



**Spare Parts Puppet Theatre's
The Farmer's
Daughter**

Education Resource Guide By
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The Farmer's Daughter

Director: Philip Mitchell

Co-Devisors: Chloe Flockart & Rebecca Bradley

Writer: Ian Sinclair

Designer: Matt McVeigh

Composer: Lee Buddle

Lighting Designer: Graham Walne

Production Manager: George Ashforth

Performers: Ruth Battle, Rebecca Bradley, St John Cowcher, Chloe

Flockart Voice over artists: Humphrey Bower, Chloe Flockart

A bond between a girl and her grandfather, the smells of earth, water and fire, the collision of light, puppet and body in an astounding visual celebration of the powerful relationship between people and the environment.

Inspired by stories from the Merredin community, *The Farmers Daughter* explores themes of change and resilience while celebrating the lives of the people who live and work on the land.

Presented in partnership with Collgar Wind Farm, CBH Group, the Shire of Merredin and the Cummins Theatre.



Department of Communications and the Arts

cash converters



About *The Farmers Daughter*
By Spare Parts Puppet Theatre

The Farmer's Daughter is a rural Australian story about a young girl's journey from an inquisitive determined girl to a woman prepared to be part of something she loves and believes in.

The Farmer's Daughter was created from the stories and experiences of the people of Merredin in Western Australia along with community partners; Collgar Wind Farm, CBH Group, the Shire of Merredin, and the Cummins Theatre. The creative team spent two weeks in Merredin engaging with the community through free workshops and the Spare Parts Popn Up Shop where community members could have a cup of tea and speak directly to the artists. The team listened to local stories of hardship, resilience, love and life on the farm.

During these two weeks the creative team spent time reflecting on these stories and finding the common themes within them. Using creative exercises the team generated imaginative and playful visions of how to present these themes and shape them into a narrative using puppetry and physical theatre.

In the local news:

Read these two articles in class to learn more about the project from a local perspective.

Article Links:

[http://www.merredinmercury.com.au/story/1885952/storiesn andn charactersn fromn the wheatbeltn ton taken centren stage/](http://www.merredinmercury.com.au/story/1885952/storiesn-andn-charactersn-fromn-the-wheatbeltn-ton-taken-centren-stage/)
and

[http://www.merredinmercury.com.au/story/1931343/communityn barbien popsn upn forn puppets/](http://www.merredinmercury.com.au/story/1931343/communityn-barbien-popsn-upn-forn-puppets/)

About Spare Parts Puppet Theatre

Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, based in Fremantle, is one of Australia's leading puppetry companies, creating inspiring theatre for young people and their families.

Spare Parts Puppet Theatre (SPPT) is a driving force in the contemporary puppet theatre landscape in Australia. Its name reflects its ethos - to be inspired by many artists, artistic forms and ideas and fuse them with puppetry to create theatrically exciting performances.

SPPT is inspired by its "family" audience – children, young people, parents and grandparents, to create meaningful and exciting theatre that respects their intelligence and emotional growth.

Puppetry uniquely addresses the imaginative mind and so, while SPPT's focus is on young people, it creates work that speaks directly to the child in us all.

SPPT's work is in high demand by audiences at its home theatre in Fremantle (40,000 paid attendances a year). The Company also has a strong track record of performing at schools and theatres around the State, nationally and internationally. In 2011, as a result of funding received from external sources the Company toured nationally three times and extensively throughout the Goldfields, Great southern, Kimberley and Pilbara regions. In 2012 the Company's show, Hare Brain, will tour to Singapore. In past year, SPPT has presented at international festivals in Europe, Asia and North America.

SPPT is lead by an outstanding team which includes award winning Artistic Director Philip Mitchell and Associate Director Michael Barlow, two of Australia's most highly experienced puppeteers. The Company collaborates with Australian artists of high standing who bring their rich skill sets to explore the creative possibilities of combining design, lighting, physical theatre, dance, music, visual art, writing and digital media - always within the foundation of puppetry.

Within Australia, Spare Parts entertains over 50,000 people annually. The Company presents three to four new Australian works and repertoire shows in its Fremantle theatre every year, as well as festival events, corporate entertainment and workshops.

Discover Merredin Western Australia

Merredin is a town in the central wheatbelt of Western Australia, located between Perth and Kalgoorlie. *Farm* by Spare Parts Puppet Theatre was made from the stories and experiences of people living in this rural community.

Activity: Years 1-7

As a class, research the town of Merredin by answering the following criteria. Work as a class, break students into groups or assign students individual criteria to address. When all the research has been completed, examine your findings.

Helpful Hint: Have a look at the Shire of Merredin Website.

- Where is Merredin located? Can you find a map showing its location?
- What are the main occupations in Merredin?
- What is the population of Merredin?
- What are the average minimum and maximum temperatures in Merredin?
- How much rain does Merredin get annually?
- What kinds of crops are grown in and around Merredin? Can you find a picture of these crops?
- Is there a local school in Merredin? What year groups attend there? What does it look like? Can you find a picture?
- When did Merredin become a town and why?
- Is there a theatre in Merredin? If so what kind of shows come to town? How long has the theatre been there? What are some other interesting things about the theatre?



What is a Crop?

A crop is a cultivated plant that is grown on a large scale.

Photo: A crop of wheat in Merredin Western Australia.

Vocabulary Words

Merredin - *proper noun* – a town in Western Australia located in the Central Wheatbelt, roughly midway between Perth and Kalgoorlie.

Wheatbelt – *proper noun* – the name of one of the nine regions of Western Australia, the region is highly suited to agriculture and is the source of nearly two thirds of the state's wheat production.

Grain – *noun* – A small, hard seed, especially the seed of a food plant such as wheat, corn, rye, oats, rice, or millet.

Wheat – *noun* – the grain of any cereal grass of the genus *Triticum*, used in the form of flour for making bread, and for other culinary and nutritional purposes.

Drought – *noun* – a period of dry weather, especially a long one that is injurious to crops.

Soil – *noun* – the ground as producing vegetation or as cultivated for its crops.

Root – *noun* – a part of the body of a plant that develops, typically, from the radicle and grows downward into the soil, anchoring the plant and absorbing nutriment and moisture.

Barren – *adjective* – unproductive; unfruitful; not producing results.

Rural – *adjective* – characteristic of the country, country life or country people; living in the country; pertaining to agriculture.

Resilience – *noun* – ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity or the like; buoyancy. Or the ability to return to the original form, position after being bent, compressed or stretched.

Regenerate – *verb* – to re-create, reconstitute, or make over, especially in a better form or condition. To revive or produce anew; bring into existence again.

What is Energy?

The show *The Farmers Daughter* is based around the experiences of the people of Merredin Western Australia. *The Farmers Daughter* was supported by one of Australia's largest wind farms, Collgar Wind Farm.

As a class talk about Energy, Renewable Energy Sources and Non-Renewable Energy sources.

Activity: Years 3-7

Examine these questions as a class:

What is Energy, where and when do we use it?

- Energy is everywhere, humans use energy to walk, talk, breathe, and live. Plants use energy they get from the sun via photosynthesis to grow. We use energy to power our appliances such as cars, computers, lights, and hair dryers.
- Life would not exist without energy.
- You can hear energy (sound), taste energy (food), see energy (light), and feel energy (heat).
- Energy can move and change but it cannot be destroyed. Because it cannot be destroyed most forms of energy can be converted into another. For example you can see energy lighting up a light bulb, and then you can feel the heat generated by that light bulb. This is the energy changing from one form to another.
- Energy is what you need to make something happen

Where do we get energy from?

- Most energy originates from the sun. We can collect this energy using solar panels.
- Plants use solar energy to grow through a process called photosynthesis. This energy is then stored in their cells.
- Animals obtain most of their energy by eating plants or other animals.
- We burn fossil fuels to release energy that has been stored in coal, gas and oil. These fuels were created by the decomposition of plants and animals many years ago.
- The energy that humans need to live comes from the food we eat.

What is Renewable Energy and Non-Renewable energy?

- Renewable Energy is energy that can be renewed, like wind, water and solar energy.
- Non-Renewable energy is energy that cannot be renewed, like Coal, Oil and Natural Gas. Once we have used up all the coal, oil and natural gas it will be gone and we cannot make more.

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Wind Power

Activity: Years 6 & 7

The town of Merredin is home to the Collgar Wind Farm. A wind farm is a source of Renewable Energy. The show *Farm* by Spare Parts Puppet Theatre was supported by Collgar Wind Farm.

“Collgar Wind Farm is a \$750 million renewable power project at Merredin in West Australia’s central wheatbelt. Merredin farmers have leased portions of their property to Collgar Wind Farm for the largest single stage wind farm in the southern hemisphere to date.

The Collgar Wind Farm, built over a land envelope of 18,000Ha, has 111 Vestas V90 turbines with a power production capacity of 206MW, generating on average 792,000 MWh per year, enough to provide electricity to power a small city of 125,000 homes.”
(<http://www.collgarwindfarm.com.au/>)



Measure the wind with your own anemometer; follow this link for an excellent resource on how to make these in class.

Link:

http://www.teachengineering.org/view_activity.php?url=collection/cub_/activities/cub_environ/cub_environ_lesson09_activity2.xml

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Shortwave Radio

In the show *The Farmers Daughter* by Spare Parts Puppet Theatre two main characters of the show use shortwave radio to communicate with each other over distance.



Information about shortwave radio:

- Modern shortwave radios can be used to listen to AM,FM and shortwave radio frequencies.
- Many people use Amplitude Modulation (AM) and Single Side Band (SSB) mode to broadcast human voice and sounds.
- People use shortwave radio to communicate with people living or working in remote locations. This form of communication is excellent for places with no electricity or phone. This form of communication was very popular before Telstra's mobile phone network was established.
- You can use a shortwave radio to listen to broadcasts (news and music) from all over the world.
- Most shortwave radios operate on battery power so they can be used from remote locations or when there is no electricity.

Learn more about shortwave radio and all their fun and interesting possibilities on;

Link:

<http://swling.com/index.htm>

Shortwave Radio Script

In the show *The Farmers Daughter* two of the main characters use shortwave radio to communicate with each other.

Activity:

Using the concept of shortwave radio explored in this resource on page 11; ask your students to write a short script of dialogue similar to what would be heard over a shortwave radio.

Present the idea of call signs to your class. Most people using shortwave radio have a "radio name" or call sign they use to identify themselves. This can be heard in the show *The Farmers Daughter* between Granddad (Foxtrot One) and the Girl character (Little Fox).

When finished get students to perform their scripts in class.

Example Dialogue:

Brother: Eagle to Sparrow come in Sparrow...

(radio crackles loudly)

Sister: This is Sparrow, what do you want Eagle?

Brother: Mum says it's teatime and if you're not home soon you're going be in trouble!

Sister: Fine! Tell Mum I'm on my way. I'll ask Aunt Sandy for a ride home.

(long pause)

Sister: Sparrow to Eagle, you there?

(radio crackles)

Brother: Mum says that's fine but you better be home in the next 30 minutes or there will be hell to pay. Over

Where does our food come from?

Farmers in Western Australia and around the world work hard to bring food to our tables. Everything we eat was grown or raised by hard working individuals and families.

The people of Merredin shared their stories of living and working on the farm with the artists at Spare Parts Puppet Theatre and these stories helped shape *The Farmers Daughter*.

Activity: Yr1n 7

As a class research what crops are grown in Western Australia.

How many different kinds of food are grown and sold within our state?

A good place to look is your local grocery store.

Homework Activity:

Ask students to list the West Australian food products found at their local grocery store.

(See the attached worksheet *West Australian Foods*)

Go over the findings in class.

Grain to Table

Activity

Ask your students to make a list of all things they eat that they believe has wheat in it. Its okay if the list isn't very long at first.

Then as a class watch the video *Wheat into Flour* made by grainchain.com.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wyhzKX97Vk>

After watching the video ask your students to research the many foods they eat that has flour in it. This can be done in class or as a homework assignment. Research can be done online or by simply looking at the ingredients lists on the back of food packets at the grocery store.

After the research is complete get your students to write a new list of all the foods they believe has wheat in it.

We suspect most students' lists will have grown longer then when they first started this activity.

GrainChain.com

For more great resources on grains please visit [grainchain.com](http://www.grainchain.com). You will find many helpful videos and lessons for Primary and Secondary students on this website.

Link:

<http://www.grainchain.com/home.html>

Food Map

The foods found in our homes come from many different places around the globe. You may be surprised how many of the products found in your pantry come from outside Australia.

Activity: Yr3-7

As a class map the places our food comes from.

Ask your students to bring in 1 or 2 items found in the family pantry. These items must have a place of manufacture listed on them. Things like snack foods, crackers, tinned food and pasta are a good place to look.

Mapping:

Print out a map of the globe and mark all the places the food comes from.

What food item travelled the farthest to be in your pantry?

Western Australian Foods List

Name: _____

Directions: With a parent or guardian visit your local grocery store. Fill in the list below with foods grown or made in Western Australia.

Note: This homework requires reading packages, stickers or signs you find near the food items.

Fruits grown in Western Australia	
1.	
2.	
3.	

Vegetables grown in Western Australia	
1.	
2.	
3.	

Dairy Items made in Western Australia	
1.	
2.	
3.	

Crops of Western Australia

In *The Farmer's Daughter* the family lives on a farm, where they grow food and crops. As a class research what crops are grown in Western Australia.

Activity:K-Yr4

Challenge your students to identify common and less common fruits and vegetables. How many do your students know?

Use the attached worksheet to test their knowledge. How did they do? Make flash cards of common fruits and vegetables available in your community. If possible bring in fresh fruits and vegetables for them to handle, smell and identify.

What Vegetable is this?

Name: _____



1. _____



2. _____



3. _____



4. _____



5. _____



6. _____



7. _____



8. _____

Name: _____

What fruit is this?



1. _____



2. _____



3. _____



4. _____



5. _____



6. _____



7. _____



8. _____

Vegetable Stamp Painting

After reviewing the many different types of vegetables and fruits as a class, use them to make creative stamp paintings.

Activity: Yrs2-5

Before you start painting ask students to verbally identify all fruits and vegetables being used.

What you will need:

- Acrylic Liquid Paint in prime colours
- Paper or canvas
- Trays to pour the paint into
- Newspaper to cover working area
- Painting smocks or old T-shirts to keep paint off of clothes
- A designated place to put paintings while they dry

Fruits I suggest:

- Apple cut through centre,
- Orange cut through centre or whole to be rolled along the paper
- A firm Pear cut in half
- Banana with peel cut into rounds

Vegetables I suggest:

- Broccoli cut into many shapes. The florets and stem can both be used.
- Celery heart cut the long stalks off the celery in one motion leaving the base of the celery. You can use the celery stalks as stamps as well.
- Cucumber cut into pieces
- Carrot cut into pieces
- Leek base and roots
- Capsicum cut into whole slices
- Red Onion cut in half

When paintings are complete and dry ask students to verbally identify the vegetables and fruits they used in their paintings. Have students point to the shapes those vegetables and fruits made on their paintings.

What is Wheat?

Western Australia grows a lot of grains, most notably wheat. 300,000 square kilometers of wheat fields can be found in the Western Australia wheat-belt.

The Farmers Daughter by Spare Parts Puppet Theatre is supported by CBH Group, one of Australia's leading grain organizations. CBH Group is based in Western Australia and is owned and controlled by more than 4500 grain growers.



Facts about wheat:

- Western Australia is the largest wheat growing state
- Wheat is milled to make flour that goes into our bread, cakes, noodles and snack foods.
- Wheat has been part of the human diet for over 9000 years.
- Wheat develops a head on top of a stem that contains around 50 kernels.
- Wheat is ready to be harvested when it becomes a golden colour and has dried out.
- 1 Kilogram of wheat has roughly 25,00 grains of wheat in it.
- A seed weighs around 35-40mg on average.
- Wheat is an annual plant, meaning it finishes its life cycle in one year.

Facts about wheat in Western Australia by CBH Group

<https://www.cbh.com.au/about-us/key-facts--figures.aspx>

- Western Australia's biggest grain harvest was 15.8 million tonnes in 2013-14.
- The CBH Group's average grain receipts are around 10 million tonnes.
- More than 95 per cent of the Western Australian grain harvests are exported.
- CBH Groups total storage and handling capacity exceeds 20 million tonnes.
- Approximately 70% of grain is normally transported by rail.

Activity: Yr2-7

As a class learn more about CBH Group and the work of grain farmers in Western Australia by watching CBH Groups informative video online. The video is titled *CBH Corporate 2012*
Link:

<https://www.cbh.com.au/media-centre/video-gallery/cbh-video-gallery.aspx>

Wheat People

Activity: Yr1-7

Grow your own wheat people as a class.

What you need:

1 egg per student

wheat seeds (also known as cat grass)

potting soil

egg cartons with lids removed or egg stands

Plastic googly eyes for decoration

Black Marker

Glue

Water and Sun

Paring Knife

Needle



Preparation:

Before you begin this project in class prepare the eggs shells to be used. Upper Years (Yrs 4-7) could help with the preparation.

- Using a paring knife cut a whole in the top on the eggs, and poke a small hole on the other end for drainage. Don't worry if the shells look a little messy, that adds to the charm
- Empty out the egg contents. Be smart, use the eggs to make breakfast
- Rinse out the eggshells with water and dry them in the sun
- Grow a couple of test eggs to bring into class for inspiration. The process takes about 10 days

Planting in class:

- Give each student a prepared eggshell
- Glue googly eyes and a draw face on eggshell
- Fill the egg $\frac{3}{4}$ full with potting soil
- Add wheat seeds, about 10-20 seeds per egg depending on egg size
- Cover lightly with more soil and gently press the soil down
- Place the eggs back in the carton on the egg stands
- Water the eggs
- Place the eggs on a sunny windowsill

Your wheat people should germinate and start growing in 7 days.

The wheat people will grow for a couple of weeks, trim your wheat people regularly to keep them looking stylish.

Stories from your community

The artists at Spare Parts Puppet Theatre spent two weeks in 2013 and two weeks in 2014 visiting the community of Merredin, Western Australia. The artists spent time listening to local stories of life living and working on farms in and around Merredin. These stories created the basis for the show *The Farmers Daughter*.

Activity: Yr3-7

Ask your students to write a short non-fiction story about a memory they have that takes place at home or in the local community. (Real stories from their life and experiences.)

Examples:

- Story of Mum's birthday dinner
- Story of the day my sister or brother was born
- Story of the day we got our family dog or cat
- Story about the time a family member came to visit

The stories should be told from the student's perspective. Encourage students to use descriptive language as much as possible. Give students some examples of sentences using descriptive adjectives and verbs prior to writing.

Use Peer Revision

Students should write a 1st Draft. That draft will be revised by a fellow student to check for spelling and grammar mistakes as well as clarity. Was the story clear and understandable? Students then write a 2nd draft that is handed in for assessment.

Body Mapping for Beginners

The artists at Spare Parts Puppet Theatre used Body Mapping as a way to create characters and explore ideas as they collaborated to make the show *The Farmers Daughter*. Create a Character with your students using Body Mapping.

Activity: Yrs4n 7

Each student to create a human character, allow students to be as creative as possible.

Simplify this activity by requesting the students create characters that live in the present, instead of in the past or future. The characters should also be human beings.

This activity has been broken down in 3 lessons, however the lessons can be combined as you see appropriate. Allowing lower year groups to spend time thinking and reflecting on their characters is recommended.

What you will need:

- Push desks and chairs against the wall to make a large open space for the students to work on their body maps. This should be done for every lesson.
- Large pieces of construction paper or butchers paper taped together
- Writing paper and pencils
- Markers
- Glue
- Rulers
- Left over supplies from other arts projects –bits of string, feathers, shells, fabric, whatever you have laying around.

Lesson 1:

Introduce the body mapping lesson. Students will be creating their own human characters using a body map.

- Students trace their body outlines on construction/butcher paper
- Students can trace each other
- This becomes the body map for their new character.

Homework:

Ask students to bring in 3 objects from home or outdoors to inspire their new characters. These objects might speak to the characters personality, physicality or appearance.

Encourage them to be creative, and think about who their character might be. Try to stay away from electronic devices like iPods, Mobile Phones or laptops. Objects should speak to the character.

Lesson 2:

Bring body maps out and place back on the floor. Working individually students should place their 3 objects on the body map. These objects are there to help guide student thinking about the character they are creating.

- Using Markers students write descriptive words or short sentences inside their body map about their character.

Break the body down into parts:

For example:

- The heart – who/what does the character care about?
- The legs – what does the character do with these?
- The head – what does the character think about or like? What occupies their thoughts?
- The arms/hands – does the character make anything or do anything regularly with their hands? Working, building, typing, sculpting?
- The torso – write the character's strengths and weaknesses in this area.
- Students may draw their character's physical appearance on the body map, but this should be kept to a minimum. The students should be focusing more on who their character is rather than just what they look like. Make sure all descriptive words and sentences can be read through any drawing of physical appearance.

Lesson 3:

Bring out body maps and place on the floor. Students should still have their character's 3 objects with them.

- Using pencil and notebook students should spend 20-30 minutes free writing a story about their character. If this is too challenging encourage students to write more about who their character is before they attempt to write a story about them.
- Allow student to sit with their body maps as they write. The map should guide and inspire them in their writing.
- Once students have written their stories encourage them to write 2 or 3 drafts, bringing out more details and correcting spelling and grammar errors as they go. Use peer revision or allow them to hand in multiple drafts before the finished product is complete.

Show and Tell

- Hang student's body maps up on display alongside their character's story.
- Have each student present their character to the class, talking about who he or she is, and then reading their finished story aloud to the class.

Write a Review

After seeing *The Farmer's Daughter* by Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, ask your students to write a review of the show.

Some prompt questions for review writing:

What was your favourite part of *Farm* and why?

Is there anything you would change about *Farm* and why?

How did the use of lights and sound enhance the story?

Who was your favourite puppet or character and why?

We would like to know what you and your students thought of the show. Send reviews to us at:

Spare Parts Puppet Theatre
PO Box 897
Fremantle WA 6959

Or

admin@sppt.asn.au