



Kit list for picture book dramas

A full kit list for performing
Monkey Puzzle by Julia
Donaldson, illustrated by Axel
Schleffer

Age 3-11

CFE Levels 1 and 2

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About this resource

This kit list is part of a set of resources to support you creating and performing picture book dramas in school.

Kit List

***Monkey Puzzle* by Julia Donaldson, illustrated by Axel Schlegger**

This is a rhyming story involving a little lost monkey and a friendly butterfly who tries to help him find his mummy in the jungle. Unfortunately, the butterfly keeps mistaking the monkey's description of his mum for another animal entirely. Eventually they find his dad who happily takes the little monkey home to mum.

Casting

Narrators- two older children who are confident readers read aloud from the book.

Alternatively, with younger or reluctant readers, you can narrate and ask them to contribute the repeated phrases and rhyming sequences.

Give narrators their own special place to stand/sit, where they can see the action.

Characters and actions

Character	Actions
Little Monkey	Jumps like a monkey as he looks for his mum. Is surprised each time another animal appears. Jumps higher as he becomes more and more exasperated.
Butterfly	Spreads her/his arms and happily takes off to fly around acting area each time they look for the monkey's mum.
Elephant	Created by two children, one standing upright, the other head bent to form the back.
Snake	One child slithering/sliding along the floor, or two/three children forming a long twisting line which moves together.
Spider	One child crawling like a spider, or a group of children forming themselves into a spider, using their arms as legs or making a web (see props) and a prop spider.
Parrot	A confident child who can jump down from a chair or rostrum and fly around the acting area.
Frog	Leaping like a frog round the water hole (see setting).
Bat	A child who can do a shoulder stand (to represent hanging from the tree) and hold the position for a couple of minutes OR a rod/coat hanger puppet (see props).

This cast would involve 11 children in the storytelling and action.

If you want to include more children as characters then simply make each animal whom the monkey and butterfly meet one of a group.

Setting

Hiding places (from which each animal emerges as the story unfolds)

Large lengths of coloured material which can cover each animal/animal group or huge paper leaves made by the children.

- Old sheets/curtains which can be painted by the children in an art activity
- An inexpensive roll of wallpaper (with embossed patterning) can be roller painted by the children and divided into long lengths to represent jungle leaves.

Each place should be clearly defined and provide the character with a starting point and a finishing point for them to return to after their individual action.

You will need manipulators for these leaves to move – two for each animal/leaf. This can be the same two children or pairs assigned to their own particular leaf.

Costume

The most effective costume is impressionistic and easy for the children to move in.

Lengths of material, cloaks, neckerchiefs or headbands can denote character and often aid the movement the children make.

You can explain to the children their costume is simply giving a clue to the audience about their character and that their movement in character will be the biggest clue of all!

Narrators - Discuss and agree what they will wear as they present the show. Suggest smart clothes which mirror what the other is wearing.

Characters

Character	Costume
Little Monkey	Fur fabric waist coat. Soft fur fabric can be purchased from material shops. Waist coats in fur fabric can be used to represent all kinds of animals such as foxes, squirrels, bears at a later date.
Butterfly	A large silk or flowing scarf which is big enough to attach at the wrists (with elastic circles). The sensation of flying is great in scarf wings!
Elephant	A cardboard box for the head (front child) with a trunk (old Hoover tube/cardboard tube/ sticking out in front of box).
Snake	Green cloaks, mittens, fabric leggings/boots/stage make up.
Spider	Black tights and socks on arms/hands.

Parrot	Red lining (silky) material cut into a rectangle and attached to wrists by elastic circles.
Frog	Frog mask painted green or yellow and attached to a garden rod/stick.
Bat	Black cloak/pillowcase over feet.

Props

Jungle leaves can be cut out and painted by the children themselves.

You will need wallpaper rolls and mini- rollers to cover the wallpaper in greens and blues.

Puppets- If children are reluctant to act out characters then it is perfectly possible to suggest a puppet character.

Using a range of junk art materials let the children create puppets for a certain character and then try it out for themselves.

In this story the spider could be made by stuffing an old sock and sewing it into a body/head shape of the spider. Add pipe cleaners for antennae.

Sound

With the children's help choose the most appropriate sound/instrument to accompany the appearance of each character. Allow time for the instrument player to present the sound as the character moves around the acting area.

Character	Sound
Little Monkey	Tambourine tapped lightly so as to jingle the bells
Butterfly	Zither or shimmer chimes
Elephant	Drum plodding footsteps
Snake	Marracca or ocean drum
Spider	Tiny bell /cymbal
Parrot	Vocal squawks plus vigorous swanee whistle
Frog	Clatterpillar
Bat	High squeak or flapping paper