



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## Rama and Sita Shadow Puppets

### What you need

- A large cardboard box (at least 45 cm wide x 35 cm deep)
- Tape
- Stanley knife (for adult use only)
- Waxed paper
- Cardboard
- Scissors
- Black markers
- Plastic straws
- Lamp

### Making the shadow puppet stage

1. Tape the flaps at the bottom of the box then use the Stanley knife to remove the flaps at the top of the box so that one side is entirely open.
2. Lay the box on its side so the open side faces the 'audience'. Cover with the waxed paper and secure with tape.
3. Cut a rectangle, approx 25 cm x 30 cm, out of the top of the box. Shine the lamp over the 'stage' so that it is well lit.

### Putting on a play

1. Divide the class into eight groups.
2. Choose one group to play the role of narrators. Have them decorate the stage for the upcoming performances.
3. Assign to each of the other seven groups a part of the play to perform. Have each group write a list of characters for their part of the play, then create puppets for their scenes using the markers and cardboard. Tape straws to the top of the puppets.
4. Allocate time for each group to practise manipulating their puppets from the top of the stage.
5. Choose a time for the final performance—then sit back and the let show begin!



This image of Rama is in the public domain as copyright has expired. This is a photograph of an original two-dimensional work of art (artist unknown).



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## The Story of Rama and Sita



### Group One

This is a story of Prince Rama, the great warrior, who was married to the beautiful Sita. Rama and Sita were gods in human form.

Prince Rama meant to take over the throne from his father the king, but his wicked stepmother had tricked his father into sending him away into the forest. With him went his wife, Sita. Rama had begged Sita to remain safely in the palace while he lived in the forest, but she declared it would be a thousand times better to be in the forest with Rama than in the richest of palaces without him.

So Rama and Sita went to live in the forest and lived a peaceful life in a small cottage.



### Group Two

One day, Sita was spotted by the demon king, Ravana. With twenty arms and ten heads, eyes as red as coal fires and a mouthful of yellow fangs, Ravana was the most terrible of demons. When Ravana saw the beautiful Sita, he immediately came up with a plan to kidnap her and make her his wife.

One day Rama and Sita were walking in the forest when they saw a beautiful golden deer with eyes as blue as sapphires, silver antlers as bright as the moon and hooves that shone as black as night. Sita was so delighted that she begged Rama to catch the deer for her. Rama was worried that this was some demon trick to split them up, but Sita pleaded with Rama until he agreed to catch the deer for her.

As soon as Sita was alone, Ravana swooped down and swept Sita up into his chariot pulled by winged monsters. Despite her terror Sita thought quickly and scattered her jewellery piece by piece as a trail for Rama to follow; first her golden anklets, then her earrings, then her glittering scarf. Far below, a white monkey named Hanuman looked up and, seeing the glittering jewellery, thought the stars were falling.



### Group Three

Meanwhile, Rama had tracked down the beautiful deer in the middle of the forest but when he caught hold of it, the deer changed into a terrible demon that broke away and flew into the sky.

Realising that he had been tricked, Rama ran back to the cottage as fast as he could, his heart filled with dread. He saw that Sita was gone. He searched frantically for her until he came upon the trail of jewellery she had left.

Rama followed this golden trail until he met Hanuman, the monkey who had seen Sita's jewellery fall from the sky. Hanuman was a very special monkey — he was the monkey king!



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## Group Four

Hanuman took Rama to the monkey city that lay under the hills in a giant cave. All the monkeys of the city were called to the marble square in the centre of the city, and messages were sent out to monkeys all over the world.

They came in their millions from the woods and caves, and with them came their friends the bears. Twenty-three million animals filled the city and covered the hills like a great shaggy sea. After they heard what had happened, they spread out to search the world for Sita.

## Group Five

Hanuman discovered the island where Sita was being held prisoner. The army of monkeys and bears stared in despair at the giant crashing waves that surrounded the island. But Hanuman was the son of the wind god and he climbed to the highest hill, took a mighty breath, and leapt into the clouds and over the crashing waves. He landed on the island and quickly found Sita in a grove of trees near the palace. There she sat, refusing to marry the evil Ravana.

Sita was overjoyed when she found out who Hanuman was and she gave him a pearl from her hair to take to Rama. Then Hanuman bounded away to fetch Rama and the great army of monkeys and bears.

## Group Six

The giant ocean waves kept Rama and his army away from the island, so the army began to build a bridge of rocks and grass and sand.

The squirrels came running out of the woods to help, every animal—large and small—helped with the building. Soon the bridge stretched 160 kilometres to the island and the animals poured across their bridge.

Long and terrible was the battle as the animals fought the evil demons. Many great deeds were done until, at last, Rama faced the demon Ravana on the battlefield. With his arrows Rama struck again and again at the heads of Ravana, but each time he chopped one off, a new one grew.

## Group Seven

Finally, Rama took up his special bow and arrow, which had been made by the sky god. He chanted a special prayer and shot. The gods of wind and fire guided the arrow and it pierced Ravana's chest. There was a blinding flash, and Ravana fell dead.

All the world rejoiced. The reign of the demons was over and Rama and Sita returned to their own country to rule.

In celebration, the gods showered flowers from the sky, and the people lined the streets with flags and garlands. Oil lamps appeared in the window of every home to welcome back Rama and Sita and their great army. The royals ruled happily for many years until time came for them to leave their life on Earth and return to Heaven.