Distance Learning/Videoconferencing at the Center for Puppetry Arts

Discovering Puppetry in Other Cultures: CHINA

Distance Learning Study Guide

7th – 12th Grade

Visual Communication Equipment provided by: Cisco
## Videoconferencing Activity

### Chinese Glove/Hand Puppet

#### Materials List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 body (template on pg. 4)*</td>
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<td>1 hand strap (template on pg. 4)*</td>
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<td>1 pocket (template on pg. 4)*</td>
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<td>1 face + beard (template on pg. 3)*</td>
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<td>1 hair piece (template on pg. 3)*</td>
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<td>1 head dress (template on pg. 3)*</td>
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<td>1 craft stick (regular or jumbo size)</td>
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<td>1 toilet paper tube</td>
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<td>scissors</td>
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<td>glue</td>
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<td>tape</td>
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*Templates must be pre-cut before the program!"
Templates, cont.

Body (5 of 7)

Pocket (5 of 7)

Hand strap (5 of 7)
National Curriculum Standards
met during live videoconference
Please go to www.educationworld.com for a complete list of national standards.

Fine Arts/Visual Arts
NA-VA.5-8.1 Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes
NA-VA.5-8.2 Using knowledge of structures and functions
NA-VA.5-8.3 Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas
NA-VA.5-8.5 Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others
NA-VA.5-8.6 Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines
NA-VA.9-12.1 Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes
NA-VA.9-12.4 Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures
NA-VA.9-12.6 Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

Fine Arts/Theater
NA-T.5-8.8 Understanding context by analyzing the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in the community and in other cultures
NA-T.9-12.6 Comparing and integrating art forms by analyzing traditional theatre, dance, music, visual arts, and new art forms
NA-T.9-12.7 Analyzing, critiquing, and constructing meanings from informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions
NA-T.9-12.8 Understanding context by analyzing the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in the past and the present

Technology
NT.K-12.1 Basic operations and concepts
NT.K-12.2 Social, ethical, and human issues
NT.K-12.3 Technology productivity tools
NT.K-12.4 Technology communication tools
NT.K-12.5 Technology research tools
NT.K-12.6 Technology problem-solving and decision-making tools

Social Studies
NSS-G.K-12.1 The World in Spatial terms
NSS-G.K-12.2 Places and Regions
NSS-G.K-12.4 Human Systems
Pre- & Post-Videoconference Classroom Activities

Activity 1: Mapping Asia

National Curriculum Standards met by this activity
Please go to www.educationworld.com for a complete list of national standards.

NSS-G.K-12.1 The World in Spatial Terms
NSS-G.K-12.2 Places and Regions
NT.K-12.1 Basic Operations and Concepts
NT.K-12.3 Technology Productivity Tools
NT.K-12.5 Technology Research Tools

Activity

Objective: Students will recognize China as a country within the Asian continent; students will identify and label countries in Asia.

Materials: Computer with access to Internet, printer, pencils, paper, a globe, maps, or textbooks with maps of Asian countries.

Procedure:
1. Teachers should arrange computer/media center time for this activity.
2. Have students go to www.enchantedlearning.com/geography/asia/outlinemap/ and print out the outline map of Asia.
3. Using maps, a globe, textbooks or other resource materials, students should label all countries on the Asian continent. Teachers may want to provide a list of countries for students.
4. Next, have students go to the following link to check their answers: www.enchantedlearning.com/asia/labelasia/answers.shtml.
5. Discuss with students by asking the following questions:
   • Did you recognize all the names of the different countries? Ask students to name the countries that are “new” to them.
   • Did you learn anything new about the location of specific countries or regions?
   • What was the most important information you learned from this activity?
   • Do you think learning the locations of Asian counties will help you in the future? Why or why not?
Post Program Activity

Activity 2: Shadow Puppetry – Precursor to Modern Cinema

National Curriculum Standards met by this activity
Please go to www.educationworld.com for a complete list of national standards.

NT.K-12.1 Basic Operations and Concepts
NL-ENG.K-12.1 Reading for Perspective
NL-ENG.K-12.2 Understanding the Human Experience
NL-ENG.K-12.4 Communication Skills
NL-ENG.K-12.11 Participating in Society
NL-ENG.K-12.12 Applying Language Skills
NA-VA.5-8.4 Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures
NA-VA.5-8.6 Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines
NA-T.5-8.8 Understanding context by analyzing the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in the community and in other cultures
NA-VA.9-12.4 Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures
NA-VA.9-12.6 Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines
NA-T.9-12.8 Understanding context by analyzing the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in the past and the present

Activity

Objective: Students will discuss Chinese influences on contemporary theatre, film, television and/or electronic media productions; students will discuss how theatre can reveal universal concepts; students will compare how similar themes are treated in drama in Chinese and American productions; students will compare the lives of representative theatre artists in modern China and the United States.


Procedure:
1. Arrange for computer time for students if necessary.
2. Print the article to have on hand in the classroom.
3. Students should access the internet and read the article “Shadow Puppetry Sees Bright Light Ahead” at the following link: www2.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-03/29/content_318817.htm.
4. Discuss the following content-related questions with your students:
   a. It states in the article that shadow puppetry is “a kind of precursor to modern cinema”. What are some of the similarities?
   b. The article mentions a modern shadow-puppet film entitled *Road to Riches*. What was the theme? Would you consider it a “universal” theme? Give examples of American theatrical productions or films with a similar theme.
   c. The article gives a brief example of the traveling life of the puppetry troupe Shanhua (Mountain Flowers). It also mentions the troupe performing overnight in the snow at one particular venue. Ask students to give examples of similar situations they might have experienced during a live, theatrical performance. Or, give an example of a modern film star overcoming an obstacle or hardship to finish production.
Other Resources

Software

Chinese Shadow Puppet Theater by Pentawa Interactive is a relatively inexpensive ($19.95) software package that I highly recommend. The CD-Rom is compatible to both Macintosh and Windows. Students can actually see a shadow play, design puppets, print out templates, assemble a cast or characters, create a stage set and print out scenery elements, and build a shadow puppet theater. They can also produce an original play (though this section only provides an empty script page to type – it really doesn’t give you any directions or instructions on writing your play). You can visit their Web site at www.MulticulturalArts.com, or call toll-free (888) 818-5164.

Websites to Explore

www.clevelandart.org/educelf/asianodyssey/html/ChiHisCult.html
Great Web site from the Cleveland Museum on Art about Chinese culture. It offers many downloadable teacher guides in PDF format. It has wonderful lesson plans for 5th-8th and 9th-12th grades such as comparing Chinese porcelain and the United States steel industry, and the Silk Road and its ties to China’s economic development.

www.worldalmanacforkids.com/explore/nations/china.html
World Almanac for Kids contains statistical, factual information on Chinese land and resources, population, education, culture, economy, government and history.

www.enchantedlearning.com/Home.html
Type in China under search and you will find a multitude of free, printable resources.

gsh.taiwanschoolnet.org/gsh2004/3363/main.htm
This Web site of Master LinBian, a master glove puppeteer from Taiwan, has wonderful pictures and descriptions of characters and the history of Taiwanese glove puppetry.

This article on Chinese shadow puppetry gives a brief history of its revival in today’s culture.

Selected Bibliography

THE PUPPETRY OF

INDONESIA, JAPAN,

and

MALI

Created by the Education Department of the Center for Puppetry Arts
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CELEBRATION OF AFRICAN PUPPETRY

In the past several decades African art has enjoyed increasing popular attention. Most American museums have mounted exhibits of sculpture, furniture, ceremonial costumes and masks. Less well known to museum goers, however, is the African art of puppetry. In order to acquaint the public with this important part of African culture, the Center for Puppetry Arts presents an exhibition of puppets from Africa.

African art is often set into motion by music and dance, and to a larger degree by investing movement into artistic images of all types. These images, when animated, are carried, danced or manipulated by human hands or worn as masks atop the head or on the face; thus they become performing objects or “puppets.” The art of puppetry is used in African life to enhance civic and religious activities rather than solely as an entertainment medium. Puppet theatre in some African groups uses the dramatic performances for instruction, in celebration of harvests, initiations or funerals, and as satiric commentaries on topics of concern in the community, individual misbehavior, or personal eccentricities.

In the Malian puppet theatre the characters fall within two clearly defined categories – those which allude to the world of the bush and those representing the world of the village. Today, the troupes generally play both sets of characters in every performance. The majority of puppets are representations of bush animals and celebrate the important role which hunting has played throughout the centuries in this savannah region. Yet besides celebrating hunting these animals also represent people’s values, beliefs and concerns about correct moral character and the proper conduct of life in the community. For example, Sigi, the bush buffalo represents the value of tradition and continuity within the community and celebrates the authority and wisdom of the elders. However, Con, the baboon, speaks to the destructive side of human behavior and stands as a metaphor for greed and gluttony.

The second category of puppets focuses on the community with special emphasis on the critical occupations of farming and fishing. Puppets representing men hoeing fields and women winnowing and pounding grain are common characters. Troupes also perform puppets which represent respected elders, warriors and ideal wives and mothers.

There is also a third more ambiguous category of characters who are seen to mediate between the world of the village and the world of the bush. These puppets represent heroic hunters and warriors who venture into the bush, as well as genies and bush spirits who move between the bush and the village.
Puppetry of Mali

In the Malian puppet theater the puppets appear out of the back of a moveable stage which houses the puppeteer. Constructed of a wooden framework covered with cloth, the stage may be decorated with a carved animal head at one end and an appropriate tail at the other! To insure the anonymity of the puppeteer, assistants follow the stage holding mats which hide the performer’s feet.

In traditional Malian theater, puppet shows do not follow a narrative or story. Puppets enter the stage area to specific drum beats, move around the stage area, and exit. Villagers are familiar with the puppets, the drum beats associated with them, and the puppet’s symbolism. For example, Sigi- the bush buffalo represents community and a respect for elders.

Puppet characters are broken down into three categories: people of the village (fishermen and farmers), animals of the bush, and spirits (fire or water spirits). Typical puppet characters are Kono, or Great Bird of Mali, who symbolizes the independent republic. Bush and water animals are as follows: lion, hyena, elephant, antelope, crocodile, manatee, hippopotamus, and water birds. Another type of puppet not associated with the mobile stage, would be carried on the shoulders of a performer, raising his stature well above the height of the audience. Masks are also worn during certain performances.
JAPANESE BUNRUKU PUPPETRY

One form of puppetry in Japan is the Bunraku theatre. The puppets are two to three feet in height. Major characters are manipulated by three puppeteers, the master puppeteer and two assistants. The master puppeteer is often dressed in traditional Japanese costume and his face is unhooded. This head puppeteer operates the head of the puppet and the right arm. He wears high wooden sandals (butai geta) so that he can stand higher than his two assistants. The two assistants are usually dressed all in black and wear black hoods over their heads. One assistant operates the left hand of the puppet with his right hand, and the other assistant manipulates the feet of the puppet. The foot operator is able to move the feet of males using the grips attached to the heels of the puppet. Female characters do not have feet so the foot assistant must learn to grip the hem of the kimono and move it as if there were feet.

Minor characters can be manipulated by a single puppeteer. The puppeteers train for many years in order to learn the correct movement for the puppets. For each show there is a narrator and a musician (shamisen).

Many of the best known plays if the Bunraku theatre were written by Chikamatsu Monzaemon. His most famous play is the Sonezaki Shinju (The Love Suicides at Sonezaki, 1703). His plays are performed today.
Try to find these words associated with the Japanese Bunraku puppet theatre. The words may be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, backward or forward.

You will be looking for the Japanese words, but their meaning is in parentheses.

TAYU (narrator)
SHAMISEN (musician)
BUNRAKU (a form of Japanese puppetry)
CHIKAMATSU ("Shakespeare" of the Bunraku and Kabuki theatre)
OMO ZUKAI (master puppeteer)
ZORI (sandals)
ZUKIN (hood worn by assistant puppeteer)
OJII (old man puppet)
BABA (old woman puppet)
NINGYO JORURI (doll or puppet)
DESHI (apprentice)
Description of Indonesian Puppetry

Indonesian puppetry is a good example of how puppetry is interwoven in a culture as a means of education as well as entertainment and ritual. The combination of music, puppets and traditional stories brings to life the heritage of the people. In Indonesian culture, puppetry plays a significant role in festivals, religious observances and rites of passage, such as weddings and circumcisions. Plays are selected to reinforce the spirit of the gathering, such as the Birth of Gututkatja for a newborn and Amoman as Envoy for a political celebration. Wayang kulit performances provide entertainment while instructing audiences in morality, social interactions, and values.

Wayang, the puppet theatre of Indonesia, is an art that has flourished on the islands of Java and Bali since the 9th century when Hindu poems were translated into the Javanese Kawi language. To the Javanese, wayang symbolizes the universe and the interdependence of god and his creatures, and the dalang (puppeteer) brings to life the Hindu epic stories. Plays based on these Hindu stories are called wayang purwa. The Mahabrata, the basis for the stories of the wayang purwa, tells of the rivalry between the two groups of cousins, the Pendawa brothers and their enemies, the Korawas, for the kingdom of Astina. In the ensuing war, all of the Korawas are killed, and the forces of good triumph. The Javanese believe that the conflict is the continuation of the Rama legend and that the setting is their homeland and not India. The conflict between the forces of good and evil, as represented by the two opposing groups, is very important in wayang, and the dalang always emphasizes the two during the performance. The performances offer moral and social instructions by example, in hopes the audience will want to be like the great heroes.

A special communal feast (slametan), arranged to honor events of personal or public significance, is often the occasion for a wayang purwa performance. An example is the celebration of Galungan, the islands most important festival. This is a time of reunion with the ancestral spirits and protective deities whose ancient victory over a mythological despot is celebrated every 210 days. For ten days their presence and that of other departed souls is honored with offerings of food and flowers, processions, and the performance of dance and wayang. The dalang and his puppets entertain the crowds while instructing them in the religious and historical significance of the holiday. Through the rituals of the dalang, the wayang kulit shows are believed to be so powerful that no one viewing the performance may be harmed by evil forces.

The dalang is a man of learning and stability, a member of the upper class, often a priest and a healer. As a functionary in a society always on the alert for signs of witchcraft, the dalang forces the power of darkness and fend them off through the selection of certain plays and appropriate rituals. The dalang burns incense and prays for his troop, the village, and government leaders. The plays are magical and mystical to ensure that no one is harmed by evil forces.
The Performance

There are three styles of puppetry in Indonesia: wayang golek- 3D wooden puppets manipulated by rods; wayang klitik- flat wooden puppets used in daytime shows; and wayang kulit- flat leather figures used as shadow puppets. Indonesian plays based on Hindu epic poems are called wayang purwa.

In a wayang kulit performance, the puppeteer, known as the dalang, sits behind a translucent fabric screen and uses rods to manipulate flat leather figures. The puppets are constructed from water buffalo hide and are painted and decorated with gold leaf. The figures are mounted on support rods, and other rods attached to the hands move the arms. The human head is always seen in profile, whereas demons and monkeys are portrayed with both eyes visible. Individual characters are indicated by head shape, nose, posture, clothing, etc. Often, 100 to 500 puppets are used in a single performance. A light dangles above the dalang, casting the shadows of the puppets onto the screen. Two banana tree trunks are at the base of the screen and serve to hold the extra puppets at each end. Behind the dalang is the gamelan orchestra. Typical instruments include metallophones, drums, cymbals, bronze gongs, stringed instruments, and bamboo flutes. The dalang will remain behind the screen for most of the night, controlling the music, puppets, narration, songs, and dialogue.

There is no written script for the performance. Instead, the dalang has a brief outline of the plot which he learns and expounds upon. The performance begins at 9pm and lasts until the next morning. The dalang prays for his troop, the local villagers, and government officials. He then strikes the metal plates on the puppet box 3 times to awaken his figures. He then takes them out and arranges them for the play. A performance consists of three parts: the prologue, where the story and characters are introduced; the main action; and the epilogue, where the moral of the story is discussed. The gamelan opens the performance, and the puppet show begins when the gunungan (tree of life) appears on the screen. The tree of life is symbolic of the universe and opens and closes all performances. Throughout the night, the dalang sings songs, burns incense, and tells tales of gods, princes, demons, ogres, and comic characters. For the prince, the puppeteer speaks courtly Javanese. Heroic or villainous clowns speak three languages, and translate for the audience. The audience comes and goes throughout the night. They know by the music when battles are fought and when clowns are cracking jokes. Finally, in the morning, all battles are won, the tree of life reappears, and the audience leaves with a renewed sense of honor, loyalty, and goodness.
Dalang with puppets behind screen.

Gamelan orchestra.
Instructions

Included is a very simple shadow puppet design that can be created in 45 minutes.
Materials: manila folders; scissors; hole puncher; pencil; colored markers; templates; paper fasteners or string; bamboo skewers or drinking straws; tape; stapler; glue.

- choose character
- glue handout onto manila folder
- cut out character
- punch holes where the arms will attach
- attach arms to body with paper fasteners and decorate with suggested indonesian motifs, repeat to create a pattern, add details that depict the character of the figure, add gold marker for final touch. glue, staple or tape control rods on.