

# Center for Puppetry Arts Study Guide

## Old Man and the Monkeys & other Chinese Tales

By Dragon Art Studio of Tigard, OR



Mar 3-15, 2009  
Performances Tuesday - Sunday



### Performance supported in part by:



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## A note from our Education Director

Dear Educator,

Welcome to the Center for Puppetry Arts and Dragon Art Studio's production of *The Old Man and the Monkeys & Other Chinese Tales*. Founded in 1978, the Center is celebrating 30 years as a cherished cultural and educational resource in Atlanta. We value your patronage and are delighted that you have chosen us as a teaching resource. Your students are in for a big treat!

This study guide was designed to enhance student learning before and after your visit to the Center for Puppetry Arts. *The Old Man and the Monkeys and Other Chinese Tales* is a fascinating collection of extraordinary vignettes performed by master puppeteers. This magical show is the perfect accompaniment to a thematic unit on China, Asia, animals, folk and fairy tales or multicultural children's literature.

All three areas of programming at the Center for Puppetry Arts (performance, puppet-making workshops and Museum) meet Georgia Performance Standards (GPS), Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards (GA QCCs) and Georgia Bright From the Start Pre-K Program Standards. To access the GA Performance/QCC standards that have been correlated to each programming area according to grade level, click the links below:

- [Old Man and the Monkeys & other Chinese Tales, P-K & K](#)
- [Old Man and the Monkeys & other Chinese Tales, Grade 1](#)
- [Old Man and the Monkeys & other Chinese Tales, Grade 2](#)
- [Old Man and the Monkeys & other Chinese Tales, Grade 3](#)
- [Old Man and the Monkeys & other Chinese Tales, Grade 4](#)
- [Old Man and the Monkeys & other Chinese Tales, Grade 5](#)
- [Old Man and the Monkeys & other Chinese Tales, Grade 6](#)

To access a complete list of GA QCC Standards for all grades and subjects, please visit <http://www.georgiastandards.org/>.

Thank you for choosing the Center for Puppetry Arts for your study trip. We hope that your students' experience here will live on in their memories for many years to come.

Sincerely,

*Alan Louis*

Alan Louis  
Director of Museum and Education Programs

# Synopsis

Dragon Art Studio of Tigard, Oregon, one of the few professional Chinese puppet theater companies in the U.S., returns to the Center with a breathtaking new show. *The Old Man and the Monkeys & Other Chinese Tales* is a compilation of five traditional and non-traditional tales of Ancient China: stories of compassion, consideration, and the greatest ping pong match of all time. These stories are told with the grace and precision that only classically trained veterans of the puppet stage can tell, along with beautiful music, ornate characters, and remarkably, no dialogue!

***The Old Man and the Monkeys*** - Alone in the woods, tired from carrying his load, an old man stops under a tree to rest. Little does he know that a gang of naughty monkeys live in a nearby tree. This story follows a tradition of clever monkey stories that are popular throughout China.

***The Crane & the Tortoise*** - One day a proud and beautiful crane flew to a pond and landed near the shore. There the crane met a very clever little turtle. The lesson in this story shows how patience and cleverness win against even the biggest bully.

***The Donkey's Best Friend*** - A loveable donkey teaches a cruel farmer about sharing work and being fair. A good friend helps along the way. This story teaches consideration and appreciation of all living things.

***The Dancer*** - Surrounded by thousands of miles of desert, deep in the canyons of Dunhuang, China, there are hundreds of caves containing countless sculptures and paintings. Over 1,500 years old, the images tell stories of the ancient ones, including a cave of dancers. Meet the most popular of these dancers, evoking the exquisite art of ancient fairy tales. These tales were not just for children, but were an important part of Chinese heritage, passed down from generation to generation.

***Super Duper Ping Pong*** – Welcome to the Super Duper Ping Pong Match! This is an awesome puppet performance whose ingeniously simple effects make this the greatest ping pong match ever seen.

# Style of Puppetry

The art of Chinese puppetry dates back a thousand years, beginning as cultural ritual and then developing into a form of entertainment. Students of rod puppetry, such as Yuqin Wang and Zhengli Xu, study and practice for years to perfect their skills. Puppeteers work the rod puppets from below, holding the figures above their heads by thin metal rods that are attached to various parts of the human and animal figures they manipulate. Rod puppeteers stand and work behind a five-to-six foot curtain, which creates the illusion of a stage at its top edge.

# About the Company

Before coming to America, Yuqin Wang and her husband and fellow performer, Zhengli Xu, were both leading puppeteers with the famous China Puppet Art Troupe for more than 30 years. When Wang and Xu came to Oregon in 1996 they founded their own puppet theatre, Dragon Art Studio. In their first year, they were invited performers at the Atlanta Summer Olympics, and over the past twelve years they have shared the beauty and excitement of Chinese rod puppetry with audiences throughout the country. With their daughter Brenda, they take their puppet performances to schools, libraries, and museums. Yuqin Wang and Zhengli Xu were honored by the National Endowment for the Arts, which presented them with the 2004 National Heritage Fellowship Award, the highest honor our nation gives to folk and traditional artists.

# Bibliography

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# Internet Resources

<http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/china.html>

Investigate Chinese folk tales at D. L. Ashliman's Folktexts, an online library of folktales, folklore, fairy tales, and mythology.

<http://china.mrdonn.org/zodiac.html>

Visit this website to find your birth year animal in the Chinese zodiac.

<http://dragonartstudio.com/>

Explore the world of Dragon Art Studio, Tigard, Oregon.

<http://www.asianart.org/pastexhibitions.htm>

Visit the Asian art Museum of San Francisco online.

<http://www.afk.com/>

Visit Asia for Kids online - your key to cultural connections.

<http://www.dragoart.com/tuts/68/1/1/how-to-draw-a-chinese-dragon-the-body.htm>

Learn how to draw a Chinese dragon at dragoart.com.

<http://firehorseportfolio.com/tea/>

Read a selection of Chinese tea stories here.

[http://www.chinaculture.org/gb/en\\_madeinchina/2005-12/05/content\\_76665.htm](http://www.chinaculture.org/gb/en_madeinchina/2005-12/05/content_76665.htm)

Visit this website for a concise overview of Chinese puppetry.

<http://www.draconika.com/chinese.php>

Visit this website to learn why dragons are such an important and revered symbol in China.



Photo by Brenda Xu

Puppets from "A Donkey's Best Friend"

# Learning Activities

## P-K & K: Monkey Math Game

**Georgia Bright from the Start Pre-K Content Standards covered:** Mathematical Development, MD 1 g (Associates numeral name with set of objects); **Georgia Performance Standards covered: Kindergarten, Mathematics, (Number and Operations) MK MI b, d.**

**Objective:** Students will recognize and select the numerals 0 through 10 and number words to name the number of elements in a set. Students will illustrate the numerals 0 through 10 by creating sets with monkey game pieces. (This activity may work well in a self-directed learning center or small group activity in the classroom).

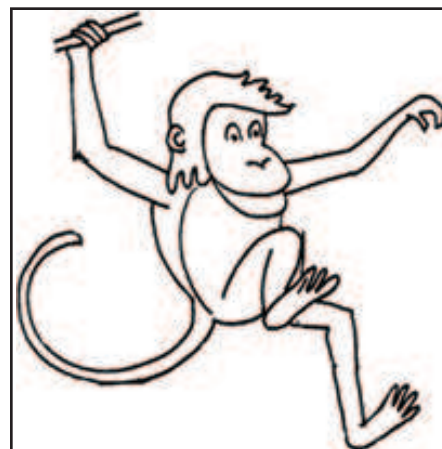
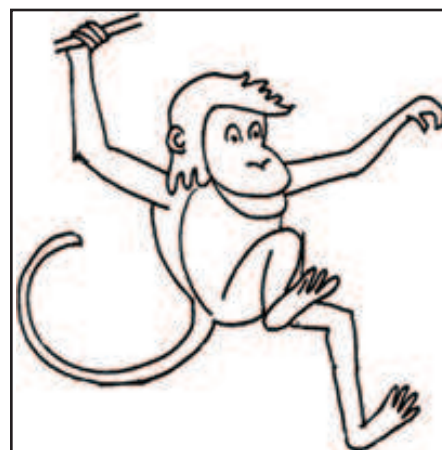
**Materials:** Monkey math game pieces (patterns provided on page 6), white or colored card stock, index cards, paper, and pencils or markers.

### **Procedure:**

1. Photocopy the Monkey Math Game pieces on white or colored card stock for a total of 10 monkeys per student playing the game. Cut out the monkeys (and laminate if desired). Prepare a set of 11 index cards with the number words zero through ten written on them.
2. Distribute 11 index cards to each student playing the game. Have students number their cards 0 through 10.
3. Hold up an index card with a number word written on it, and ask students to match each one with the corresponding numeral index card. Continue until you have gone through all 11 numbers.
4. Next, ask students to shuffle all of their index cards into a pile. Have students take turns selecting a card and illustrating the number using the Monkey Game Pieces. Students should record each number they illustrate on a tally sheet.
5. Finally, ask students to create two different sets to compare and describe: unequal, equal, more than, fewer than, etc.

**Assessment:** Meet with students one-on-one and have them match number words to corresponding numeral cards and Monkey Game Pieces.

# Monkey Math Game Pieces





# Learning Activities

## 1st & 2nd Grade: Monkey Fraction Activity

**Georgia Performance Standards covered:** Grade 1, Mathematics, Number and Operations M1N4 c; Grade 2, Mathematics, Number and Operations M2N4 a, b.

**Objective:** Students will relate fractions (halves, thirds, fourths, etc.) to concrete pictorial models of the fractions.

**Materials:** Orange crayons, chart paper and markers (or a dry erase or chalk board), Monkey Fraction Activity reproducible handouts from this study guide (one per student).

### **Procedure:**

1. Review fractions with students. Explain that the number below the line (denominator) represents the whole and the number above the line (numerator) represents the part of the whole. Demonstrate this concept using groups of like objects and write the numerical representation in the form of a fraction on the board or on chart paper.
2. Distribute Monkey Fraction Activity handouts and orange crayons.
3. Ask students to color the number of monkeys from the group that will represent the fraction given for each group. For example, since  $\frac{1}{2}$  is one out of two, just one monkey from the grouping of two should be colored orange.

**Assessment:** Collect student handouts and check for accuracy. Remediate if necessary.

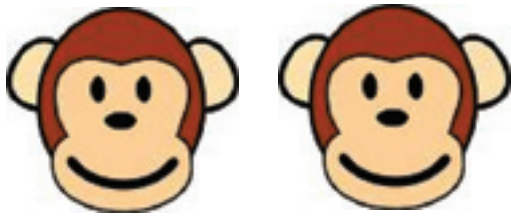


Photo by Brenda Xu

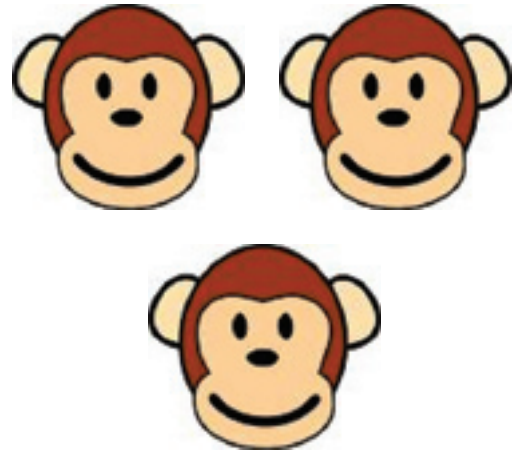
Puppets from the story “Old Man and the Monkeys”

## Monkey Fraction Activity

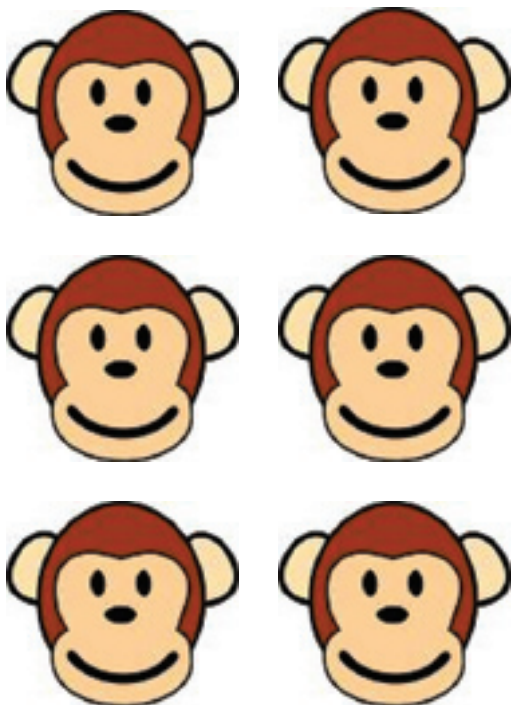
**Directions:** Using an orange crayon, color the correct number of monkeys to represent the fraction shown for each group.



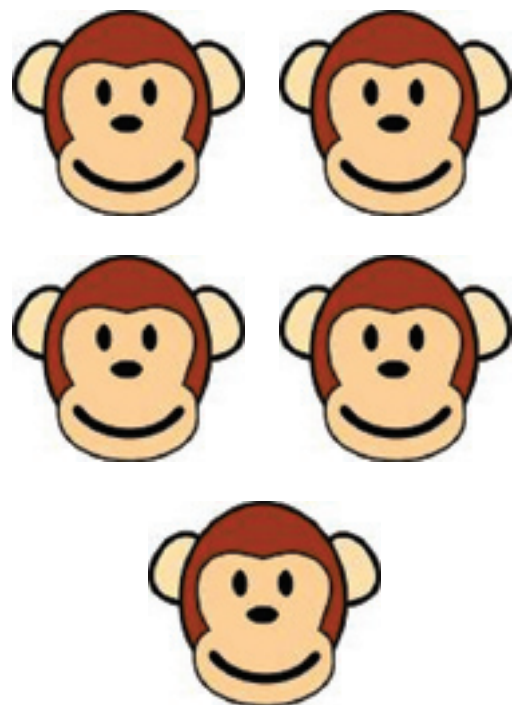
$1/2$



$2/3$



$6/6$



$3/5$



# Learning Activities

## 3rd & 4th Grade: The First Cup of Chinese Tea Word Search Puzzle

**Georgia Performance Standards covered:** **Grade 3**, English/Language Arts, Reading, Vocabulary ELA3R2 a,e,f; English/Language Arts, Reading, Comprehension ELA3R3 a,i,k,p; **Grade 4**, English/Language Arts, Reading, ELA4R3 a,b,c,e.

**Objective:** Students will read a story about the origin of tea in China and complete a word search puzzle that uses vocabulary from their reading.

**Materials:** Word search puzzle student handout (one per student) from this study guide, and highlighters or pencils.

### **Procedure:**

1. Distribute word search puzzle student handout to each student. Read the directions aloud to the class. Ask students to read the informational paragraph to themselves and then complete the puzzle.
2. When all students have completed the activity, choose a student to read the paragraph aloud. Answer any questions about the content of the passage or the meaning of any vocabulary words.

**Assessment:** Check student work for completeness. Quiz students on questions from the reading after a few weeks have passed to see if they have retained the information given in the informational paragraph.



Photo by Brenda Xu

**Puppet from the story “The Dancer”**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## The First Cup of Chinese Tea: A Word Search Puzzle

**Directions:** Read the story by Colette Chooey. Locate all 19 bold face words in the puzzle. Circle or highlight each word as you find it. Words are hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally and backward.

C h i n a d f h g q u n b x e  
i n p m y l e n w y i e o s c  
u z g d o d i s i k p d i i n  
m a p w j m h s i a s r l o a  
a o e y a q w d w r m a i t r  
a r n e s l i o r v p g n y g  
s e t k d e c i t n e r g o a  
a s t z e l o n f l i q u p r  
z a z p d y l b m o n f z s f  
s i p p e d s o t u o l t a n  
j y r l x h v h f i t d z o a  
s n o i t a t i d e m u s c m  
t g n u d i r g a k y a a f b  
e p i g n e y n j i e k z m e  
a r t u r n i n g s i g d c r

It was **autumn** in **China**. The air was starting to chill and the leaves were **turning** brown. A Taoist monk was taking a break from reading his scriptures and **meditations**. He put a pot of water on the **fire** to warm the room and then he walked through the **garden** to watch the monkeys settle in for the cold **season** ahead. For the past year, he watched a monkey family gather certain **foods** at particular times of the day. This time, the **monkeys** were eating dried flower buds and leaves. The Taoist monk, amused, picked the same buds and leaves the monkeys had chosen. He was **surprised** to find that the flowers were still fragrant and the leaves were sticky with natural **oils**. The monk went back inside to where his water was **boiling**. He put his handful of **flowers** and leaves in a small bowl, then poured hot water over them. The **fragrance** released from the flower buds filled the air. The leaves changed the clear water to a deep **amber** liquor. The monk was so **enticed** by the **steaming** liquid that he slowly **sipped** his first cup of **tea**.

# Learning Activities

## **5th & 6th Grade: The Year of the Ox: Understanding the Chinese Lunar Calendar**

**Georgia Performance Standards covered:** **Grade 5**, ELA5RI (for informational texts) a,e,f,g,h; **Grade 6**, ELA6RI (for informational texts) a,b,c,d.

**Objective:** Students will visit the website of the Chinese Culture Center in San Francisco, CA, to determine their Chinese astrological sign and answer discussion questions about the Chinese lunar calendar.

**Materials:** Computers with internet access, notebook paper, and pencils or pens.

### **Procedure:**

1. Have students go to <http://www.c-c-c.org/chineseculture/zodiac/zodiac.html> and read all of the sections of text under the heading “Chinese Lunar Calendar.”
2. Ask students to consider these questions for discussion afterward:
  - How is the Chinese lunar calendar different from the Western calendar?
  - Why are there 12 animals in the Chinese zodiac?
  - Why is the Rat first?
  - What is your sign according to the Chinese zodiac? Do you agree with what it says about your personality traits?
  - Do the Chinese take the zodiac very seriously?
  - Why would the Chinese Culture Center post this information on their website?
  - Using the information provided, calculate which animal in the cycle will represent the year 2020.

**Assessment:** Review these questions later in the school year to test for retention.



Center for Puppetry Arts<sup>SM</sup> is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization and is supported in part by contributions from corporations, foundations, government agencies, and individuals. Major funding for the Center is provided by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners under the guidance of the Fulton County Arts Council. Major support is provided by the City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs. These programs are supported in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) through the appropriations from the Georgia General Assembly. GCA is a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. The Center is a participant in the New Generations Program, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation/The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and administered by Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American Theatre. The Center is a Member of TCG and the Atlanta Coalition of Performing Arts. The Center also serves as headquarters of UNIMA-USA, the American branch of Union Internationale de la Marionnette, the international puppetry organization.





# Study Guide Feedback Form

The following questions are intended for teachers and group leaders who make use of the Center for Puppetry Arts' study guides.

1. In what grade are your students?
2. Which show did you see? When?
3. Was this your first time at the Center?
4. Was this the first time you used a Center Study Guide?
5. Did you download/use the guide before or after your field trip?
6. Did you find the bibliography useful? If so, how?
7. Did you find the list of online resources useful? If so, how?
8. Did you reproduce the grade-appropriate activity sheet for your class?
9. Additional information and/or comments:

Please **fax** back to the Center for Puppetry Arts at **404.873.9907**.  
Your feedback will help us to better meet *your* needs. Thank you for your help!