

Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Dato' Razali Ismail

Techniques for Teaching Grammar

Teaching of Grammar in the Primary Classroom



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Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Introduction	2
Objectives	2
Materials	2
Procedures	3
Worksheet 1- Why Teach Grammar?	3
Why Use These Techniques for Teaching Grammar?	4
1. Stories	5
Story Telling:	6
Worksheet 2 - Stories	7
Activity 2:	7
2. Songs and Chants	8
a) Using traditional songs	8
Worksheet 3 - Songs	9
b) A song as a text	10
c) A song about the rules	11
d) Chants	11
Worksheet 4 – Chant 1	12
Worksheet 5 – Chant 2	16
3. Games	17
Activity: Class Board Game - Grammar Soccer	17
Worksheet 6 - Games	18
4. Nursery Rhymes and Poems	19
Worksheet 7 – Nursery Rhymes	20
5. Plays and Dialogues	22
Worksheet 8 – Plays and Dialogues	24
6. Puppets.	25
Project Activity	27
Workshop Evaluation	28

Techniques for Teaching Grammar

Facilitator's Manual

Acknowledgements

The workshop was organized by Pn Zainab binti Ab Rahman, coordinator for Language Description courses in the Jabatan Bahasa-Bahasa at IPGKDRI.

Introduction

This is a short (2 hour) workshop prepared for students at IPGKDRI as part of the "Teaching of Grammar in the Primary Classroom" (TS 3108) course in Semester 2, 2012.

Objectives

Participants (lecturers and IPG students) will:

- experience the use of techniques such as
 - songs and chants
 - Games
 - Stories
 - Nursery Rhymes and Poems
 - Puppets
 - Plays and Dialogues
- be equipped to create and develop their own materials to use these techniques when teaching grammar.

Materials

The Facilitator needs:

- Facilitator's notes
- PowerPoint presentation file
- Plain paper, one sheet for each participant
- A short story plan for each participant
- A song sheet for each participant
- Whiteboard with soccer field drawn on. Soccer players stuck/drawn on, ball to stick on, speech cards.

The participants need:

- a copy of the participant's worksheets and notes
- writing materials (including colours and scissors) and notebook.

Procedures

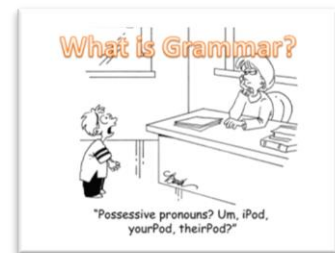
NOTE: Thumbnails of PowerPoint slides are included in this manual.



Grammar is all about 'getting your ducks in a row' – seeing and understanding patterns in language.

Briefly discuss the following questions:

- What is "Grammar"?
- How important is grammar in learning a language?
- Is it possible to learn a language well without learning the grammar?
- What is the easiest way to teach grammar?



Students should have already studied around these questions in the course.

Participants fill in the worksheet and discuss briefly. (Participant's p 3)

Worksheet 1- Why Teach Grammar?

Briefly answer the following questions

What is "Grammar"?

.....

How important is Grammar in learning a language?

.....

Is it possible to learn a language well without learning the Grammar?

.....

What is the easiest way to teach Grammar?

.....

.....

Discuss

The reason for learning Grammar Rules is to pass exams.

Grammar rules for passing exams



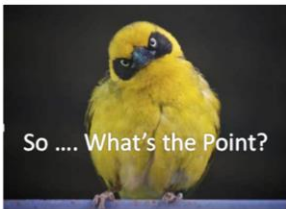
The main reason for learning grammar rules is to pass exams.

Knowing the rules has little or no effect on language proficiency.

Natural language learning does not involve learning rules.

However students need to learn rules simply to pass exams.

Why Use These Techniques for Teaching Grammar?



The Techniques we are going to talk about today are more effective than drilling the rules because:

1. They Defeat Boredom

With the **variety** of activities children are more motivated.



1. Defeat Boredom



1. Defeat Boredom

(Slide animation changes one picture to the other.)



Save the teacher's sanity too

The teacher (you) is also less likely to become frustrated.

2. They Encourage Natural Learning



In fact these activities are good for all areas of language learning – especially listening and speaking – as they develop the students' natural language learning skills.

3. They Can Still Practise the Grammar Rules.



These strategies provide for some more interesting ways to practise the rules - which they need to know in order to pass their exams.

NOTE: *The six techniques below overlap with each other, and are also useful in all the other areas of English teaching including Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing and Language Arts.*

1. Stories



The KSSR is built on three broad themes – The World of Self, Family and Friends, The World of Stories, and The World of Knowledge. But that does not mean that stories can only be used in lessons related to “The World of Stories” theme.

Stories can (and really *should*) be part of every lesson in every area of the curriculum. In the words of the old Indian proverb:

“Tell me a fact and I’ll learn. Tell me the truth and I’ll believe. But tell me a story and it will live in my heart forever.”

Strategies for using stories



Start with a story, any story – traditional, from a modern storybook, or just made up on the spot.

Read or tell the story to the children, and include pictures, actions, and sound effects – whatever it takes to make the story understandable and enjoyable.

As you do so **draw attention** to and emphasise the grammar point that you want them to **notice**.
Maybe add more of that type of example to the story as you go.

For example:

- Articles – definite and indefinite.
- Adjectives
- Comparatives and Superlatives
- Tenses
- Imperative
- Modals

You can encourage the children to join in as they notice a pattern, or contribute ideas (of other adjectives, for example, as they look at the pictures), or you can include some sort of short chant (such as maybe a grammar rule) for them to join in with.

Re-tell the story (and / or get the students to retell it) and make changes to emphasise your grammar point.

For example:

- Change the tense of the story – present to past or future
- Change the adjectives, or make them all superlatives
- Change the story all to imperative, or interrogative
- Change the point of view of the story – 3rd person to 1st person maybe

Story Telling:

With a partner, look at the brief story outline you have been given.

- Decide how you can tell the story to emphasise a particular Grammar point of your choosing.
- Decide how you can change the story to bring out the same or a different grammar point.

Prepare to present your story with one of you telling it one way and the partner telling the changed version. (Participant's p 4)

Worksheet 2 - Stories

Telling and re-telling a story.

With your partner read the story-line you have been given. It includes only the minimum idea of a plot which you will elaborate on.

Give your story a title:

What grammar point are you going to emphasise **in the first telling of your story**?

.....

What words or phrases will you do this with?

.....

.....

Which parts of the story will you encourage the children to join in with?

.....

.....

In the second telling of your story, what grammar point are you going to emphasise?

.....

What words or phrases will you do this with?

.....

.....

Which parts of the story will you encourage the children to join in with?

.....

.....

Activity 2:

Make a little book.



With your partner, write (and illustrate) the two versions of your story in your two little books. (It may need to be a shortened version of your story!)

2. Songs and Chants



Some songs tell a story, and some stories contain a song.

Learning a story song can have the same benefits of a story with the added advantage that somehow when we learn something that includes music we remember it better, it 'sticks' in your mind.

a) Using traditional songs

Traditional songs are simple, rhythmical and usually repetitive, and often have fun actions and sound effects which children enjoy. As children learn the song, the inherent grammar rules can be pointed out for them to **notice**. As with the story, with some songs you can change parts of the song to emphasise particular grammar points.

Grammar in a Song

In your group, look at the traditional song you have been given. Make sure you all know the tune and how the song 'goes'.

Look for Grammar features that could be taught using the song.

What could be altered in the song to emphasise your point or bring out a new point?

Be ready to present your song.

(Participant's p 5)



Worksheet 3 - Songs

What is the name of your song?

What Grammar points could you teach with this song?

.....

.....

.....

Which words in the song show the Grammar points?

.....

.....

.....

What could you change in the song?

What Grammar points could you teach with the changed song?

.....

.....

.....

Which changed words in the song show the Grammar points?

.....

.....

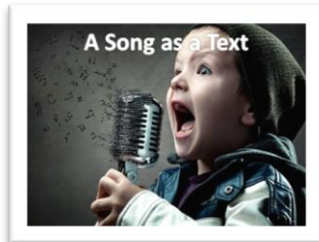
.....

What actions, movements, noises or fun bits would you use or add?

.....

.....

b) A song as a text



You can have the children listen to a commercial song, and then examine the words in a worksheet and do exercises involving the words, just like you would with a reading text except that they get to learn the song (where they are unlikely to choose to memorise sections of a written text).

Of course with young children, from year 3 and upwards, we need to be careful about selecting suitable songs, and there is not a lot of point if the background music blurs out the song words either.

To find a song that has a particular phrase or sentence use the website: <http://lyreach.com>

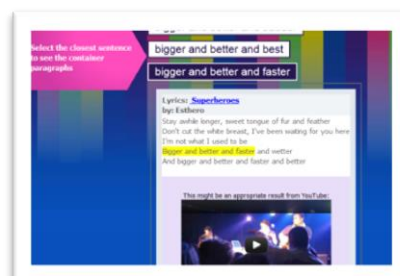
You simply type in the words you are hoping to find, and it comes up with a list of songs, and links to the songs.

For example:

I want to find a song using the expression “bigger and better”. These are some of my choices:



When I click on “bigger and better and faster”, it shows me the lyrics of the song and a YouTube video of the song.



Looking at the lyrics there, I'm not sure that it would be a suitable song for primary school!

c) A song about the rules

There are actually children's songs which drill grammar and spelling rules. They are available at <http://www.songsforteaching.com/grammarspelling.htm> where there are CDs for you to buy.

d) Chants



Chants take advantage of the rhythm and rhyme of a song, without the complication of a tune. For this reason at least, it is very easy to create our own chants.

(Books of "Jazz Chants" are also available commercially by Carolyn Graham, and sometimes you can find her raps and chants online.)

❖ Vocabulary Chants

A vocabulary chant is the simplest to create. In the context of Grammar learning, this may involve learning a group of words that are all a particular type – such as adjectives – or it may involve a selection of grammar terms – such as past, present, future.

Make a Vocab Chant

With a partner, create a vocabulary chant using the following steps.

(Worksheet 4 follows steps)



(Participant's p 6)



Worksheet 4 – Chant 1

Create a Vocabulary Chant

1. Decide on your topic or theme (e.g. grammar terms, nouns with a theme such as animals, verbs of speaking, adverbs ... anything really)

.....

Brainstorm words that fit your topic or theme. Write 10 or 15.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Next to each word, note how many syllables it has.

Now choose 3 words with 2, 2, 3, and 1 syllable respectively.

(2) (3) (1)

Now write your chant:

(2) (3) (1) *

(2) (3) (1) *

(2) (3)

(2) (3)

(2) (3) (1) *

* When you say your chant, keep a strong 4-beat rhythm by putting one beat on each word and then adding a ***click** at the end of the 1st 2nd and last lines.

❖ Grammar Chants

A Grammar chant usually consists of a series of phrases, sentences, or grammar rules which are called out by the teacher and simply repeated by the students.

The first time you teach a new chant, you can make it simply an Echo Chant, for example:

Eat! Eat!

Teacher: Write! Write!

Students: Write! Write!

Teacher: Who writes?

Students: Who writes?

Teacher: He writes.

Students: He writes.

Teacher: What does he write?

Students: What does he write?

Teacher: He writes his homework every day.

Students: He writes his homework every day...

... and so on. (Don't make it too long!)

After that you can change it to a Question and Answer or Call and Response chant using the same words, for example:

Eat! Eat!

Teacher: Write! Write!

Students: Write! Write!

Teacher: Who writes?

Students: He writes.

Teacher: What does he write?

Students: He writes his homework every day...

Next ...

Now you can *switch parts* - let a student, or group of students, take the 'teacher's part ... or let students practice it in pairs.

And then you can add actions (such as eating actions) and *body rhythm* (clap, click, slap thighs, stamp ...)

for example:

Write! (*clap-clap*) Write! (clap)
 Write! (*clap-clap*) Write! (clap)
 (clap) Who writes? (clap)
 He (*clap-clap*) writes! (clap)
 What does he write? (clap)
 He writes homework (clap *clap-clap* clap clap) every day.

Note: (*clap-clap*) would be two quick claps, while (clap) is one clap and a pause - make it rhythmical!

Thus it should fit into a four-beat pattern:

1	2	3	4	1 ... etc.
Write!	<i>Clap</i> <i>clap</i>	Write!	Clap	Write! ... etc.

Think about the learning outcomes

- Make sure that your chant has correct grammar (and pronunciation by you)
- Make sure your chant teaches what you want it to teach.
- Don't try to include too many learning points in one chant.
- Don't make it too long.
- Find a way to make sure it is fun.

For example:

The chant above teaches the simple present question and answer. "He writes", "He writes homework everyday", "What does he write?"

After that, it might be good to create another chant around "What is he writing?", "He is writing English." to emphasise the difference between Present Simple and Present Continuous which so many ESL learners have problems with.

Substitutions



Now use substitutions ... e. g. "What does she write?" ... to reinforce grammar points and teach vocabulary, such as in this "Likes/Doesn't Like" rap.

Za-	1 kiah likes	2 lettuce but she	3 doesn't like	4 peas. Does Za-
	1 -kia like	2 lettuce?	3 Yes, she	4 does. Does Za-
	1 -kia like	2 peas?	3 No, she	4 doesn't. Za-
	1 -kia likes	2 lettuce but she	3 doesn't like	4 peas.
	o Ali likes po-	o tatoes but he	o doesn't like	o rice. Does
	o Ali like po-	o tatoes?	o Yes, he	o does. Does
	o Ali like	o rice?	o No, he	o doesn't.
	o Ali likes po-	o tatoes but he	o doesn't like	o rice.

Activity

Create a *short* Grammar Chant of your own to teach Adjective-Noun word order. Write your newly-created chant here: (Participant's p 7)

Worksheet 5 – Chant 2

Title:

Leader

Response

Leader

Response

Leader

Response

Leader

Response

Leader

Response

3. Games



The purpose of playing games is to practice drilling as well as encourage some automatic response, natural language in an exciting, often **competitive**, atmosphere so that the children are motivated and concentrating on the game itself rather than stressing about the rules.

The most mundane of practice tasks can become enjoyable when presented in a game, with or without a physical reward for “winning”.

These games are best **played in teams** to encourage team spirit and cooperation. An **element of chance** takes away the sting of losing and makes it possible for even the less able students to win and feel like winners.

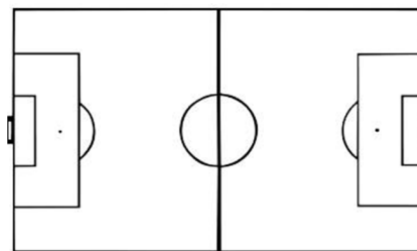
When devising your own games, try to include these elements.

NOTE: 15 types of language games are described in a document which you can download from <http://ktf2012.weebly.com/language-games.html>
All of these can be adapted in some way to use for teaching Grammar.

Activity: Class Board Game - Grammar Soccer



(Note: a version of this game can be found on http://bogglesworldesl.com/grammar_soccer.htm)



1. Draw soccer field on white/black board.

2. Stick or draw players on field, four for each side. One could be in the goals, one on the centre circle, and two in between (maybe out on the wing).

3. Prepare questions.

4. Divide class into two teams.

5. Teams take it in turns for representative to pick up a card and read out the statement – with appropriate acting – and the other team representative must answer in the form of reported speech.

(OR two members from the same team, one reads the card appropriately and the other gives the answer.)

6. If the answer is totally perfect the ball moves one player closer to the opponent's goal. Otherwise it moves towards the player's own goal.

In this workshop, participants need to be aware of the teaching points in Worksheet 6. (*below*)

An example of each type of reported speech will be given for participants to quickly jot down on the worksheet appropriate answers. (Participant's p 8)

Worksheet 6 - Games

Reported speech soccer.

This particular version of this game would be too difficult for primary school students – it has been adapted to be fun for IPG students.

This is a revision exercise, so - remember the rules for reported speech?

On the back of each card is a word or two telling the original speaker how to say the quote so that their partner can give the correct answer. The categories on the cards are:

say, agree, refuse, promise, threaten, yell/shout, whisper, read, write, ask (if), ask (wh-), wonder (if), wonder (wh-), brag/boast complain, deny, confess.

How would you report each of the following:

(Say) "I am in a good mood."

(Yell/shout) "I hate living in this house."

(Whisper) "I need an eraser"

(Agree) "OK. I'll sell it for \$200."

(Refuse) "I WON'T help you!"

(Wonder wh-) "What will I be when I grow up?"

(Wonder if) "Will it rain tomorrow? "

(Promise) "I'll take you to a movie tomorrow."

(Threaten) "If you don't do it, I'll hit you."

(Confess) "I robbed the store."

(Deny) "I didn't kill the boss."

4. Nursery Rhymes and Poems



Nursery Rhymes are essentially very old poems that have become traditional and lasted the test of years mostly because of their rhythmic quality. Some of them have tunes and have become traditional songs for children, and some of them are traditionally chanted. As with the traditional songs we looked at already, the rhythms, tunes and words are simple and easily adapted to suit our Grammar needs for the purpose of

- Having fun, motivating students
- Practising natural rhythmic language
- Providing a structure for practising Grammar rules (in order to pass exams!)

Teach Grammar with a Nursery Rhyme

Choose one of the Nursery Rhymes listed below.

Explain to your partner what Grammar it demonstrates and how you could use it.

What could you change or substitute to reinforce a grammar point?

(Worksheet 7 participant's p 9)

Worksheet 7 – Nursery Rhymes

Choose one of these Nursery Rhymes.

Little Bo-Peep
Has lost her sheep,
And doesn't know where to find them.
Leave them alone,
And they'll come home,
Wagging their tails behind them.

Mary had a little lamb,
Its fleece was white as snow;
And everywhere that Mary went
The lamb was sure to go.
It followed her to school one day
Which was against the rule.
It made the children laugh and play
To see a lamb at school.

The old woman must stand
At the tub, tub, tub,
The dirty clothes
To rub, rub, rub:
But when they are clean
And fit to be seen,
She'll dress like a lady
And dance on the green.

Betty Botter bought some butter,
But, she said,
The butter's bitter;
If I put it in my batter
It will make my batter bitter.
But, a bit of better butter
Will make my batter better.
So, she bought a bit of butter
Better than her bitter butter,
And she put it in her batter
And the batter was not bitter.
So, 'twas better Betty Botter
Bought a bit of better butter.

Doctor Foster went to Gloucester
In a shower of rain
He stepped in a puddle,
Right up to his middle,
And never went there again.

Little Miss Muffet
Sat on a tuffet
Eating her curds and whey.
Along came a spider
And sat down beside her
And frightened Miss Muffet away.

The Queen of Hearts
She made some tarts,
All on a summer's day.
The Knave of Hearts
He stole those tarts,
And took them clean away.
The King of Hearts
Called for the tarts,
And beat the knave full sore.
The Knave of Hearts
Brought back the tarts
And vowed he'd steal no more!

There was a crooked man,
And he walked a crooked mile,
He found a crooked sixpence
Against a crooked stile;
He bought a crooked cat,
Which caught a crooked mouse,
And they all lived together in a crooked
little house.

There was an old woman
Lived under a hill
And if she's not gone
She lives there still.
Baked apples she sold,
And cranberry pies,
And she's the old woman
That never told lies.

Alas! Alas!
For Miss McKay!
Her knives and forks
Have run away.
And when the cups
And spoons are going,
She's sure there is
No way of knowing.

Worksheet 7 continued

Which Nursery Rhyme did you choose?

Have you heard this Nursery Rhyme before?

What Grammar points could you practise with this Nursery Rhyme?

.....

.....

What could you change or substitute to reinforce a grammar point?

.....

Can you think of any other activities you could/would do while practising it?

.....

.....

Share with your partner.

5. Plays and Dialogues



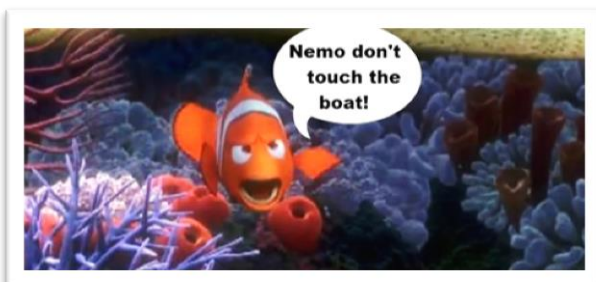
Plays do not have to be a major production involving costume, stage and props. Children generally love acting or playing a part. Any story can be dramatized, giving opportunities for children to repeat sections of natural dialogue which demonstrates a particular point. Plays can be easily created from the stories we looked at earlier, and the dialogues changed and adapted to bring out a particular point.

Children can be asked to write or adapt their own part.

Very short dialogues and role plays are easy to develop involving everyday situations and appropriate language. Children can have fun with minimal added wardrobe such as a hat or a name-tag to put them in the role.

The dialogue could be taken out of a movie, or the stimulus could be a picture or cartoon or just an object.

For example:



- In the movie "Finding Nemo", there are many examples of Imperatives being used, such as when young Nemo goes out to touch the boat.

Students could watch the video segment, practise with it, perform without it, and make changes as well.

What is this conversation?



Any day-to-day situation such as shopping or eating in a restaurant can become a play.

Activity

Create a dialogue from this picture. Use the Grammar points in the worksheet.

(Worksheet 8 participant's p 11)





Worksheet 8 – Plays and Dialogues

Look at the picture. What might each of the three men be saying?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- Discuss with your group.
- Decide on and practise a short dialogue.
- Consider applicable Grammar points.
- Be prepared to present to the whole group.

6. Puppets.



Puppets are an even more fun way of doing drama.

Children who are maybe a little bit shy are often willing to do funny voices and everything when it is the puppet talking.

And then there is all the fun of designing and creating the puppets.

A puppet dramatization can be presented by an individual using both hands and varied voices, or it can be performed by several individuals each operating one or more puppets.

Puppets do not have to be 'fancy' or complicated. However, Soft Toy type puppets and string puppets can be purchased and used repeatedly, especially if you want to create a class character (dinosaur, teddy, clown etc.) that becomes part of regular English lessons with children asking him questions and the like.

When the students create the puppets they will work with, then there is opportunity for even more learning to take place. As the puppet is being created, the child is hopefully thinking about its name and identity and English language associated with it, and conversing with the teacher and other students using (hopefully) target language.

Some types of puppets to make:

Finger Puppets

A face can be drawn directly onto the child's finger, or something small (such as a bottle-top, cut corner of a cardboard box or envelope, cardboard roll etc.) can be decorated and placed on the finger. Alternatively, puppets can be made from cloth material and/or felt, or cut out from paper/card templates and constructed. The puppet can be placed over the end of the finger, or have two holes to poke two fingers through to appear as legs of the puppet.

Sock Puppets

If children can be persuaded to bring in spare socks – the ones that have lost a partner in the wash – these can be put to great use as puppets. Or cheap socks can be bought new. The child puts their hand inside the sock and pushes the sock into the palm of their hand to form a working 'mouth', and then it needs to be decorated with eyes etc.

Stick Puppets and Spoon Puppets

Pop-sticks, twigs, or even spoons can be dressed up as puppets.

Familiar Face Puppets – this is another idea from Family Fun, similar to the above ones. A person-shaped template is provided, and then a familiar face from a photo can be added so that children can dramatize interactions involving friends or family members. The person shape can be held on a stick, straw or just stiff card.

String Puppets / Marionettes

These are slightly more difficult to make, and complicated to use, but can be very satisfying to use.

Shadow Puppets

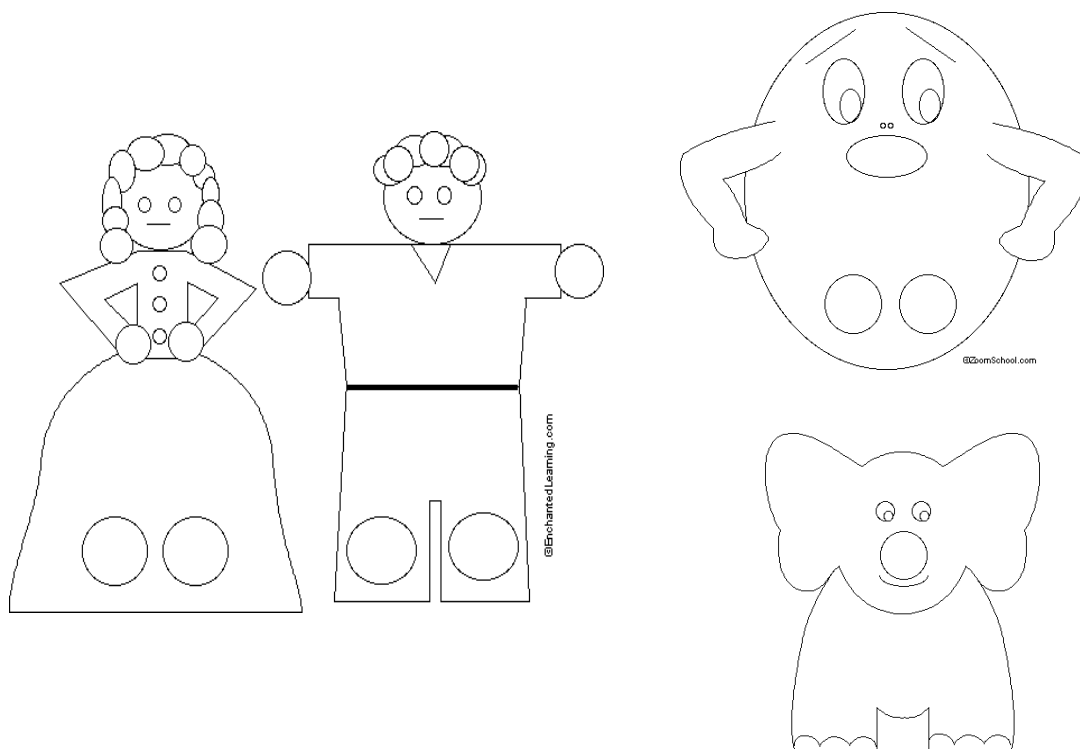
Special arrangements would need to be made to give a show with shadow puppets, but making the puppets can be quite simple and many children may be aware of shadow puppetry as a cultural activity.

Project Activity

(Participant's p 13)

These 2-finger puppet templates are from www.enchantedlearning.com, and are designed for specific stories or themes such as nursery rhymes. (There are others available on the website.)

They are reproduced here slightly smaller than they should be – the holes need to be big enough for children to put their fingers through.



Task: Design and create **your own** set of 2-finger puppets for a specific story or role-play activity.

Workshop Evaluation

Name (optional) Class

Date of Workshop Presenter

Please feel free to add specific comments.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I enjoyed the workshop. (comments?)					
I learnt something useful and new. (comments?)					
I will use this material when I start teaching. (comments?)					
I would like more like this. (comments?)					
Some things in the workshop were not useful. (comments?)					
<i>Other Comments</i>					