

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 442 172

CS 510 361

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TITLE "Turtle Island Tales." Cue Sheet for Students.
INSTITUTION John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 1996-00-00
NOTE 10p.; Additional funding provided by The Kennedy Center Corporate Fund and The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation.
AVAILABLE FROM <http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/cuesheet/theater.html>.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom - Learner (051)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *American Indian Culture; *American Indian Literature; American Indians; Audiences; Class Activities; Cultural Activities; Elementary Education; Multicultural Education; *Puppetry
IDENTIFIERS *Drama in Education

ABSTRACT

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)

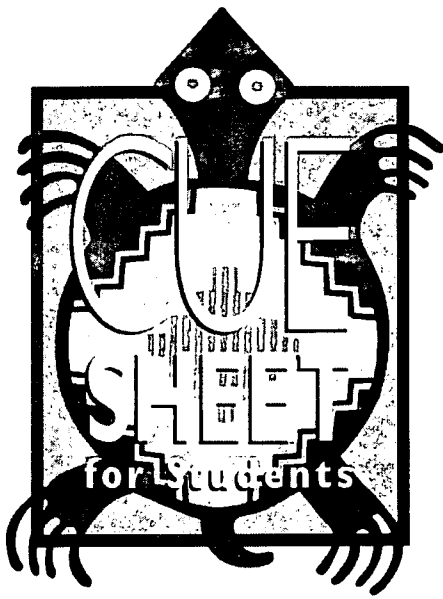
“(Turtle Island Tales.)” Cue Sheet for Students.

by Gail Carr

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TURTLE ISLAND TALES

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



The Kennedy Center



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

The figures on pages 2, 4, 6, and 7 are outlines for shadow puppets. You can cut them out, or trace them onto paper or cardboard first. (Use a hole punch for eyes.) These outlines are some of the characters you will meet in *Turtle Island Tales*. After the performance, you can re-tell the stories with your puppets, or make up your own stories and puppets.

a turtle island tale

Raven steals the sun

a tale of the haida

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."

trace or cut here



The Shadows

FOR MORE IDEAS.

READ:

Brown Bag Ideas from Many Cultures by Irene Tejada

Fantastic Theater: Puppets and Plays for Young Performers and Young Audiences by Judy Sierra

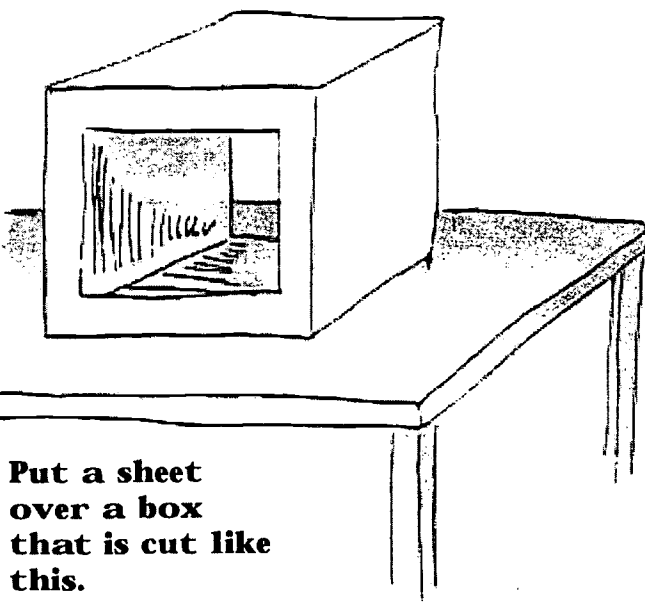
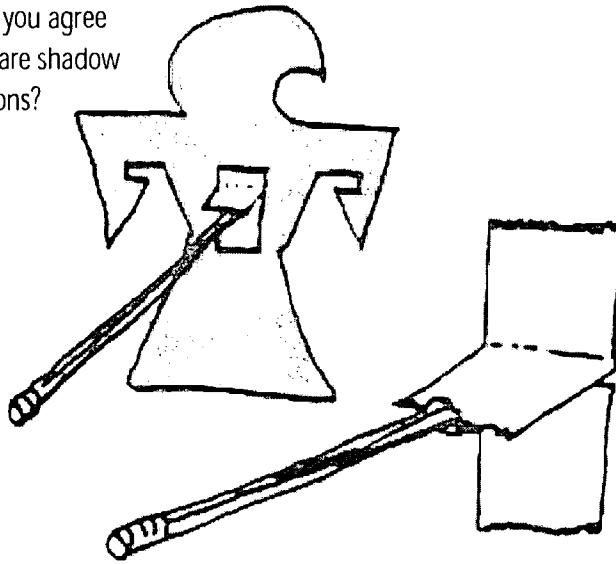
Puppets and Puppetry: A Complete Guide to Puppetmaking for All Ages by Peter Fraser

Scrap Puppets: How to Make and Move Them by Laura Ross

The Shadow Puppet Book by Janet Lynch-Watson

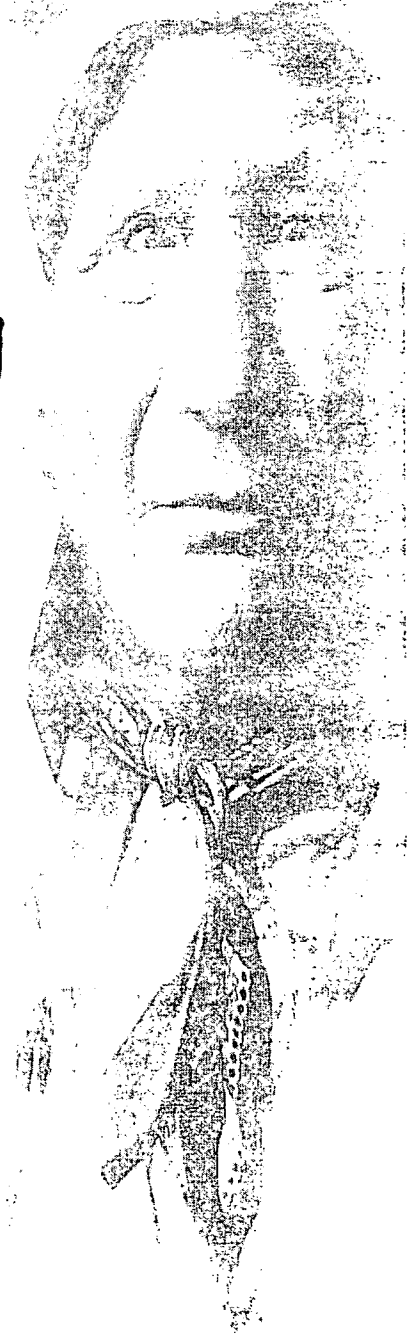
Shadow Puppets

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?



Put a sheet over a box that is cut like this.

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.



a turtle island tale

The gift of fire

a tale of the chumash

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.

Bear

"Never build your fire too big or play with fire or your fire will burn or destroy you!"

Sun

The Tribes



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.

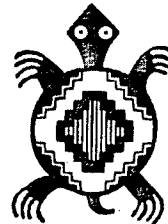


Arikara (uh-RIK-uh-ruh)

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."

a turtle island tale

Antelope Carrier and the Thunderbirds

a tale of the arikara

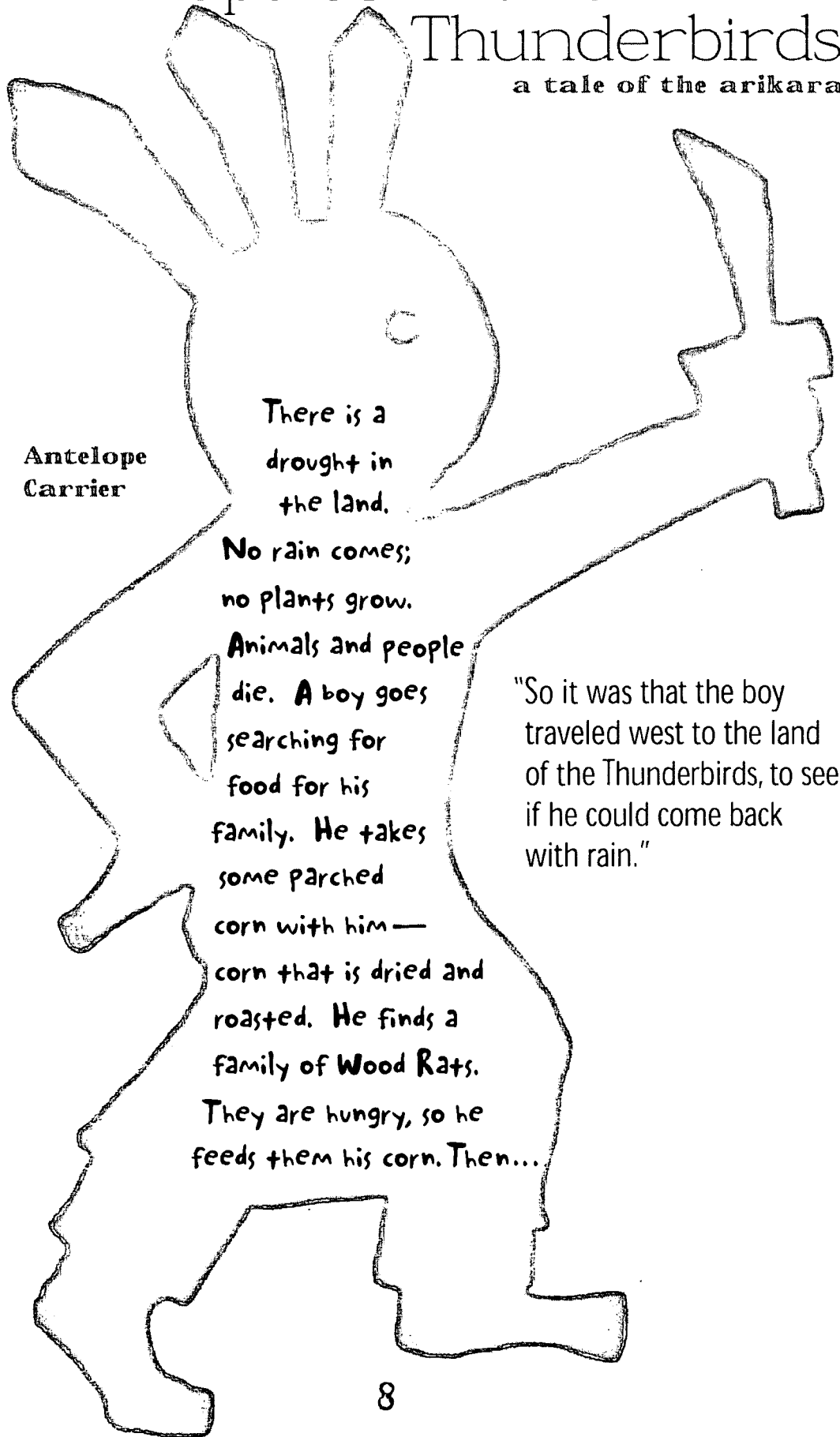
Antelope
Carrier

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."

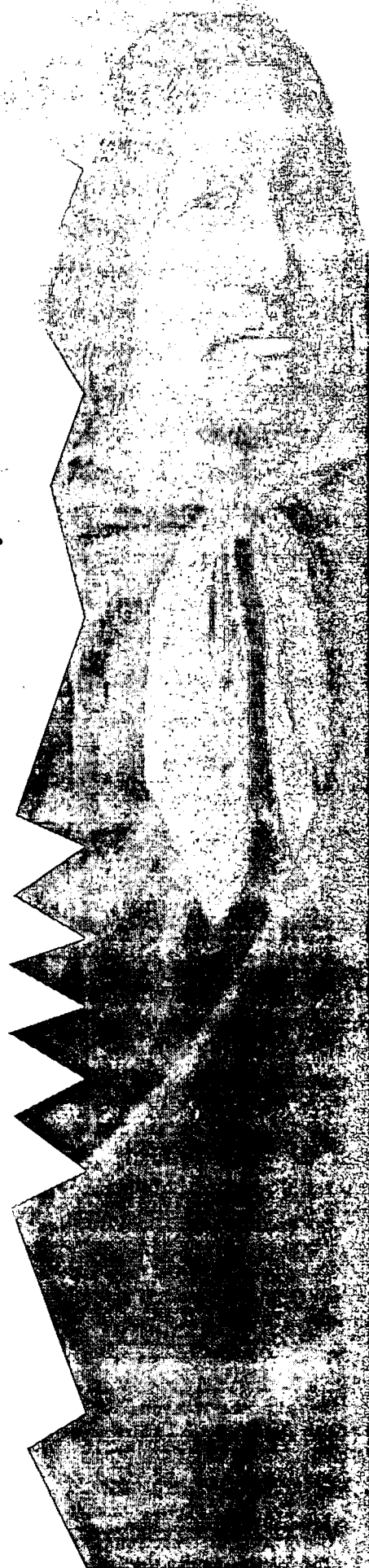


Thunderbird

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!



In the *Turtle Island Tales* performance, one puppet tells all the tales. This storyteller puppet represents many different Native American tribes.

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

The Kennedy Center

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Turtle Island Tales

CUE SHEET Writer: Gail Carr. Editor: Rosalind Flynn. Design: Paul Dupree Communications. Cuesheet is funded in part through the support of the U.S. Department of Education, The Kennedy Center Corporate Fund, and The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation. ©1996 The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.



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EFF-089 (3/2000)