

EXERCISE: PUPPET SCULPTOR

GRADES: 1st grade and up

TIME: 10 minutes

SET-UP: This exercise works best in an open space

SUPPLIES: None

INSTRUCTIONS:

Divide students into pairs; have them stand face to face, away from other pairs. Tell the students that each pair needs to identify which of the two of them is oldest. Give them a time limit for this by counting down from 10 to zero. Ask the older students to put their hands on their heads. Inform them they will begin by being “Geppetto.” Ask the younger students to put their fingers on their noses. Inform them that they will be “clay.”

Explain that you will announce a category such as animals; the Geppettos will then have approximately one minute to shape their clay partner into a puppet that fits in that category. The Geppettos should not tell their clay partner what they are creating. The Geppettos will use their hands to gently move the clay’s body into a position that communicates a specific animal. It is the job of the clay to be willing and open to the movement. Alternatively, have the Geppettos verbally explain or physically show their clay partner the position or shape they would like created.

When the shaping time is done, explain that it is now time for the clay students to guess what animal puppet they are. Rather than verbalizing their guess, have them bring their puppet to life (just like Pinocchio) with sound and movement. Either cue the clay students to come to life all together or cue them individually with a tap on the shoulder.

Repeat with another category like machines, or fictional or historical characters. You can also give the Geppettos the opportunity to create a puppet of their choice. After 2-3 categories, have the students switch roles.

VARIATION: Have one person be Geppetto and 4-5 people be the clay to create a full scene.