

PUPPET ARTS THEATRE

presents
A Study Guide for Classroom Teachers



The Adventure of Momotaro

Japanese Folktale

A Production of PUPPET ARTS THEATRE
1927 Springridge Drive
Jackson, MS 39211
(601) 956 3414

<http://tinyurl.com/PAT-Momotaro>
peter@mispuppetry.com

Feel free to make as many copies as needed.

ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION

“The Adventure of Momotaro” was adapted for the puppet stage by Jean Enticknap and Sue Ennis of Thistle Theatre in Seattle. It was based on the Japanese folktale, “Momotaro the Peach Boy.” The stunning bunraku style rod puppets were designed for Puppet Arts Theatre by Peter Zapletal, founder of the Puppet Arts Theatre. The costumes, all animals and sets were designed and constructed by Jarmila Zapletal. The graphics for the movie animation were done by Erica Flannes. The music is original music specifically composed for the play by Sue Ennis, with the exception of the Momotaro song; that is a folk melody.

SUMMARY

An old man and his wife are sad and lonely because they have no children. The demons Oni, plunder their village and steal everything they have. One day, while washing clothes in the river the woman finds giant peach which she takes home as a treat for her husband. Before they can cut it open, it bursts and a baby boy pops out, an answer to their prayers. They name the child Momotaro, which means Peach Boy.

The boy grows up big, strong and brave. When he is a teenager, he decides to go on a quest to bring back the treasures the Oni (the demons) stole from the villagers. The Oni live on an island called Onigashima. These horrible Onis have terrorized the villages for years, stealing the peoples' treasures and ruining their property. His parents help him prepare for his adventure by giving him a good-luck banner and dumplings to eat.

On his way to the island, Momotaro meets three animals, a dog, a monkey and a pheasant. After he shares his dumplings with each of them, they decide to join him. These three creatures, who would naturally be enemies, become good friends. The four of them, each using their own abilities and skills, defeat the Oni and return the treasures to their rightful owners.

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

Ojiisan Nezumi - an old mouse who serves as a narrator.

Momotaro - the hero and title character who wants to protect his guardians.

Obaasan - Old Woman - who finds baby Momotaro in a floating peach down the river and

Ojiisan - Old Man who takes care of Momotaro while he grows up.

Oni no Taisho - the head Oni, the leader of the demons who steal and plunder.

The helpers that are befriended by Momotaro and help him fight the Oni: Inu the Dog, Saru the Monkey, and Kiji the Pheasant who are by nature not friends but under leadership of Momotaro, they unite in the task of defeating the Oni.

Other characters: Five other Oni, Snail and Butterfly.

THEMES IN THE PLAY

1. Responsibility to use your abilities to help others.
2. Recognizing that different individuals may have different skills.
3. The importance for each individual to contribute his or her skills to a joint, co-operative venture.

OBJECTIVES:

Language Arts Objectives:

1. The student identifies and describes the actions, traits, emotions, and feelings of a character from a story.
2. The student recalls story details.
3. The student recognizes sequential relationship.
4. The student predicts outcomes of a story.

Social Studies Objective:

Locate and label continents and find Japan.

Writing Objectives:

1. To express thoughts through writing.
2. To explore various genres (folk tale)

BEFORE THE SHOW

1. Introduce the students to folk tales by asking the children if they have ever heard any folk tales or fairy tales. Discuss how folk tales, stories or legends, originated among common people.
2. Locate Asia on a map and discuss that Asia is a continent and have students locate Asia on a globe.
3. Find the country - Japan. See how far away it is from Mississippi?
4. Introduce the name of the puppet show "The Adventure of Momotaro."
5. Who do you think this story is about?
6. Where is this story set?
7. Based on the illustration, what other kinds of creatures do you expect to meet?
8. What are demons (Oni)?
9. What might Momotaro encounter on the island of Onigashima?
10. What do you think will happen in this story?
11. Remind students that most folk tales had morals. Listen for the moral of the story.
12. Remind the students that sequencing means putting things in order, and that they will need to be able to sequence the story.
11. Have children define vocabulary words from the play and explain that these words will be used throughout the show.

LEARN A LITTLE JAPANESE

gaman - be patient	ganbatte - good luck, do your best
tako - octopus	momo - peach
sensei - teacher	kibidango - a dumpling
sumimasen - I am sorry, please excuse me	saru - monkey
inu - dog	kiji - pheasant
ohayo - hello	kanabo - club with spikes
donburako - something is floating	yakusoku - I promise
PON! - Wow!	medetashi - wonderful
gin - silver	kin - gold
ittekimasu - I am leaving, I will return	arigatou - thank you

AFTER THE SHOW

1. Discuss the story together in class.

When did the story happen?
Where did the story take place?
What is the main problem in the story?
How is the problem solved?
2. Have children tell the story in sequence.
What do the old man and woman do after the village is attacked?
What does Momotaro choose to take with him when he goes to get back the treasures?
Does Momotaro's choice turn out to be useful?
What contributions do the pheasant, the monkey and the dog make to the defeat of the Oni?
What contribution does Momotaro make?
Do you think Momotaro would have succeeded if he had been alone? Why or why not?
3. Discuss some of the characters in the story.
Have the students write or tell a brief character sketch of their favorite character.
4. How did the dog, monkey and pheasant feel about each other?
5. What or who made them to work together?
6. Discuss the morals of the story and some of the details to support them.
7. Have the students sequence one of the story in their own words by writing character descriptions, and details that would support the moral.
8. Have students to draw their favorite part of the story.

PREPARING THE SHOW FOR YOU

Many people are involved in making “The Adventure of Momotaro” a successful stage production. When you are watching the performance see what each one contributed:

The Writer created the lines for the characters to say.

The Set Designer planned out what the stage should look like during the show.

The Costume Designer created the costumes that the actors wear on stage.

The Puppet Makers build puppets.

The Musicians are playing the music you hear.

The Director instructed the actors and puppeteers where to move.

The Actors/Puppeteers from Puppet Arts Theatre are performing the various parts in the story.

The Lighting Designer set and focused lights to set the mood for the show.

They all worked together to create “The Adventure of Momotaro” just for YOU!

Puppet Arts Theatre brings amazing puppetry to audiences throughout the Southeast. Recognized for its commitment to excellence and innovation, it receives support from the Mississippi Arts Commission and the Greater Jackson Arts Council.

Puppet Arts Theatre was founded in 1967 and now performs for thousands of children each year.

Contact:

Puppet Arts Theatre

1927 Springridge Drive

Jackson, MS 39211

(601) 956 3414

peter@mstpuppetry.com