

TRASH WITH A PORPOISE EDUCATION KIT



ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource has been created to provide teachers with curriculum links to the Victorian Curriculum, and includes some preliminary and post show ideas and activities as to how to extend their experience of Trash Puppets. The activities are designed to be open-ended and multi-ability. They may need differentiation for your specific cohort.

INTRODUCTION TO TRASH PUPPETS

Trash Puppets makes sustainability fun!

Trash Puppets offers creative puppetry workshops and interactive puppetry experiences for children and adults. Through these offerings, we give people positive reinforcement of sustainability and waste reduction messages, as well as a valuable creative experience.

We are passionate about:

The power of creativity to transform and inspire people of all ages

- Imagination and play
- Joyful interactions with tangible objects in an increasingly digital world
- Facilitating meaningful (and fun) engagement with sustainability, inspiring people towards behavioural change
- Innovation and making the most of what you already have.

We believe that every person is a creative being, and that unleashing this innate nature ultimately leads to a happier, healthier, more innovative, and more collaborative society.



ABOUT TRASH WITH A PORPOISE



Join us as we navigate the depths of our waterways - battling whirlpools, cracking jokes with a walrus and learning how we can reduce our impact through everyday actions!

This fun, new sketch comedy show for children and families is a thrilling journey full of puppetry, clowning, song and of course, plenty of Trash!

With a whole host of new, original trash puppet characters, including Crabs, Sea Slugs, Penguins, a Sea Horse & a Puffer Fish, who join our Porpoise and starring character "Merf", children will be mesmerized by the diversity of sea creatures and the stories, song and jokes they share.

Trash with a Porpoise has the format of a sketch comedy show with short, punchy, sometimes hilarious sketches, whilst exploring the themes of marine waste, and how we can take positive steps to help it.

The show includes participatory elements, wherein the children will be called upon to help us, including call and response and even inviting some of them on stage to help us in the show!

Trash Puppets are strong believers in not underestimating children, in their humour, their depth, and in their understanding of the world. This show will provide actionable ways that we can all make a difference for our environment, empowering audiences to take small steps in their everyday lives that all-together can make big change.

Aiming to create this new original show, with and for children, Trash Puppets Artists travelled to Portland in December 2021 to complete a Residency at Bundarra Primary school. This work with the kids generated full sketch ideas, costuming ideas, set design, soundscapes, puppet inspiration, as well as the kids contributing their ideas and opinions around sustainability relating to our oceans and waterways. After multiple weeks in the rehearsal room further developing the sketches, characters and puppets, the cast then returned to Portland to preview the show for the entire school, and were thrilled to hear constant laughter from the kids in Prep right through to Grade 6.

Director of Trash with a Porpoise Jhess Knight shared her vision for the show:

“I am hoping that the show will be a conversations starter between adults and children. At Trash Puppets we have always believed in engagement through play. Rather than drilling them with dry information, let’s have fun, and learn some things in the process. They may not even realize how much they are learning through all the laughs!”

The cast are highly experienced performers with backgrounds in dance, musical theatre, stage combat, puppetry, clowning, puppetry and work for kids.

As in all Trash Puppets work, everything in the show was created using reclaimed, repurposed, recycled materials, including the puppets, set and costumes. We want children to witness how everyday household items have been used to create this work and to feel inspired to create at home.



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

The vision when creating TWAP was to create a sketch comedy show with a focus on marine waste, the issues surrounding that and ways that we can help! By sharing this kind of information in a playful, comedic way, we hoped that our audiences would learn new ways to lessen their impact while having a whole lot of fun!

We have always been big believers in engagement through play and this show is no exception to that ethos. We are not trying to solve the problem of marine waste (what a mission that would be) but we are definitely trying to start conversations amongst families, classrooms etc. We hope that our show will get kids and adults thinking. In order to make any change in the world, we need to be thinking creatively, and we hope to inspire the next generation of creative thinkers!

Sketch comedy in my experience has been something mostly dominated by actors and comedians! Where are the puppets in this space!

Though our show does have some elements of narrative, our aim really was to make a fun, silly, playful sketch show starring some fabulous puppets and with a great message.

Developing the show was an absolute joy.

It was a devised piece, with four performers in the room, two makers and myself... we played and played and played!

We probably came up with 20-30 sketch ideas and explored maybe half of that.

Probably 6-7 actually made it into the show!

We had the performers on the floor making puppets, coming up with characters, writing songs etc.

It was pure chaos and I loved every moment of it.

What came out was a show that I am incredibly proud of.

Jhess Knight
Trash Puppet Founder
Trash with a Porpoise Director



SUGGESTED PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

1) Arts and Crafts

Start the kids thinking about Trash Puppets, by making one themselves before seeing the show. Trash Puppets have a variety of videos of simple puppets that can easily be made by Kids on our Youtube Channel, which are free and accessible for teachers to view, to then teach to kids.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi6IUWgIMW6AQ8vmyUDhtJw>

We love puppets, but what else can be made out of trash? Fashion, musical instruments, visual art... the list goes on.

2) Sustainability research

What is your local council's recycling policy? What sorts of materials can be recycled? What kinds of things do we use every day that have been made out of other things - what are some examples of really big projects that have used recycled materials? What are some ways we can reduce, reuse, recycle, AND refuse?

3) Being a Puppeteer requires focus and control.

Encourage your students to experience the skills needed to be a puppeteer with this simple activity:

Follow the hand

In pairs: "A" holds their hand palm outwards a few inches away from their partner's face. Now they move their hand slowly and "B" tries to keep their face the same distance away, moving their body wherever needed. As a variation, try both leading the other (slowly!), or in threes, each leading another whilst being led themselves!

4) A puppeteer brings the puppet to life using the mechanism that the puppet is manipulated with.

Prepare your students by exploring how objects can be anything you want them to be, simply by the way you handle them with this simple activity:

Shoe shuffle

Pass any easy-to-handle object around the circle – or place it in the centre – for example a shoe, a bucket or a chair. Each person uses it in turn - changing it into a different object each time through improvisation, e.g. a shoe becomes a phone by holding it to your ear and talking. It can be anything - apart from what it really is.

As a variation, other members of the group can step into the improvisation so that a short scene develops.

SUGGESTED PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

5) Manipulating a puppet is different to making your body move.

Prepare your students by focusing on joint movement to create one picture with this activity:

Hands through (An absurd improvisation exercise)

Person A stands behind person B and puts their arms underneath B's arms so that they protrude in front. At the same time, B clasps their hands behind their own back.

Now any scene is improvised but A moves their arms as though they were the arms of person B.

You could, for example, ask B to give some kind of lecture, but A would provide all the gestures! Or, you could have two "hands-through" pairs facing each other as though they were meeting each other.

Of course, in theory, A can do anything she likes to B – scratching his head, stroking his chin, waving furiously, drinking a glass of water and so on.



SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Performance Space with or without puppets – story structure.

1) The Fairy tale Game:

Create a 'Performance Space'. This could be a square drawn out with masking tape on the floor (the audience sit around the outside) or a traditional marionette puppet theatre made out of a large box (recycled!).

- Break your students into small groups.
- Ask your students to pick a fairy tale of their choice.
- Either using the puppets as the actors, or being the actors themselves, ask them to rehearse the fairy tale with a focus on finding a definite 'beginning, middle and end'.
- Invite each group to perform their fairy tale in the performance space.

Once each group has done this, challenge each group to perform the fairy tale again, but with time limits:

- 2 minutes
- 1 minute
- 30 seconds
- 10 seconds

What is important to keep in your performance to successfully retell the story in a short time?

How can you keep the beginning, middle and end clear in a shorter telling?

2) Hot Seat

Set up a 'hot seat' in front of the class.

Invite an actor/puppeteer to sit in the 'hot seat'.

The remainder of the class are investigative reporters. They are invited to ask the puppet/actor questions about themselves to find out more about them.

Some examples:

- How old are you?
- What is your favourite activity?
- What is your favourite food?
- Where do you live?
- What family do you have?



SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

Group puppets

If you have made a puppet in the classroom already, why not think about expanding?

There's nothing quite like working together to achieve something bigger than ourselves.

In groups of 4 or 5, create ONE puppet together which requires everyone to join together to operate it.

What is the benefit in collaborating together?

How can that improve the outcome when making puppets?

How can working together on other things improve the outcome?



SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

Sustainability

Fun activities to get your class thinking about rubbish and recycling in a more long term way!

1) The Great Trash Race

Set out 2 piles of trash with non-recyclable and recyclable materials.

Split the class into two teams.

The teams must sort their piles into non-recyclable and recyclable materials. The first team to successfully complete this wins.

2) The 30 day sustainability challenge!

Our planet is in danger and we need to act now!

For 30 days, become an environmental warrior - each day take one step, no matter how small, towards a more sustainable life.

Brainstorm some ways to reduce, reuse, recycle and refuse, then get to work changing the world!

Some ideas are below - but what else can you think of?

- Reuse something you could have thrown away
- Refuse a plastic bag at the shops
- When out shopping, pick products with less packaging
- Fix something broken rather than getting something new
- Fix something for someone else
- Recycle everything you can if there is no use for it!
- Think about how you get your whole family involved?



Will it all stop after 30 days or are there ways to make these changes permanent?

TRASH WITH A PORPOISE CREATIVE TEAM

Directed by Jhess Knight

Produced by Jen Gay, Packed House Productions

Originally Presented by La Mama for Kids

Puppets by Jhess Knight and Mads Hillam

Performers: Jemima Eva, Joseph Lai, Jackson Eather and Julia Landberg

Stage Manager: Tim Dennis

Lighting Design : Tom O'Sullivan

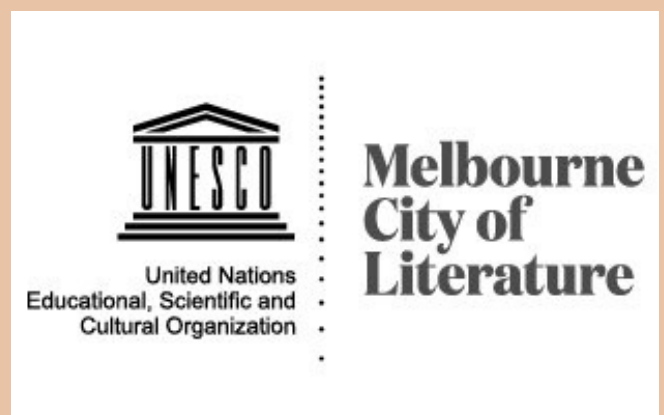
Images by Jarryd Bravo & Darren Gill

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**Proudly supported by
the City of Port Phillip
Cultural Development Fund**





"What a wonderful morning our students had! Joey and Julia were very engaging and all our F-Yr6 students were all able to take away the importance of looking after our oceans from the production." (KW, Junior Science Teacher, Huntingtower School)

