

Plaster Butterfly Stick Puppets – Kinder – 2nd Grade

By Denise Rudd, Art Resource Teacher – APS Fine Arts Program

Materials & Visuals:

Aluminum Foil
Plaster Fabric
Water
Sticks (chopsticks work wonderfully)
Paint
Wax paper
Tissue Paper – asst. colors
Watered-down white glue
Tag board – 8”x10”
Paintbrushes
Visuals of butterflies, their life cycle, and body parts

- Objectives:**
1. Introduce students to the life cycle of the butterfly and discuss the body parts of a butterfly.
 2. Students will construct the body of their butterfly puppet using plaster fabric over a foil *armature*, and include: the head, thorax, eyes, and spiracles. Holes will be made to allow for addition of 6 legs and 2 antennae (optional).
 3. Students will make wings using tissue paper collage,
 4. Students will form the shape of the wigs using a tracer that they have created. Students should use symmetry when drawing their wing tracers.

Vocabulary:

Armature	Spiracles
Wrap	Wings
Smooth	Legs
Symmetry	Antennae
Chrysalis	Caterpillar
Eye	Thorax
Metamorphosis	Abdomen
Sculpture	Form
Stick Puppet	

- Preparation:**
1. Tear wax paper into 1’ pieces.
 2. Pre-cut plaster fabric into small strips – approximately 2”x6”.
 3. Pre-cut wax paper into approx. 3”x3” pieces.
 4. Provide handouts at each table showing different kinds of butterflies.

Instruction:

First Day:

1. Introduce students to the life cycle of the butterfly, and the anatomy of the butterfly.
2. Explain the concept of symmetry to students, and explain that it is a feature that can be found in many areas of nature. Butterfly wings are a great example of symmetry.

3. Instruct students to fold the tag board in half lengthwise, and draw one set of wings (starting at the fold). Students should refer to examples at their table of different types of wing shapes, such as: swallowtail, Milkweeds, Longwing, Fritillaries, Whites and Sulfurs.
4. Starting at the fold, students should cut out the wings to create their template.
5. After the template is cut out, students will trace it onto their tissue paper collage using a black sharpie.
6. Each student should have a piece of wax paper and a paintbrush. Colored tissue paper and a container of watered-down glue can be shared per four students.
7. Instruct students to trace their wing template with black Sharpie towards the top of the wax paper (held vertically). Have them fold the wax paper in half, with the butterfly on the inside, making sure the traced butterfly wings stay within the edges of the wax paper. Flip the wax paper over.
8. Students will cover the wax paper with the tissue paper – they can cut shapes, use warm or cool colors, a monochromatic scheme, etc. Tissue should go just beyond the black Sharpie lines. Demonstrate how to brush a small amount of the glue mixture on the back of a piece of tissue, stick it to the wax paper, and then brush the glue mixture over the top.
9. The next piece of tissue should overlap, and so on. There should be no wax paper visible through the tissue paper. Shapes can be added to the top layer.
10. Set the tissue paper collage aside to dry.

Second Day:

1. Review the anatomy of the butterfly, focusing on the eyes, thorax, abdomen and spiracles, abdomen and antennae. Students will be making a sculpture of these parts of a butterfly using a foil armature, and chenille stems.
2. To make the foil armature: each student should be given a piece of aluminum foil, approximately 8"x12". Instruct them to roll the foil into a loose tube, and gently squeeze it into shape – with one end pointed. The armature should be thinner than the size they want the finished body, because the butterfly's "weight" will be added with the plaster fabric. Instruct students to bend about 1.5" of the foil over, round it, and squeeze it near the bottom of the ball to form the head. Use masking tape to attach the chopstick to the pointy end of the butterfly body.
3. Each table receives a pile of plaster strips to begin with. These strips are dipped and swished in a container of water to wet the plaster, then wrapped around the foil armature, and smoothed with a finger. The entire foil armature needs to be covered with at least two layers of plaster strips, and the smoother the surface, the easier it is to decorate.
4. To add the eyes, a strip of plaster can be cut (or ripped) in half, dipped in the water, rolled into a ball, and positioned at the top of the butterfly's head. To create the spiracles, the strips can be dipped and then rolled into coils and added to the pointy end of the armature.
5. Six holes can be created for the legs and two for the antennae (optional) once the sculpture is dry using a thumbtack – wiggle the tack around until it punches through the plaster. Chenille stems fit securely in the tiny hole, but school glue can be used to set them in permanently if necessary.
6. The plaster can be painted with watercolor, tempera, or acrylics.

5. When the wings are finished, they need to be glued to the thorax portion of the body sculpture. Tack glue or hot glue works best for this step.

Assessment: To receive a grade of 3 on the Standards-Based Progress Report:

1. The student's butterfly should have eyes, wings, a head, thorax and spiracles, and the student should be able to identify each part. Surface should be smooth.
2. The student has used symmetry to create the shape of the butterfly wings. Lines that are cut follow the drawn line.
3. The student has covered their wax paper with colored tissue paper, leaving no wax paper showing in between.
4. The completed structure is glued together, does not fall apart, and the material used to attach pieces to the structure is hidden (such as glue).

APS Elementary Visual Arts Standards Met:

Standard 1: Developing the Skills of Art – Understand and apply visual arts materials, techniques and processes.

Standard 2: Using the Language of Art – Identify and apply the elements and principles of visual art.

Standard 3: Creating Art – Explore the creative process by using a variety of genre, symbols, and ideas for artistic expression.

Standard 6: Connecting Through Art – Make a connections between visual arts and other disciplines (Math and Social Studies).

Common Core Standards Addressed (2nd Grade):

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.2 - Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.3 Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.5 Create audio recordings of stories or poems; add drawings or other visual displays to stories or recounts of experiences when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

Other Resources:

Gardens with Wings: <http://www.gardenswithwings.com/identify-butterflies.html>. This website lets you look at many different species of butterflies, and look them up by categories like wing shape, prominent color, wingspan, common name, and family name. There are hundreds of visuals available on this site.