

SPARE PARTS puppet theatre

The Go for 2&5 Regional Tour is supported by Healthway and Horizon Power

Hare Brain

TEACHERS NOTES



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Hare Brain

Hare Brain tackles the age-old dilemma – does fast and furious or slow and steady win the race?

Updated to a fantasy world where toys and objects come to life, replete with a crazy gurgling think tank that sparks vacuum cleaners, mops and brushes into a life of their own, Hare Brain tells the tale of Harry and Lucy who are in a slapstick race against time to find the perfect story that will fit the perfect toy. Who will tell the final tale? Harry, the stressed-out marketing guru or Lucy, the considered, gentle storyteller? This work will excite the imagination while exploring the different ways people think.

In the great tradition of Spare Parts' 30 year history, we have assembled a dynamic team to retell the Aesop fable of the Hare and the Tortoise. Given a modern workout by writer Justin Cheek, who adapted Tim Winton's *The Deep*, the ancient tale gets a make-over from designer Cecile Williams and an original score by our very talented composer Lee Buddle.

Like the great Hoover of life, Hare Brain will suck you into a gurgling think tank of discussion and debate about the pros and cons of slow and fast. Whatever way you think, you will never contemplate vacuum cleaners, mops, puppetry or story telling in the same way ever again.

Ready? Get set...GO!

Credits

Writer: Justin Cheek

Director: Philip Mitchell

Designer: Cecile Williams

Composer: Lee Buddle

Puppet and Set Construction: Cecile Williams & Jiri Zmitko

Performers: Daniel Dosek & Shaun Johnston

Original Cast: Michael Barlow & Simon Clarke

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 celebrate what it is to be human, connecting 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.

Pre-show Classroom Discussion

Hare Brain may be the first 'live theatre' experience for some students and therefore it may be relevant to discuss what to expect and how to behave during the performance. The following information can be used as a guide to promote discussion.

Can you think of reasons why you should...

... visit the bathroom before the show begins?

... remain in your seat for during the performance?

... not talk during the performance?

... clap at the end of the performance?

... when is it ok to laugh or call out during a show?

What is the Go for 2&5 Campaign?

The **Go for 2&5** campaign improves health by promoting good nutrition in Western Australia. Eating the recommended amount of fruit and vegetables not only contributes to good health, but also protects against a number of diseases. Increasing the average person's fruit and vegetable intake is a State health priority and may be the single most important dietary change needed to reduce the risk of major diseases.

How you can help

A discussion with children about what it means to **Go for 2&5**.

It is important to eat a variety of fruit and vegetables every day. Include raw and cooked, and many different colours.

Recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables for children and adolescents

Age of child (years)	Fruit (serves)	Vegetables (serves)
4–7	1–2	2–4
8–11	1–2	3–5
12–18	3–4	4–9

Suggested Activities to promote the Go for 2&5 message

- Go to the website www.crunchandsip.com.au and register to be a crunch & sip school.
- Choose a country and create a list of foods that are a tradition in that country.
- Have a look in your fridge at home. List five foods that are in your fridge. Talk about these foods with other members of your family. Do your school friends have the same foods in their fridge?
- Choose an eating behaviour that you would like to change (for example eat less junk food, eat more fruit and vegetables, eat breakfast every day). Decide on a short-term goal.
- Discuss your goal with a parent or other adult and ask for their help to achieve it.
- Ask an adult to help you create a simple recipe. Create a food that is low in fat and/or high in fibre. If possible, make the recipe and let the family try it out.
- Create a poster promoting a healthy diet and eating fruit and vegetables.
- Check out all the different foods you and your family eat in one night at your place. How many different foods do you eat? Remember, enjoying a variety of foods will make you grow and feel good.



Food (Example: Apple)	Colour (Example: Red)	Shape (Example: Round)	Flavour (Example: Sweet)	Food Group (Example: Fruit)
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- Create a menu for a day ensuring there are 2 fruit and 5 vegetables in it.
- Look at different fruits and vegetables that a rabbit or a tortoise might eat and create a recipe using these.
- Make some of the following recipe and many more by visiting the www.gofor2and5.com.au

FRUITY CONES

Ingredients

Mixture of fresh fruit in a variety of colours
Square ice-cream cones



Method

Wash and chop fruit into 1cm cubes. Drain the fruit of excess liquid and pile into the cone. Top with yogurt or a dollop of ice cream if desired. Serve immediately to prevent the cones going soggy.

Variation

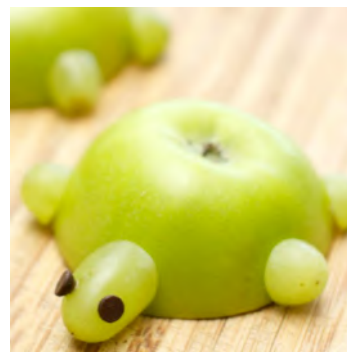
Cover tinned or fresh fruit with jelly and allow to set. Chop with a fork and fill ice cream cones.

FRUITY FRIENDS

Get creative and see what kinds of fruity friends you can make with your favourite fruit!

There are some wonderful examples online and they can be as easy as detailed as you'd like.

Pro tip: you can use sultanas as little eyes, and toothpicks can help hold everything together.



Share it: Be sure to share your favourite creation with us!
@sparepartspuppettheatre on Instagram. #gofor2&5 #spt #harebrain

A little on the parts that make up Hare Brain...

Hare Brain combines two distinct styles of storytelling – one very old and one very new. *Hare Brain* is based on the Aesop fable of The Hare and the Tortoise, and in Spare Parts' modern reworking of the story we've used the contemporary technique of object theatre.

Another distinct technique used in *Hare Brain* is the recasting of the Hare and the Tortoise. While Spare Parts has used the traditional fable as the basis of *Hare Brain*, we have taken the essence and ideas of the original story and placed it in a new setting.

What is a fable?

Fables are a traditional form of storytelling: folk literature, and have roots in many different cultures including ancient Egypt and Greece, India, Russia and the Middle East. In Western culture, the fable is best known by the work attributed to Aesop, a slave and storyteller of Ancient Greece. There are many contemporary writers that can be considered fabulists too – George Orwell (*Animal Farm*) or Dr. Seuss.

A fable will usually feature animals as characters or have animals that take on human characteristics. They are usually very short stories or can be told very succinctly. Fables, as distinct from a fairy tale or other story, serve the specific purpose of illustrating a moral lesson which is usually summed up in a short statement – 'Slow and steady wins the race'.

What is 'Object Theatre'?

The latest movement in puppetry is 'Object Theatre' – where everyday objects become part of the theatre performance, taking on a character or another meaning for the purpose of telling the story. In the case of *Hare Brain* a cleaner's bucket becomes a tortoise and a plastic bag becomes a hare.

Object Theatre may be a very new form of theatre, but it has its roots in the oldest of storytelling methods. In many ancient traditions, the embodiment of characters into everyday objects was part of ritual, spiritual or religious ceremony as well everyday storytelling. Much as these ceremonies were the very beginning of theatre and storytelling, they were also the beginning of puppetry.

Recasting an old tale in a new setting

While *Hare Brain* takes its ideas and name from Aesop's fable The Hare and the Tortoise, our performance is very different from the original tale. We have taken the characteristics of the Hare and turned them in to Harry, a fast paced, business-like, 'left brainer', rushing around getting things done. The characteristics of the Tortoise are embodied in the more right-brained Lucy, considered, gentle and creative.

Instead of a race against each other, it is a race against time; and instead of competing with each other they are trying to work together, adapting their contrasting personalities and approaches.

While these changes make *Hare Brain* very different from the original story, the basic ideas of The Hare and the Tortoise are still at work.

Recasting is more common than you may realise. For example, Red Riding Hood was recast as *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-duck*. The Pixar film *A Bug's Life* was recast from the fable of The Ant and the Grasshopper.

Terms used in Hare Brain

Marketing

Harry and Lucy work for a marketing company. Harry's job is to come up with ways to sell consumer goods to people. Lucy's job is office cleaner.

Merchandising

Harry is trying to find a story so his boss can sell toys – he uses the term 'merchandising' to explain to Lucy what he needs the story to sell. Merchandising is certainly not new to primary school children, even if they don't recognise it – merchandising is specifically when a book, film or TV show has products for sale that are associated or branded with it. Prime examples (mentioned in the performance) are Harry Potter, Pokémon and Star Wars. Other current examples are Transformers, Pirates of the Caribbean and X-Men.

Think Tank

For the purposes of the story, *Hare Brain* uses 'Think Tanks', actual tanks that Harry and Lucy go into to generate their ideas.

In real life, a think tank refers to a group or collective that work together on ideas, research and other thoughts in order to improve the creative thinking process for each other.

Brainstorming

While inside the Think Tank, Harry uses the term Brainstorming. This is how he approaches coming up with new ideas.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Left Brain and Right Brain

<i>Learning Areas</i>	<i>Health, Physical Education, Science</i>
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'Right Brain' versus 'Left Brain'

A central theme to *Hare Brain* is the clash between the different ways of thinking and approaching the world that are central to Harry's and Lucy's personalities. Popular thinking about brain function in recent times supposes that the **left side** of the brain controls the **logical and mathematical** thinking and the **right side** of the brain controls the **creative and philosophical thinking**.

Harry is very much a 'left-brain' thinker and Lucy a 'right-brain' thinker. Essentially, however, these are two different ways of describing the different approaches and ways of thinking Harry and Lucy take to their work and to life.

Are you left brain or right brain?

This activity is a good way of demonstrating to students that people's minds work in different ways, which is the basis for good communication and interpersonal skills.

A simple, fun test suitable for children is the 'colour word illusion':

If you find it easier to read the word than say the colour, you lean toward the left side of your brain. If you find it easier to say the colour than read the word, you lean toward the right side of your brain.

Look at the chart and say the **COLOUR** not the word.

YELLOW BLUE ORANGE
BLACK RED GREEN
PURPLE YELLOW RED
ORANGE GREEN BLACK
BLUE RED PURPLE
GREEN BLUE ORANGE

This version of the test came from www.fuzz2buzz.com but you will easily find one by using Google images and searching for 'colour versus word test'.

LEFT – RIGHT CONFLICT
 Your right brain tries to say the colour but your left brain insists on reading the word!

The differences between Harry and Lucy

Harry and Lucy approach things in different ways – from how to come up with new ideas for a story to how to untangle an extension cord. Have students describe the different parts of the performance where Harry and Lucy approach things differently.

Harry...	Lucy...
<p>Does things very quickly</p> <p>Doesn't stop to think first – he goes straight to the doing</p> <p>Likes the part of the Think Tank that is full of noise and activity</p> <p>Likes technology</p>	<p>Does things slowly</p> <p>Does things step by step</p> <p>Likes the part of the Think Tank that is quiet and still</p> <p>Is happy to think and work on things even if she doesn't know how they will end or how they will be useful</p>

This process can be done in several ways:

As a class as a discussion

As a piece of writing

As a chart

Have children reflect on how the different approaches of Harry and Lucy affect what they are doing.

Is one better than the other?

How does Harry learn from Lucy's way of doing things?

What approach do you use? Who are you most like?

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Making a Fable

<i>Learning Areas</i>	<i>English, Arts</i>
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Sequencing using The Hare and the Tortoise

Fables are a great way of teaching sequencing and the components of a narrative.

(Exposition) Characters and Setting	(Rising Action) Events leading to conflict	(Conflict) The struggle	(Falling Action) Events resulting from conflict	(Moral) Lesson
The Hare The Tortoise The woods	The Hare boasts about being the fastest.	The Tortoise challenged the Hare to a race.	The Hare was too confident and decided to have a nap; the Tortoise kept racing and won the race while the Hare slept.	Slow and steady wins the race.

There are many different ways to have students exercise sequencing using The Hare and the Tortoise or any other fable. You can:

Use a table like the one above

Use a map or flow chart to map each section, using words or pictures to describe it

Turn the story in to comic strip, with each section of the story sequence in a different panel

Older students can sequence the performance of Hare Brain as well.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Recasting the Fable

<i>Learning Areas</i>	<i>English</i>
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How is Hare Brain different from The Hare and the Tortoise?

Before your visit to Spare Parts explain to students that *Hare Brain* is a recasting (or reinterpretation) of *The Hare and the Tortoise*.

After the performance, have the students reflect on how the Spare Parts performance used Aesop's original fable.

Depending on the year level this can be done in a number of ways: by a group discussion, by writing an explanation or by drawing up a table that shows what has been taken from the original fable.

In the original story...

there is the Hare
there is the Tortoise
there is a race

In *Hare Brain*...

there is Harry the marketing guru
there is Lucy the cleaner
they have to come up with a story racing against time

The other thing *Hare Brain* does is tell a story within a story. Throughout the performance the original story of *The Hare and the Tortoise* is retold several times; older students can identify how the original fable has been retold within the story.

This exercise can be a precursor to the next activity – doing your own recasting of a story.

Recasting the Hare and the Tortoise (or any story you like)

Once students understand the story parts of *The Hare and the Tortoise* they can retell the story in their own way:

Create their own play

Create a comic book

Tell the story in a picture

Re-write the story in their own words

Students can recast their story in a new setting as well. Recasting a story requires the student to understand the principal parts of the story, its meaning and themes and so is a great way to

demonstrate comprehension. Students can work in groups to make their own play of The Hare and the Tortoise, or another fable or fairy tale they know well and use their creative thinking to turn it in to something new:

The Hare and the Tortoise set in classroom

Cinderella set in a hotel

The Three Little Pigs on a construction site

Students can make their own puppets as described below to tell the story.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Make a Tortoise or a Hare

<i>Learning Areas</i>	<i>Arts</i>
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Finger puppets

What you will need:

Piece of Card paper

Paint, markers/texters, pencils, crayons or coloured paper

Scissors

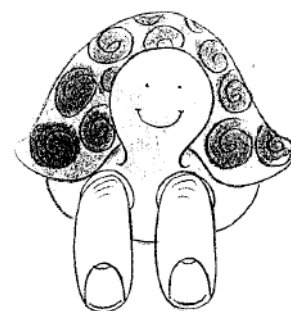
Pencil and ruler

Cotton wool

String

Glue and sticky tape

Ice cream stick (paddle pop)



Step 1: Draw an egg shape about 11cm high onto card paper. At the bottom draw 2 holes 1cm apart, big enough to fit your first 2 fingers through.

Step 2: Draw your puppets (Hare and Tortoise) using the egg shape as the body and cut them out.

Step 3: Carefully cut out the bottom 2 holes. Paint and decorate the Hare and Tortoise. The Hare could have cotton wool glued onto the ears and tummy and the Tortoise could have a green shell with pieces of string glued on in swirls.

Step 4: Animate your Hare and Tortoise by pushing your fingers through the holes to make legs. You now have your very own animated object (puppet!) for use in your own storytelling.

Variation: of course this method of simple puppet making isn't limited to a Tortoise or a Hare, you can use this idea for any type of character that can use two fingers as legs!

Mouth puppets

You can make simple mouth puppets using a paper bag; with the bottom panel of the bag folded down (as a paper bag folds so as to sit flat) paint the folded bottom to become the face of your tortoise, hare or other animal and the bottom of the bag as the body. You can decorate however you like.

This example of a pig made this way is from Puppets: Methods and Materials by Cedric Flower and Alan Fortney (Davis Publications Inc, Massachusetts, USA, 1983). If you can get your hands on a copy of this book there are some great, simple ideas to use in the classroom for art activities.



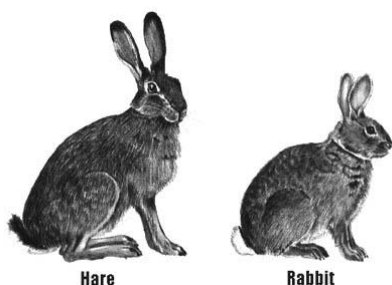
LEARNING ACTIVITIES

What is a Tortoise? What is a Hare?

<i>Learning Areas</i>	<i>Science, Society and Environment</i>
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Why Tortoise and Hare? Why not Turtle and Rabbit?

The original Aesop fable is based on recognisable animals, but they are different from the equivalent animals we recognise in Australia. Have students investigate and present their findings on the difference between a hare and a rabbit, a tortoise and a turtle.



From <http://www.ipcc.ie/infohare.html>
accessed 9/06/11

A **hare** is larger than a **rabbit**, with longer hind legs. A **hare's** coat will change colour through the seasons while a **rabbit's** stays the same colour. **Rabbits** prefer soft stems, grass and vegetables while a **hare** eats tougher food like bark and shoots. **Rabbits** are very social creatures that live together in tunnels underground, while a **hare** will live above ground and prefers to live alone. When **rabbits** are born they have no fur, are blind and are helpless, when a **hare** is born it has a full body of fur, can see and can move about on its own.

A **tortoise** lives on arid land, such as in the desert, while a **turtle** lives in wet areas like ponds, wetlands or beach areas and can swim. A **tortoise** stores water for a long time, uses water only for drinking or washing, while a **turtle** lives in and out of water. A **tortoise** is a herbivore, while a **turtle** can be an omnivore eating insects as well as plants. A **tortoise** has clawed feet for living on land and digging with, while a **turtle** has webbed feet for swimming. Australia has only **turtles**; there are no **tortoise** native to Australia.



Foot of a tortoise (left) and the foot of a turtle (right) From

<http://www.coolcompanions.com.au/australian-reptiles/australian-turtles/turtle> accessed

Why does a hare move so quickly and why does a tortoise move so slowly?

Have students investigate how the physical make-up of each animal affects its movements and habits.

Students can begin with a hypothesis and use scientific investigation to prove or disprove their hypothesis. Students can present their findings as a report or a table.

RESOURCES

More information on Spare Parts Puppet Theatre and *Hare Brain* can be found at www.sppt.asn.au

Further resources about puppetry:

- www.unima.org – UNIMA: Union Internationale de la Marionnette
- www.unima.org.au – UNIMA Australia
- www.puppetryaustralia.info – Puppetry Australia
- www.puppetrynews.com – Puppetry News
- <http://web.archive.org/web/20080213174919/http://www.unima2008.com/> – UNIMA 2008 Archive of the World Puppetry Festival and Congress hosted by Spare Parts Puppet Theatre
- <http://www.sagecraft.com> – American website with access to a range of information about puppetry including puppetry traditions, festivals, puppet building and using puppets
- <http://www.schoolofpuppetry.com.au/links.php/terrapin-puppet-theatre-tas> – website with lots of information about the basics of puppetry, types of puppetry, tools and designs for making puppets, and how to teach puppetry resources for teachers
- <http://www.schoolofpuppetry.com.au/packs.php/how-to-teach-puppetry#features> – lesson plans for teachers to download about how to teach puppetry
- <http://chartier.rainbowwings.org//Kids/puppet.html> – an online performing arts workshop with activities for children on turning anything into a puppet
- http://familycrafts.about.com/od/puppets/Puppet_Craft_Projects.htm – a website with step-by-step guidelines about how to make puppets for children using simple objects like socks, gloves and household packages
- *Puppet Mania!* (2004) by John Kennedy – a great practical book for parents and teachers about how to make imaginative puppets using materials that are easy to find and work with. The author worked for the Jim Henson Company for 12 years and has taught puppetry workshops to students.
- *Introduction to Puppets and Puppet-Making* (1996) by David Currell – A history of puppets and puppet making with step-by-step projects on how to build everything from simple shadow puppets to hand puppets to marionettes
- *The Space Between: The Art of Puppetry and Visual Theatre in Australia* (2004) by Peter J Wilson and Geoffrey Milne (Currency Press) – a history of puppetry and image related theatre in Australia including innovative theatre companies who helped shape puppetry in Australia.