



The Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre Presents:
**The Princess, The Emperor, and The
Duck**

Study Guide

for use by educators, parents, and kids in distance learning classrooms or at home!

Designed for Grades Pre-K-3

Watch full digital performances by the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre online at
[City Parks Foundation's YouTube channel!](#)

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Table of Contents

About City Parks Foundation	3
About the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre	3
Puppetry in Education and the Marionette Theatre Puppeteers	4
About the show	4
How to use this guide	5
Suggested Lessons	6
Pre-show activities	6
Post-show activities	7
Standards	8
Materials	9-17



About City Parks Foundation

City Parks Foundation (CPF) is a non-profit organization dedicated to invigorating and transforming New York City parks into dynamic, vibrant centers of urban life through sports, arts, community building, and education programs for all New Yorkers. Our programs -- located in more than 400 parks, recreation centers, and public schools across New York City -- reach 310,000 people each year.

Our ethos is simple: *we believe thriving parks mean thriving communities*. For more information, visit www.cityparksfoundation.org

About the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre

The Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre was imported to the U.S. in 1876 as Sweden's exhibit for the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. The enchanting Swedish architecture and craftsmanship of the structure, suggestive of a model schoolhouse, caught the eye of Frederick Law Olmsted, who brought it to Central Park in 1877.

A traveling marionette company was founded in 1939 and in 1947 the Swedish Cottage became home to the company. In 1973, a permanent theater was constructed inside the Swedish Cottage, designed for marionette performances. Since then, hundreds of thousands of children and families from around the world have enjoyed its original productions.

Puppetry in Education and the Marionette Theatre Puppeteers

Puppetry as a tool for teaching Language Arts has been used for many years in early childhood education, long before Sesame Street appeared on T.V. Teachers recognize that puppetry in its many forms can capture the interest of students, stimulate their curiosity and develop their thinking processes.

The Marionette Theatre Puppeteers have been entertaining and educating children since 1940 when four members of the New York Recreation staff who had been selected for training in puppetry mounted the first outdoor production of *Jack and the Beanstalk*. The present corps of puppeteers -- who continue to bring fairy tales alive for enchanted audiences -- is a diverse group of artists and performers. They write original music and scripts, act, sculpt and carve, make costumes, produce lighting and build scenery for each production to create a total theater experience. The multi-talented Bruce Cannon, Artistic Director of the Theatre, is a native New Yorker born and raised in Harlem. Mr. Cannon has been honing his craft in puppetry since 1975, when he came to the Swedish Cottage. He became Artistic Director in 1997, combining his years of experience in marionette theatre with his vibrant cultural history to create new productions for the Swedish Cottage, including *Sleeping Beauty*, and *Three Bears Holiday Bash*.

About the show

The Princess, The Emperor and The Duck premiered in fall 2003, and was performed in 2006 and again in 2017. Set in Africa, China and New York's own

Central Park, *The Princess*, *The Emperor*, and *The Duck* retells storyteller Hans Christian Andersen's world-famous fairy tales -- "The Princess and the Pea", "The Emperor's New Clothes", and "The Ugly Duckling" -- bringing the theatre to life with new marionettes and hand painted scenery. Guided by a narrating Owl, audience members fly into each story with the original tales that teach important life lessons still relevant to children today. Watch [online](#) at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_DWFGnlZ6A&list=PL_t58QJC20u6x_Vk5iwabLflCtopXYG2z&index=7

How to use this guide

The activities in this packet were designed for distance learning by teachers in virtual classrooms, families collaborating in schooling their children, or children to complete independently in tandem with watching the Swedish Cottage digital performances available at City Parks Foundation's [YouTube channel](#),

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL_t58QJC20u6x_Vk5iwabLflCtopXYG2z.

Activities are suggested for grades PreK-3, with accompanying suggested standards, though lessons are designed to be flexible and easily adapted by educators according to the needs of each learning group. ***Pre-readers may need assistance reading directions with some activities.***

The Swedish Cottage thanks Joyce Mendelsohn for her generous work in creating the 2003 version of this study guide and supporting the educational activities of the theatre.

Suggested Lessons

Pre-show activities

Sample Read-Alouds

***Local author!** *Princess and the Peas*. (2017). Rachel Himes. Charlesbridge. Grades K-3. A retelling of The Princess and the Pea set in South Carolina.

La Princesa and the Pea. (2017). Susan Middleton Elya, Juana Martinez-Neal (illustrator). G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers. Grades PreK-3. A bilingual retelling of The Princess and the Pea.

The Ugly Duckling. (1992). Hans Christian Andersen, Jerry Pinkney (illustrator). Morrow. Grades PreK-8.

The Emperor's New Clothes. (1997). Hans Christian Andersen, Angela Barrett (illustrator), Naomi Lewis (translator). Candlewick. Grades PreK-3.

Simple Puppets from Everyday Materials. (1996). Barbara MacDonald Buetter, author. Sterling Publications. Step-by-step instructions and colorful illustrations. Grades PreK-3.

The Man Who Made Parks: The Story of Parkbuilder Frederick Law Olmsted. (1999). Frieda Wishinsky, Song Nan Zhang (Illustrator). Tundra Books. The life of a man whose childhood love of nature led him to turn a neglected piece of land into an acclaimed park. Grades K-3.

Learn about the Swedish Cottage

1. Read information on the history of the Swedish Cottage (page 3) together.
2. On page 9, find Sweden, Philadelphia, and New York on **maps**, and find **shapes** in the architecture of the Swedish Cottage!

Introduce vocabulary

1. Discuss the vocabulary words:
 - a. **Puppet** - A model of a person or animal that is usually moved by a hand
 - b. **Marionette** - A puppet moved by strings attached to its arms & legs
 - c. **Theater** - A place that performs dramatic works, like puppet shows!
 - d. **Cottage** - A small, simple house

Post-show activities

1. **Record your reaction!** Have your students or children record how the play made them feel and their favorite part on page 10.
2. Learn about **sets** with the Princess! (pages 11-12)
Learn technical vocabulary for producing a show - **set, stage lights, puppeteers** - on page 11, and have your students or children draw their own puppet show set on page 12!
3. Learn about **costumes** with the Emperor! (pages 13-14)
Learn about **costumes** and **puppet making** on page 13 - and have your students or children draw their own puppet costume on page 14!
4. Learn about **story** with the Duck!

Exercise 1: After a mini-lesson introducing **ordinal numbers**, ask students to put the *scenes of "The Ugly Duckling"* in order on page 15.

Suggested mini-lesson: Ask students to define **ordinal numbers**. Explain that ordinal numbers are the numbers that show a number's order, or place, in a list or a line. Introduce ordinal numbers **1st** through **10th**.

Practice the ordinal numbers by lining up household items and asking "What comes first? Second?" (through photos, in a virtual classroom, or with physical objects, at home), or play a memory game, in which teachers, parents, or children, show a series of objects, and then challenge the watcher to remember "Which came first? Second?"

Exercise 2: After a mini-lesson helping students to make **predictions**, ask students to draw or write what they think happens next in the duck's (or more accurately, swan's!) story! (page 16)

Suggested mini-lesson: Ask students what they think a **prediction** is. Explain that a **prediction** is what we imagine will happen in the future. We can make predictions in our heads

when we're reading stories or watching plays based on what we're seeing the characters do and say.

*Read a suggested read-along, or watch "The Princess, The Emperor, and The Duck," pausing to ask, "What do you think will happen next?" Reinforce ideas with vocabulary - "Good **prediction!**"*

Exercise 3: Help the duck find her way home with the maze on page 17!

Standards

[NYS Next Generation ELA Standards KW4](#): Create a response to a text, author, or personal experience (e.g., dramatization, artwork, or poem).

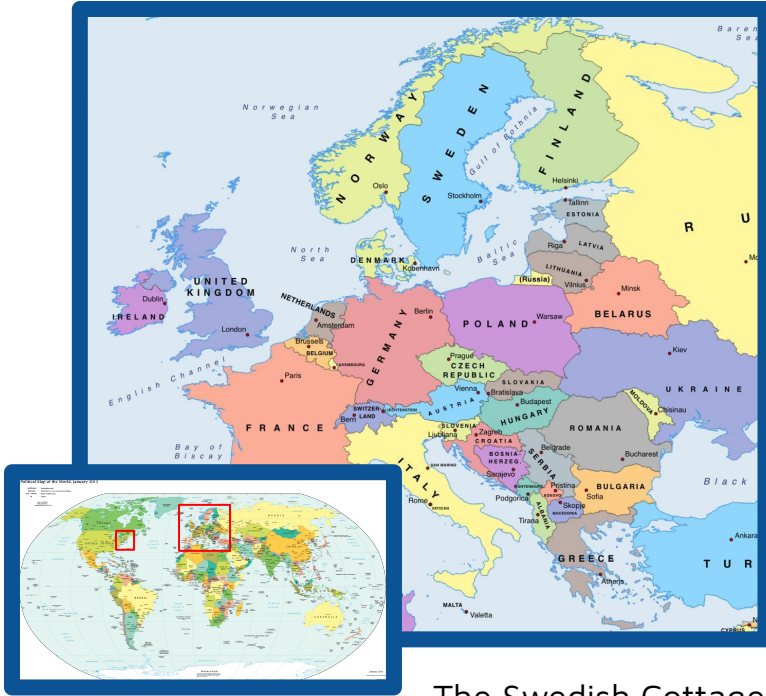
[NYS Next Generation ELA Standards 1R3](#): Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, or pieces of information in a text.

[NYS Learning Standards TH:Cr1.1.2a](#). Propose potential new details to plot and story in a guided drama experience.

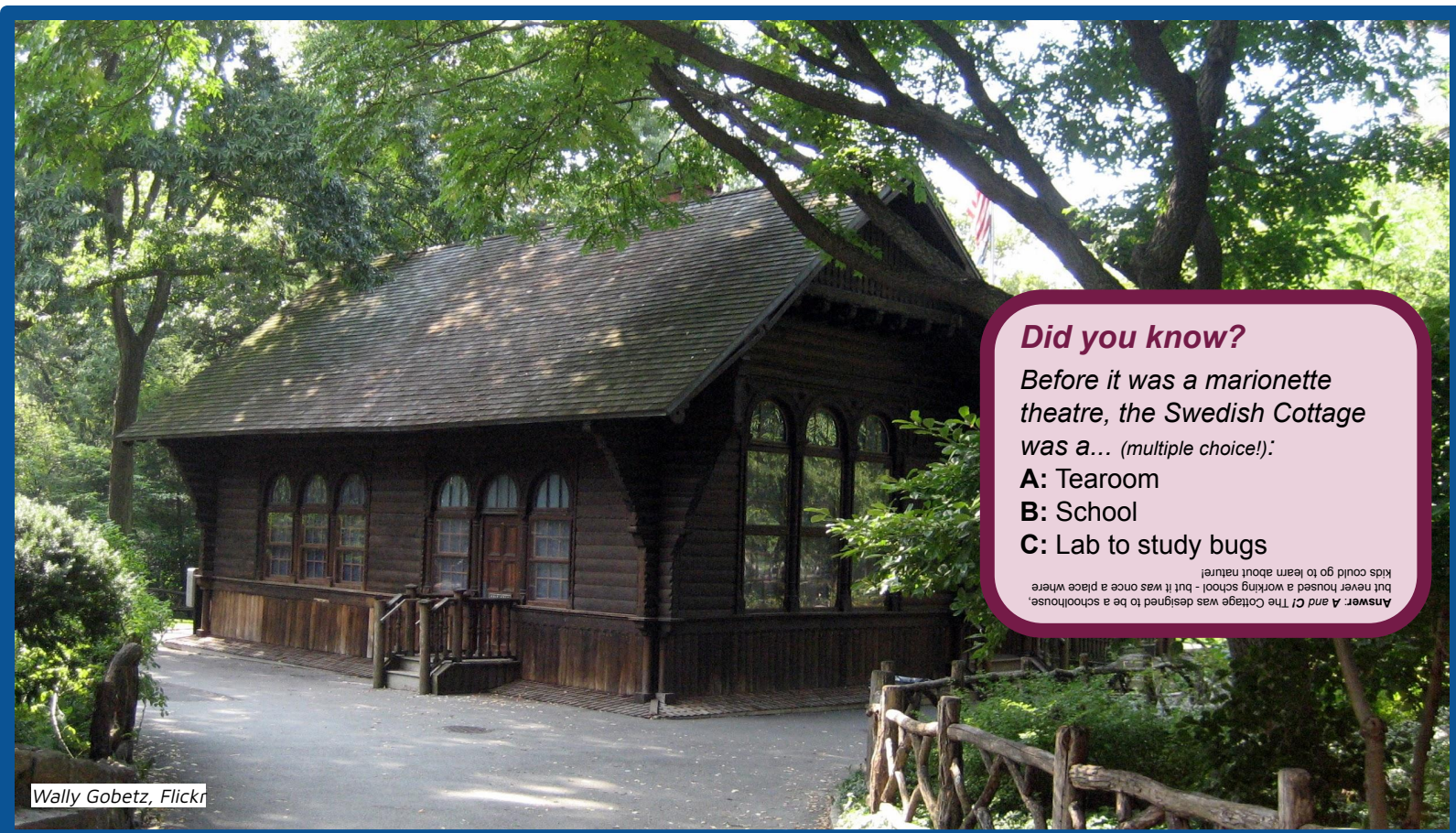
[NYS Learning Standards TH:Cr1.1.PKb](#). With prompting and support, use non-representational materials to create props, puppets, and costume pieces for dramatic play.

[NYS Learning Standards TH:Cr5.1.1b](#) With prompting and support, identify technical elements that can be used in a guided drama experience.

All about the Swedish Cottage!



The Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre was built in **Sweden**, shipped to **Philadelphia**, then moved to **Central Park** in **New York City** by Frederick Law Olmsted in 1877! **Can you find Sweden, Philadelphia, and New York City on these maps?**



Did you know?

Before it was a marionette theatre, the Swedish Cottage was a... (multiple choice):

- A: Tearoom
- B: School
- C: Lab to study bugs

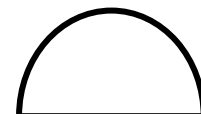
Answer: A and C! The Cottage was designed to be a schoolhouse, but never housed a working school - but it was once a place where kids could go to learn about nature!

Wally Gobetz, Flickr

How many of each shape can you find?







_____9

React to the play!

After watching "The Princess, The Emperor, and The Duck," record your **reaction** here!

How did the play make you **feel**? (circle one, draw your own, or write!)



What was your **favorite part**? (Draw or write it here!)

Go behind the scenes!

How is a puppet show **made**? You need more than just puppets to put on a puppet show! Let's learn about **lights**, **sets**, and **puppeteers**...

A person who moves puppets is a **puppeteer**! They stand on a bridge above the stage.



Stage lights are used to make the play **bright**!



A **set** is the **backdrop** and **set pieces** that show **where a play is happening**.

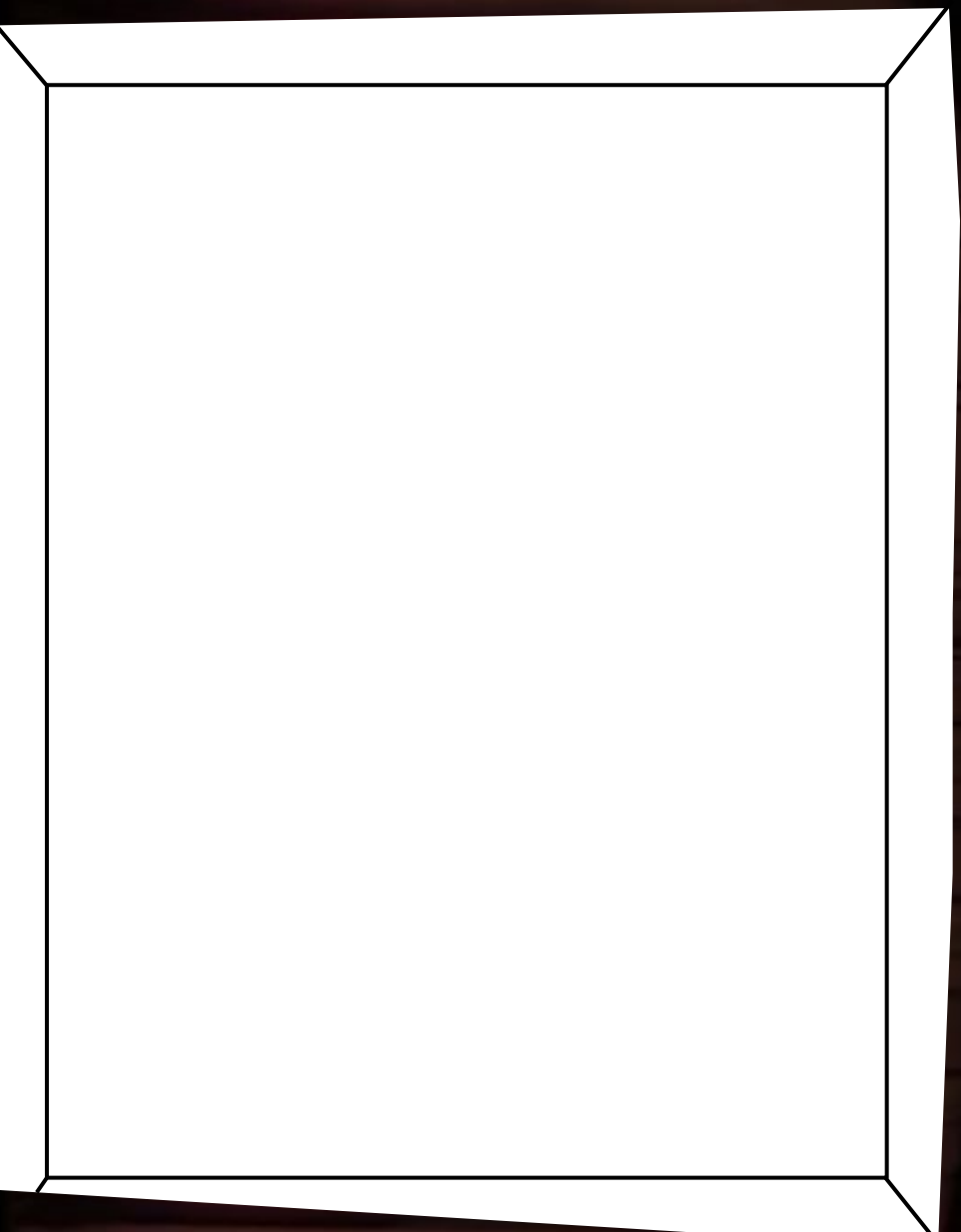
A **backdrop** is the background of a play! Usually a **backdrop** is a large cloth hung in the back of the stage with painted background scenery.

Set pieces, like the Queen's throne and the princess' bed, are the furniture and other **props** (things, like a pea or a mirror) characters use!





Fun fact - the
puppeteers stand on a
bridge 10 feet above the
stage floor to move the
marionette puppets!



Design your own set for a Swedish Cottage Marionette show!

What makes a puppet a puppet?

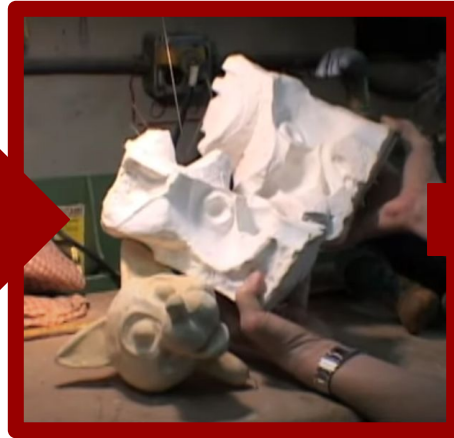
Every puppet is unique! The Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre builds a **marionette puppet** and a **costume** for each **character** in the play.

How puppets are made at the Swedish Cottage:

A **marionette puppet** is a special kind of puppet that is moved using strings attached to its arms and legs. Addis Williams, puppet maker, explains how he builds puppets in a 2011 "It's My Park" episode on SCMT. Watch at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qC5_JOWjXZs!



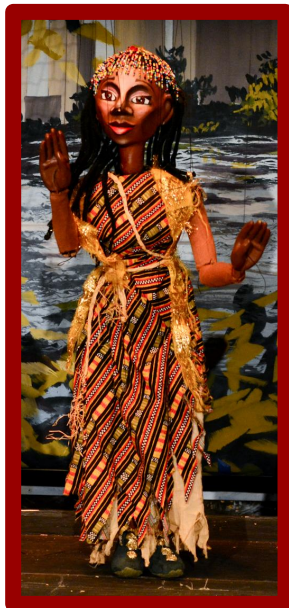
Step 1: Make a clay head



Step 2: Make a plaster mold of the head



Step 3: Paint!



A puppet is born!



Next - costumes!

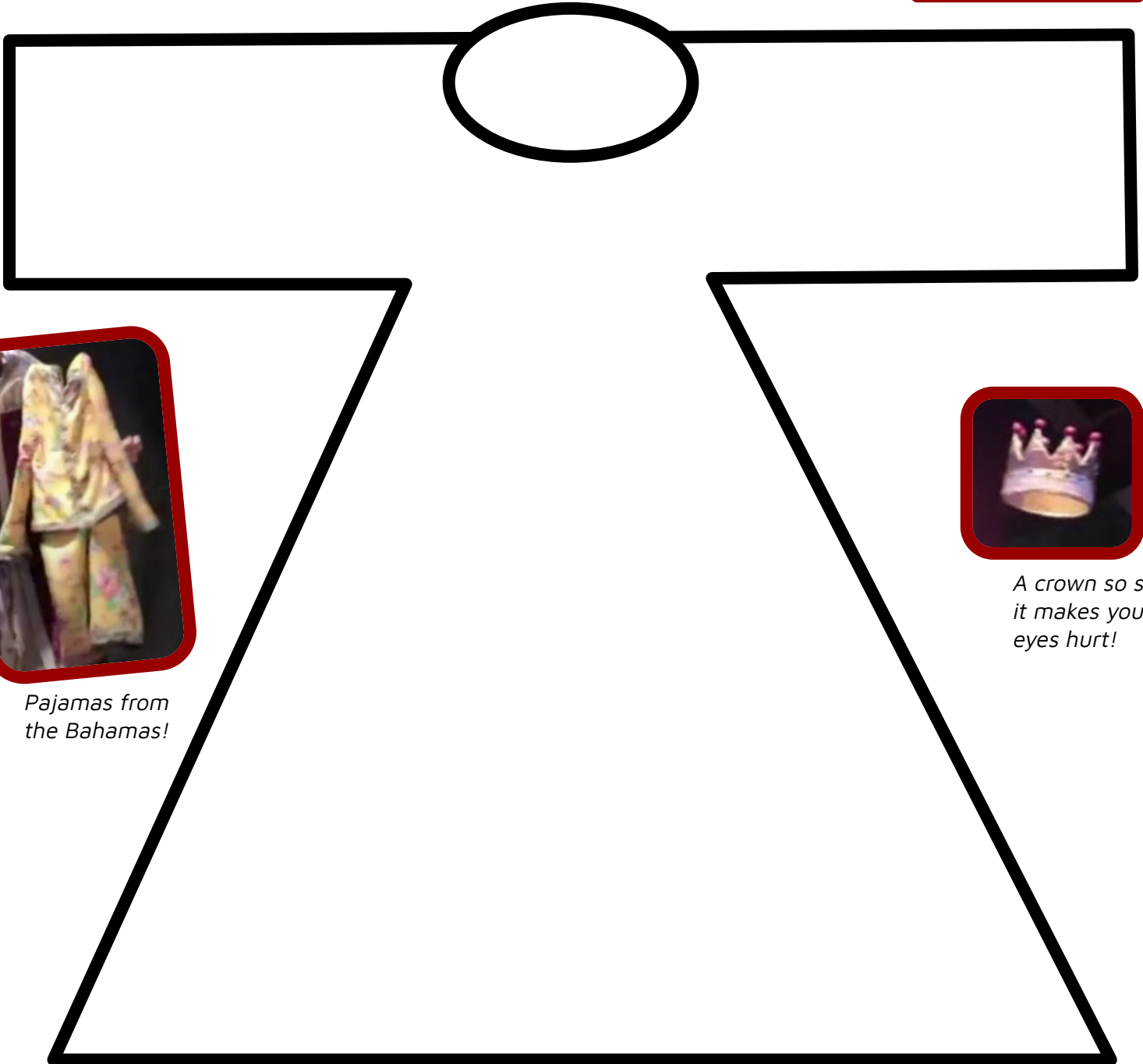
A costume designer designs and sews each puppet a **costume** (clothes)! A costume is special to each character depending on who they are, where they live, and what they like!

Which costume is your favorite?



Design a *costume* for the Emperor!

The Emperor of China in "The Princess, The Emperor, and The Duck" wants to wear the fanciest robes he can! Can you help him by designing him a **costume**?



Pajamas from the Bahamas!



A crown so shiny it makes your eyes hurt!



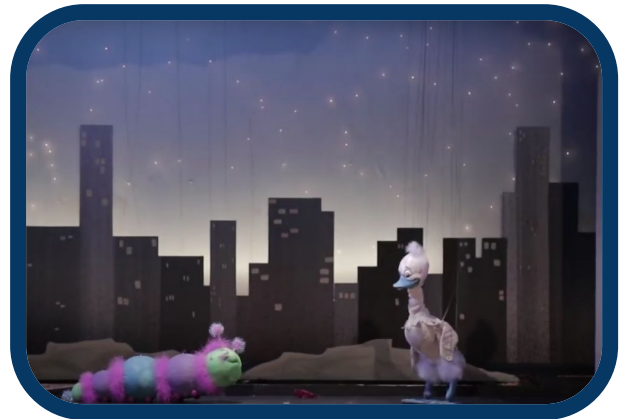
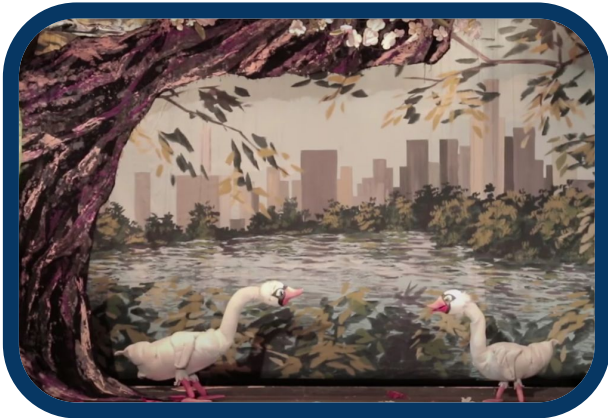
Diamonds in my cuffs!

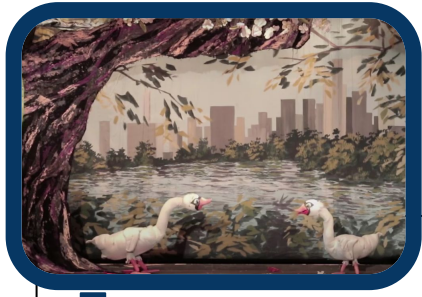


The world's biggest coat!

Can you put these scenes in order?

Can you remember the story of the Duck from "The Princess, The Emperor, and The Duck?" Put these scenes in order with **ordinal numbers** (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th)!





What happens next?

Make a **prediction** - what happens after the little swan finds out she's a swan? **Draw** or **write** what happens next in her story!



Soon...

CityParks
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Swedish
Cottage

MARIONETTE THEATRE



END

START



CENTRAL PARK ZOO

