

This performance guide is designed for teachers to use with students before and after a shadow play performance of "Turtle Island Tales" by Hobey Ford and His Golden Rod Puppets. The guide, called a "Cuesheet," contains seven activity sheets for use in class, addressing: (1) The Tales (offering brief outlines of the three tales told); (2) The Shadows (with some background information of shadow puppet shows and how to make shadow puppets); (3) The Tribes (with brief background information about the four Native American tribes from which these tales come); and (4) The Participants (discussing the puppeteer, the puppets, and the audience, and how the audience can help in a live theatre performance). Resources for further exploration are listed. (SR)
"Turtle Island Tales." Cue Sheet for Students.

by Gail Carr
WELCOME TO CUESHEET, a performance guide published by the Education Department of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C. This Cuesheet is designed to be used before and after attending a shadow play performance of Turtle Island Tales by Hobey Ford and His Golden Rod Puppets. You may use Cuesheet alone or with others. Some of the suggested activities will be more interesting if they are done with classmates, friends, or family members.

What's in Cuesheet?
The Tales, pages 2, 4, 6, and 7
The Shadows, page 3
The Tribes, page 5
The Participants, page 8
Before the world was created, people lived on an island in the sky. Below, there was only water. A woman fell through a hole in the sky island. Swans caught her with their wings. A muskrat dived to the bottom of the water and brought up some mud, which other animals spread on the back of the Big Turtle. The mud grew into an island large enough for the woman to live on—Turtle Island, or North America. According to this legend, the land still rests upon the shell of the Turtle. An Iroquois Creation Story

Raven

Raven is a well-known trickster and creation figure in Native American stories. In this story, he plots to steal the sun from the Sky Chief, who is keeping it hidden. Raven sees the Sky Chief's daughter next to a pool of water. He changes himself into a leaf and lands in the pool. When the chief's daughter drinks from the pool, she swallows the leaf. She gives birth to a child who is Raven. The baby (Raven) cries and cries until the Sky Chief gives him the box that holds the sun. Raven changes back into a bird and flies away with the sun. He squeezes through the smoke-hole of the lodge. This turns his feathers black, as ravens are today. He places the sun in the sky for all the people to enjoy.

"She would thank each plant with a small gift before she picked it, and then, picking only what she could use, she would make her way to a small spring. And thanking the waters of the spring, Sky Chief’s daughter would drink.”
The Shadows

Shadow Puppets

Shadow puppet shows (or shadow plays) from Asia are the oldest form of puppet theater. You will see both shadow and rod puppets in Turtle Island Tales. The shadow puppet is a flat cutout that is held against a screen and lighted by a lamp from behind. A rod puppet is controlled by the long, thin rods attached to it. Turtle Island Tales also uses a life-size puppet made of foam rubber. Puppeteer Hobey Ford thinks of shadow plays as an early form of cartoons. See if you agree with him. How are shadow plays like cartoons? How are they different?

To make a shadow puppet stage, stretch a sheet over the cut-out end of a box (or over a wooden frame). Shine a light, such as a flashlight or slide projector, from behind. Darken the room. Hold the puppet close to the sheet so that your audience sees only its shadow. You are the puppeteer who moves the puppet and provides its voice.

Put a sheet over a box that is cut like this.
In the beginning, people had no special protection for themselves. Bears had teeth and claws and thick fur. Birds had wings to fly away from danger. Bees had stingers. In this story, the hummingbird goes to the sun to ask for a special gift for the people. The sun sends lightning to bring fire. Then the people are able to smoke the bear from his cave, and so have a home. They smoke the bees from their hives and eat the bees' honey. The sun also gives the people a warning: Never build your fires too large, or they will destroy you.

"Never build your fire too big or play with fire or your fire will burn or destroy you!"
Haida  (Hi-duh)
Tale: "Raven Steals the Sun"
Location: Northwest coast—Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia, Canada; Prince of Wales Island, southeast Alaska
They hunted, fished, and gathered plants for food. Many families lived together in plank houses.

Chumash  (SHOO-mahsh)
Tale: “The Gift of Fire”
Location: Southern coastal California, including islands around Santa Barbara
They ate fish and shellfish, and gathered plants for food. They built boats from wood planks.

Arikara  (uh-RIK-uh-ruh)
Tale: “Antelope Carrier and the Thunderbirds”
Location: North Dakota
They grew corn and hunted buffalo. They lived in earth-covered lodges.

Iroquois  (EAR-uh-kwah)
Tale: “The Legend of Turtle Island”
Location: Eastern woodlands, New York state and Southern Canada
They hunted, fished, and grew corn. They lived in long wooden houses.

All Native American tribes have legends and stories that were told to explain things that people didn't understand, such as earthquakes, storms, and seasons. Other stories told about gods and heroes and reminded people how they should act and what rules they should follow. Some stories were told just for fun. Through stories, each generation passed its religion, ideas, and traditions to the next generation. Native American tales give information about a tribe's way of life, where they lived, the food they ate, and how they got their food.

The stories in Turtle Island Tales are explained on pages 2, 4, 6, and 7. They come from these four Native American Tribes.

"So let us begin, from the East where the sun rises; to the South where the heat and light come from; to the North where the cold and wind come from; and to the West where the sun sets."
There is a drought in the land.
No rain comes; no plants grow. Animals and people die. A boy goes searching for food for his family. He takes some parched corn with him—corn that is dried and roasted. He finds a family of Wood Rats. They are hungry, so he feeds them his corn. Then...

"So it was that the boy traveled west to the land of the Thunderbirds, to see if he could come back with rain."
The mother Wood Rat gives him a quiver of magical arrows, which would always hit their targets.

He hunts antelope and provides his people with food. Still the drought continues, so he travels to the land of the Thunderbirds—the bringers of rain, thunder, and lightning.

Thunderbird asks for the boy’s help in destroying a two-headed serpent, or sea monster, who has stolen all but the last Thunderbird egg from the nest. When the serpent appears, the boy shoots one of the magic arrows. It goes into the serpent’s mouth, changes into a tree, and splits one head. Then the boy hits the other head with another arrow. The serpent is destroyed, the Thunderbirds are saved, and rain comes to the people.
The Participants

**The Puppeteer — Hobey Ford**
When Hobey Ford was in college, he took a trip to the western United States. On the way, he met a Native American family in Nevada. They were building a traditional Native American village in the desert. Mr. Ford stayed for two years and learned about their traditions, songs, and stories. In 1980, he started the Golden Rod Puppets. Since then, he has traveled all over the United States to perform. Mr. Ford and his family live in North Carolina.

**The Puppets — The Golden Rod Puppets**
In his shows, Hobey Ford uses many kinds of puppets — shadow puppets, rod puppets, hand puppets, and marionettes. *Turtle Island Tales* also uses a life-size puppet, made of foam rubber, as the storyteller.

**The Audience — YOU**
A puppet performance is different from a movie or a television show. A puppeteer is in the same room with you, and is affected by what you do. This is how you can help:

- Listen and watch closely.
- Join in when you're invited.
- Laugh if something is funny.
- Clap for the stories you enjoy.
- Have fun!

YOU MAY WANT TO READ:
- *Dee Brown's Folktales of the Native American, Retold for our Times* by Dee Alexander Brown
- *Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Pacific Northwest* by Gerald McDermott
- *How Raven Brought Light to People* retold by Ann Dixon
- *The Woman Who Fell From the Sky* retold by John Bierhorst
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