

Curriculum Guide

The Fratello Marionettes

The Art of the Puppet

Teacher Guide

K-8

About the Artist

The Fratello Marionettes began entertaining audiences in 1989 by bringing the ancient art of marionettes to audiences throughout the world. We have toured extensively throughout the United States and internationally.

The Fratello Marionettes produce high quality marionette shows using the “cabaret style” of manipulation. In this truly American style the puppet and puppeteer perform in full view of the audience. Our shows present intricately handcrafted marionettes that range in size from one foot to three feet tall. Our shows are geared for children of all ages, and some of our work is performed without dialog. These music-based programs are designed to surmount the language barrier.

About the Program

This unique production is designed to demonstrate to students the ancient art of puppetry. We have included a multitude of different kinds of puppets to demonstrate diverse styles, types of puppetry as well as historical background of puppetry.

The puppeteers discuss how these puppets are all hand crafted by the talented artists at The Fratello Marionettes. They also show how they travel with all the puppetry equipment.

During *The Art of the Puppet*, the audience is treated to a myriad of short vignettes utilizing different types of puppets. In between each of these vignettes, we show how we create and manipulate the puppets. We demonstrate different types of puppets such as hand puppets, rod puppet, finger puppets, shadow puppets, moving mouth puppets and marionettes. Following the presentation, the students are encouraged to ask questions about puppets, puppetry or the performers.

Learning Objectives

- To introduce children to the art of puppetry
- To open children’s imagination to the theater
- To learn about different types of puppets
- To learn the history of puppetry in the world

- To show how to follow one's dreams (Both puppeteers started in puppetry at a young age)

Teacher Preparation for the Program

Discussing the History of Puppetry

- What is a puppet?
- What is a marionette?
- How many different types of puppets are there?
- How can I make a simple puppet?
- When did the art of puppetry begin?

The Art of the Puppet

- How do the puppets travel?
- What types of puppets are from Europe, Asia or Africa?
- What are the most famous puppet characters you can think of?
- How young can I start in puppetry?

Follow-Up Ideas and Activities

How to Create a Puppet Show

- Think of a clever story to tell.
- Writing the script.
- Develop what characters are involved.
- Decide what type of puppets to use to tell the story.
- Determine how and when to use sound effects or music.
- Decide who is going to play which characters.
- Rehearse the show.
- Put on a performance.
- Have fun!

Vocabulary and Key Concepts

Hand Puppet: a figure manipulated from below using your wrist and fingers to move the puppet internally.

Rod Puppet: a figure manipulated from below where rods or sticks are used to manipulate the head and hands. Sometimes these figures have movable mouths.

Shadow Puppet: an ancient form of puppetry using an articulated flat figure manipulated against an illuminated background.

Moving mouth puppet: these figures are worked from underneath and often used in movies or television shows such as in the “Muppets.”

Finger Puppet: A small figure slipped onto the end of one’s finger to manipulate a miniature figure.

Marionette: mar-i-o-nette ; a puppet manipulated from above by strings attached to its jointed limbs.

English-Language Arts Content Standards

This puppetry program meets the VAPA and ELAC standards:

- 1.1 Artistic Perception: puppets, story, classical music, conflict
- 2.1 Creative Expression: Students connect emotional bonds with the characters portrayed in the puppet show presentation
- 3.2 Historical and Cultural Context: Students are enlightened on one of the earliest forms of performance art. They are also encouraged to ask questions following the performance.

Resources

Bil Baird, The Art of the Puppet, Bonanza, 1973

David Currell, The Complete Book of Puppet Theater, A&C Black Publishers, 1986

Luman Coad, Marionette Sourcebook, Charlamagne Press, 2007

Mabel and Les Beaton, The Complete Book of Marionettes, Dover Publications, 2005

David Currell, Making and Manipulating Marionettes, Crowood Press, 2005

Mark Mazzarella, Stories of the American Puppet, DVD, 2007