

ON OUR

BEACH

INTERACTIVE  
THEATRE!



**Spare Parts Puppet Theatre**

# On Our Beach

*An original production from Spare Parts Puppets Theatre*

*An Interactive Theatre for kids of all ages*

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## Primary Teacher Resources

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*A comprehensive set of classroom activities  
relating to Spare Parts Puppet Theatre's production of  
On Our Beach*

*With contributions from Maria Binns, Regina Grainger and Elisabet Ellery 2019*

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## About On Our Beach

*On Our Beach* is an experiential theatre show where children can dive straight into some fun and games.

At the heart of the work is the question - What is Fair? Throughout the show you and your students may feel discriminated against for no logical reason – this will provide a good springboard for your class to discuss how they felt and what they think is fair.

You will join the performers and Fomo the Dog, on a shoes off, hands on, never before experienced holiday to a very special beach.

Once you have cleared the 'serious identification business' (a drawing activity) and passed the 'border control' (a fun interaction), you will be launched straight into the pre-departure fun and games (opportunities for photos and dress ups) so make sure you arrive well ahead of the start time, we recommend allowing 30 minutes.

*On Our Beach* is your chance to ride a surfboard, be part of sculptures by the sea, play a game of beach volleyball and swim in a sea of shimmering balls.

The show is not seated, however there are a few seats for those who need a rest, so be prepared to participate if you want to and be transported to an imaginary beach where strangers become friends.

## The Creative Team

### Performers

Tani Walker  
Shona Mae  
Rebecca Bradley

### Writer & Song Lyrics

Peta Murray

### Director

Philip Mitchell

### Assistant Director

Rebecca Bradley

### Designer & Maker

Cecile Williams

### Composer

Lee Buddle

### Puppet Maker & Set Construction

Leon Hendroff  
Michael Griffin  
John Harrison

### Costume maker

Nora Stelter

### Lighting & Maker

Chris Donnelly

### Stage Manager & Maker

Jackson Harrison

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## About Spare Parts Puppet Theatre

Spare Parts Puppet Theatre is Australia's flagship puppetry company dedicated to the development and creation of the art form. Through puppetry we share stories that connect audiences across generations.

Over the course of our 38-year history we have entertained and enriched the lives of hundreds of thousands of audience members both in Australia and abroad.

## About the performance

A creative process three years in the making, *On Our Beach* was devised through a collaborative process where writer, designer, performers, composer, lighting designer and director all contributed equally to the creation of the work.

*On Our Beach* was partly inspired by a comparison between two images; Charles Meere's 1940 painting titled "Australian Beach Pattern" and Anne Zahalka's 1989 image titled "The bathers". While Meere depicts a white almost Aryan Australia, Zahalka re-presents a diverse Australian culture. The following are useful links to invest time in understanding multiculturalism and racism in the classroom:

<https://www.racismnoway.com.au/teaching-resources/anti-prejudice-activities/year2/multicultural-mural/>

[https://www.educationworld.com/a\\_lesson/03/lp294-01.shtml](https://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/03/lp294-01.shtml)

## Extra things to know

Bring your camera! Photography is encouraged. After all, you are going on holiday!

There are interactive activities in the foyer before the commencement of the show so arrive early.

Patrons will be removing their shoes as they enter the show – easily removable footwear is recommended like sandals and thongs.

Large groups will be able to enter in staggered smaller groups of 20.

There is a foot bath to walk through. For allergy purposes, please be advised that it contains an **alcohol cleanser**.

Due to the interactive and mobile nature of the work, wheelchair access is unavailable. Please speak to our Box Office staff if this is likely to impact your school group.

Sandals and thongs are ideal. Patrons will be removing their shoes and socks as they enter the show.

Please try to bring as little as possible to the theatre as there is limited storage available for bags and personal items.

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## Theatre etiquette for an interactive performance

For some students, seeing *On Our Beach* may be a first experience of live theatre and for many interactive theatre will make some students very excited. The following can be used as a worksheet to promote discussion on what constitutes appropriate audience behaviour at a live interactive performance.

Live interactive theatre differs greatly from other theatre performances and other mediums such as film or television. For audiences, the experience of seeing a live interactive performance differs to that of watching a pre-recorded one. For performers as well, working to a live audience is vastly different to performing in a studio to a camera.

**Certain behaviour is expected of audiences at live theatre events. Please ensure that you observe the following:**

- Arrive at least 30 minutes before the start time, as there will be activities in the foyer that will enhance your enjoyment of the performance. Missing the start of a performance will diminish your enjoyment and/or understanding of the piece. It will also disrupt the show for others.
- While we encourage use of photography please make sure any mobile phone or other electronic device is turned to silent. These are disruptive to the performance and distracting to audience members and performers.
- If necessary, visit the bathroom prior to the commencement of the performance. Going to the bathroom during the performance will disrupt the show for yourself as well as others.
- There will be several front of house staff who will usher you through the interactive foyer and the performance. Follow their directions.
- Because this performance has participation elements, it is important to **remember to play safely and respect others**. Be sure to listen and follow instructions.
- Remember what colour group you are in because that is how you will find your shoes at the end of the performance.
- During this performance when you hear a whistle blow it means freeze.

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## Connecting the performance to the West Australian Curriculum

ECE	Content Descriptors	Activities/Ideas
<b>ENGLISH</b>		
Expressing preferences and evaluating texts. Expressing personal preference for different texts and types of texts and identifying the features of texts that influence personal preference.	Share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts.	Have a class discussion about the performance of <i>On Our Beach</i> . Discuss the characters and how the students felt about them. Write/say/draw why they like <i>On Our Beach</i> and what they liked about it. Students can write about the characters, the setting and the story line.
How texts reflect the context of culture and situation in which they are created.	Recognise that texts are created by authors who tell stories and share experiences that may be similar or different to students' own experiences.	Have a class discussion about the performance and how it is typically Australian. Discuss the importance of the beach to Australians. Ask the students to write a short text on their first trip to the beach.
<b>THE ARTS</b>		
<b>Drama</b>  Responding to and interpreting the arts.	Audience behaviour (being attentive, responding appropriately) when viewing drama.  Different places and occasions where drama is seen or heard in the community.  Personal responses to drama they view and make.	(Think pair share) Discuss with the class (before attending) what the expectations of attending an interactive performance are. (Brainstorm do's and don't's of theatre etiquette) Write a list on the board.  Have a classroom discussion about the performance of <i>On Our Beach</i> and ask students why they liked it. Ask students to write about the performance.
<b>Visual Arts</b>	Use of a variety of techniques, to create 2D and 3D artwork inspired by personal experiences, ready for display.  Sharing artwork with others.	Create a painting inspired by a trip the student has made to the beach. Use blue and green dye for the ocean and sand glued on for the beach sand. Add other figures such as fish, people, etc to the painting.
<b>HASS</b>		
<b>Geography</b>	The reasons some places are special to people and how they can be looked after, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' places of significance	Have a class discussion about the beach and how it can be looked after. Ask students to create a visual display on how to look after the beach. Discuss Aboriginal and Torres Islanders' and their relationship to the ocean.

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MIDDLE PRIMARY	Content Descriptors	Activities/Ideas
<b>ENGLISH</b>		
<p>Personal responses to the ideas, characters and viewpoints in texts. An individual response to the ideas, characters and viewpoints in literary texts, including relating texts to their own experiences</p> <p>Creating literary texts</p> <p>Creating their own literary texts based on ideas, features and structures of texts experienced</p>	<p>Discuss literary experiences with others, sharing responses and expressing a point of view</p> <p>Use metalanguage to describe the effects of ideas, text structures and language features of literary texts</p>	<p>After the performance, complete a recount or review including response to different characters and the response elicited from these characters</p>
<b>THE ARTS</b>		
<p><b>Drama</b></p> <p>Sharing the Arts through performance, presentation or display for an audience</p>	<p>Performance skills and audience awareness (where the performers use focus and control) when performing drama styles</p>	<p>Before the viewing of the performance, have a class discussion on any performances the students have seen. Show students images of different places where dramas are performed and discuss as a class.</p> <p>After viewing, discuss the preparations of props and layout, then how these ideas came together to change the impact of the performance on the audience</p>
<p><b>Visual Arts</b></p> <p>Responding to and Interpreting the Arts</p>	<p>Appreciation for a range of artwork from different social, cultural and historical contexts</p>	<p>After viewing the performance, discuss the use of beach themed materials for the set. Did you enjoy making a towel sculpture? Design a "Sculpture by the Sea" piece with a material of your choosing, and explain why you chose that material</p>
<b>HASS</b>		
<p><b>Civics and Citizenship</b></p> <p><b>Geography</b></p>	<p>People belong to diverse groups, such as cultural, religious, and/or social groups and this can shape identity</p> <p>The connections of people in Australia to other places in Australia, in the Asia region, and across the world (e.g. family connections, trade, travel, special events, natural disasters)</p>	<p>Have a class discussion with images about the ocean and different beaches on the Earth.</p> <p>Read about or research a different culture or time in history (e.g. Aboriginal Australian, Inuit, Pioneer Australia), and discuss how it differs from what we think about when it comes to the beach</p>

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UPPER PRIMARY	Content Descriptors	Activities/Ideas
<b>ENGLISH</b>		
Present a point of view about particular literary texts using appropriate metalanguage and reflecting on the viewpoints of others	Posing and discussing questions, such as 'Should this character have behaved as they did?', and beginning to make balanced judgements about the dilemmas characters face and relative merit and harm	In pairs, complete a review/advertisement for <i>On Our Beach</i> . Together, discuss the main points of the performance and then write an article or advertisement explaining what both of you did and didn't like about the performance.
Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts	Recognising the influence our different historical, social and cultural experiences may have on the meaning we make from the text and the attitudes we may develop towards characters, actions and events	Discuss how Australia has changed its demographic landscape since colonisation. The following are useful links to invest time in understanding multiculturalism and racism in the classroom: <a href="https://www.racismnoway.com.au/teaching-resources/anti-prejudice-activities/year2/multicultural-mural/">https://www.racismnoway.com.au/teaching-resources/anti-prejudice-activities/year2/multicultural-mural/</a> <a href="https://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/03/lp294-01.shtml">https://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/03/lp294-01.shtml</a>
<b>THE ARTS</b>		
<b>Drama</b>  Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent ideas	Dramatic structures to sequence how a story is opened, how events are presented (mood and tension elements) and key details to help the audience understand dramatic meaning	Have a classroom discussion with students before the performance on different styles of drama. Show images to students of different styles of drama from around the world. E.g. Shakespeare, Greek drama, modern drama, puppet theatre.  Have students work in small groups and devise short dramas about a day to the beach. These can be performed to the class.
<b>Visual Arts</b>  Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to present ideas	Exploring of the influences of other Artists, and selection of visual art elements, materials, media and/or technologies, to enhance their own artwork	After discussion about beaches and oceans, have students create a diorama of a beach/ocean scene. They could complete this in small groups. Students explain their dioramas to the class and display them in the classroom.
<b>HASS</b>		
<b>History</b>	The patterns of colonial development and settlement and how this impacted upon the environment and the daily lives of the different inhabitants	Brainstorm in a groups or research how Aboriginal Australia used the Australian coast, then how the convict settlement used the coast and how diverse groups use our coast today. Display in a timeline with images and dates.



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## Teachers Resources

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### Activities before the Performance

#### Pre-Show Activity 1: Performance Genres

**There are different types of arts performances; dance, theatre, live music, puppet shows, musicals, ballet, etc. Each performance type has its own unique training required, costumes and venues, yet all are designed to entertain and inspire.**

- As a class or in small groups brainstorm the different types of performances.
- Survey the students' favourite performance types, make a tally and graph the results. For older students you may like to survey another classroom or the whole school.
- In pairs have students research what training is required to participate in a particular performance genre.
- Discuss different costumes that are used in performances. Make a list of how these are the same and different as everyday clothes.
- Print pictures of different costumes or make a collection of costumes and have students match them to the type of performance.
- Create a poster ad (advertisement) or a digital ad (advertisement) for a particular performance. Consider a catchy slogan using persuasive language, include pictures that are colourful and eye catching. The advertisement needs to be colourful and eye catching. Don't forget to include important details such as title of the show, dates and times of the show, cost of tickets, etc. It needs to include the title of the show, the date and time, the cost of tickets and a picture. You may like to use the theme of *On Our Beach* as a springboard for poster ideas.

#### Pre-Show Activity 2: Viewing

**Watch the YouTube clip 'Behind the Scenes'. This shows some of the preparation undertaken before a Spare Parts before a show begins.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0w8i10d8nVY>

- Brainstorm all the equipment you can see in the video being used to set up for the show, write what each item could be used for.
- Talk about a time you put on a party or celebration. What was the preparation needed 'Behind the Scenes'? Create a flow chart or write a procedural text telling what happened first, second, etc.
- Discuss what steps would be needed to create a puppet show. Create a flow chart or procedural text for a puppet show.

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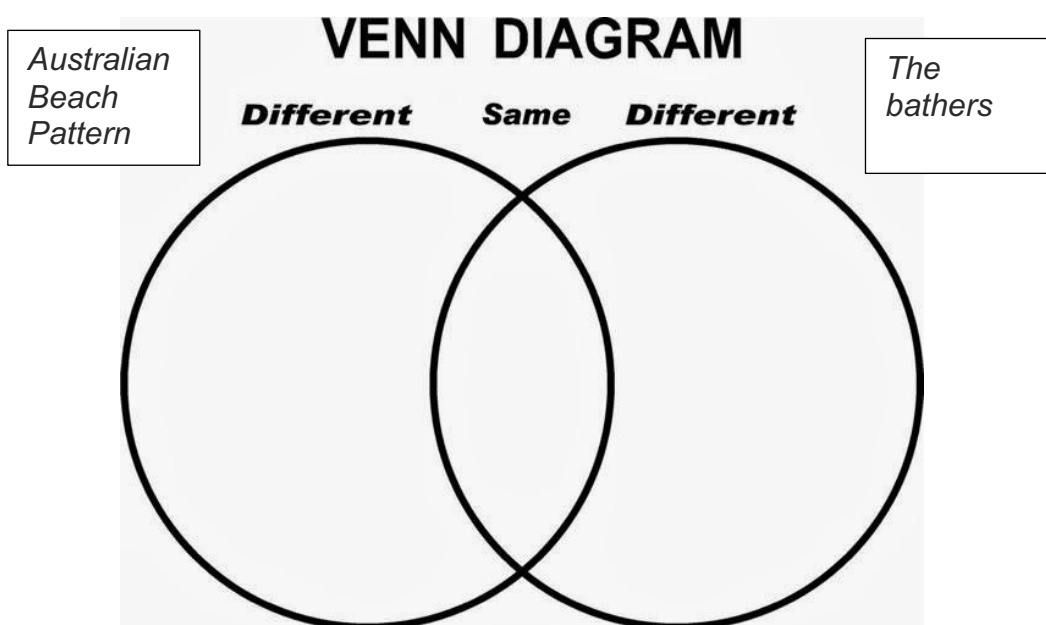


## Pre-Show Activity 3: HaSS

Develop aesthetic, artistic and cultural appreciation of visual arts in past and contemporary contexts, both as artists and art critics.

The painting “Australian Beach Pattern” by Charles Meere was used as part inspiration for *On Our Beach*. Discuss as a class the picture, the time it was painted, the social climate of the time and other cultural aspects.

- View the painting “Australian Beach Pattern” by Charles Meere:  
<https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/OA20.1965/>
- Put students into groups to discuss and record the following:
  - 5 Things you see.
  - 4 Feelings the painting evokes.
  - 3 Activities you have also experienced at the beach.
  - 2 Questions you have.
  - 1 Thing you would change.
- Now view Anna Zahalka’s photographic parody “The bathers”:  
<https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/96.1990/>
- Ask students to look at the similarities and differences. Have them create a Venn diagram to compare both paintings. Older students can research how people accessed our coast for recreation in 1940, considering such topics as transport, clothing, activities, rules and laws and celebrations. Younger children can find magazine pictures or older children write a comparative text to show how our coast has changed.
- Discuss how Australians enjoyment and usage of the beach has changed over time and what has remained the same.



You could extend this activity by having students research important facts about Australian beaches and beach usage and creating a timeline.

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## Teachers Resources

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### Activities after the Performance

#### Post-Show Activity 1: Beach Safety

**Part of enjoying Australia's beaches is knowing about beach safety. As a class watch the following YouTube clip on beach safety by the Royal Lifesaving Society.**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3\\_6mP\\_vLU5s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_6mP_vLU5s)

You could choose from any of the following activities:

Create a poster explaining how to be safe at the beach. For younger students, print out the beach safety rules and have them illustrate them.

Write a persuasive text as to why beach safety is important.

Work in groups to write and perform a short play on one aspect of beach safety. The play could be performed live or video recorded using an ipad and an app such as imovie or videostar.

#### Post-Show Activity 2: Friendships

***On Our Beach* explores the connection between two people. Creating connections and making friends is an important skill, often children need to be explicitly taught these skills. What are good strategies to make connections with others? Brainstorm ideas as a class.**

Make a 'Friendly Finn'

Give each student a simple paper doll to cut out then glue onto a piece of card or to assemble with split pins. Write or draw the strategies for being a 'Friendly Finn'. For younger students you may like to type the strategies and allow them to cut and glue them on. Have students design and create a friendly face.

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## Post-Show Activity 3: Create a Beachscape

After viewing *On Our Beach* use art materials to create a beach scape. This can be done on a piece of paper or card (2D) or with older students in a box (3D). You may consider making both 2D and 3D versions and making comparisons between technique, skills and materials needed.

### 2D Beach scape

You will need:

- Yellow and blue edicol dye
- A3 paper or card
- Sand
- PVA glue
- Blue and white paint
- Collage materials

Paint the card/paper with edicol dye; 1/3 of the card yellow, the middle third dark blue, the top third light blue.

Once dry, paint the yellow portion with PVA glue and sprinkle sand on.

Using blue and white paint think waves over the dark blue section.

Once dry add collage materials cut into shape to create beach objects such as shells, umbrellas, towels, sea creatures, etc.

### 3D Beach Scape

You will need:

- A box per student
- Yellow and blue paint
- Sand
- PVA glue
- Collage materials
- Plasticine

Cut the box so one side is open.

Paint the inside of the box. The bottom should be yellow for sand, the walls and top light blue.

Once dry use thick blue and white paint to add waves above the sand.

Paint the yellow section with PVA glue and sprinkle sand on top.

Use white paint or cotton wool balls to create clouds.

Once dry add collage materials cut into shape to create beach objects such as shells, umbrellas, towels, sea creatures, etc.

Use plasticine to sculpt people or animals and add to the beachscape.

### *Extension:*

Have students take 4 second video clips of each stage of the creating process. At the end of the project they can use these clips and an app (TikTok is a good one) to create a video collage of how the project was created. Have students record a review of their artwork and add this to their project.

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## Post-Show Activity 4: Fish Puppets

**Puppets come in a variety of forms from very elaborate to simple. Talk about the puppets used in *On Our Beach* and what materials they may have been made from. Discuss the puppets the students saw in the Spare Parts Puppet Theatre foyer. What materials were used to make them?**

Make your own fish puppets, you may like to set up a puppet theatre or a simple backdrop using blue material for students to use their puppets. Integrate this activity with the technology curriculum, have students video record puppet shows or an advertisement for a Spare Parts puppet show around the theme of ocean. Link it to the previous activity on friendship and have students create a puppet show about making friends.

- Students trace their hand, then cut and decorate. Draw on an eye and add a pop-stick to create a puppet.
- Paint two pieces of paper, cut out a fish shape, staple the shape together except at the bottom where the puppeteer's hand slides in.
- Cut cardboard into thin strips, wrap the strip around each finger to make a ring. Staple the strip so it is the right size and trim the excess card. Draw five fish or characters from *On Our Beach*. Cut them out and attach to the five rings to create finger puppets.



### YouTube tutorials for fish puppets

Origami fish puppets for older students:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCsMvSEoadI>

Simple smiley fish puppets:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BLJsVy7XV8Q>

Pop-stick fish puppets:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ViDHBBzh7MY>

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## Post-Show Activity 5: HaSS

From Australia's first people to modern day, Australians have felt connected to the beach and coast, part of our National Identity revolves around our relationship with the beach.

- Look back on "Australian Beach Pattern" by Meere and Anna Zahalka's photographic parody "The bathers". Both paintings show Australians connectivity to the beach. As a class brainstorm the way students feel connected to the beach. Highlight some of the important words that have developed from the brainstorm.
- Have each student choose some highlighted words or phrases that are meaningful to them and create a wave shape poem. A shape poem is a poem that is written in the shape of the subject discussed. You could create other beach themed shape poems as well.



## Post-Show Activity 6: Health

***Australian Beach Pattern* by Charles Meere depicts Australians as healthy, good looking and Caucasian. Anna Zahalka's photographic parody 'The bathers' includes people who represent a greater range of Australians but is this a true representation of our Australian society? Do either of these pictures include human bodies that are a realistic representation of people today? Is it fair that media often portrays a certain body type and person?**

Students will create their own beach scape depicting Australians today with a wide range of cultural diversity and body shapes. Have them refer to both paintings for inspiration on what poses the people in their artwork should adopt. They could either:

- Create a painting a beach landscape on paper using paint, edicol or dye and then cut out printed images from the internet of people at the beach to be collaged over the top. A layer of clear pva glue will seal the printed pictures to the landscape; OR
- Take photographs of themselves and their classmates in beach clothing to be collaged using a photography app and printed out.

"Australian Beach Pattern" by Charles Meere:

<https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/OA20.1965/>

Anna Zahalka's photographic parody "The bathers":

<https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/96.1990/>

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## References and Additional Resources

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Spare Parts Puppet Theatre Puppet Theatre <http://www.sppt.asn.au/planning-your-excursion/>

PETAA [Publications](#):

[http://www.petaa.edu.au/imis\\_prod/w/Teaching\\_Resources/CBCA\\_Guides/2017\\_CBCA\\_Guide/Intro/w/Teaching\\_Resources/CBCA2017/Intro.aspx?hkey=a99a82f2-7bcc-4bc1-8fdc-0e2c7ff2311f](http://www.petaa.edu.au/imis_prod/w/Teaching_Resources/CBCA_Guides/2017_CBCA_Guide/Intro/w/Teaching_Resources/CBCA2017/Intro.aspx?hkey=a99a82f2-7bcc-4bc1-8fdc-0e2c7ff2311f)

PETAA [Assessment advice](#) for students engaging with visual and multimodal texts:

[http://www.petaa.edu.au/imis\\_prod/w/Publications/PETAA\\_book\\_extras/tsottc.aspx/#Assessment%20advice](http://www.petaa.edu.au/imis_prod/w/Publications/PETAA_book_extras/tsottc.aspx/#Assessment%20advice)

Teaching with Puppets: A video Resource for Teachers Dept. of Education and Early Childhood Development Canada <http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/earlychildhood/puppets/>

Additional apps to use: Green screen, Popplet, Timeline, Haiku Deck, Puppet Pals, Chatterpix, Smiling Mind and Headspace. Available from Google Play and the App store.

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Today we went to Spare Parts Puppet Theatre puppet show.

We watched the performance of **On Our Beach** and after class we looked at Multimodal Texts and how they were used in the show to communicate different things. My groups' mode of text is highlighted below.

Written/ Linguistic mode of text	Visual mode of text	Audio mode of text	Gestural mode of text	Spatial mode of text
<i>Vocabulary, structure and grammar of oral and written language.</i>	<i>Colour and viewpoints in still and moving images</i>	<i>Sound effects, noises, ambient noise and silence through use of volume, pitch and rhythm.</i>	<i>Body movement, hands, eyes and facial expressions and body language and the use of rhythm, speed, stillness and angles.</i>	<i>Position with regards to layout and organisation of objects within a space, proximity and direction. (Think camera angles)</i>

This is my report on how my mode was used in *On Our Beach*.

Introduction/statement:

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Description: Describe how your mode was used and what it communicated to the audience.

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Conclusion: (What you thought was the best aspect of the performance and why you would recommend others to come and see it.)

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