

# Pinocchio



a  
Wheelock Family Theatre  
Study Guide  
prepared by Paul Rivenberg

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200 The Riverway | Boston, MA 02215-4176  
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## The Story

Geppetto, a carpenter who is overwhelmed with grief after his wife's death, carves into life a puppet he names "Pinocchio." Geppetto is not used to being a parent, and the strong-willed puppet is both naïve about the intentions of others and oblivious to the consequences of his own behavior. During the ensuing episodic adventures, Pinocchio is separated from Geppetto, drifting into the world of con men, manipulators, and exploiters, aided from time to time by various incarnations of the Blue Fairy. Geppetto has his own encounters with the Blue Fairy as he continues to wallow in his grief, while searching for Pinocchio. They eventually find each other in the belly of a sea monster, where they work together to escape. Life back on land finds Pinocchio taking the lead in supporting the now ailing Geppetto. His devotion and commitment to Geppetto, as he seeks to make a new life for the two of them, help transform the puppet into a real boy.

For a scene-by-scene synopsis of the play, see the last pages of this study guide.

## The Author

Carlo Collodi, the author of *Pinocchio*, was born Carlo Lorenzini in 1826 in Florence, Italy. When he began to write for publication, he adopted the name Collodi, after the town in which his mother was born.

As a young man Collodi worked as a bookseller. He later became a journalist, motivated by an interest in Italy's political situation. At that time Italy was not a unified nation as it is today, but rather a patchwork of governments, many of which were controlled by other countries. Collodi supported a movement to make Italy an independent nation. To that end, at the age of 22 he founded a newspaper called *Il Lampione (The Lamp Post)*, which combined satiric humor and news. The movement was successful and Italy became one nation around 1871, with Rome as its capital.

Collodi continued working as a magazine editor. He also began translating French fairy tales. Writing his own children's tales was a logical next step. In 1881, *Pinocchio* appeared as a serial in *Giornale dei Bambini (Journal for Children)*, a magazine responding to the increasing interest in children's literature. The story of the puppet/boy Pinocchio, whose independent spirit and gullibility land him in increasingly dramatic situations, was immediately popular. Church leaders, however, disapproved, fearing it would encourage a rebellious spirit in the nation's youth.

Initially Collodi ended the story with Pinocchio hanged in a tree, presumed dead. The author had no intention of reviving him, but the public clamored for Pinocchio's return. So, Collodi brought the puppet back to life and sent him on even more sensational adventures.

## Create Your Own Children's Newspaper

Like Carlo Collodi, create your own newspaper and fill it with humorous articles. This can be done either as a class activity or individually.

- What is the name of your newspaper?
- Younger students may be asked to draw pictures of something they think is funny, or of funny parts of *Pinocchio*, for inclusion in the paper.
- Write a funny story, or an article poking fun at something.
- Illustrate your newspaper, either with your own drawings, or with images from magazines. Remember, the newspaper is supposed to be amusing.
- As a reporter, write a humorous article about an episode in the book or play as if it actually happened.

## Adaptation

The story of *Pinocchio* has remained popular through the centuries, being used as the basis for numerous literary and film adaptations, most notably Disney's animated film version. Walt Disney had a difficult time with the original story, which contains too many episodes to dramatize. And he was concerned with some of the puppet's naughtier and crueler moments. As a result he made several changes to the story and, after production began, he insisted that *Pinocchio* be redrawn to look more human. He and his writers selected episodes they felt would work best in a 90-minute film.

This is a challenge for any writer seeking to adapt literature for the stage. *Pinocchio* director Steven Bogart and WFT's producer Wendy Lement, who collaborated on this play, had to make similar decisions when they decided to adapt the story.

- Watch the Disney film. How does it differ from the story on WFT's stage?
- Read the original book and discuss how it is different from the Disney film and the WFT's production. What episodes were chosen? Which episodes were left out? How does the tone of WFT's *Pinocchio* differ from the Disney version? Which version do you enjoy most: the book, the play, or the Disney film?
- Find an image of Disney's *Pinocchio* on the Internet and one of the original illustrations in Collodi's book. How do they differ? Draw your own version of *Pinocchio*.

- Choose a scene from Collodi’s book that was not dramatized in the play or the Disney movie, and adapt it for the stage. Feel free to move beyond the original story. Use your imagination to create a dialogue. Try, for example, the episode (Chapters 28 and 29) in which Pinocchio rescues a dog from drowning and is, himself, rescued in return by the dog (who prevents Pinocchio from getting coated in batter and fried). This could be a fun scene to dramatize.
- Think of other movies and books that revolve around the ideas of toys coming to life, such as *Toy Story* and *Babes in Toyland*. How are they similar to *Pinocchio*? How are they different?
- The Japanese comic book *Astro Boy* can be seen as a variation of the *Pinocchio* story. Read one of *Astro Boy*’s adventures. How are *Astro Boy* and *Pinocchio* alike? How are they different?
- Steven Spielberg’s *A.I.* is another film that takes its inspiration from *Pinocchio*. Watch the film, and discuss the similarities and differences.

## Learning About Japan

In adapting *Pinocchio* for WFT, the playwrights have changed the setting from Tuscany to Japan and used elements of Japanese folklore and theatre.

### Learn Japanese Words

There are a number of Japanese words in the play and in the stage directions. Choose from the list below. Assign students a word. Ask them to learn what it means and how to pronounce it, then use it in a sentence. Challenge them to use as many words on the list as they can in one sentence.

- Pachinko (noun) [pah-ching-koh]: A Japanese gambling game played on a vertical pinball machine.
- Mochi (noun) [moh-chee]: Japanese rice cake.
- Ningyōtsukai (noun) [Nin-gyoh-tzoo-kai] (Ningyō – doll, tsukai – user) – A puppeteer.
- Kabuki (noun) [kah-boo-kee]: A type of popular Japanese drama evolved from the older Noh theatre.
- Yen (noun): Japanese money.
- Funa yurei: Funa [foo-nah] (boat, sailor) yurei [yoo-ray] (ghost) – water spirits, said to be the souls of shipwrecked sailors.
- Ame Onna: Ame [ah-may] (rain) Onna [ohn-nah] (woman) – spirit of rain, sadness, self-pity.
- Shamisen [sha-mi-sen]: A three-stringed Japanese musical instrument.

## Japanese Theatre

WFT's *Pinocchio* uses elements of Japanese Noh and Kabuki theatre, both forms of highly stylized drama that feature music, dance, masks, and elaborate costumes. Based on traditional tales, the plots often revolve around ghosts or supernatural elements, and frequently include scenes in which a character undergoes a physical transformation. WFT's production also includes elements of Japanese puppet theatre known as Bunraku, a style that does not seek to hide the puppeteers, who control the puppets in plain sight of the audience.

- Learn more about Noh drama and Kabuki theatre, and list the similarities and differences. What elements of Japanese theatre and culture did you observe in WFT's production of *Pinocchio*? What elements did you enjoy the most? Why? How do you think the production would have been different if it had taken place in another country, like Italy, where it was originally set?

## Music

The music accompanying *Pinocchio* is performed on some instruments that may not be familiar to American audiences. WFT is fortunate to have the internationally respected samisen player and singer Sumie Kaneko playing her instrument on stage for the production.

## Instruments

- Watch a video of Sumie Kaneko assembling her samisen, playing it, and singing. <http://www.sumiekanekomusic.com/apps/videos/videos/show/18306709-sumie-kaneko-promotion-video>
- On her podcast page, Sumie Kaneko samples some of her music, including a version of "My Favorite Things" from *The Sound of Music*, played on the samisen and sung in Japanese. <http://www.sumiekanekomusic.com/apps/podcast/>. Compare the samisen to instruments that are familiar to you. What are the differences? The similarities? What makes the Japanese instrument unique? How would you describe the sound? Compare Sumie Kaneko's version of "My Favorite Things" to the version from the film musical. This could be a written assignment or a class discussion.
- In *Pinocchio*, a drum (along with other percussive instruments) is often used to dramatize or emphasize certain moments. Build your own drum using packing tape. Alec Duncan of *Child's Play Music* demonstrates how to do this in a YouTube video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-COHNYFT0nc>
- Decorate the body of the drum. Use elements of Japanese design you remember from the production or scenes and characters from the play.

- Explore other traditional Japanese musical instruments, like the shinobue, a kind of bamboo Japanese flute or recorder with a unique sound. How is the sound different from a flute? Which do you prefer? You can learn more about the shinobue and listen to performances at <http://shinobueflute.com/>.

## Musical Motifs

In *Pinocchio*, the composer has assigned most characters a musical theme or motif, usually heard when the character first enters. Students may be familiar with musical themes from movies they have watched.

- One of the most famous examples of character motifs is Tchaikovsky's *Peter and the Wolf*. If you wish to explore the idea of motifs further, introduce students to this story and its music, and use the following websites to help define each character's theme.

Scenes from the animated film *Peter and the Wolf* (2008):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0sZpZnm7Ed0>

An introduction to *Peter and the Wolf* by Phil Tulga

<http://www.philtulga.com/Peter.html>

Discuss which qualities in the music remind you of the animal or person for which it was created.

- There are a number of animals and spirits in *Pinocchio* (listed below). Review the animals and spirits, and discuss their characteristics. What do you like about them? What do you dislike? How do they behave? Decide what kind of musical instrument or sound could be used to describe them.

Animals: Cat, Fox, Cricket, Parrot, Dolphin, Owl, Crow, Rabbit, Namazu

Spirits: Blue Fairy, Blue Fairy Child, Ame Onna, Funa-yurei

- What kind of music best describes who you are? If you were a musical instrument or a sound, or a combination of sounds, what would it be? Why?

## Dance and Movement

Kabuki movement and dance are important aspects of WFT's *Pinocchio* and rich topics for exploration.

- The bow is a traditional Japanese gesture of welcome and farewell. When the Crow and Owl doctors depart from tending Pinocchio, they play a kind of bowing game, seeing who

can bow the lowest. Why do you think the playwrights included this sequence? Have two students alternately bow to one another, each trying to bow lower than the other.

- Hand out cards to the students, on which are listed different emotions or characteristics. Have each student come up with a single gesture or movement he or she feels communicates the assigned emotion or characteristic. Have the class guess what is being conveyed.
- Provide each student with the name of an animal to observe, either in person, on TV, or online. Have each student portray the animal with his or her own body movement, and see if the class can tell what kind of animal is being depicted.
- When the Fox and the Cat are first introduced they perform a Kabuki-style dance, after which the Cat performs his own Kabuki dance. Create a dance or movement to introduce yourself.

For advanced classes:

- In traditional Kabuki theatre men played both the male and female parts. Each character was required to move in different ways depending on its gender. The following examples are from the TES Australia education website.

**Bowing:**

Women: Hands come forward. Fingers together. Look ahead. Lower back but keep head and back in alignment. Rise and look forward again. Keep knees together and elbows in.

Men: Hands come forward. Fingers together. Look ahead. Lower back but keep head and back in alignment. Rise and look forward again. (Men are allowed to take up more space by keeping the knees and elbows apart.)

**Laughing:**

Women: Impolite for women to show their teeth. Hold hands in front of mouth. Hands horizontal to mouth, index finger outstretched.

Men: Ha ha (from low to high)

Hee, Hee (from high to low)

A ha, ha, ha, ha, ha

Have boys and girls practice both ways of bowing and laughing, and ask them to answer the following questions.

- How does it make you feel to bow the woman's bow as opposed to the man's bow?
- How does it make you feel to laugh the woman's laugh compared to the man's?

- These movements are based on old traditions and do not necessarily reflect contemporary Japan. Do you feel that men and women in your own culture have defined ways of moving or acting (for example sitting, laughing, walking, dancing, shaking hands, etc.)?

## Costumes and Masks

Costumes and masks for *Pinocchio* were also influenced by Japanese Kabuki theatre and Noh drama.

Review the costume designs used in WFT's production of *Pinocchio*, at their blog site: <http://wheenews.blogspot.com/2015/01/pinocchio-costume-designs-by-miranda.html>

- What is your favorite costume and why?
- The Cat and Fox both have two costumes, one specifically created for their Kabuki dance. How did the costume designer differentiate the Cat from the Fox? How are their Kabuki outfits different from the outfits they wear for most of the play?
- Look at the costume for the Snail online. Using a backpack and referencing the illustration, see if you can create a snail shell to carry on your back, incorporating cloth, twine, safety pins, and other found objects. If you do not have the materials, create a detailed costume design instead. Build a set of antennae to go along with the Snail costume with a simple headband and two pipe cleaners. In costume, practice moving like a snail.
- Read a fairy tale, and decide what the different characters would be wearing. If there are animals in the story, how would you costume them?
- The masks that visually transform Lampwick and Pinocchio into donkeys were designed and fabricated by Oxeyedaisey Pattern and Design in Australia. Look at their website to see what other creative critters they have created. <https://www.etsy.com/shop/oxeyedaisey?ref=l2-shopheader-name>.
  - Notice what materials Oxeyedaisey used to make the masks. What other materials could you use to make a mask?
- Make your own donkey ears. Think about how you might go about it. What materials would you use? What determines your choice of materials and your design? Compare your technique to those below:



## **Making Donkey Ears (Source: Creativebug; Kabrina McLaughlin)**

Draw a pair of donkey ears on a piece of brown construction paper. Make the ears as large or as small as you like. Cut them out.

Trace around the pair of ears and cut out a second set. (The second pair of ears will make the headpiece sturdier.) Use non-toxic craft glue to attach one set of ears to the other.

Cut out smaller ear-shaped pieces from pink construction paper. Affix the small pink ear shapes to the brown donkey ears with the glue to create the inner portion of the donkey ear for a more realistic look.

## **Making the Headband**

Measure and make note of head circumference.

Use a ruler and pencil to mark the length of the head measurement, plus one inch for overlap, on a piece of brown construction paper and cut out a 2-inch strip of paper according to this length.

Test the headband paper strip size by wrapping it around the head to ensure a proper fit.

## **Finishing the Project**

Lay the completed ears on the headband paper strip and eyeball the appropriate distance between the ears based on the desired look of the headband. Mark the spot for each ear on the headband strip with pencil.

Affix the completed donkey ears to the headband paper strip with non-toxic glue.

Wrap the completed headband around the head with the front of the ears facing out.

Make sure the headband is wrapped tightly enough so that it won't slip off. Tape the two ends of the headband together.

- More advanced students can try cloth donkey ears and hooves: [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_6833012\\_make-donkey-ears\\_-hooves-tail.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_6833012_make-donkey-ears_-hooves-tail.html)
- Traditional Japanese masks are very stylized. See some examples at <http://www.oldjapaninc.com/shop/japanese-masks>. One of the masks shown on that page is of the fox, or Kitsune. Find instructions for making a Kitsune mask at [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_8585985\\_make-kitsune-mask.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_8585985_make-kitsune-mask.html)



## **Artistic Choices**

- In *Pinocchio*, elements of nature like clouds and waves, are manipulated on stage by visible puppeteers called Ningyōtsukai. For example, Ame Onna, the spirit of sadness and self-pity, appears with a dark cloud near her. Using cardboard or construction paper attached to poles or rulers, have students create their own elements of nature—lightning, rain, sun, clouds, wind, trees, bushes, and mountains. As a class, create and dramatize a story that includes all these elements of nature.
- The waves carried on stage by the Ningyōtsukai are inspired by the Japanese artist Hokusai. Read about this artist and study his painting. What are the characteristics of his style? Compare his painting of waves with other sea-themed paintings. How are they different? Make your own painting of waves.



You can see other images by Hokusai by visiting: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirty-six_Views_of_Mount_Fuji)

## Puppetry

There are many kinds of puppets, but Collodi's creation is most similar to a marionette, a puppet controlled by one person from above. Disney's *Pinocchio* was clearly modeled after a marionette, singing the lyrics, "I've got no strings to hold me down, to make me laugh or make me frown." Marionettes were popular in Italy, where the story of *Pinocchio* originated. One form of Japanese puppet theatre is called Bunraku. Accompanied by a samisen, doll-like puppets half the size of a person are controlled on stage by visible puppeteers. WFT's production uses elements of Bunraku. The puppeteers are called Ningyōtsukai.

- Read about the different ways of creating puppets (hand puppets, shadow puppets, etc.). Create your own puppets and use them to tell a story. Or create shadow puppets of characters from *Pinocchio*, and use them to enact favorite scenes from the book or play.
- Shadow Puppets – You may want to explore making shadow puppets, which are similar to Bunraku but created in paper and are two-dimensional. The following resources will provide inspiration.

*Making Shadow Puppets (Kids Can Do It)* by Jill Bryant and Catherine Heard, illustrated by Laura Watson

How to make shadow puppet theatres:

[http://www.bgfl.org/bgfl/custom/resources\\_fnp/client\\_fnp/teacher/english/w\\_e\\_mperor/pdfs/shadow\\_puppets.pdf](http://www.bgfl.org/bgfl/custom/resources_fnp/client_fnp/teacher/english/w_e_mperor/pdfs/shadow_puppets.pdf)

More advanced students may enjoy watching The Learning Connexion tutor, Steffen Kreft, show how to make a simple shadow puppet. You will need a card, scissors, tape, and a stick! <http://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-make-Shadow-Puppets/>

- The popular stage play *War Horse* features puppet horses inspired by Bunraku tradition, controlled by actors on stage. They are designed by the Handspring Puppet Co. Watch a Ted Talk about these kinds of puppets at [http://www.ted.com/talks/handspring\\_puppet\\_co\\_the\\_genius\\_puppetry\\_behind\\_war\\_horse](http://www.ted.com/talks/handspring_puppet_co_the_genius_puppetry_behind_war_horse)

## Acting Like a Japanese Puppet

Actress Sirena Abalian, who plays Pinocchio, is familiar to local audiences from roles in a number of plays. At WFT she has played both girls (Pippi Longstocking), boys (JoJo from *Seussical*), and even an old lady (*Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse*), but she has never portrayed a boy puppet. Sirena notes that Pippi and Pinocchio have a similar energy. They are both open minded, carefree, and acrobatic. They think highly of themselves and speak out for what they believe. But, while Pippi has an innocence about her convictions that stays constant throughout

the play, Pinocchio is mean-spirited and selfish at first, eventually growing and changing significantly from his experiences.

Some of Pinocchio's growth is expressed through his physicality; he constantly falls down, but learns from those tumbles until he becomes adept at picking himself back up. One of Sirena's greatest challenges in the role has been learning how to move not just like a puppet, but like a Japanese puppet; not like a marionette, but like a life-sized doll controlled by Ningyōtsukai.

- Practice moving like a marionette, as if you are controlled from above by strings tied to each of your joints. Then pretend that your body is being moved by on stage puppeteers, who are using sticks to make you walk and gesture. Discuss how it felt to move in these different ways. What other kinds of puppets can you imitate?

## Learn More About Japan

There are a multitude of Asian resources in the Boston area. You may even be able to take a field trip to some of them.

- Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has an excellent collection of Asian art, including works by Hokusai. <http://www.mfa.org/collections/asia>  
Their Japanese collection - <http://www.mfa.org/node/9464>
- Peabody Essex Museum - [http://www.pem.org/collections/8-japanese\\_art](http://www.pem.org/collections/8-japanese_art)
- Kaji Aso Studio - The Kaji Aso Studio on Saint Stephen Street in Boston, not far from WFT, is a wonderful resource for Japanese art and culture, providing instruction in various Japanese arts as well as the traditional tea ceremony.  
<http://kajiasostudio.com/webroot/home.cfm>

Every year Kaji Aso Studio has a haiku contest. Explore this Japanese form of poetry—see some 2013 contest winners at [http://kajiasostudio.com/webroot/haiku\\_contest2006.cfm](http://kajiasostudio.com/webroot/haiku_contest2006.cfm). Have students write haikus about Pinocchio—and submit them to the Kaji Aso Haiku contest! The deadline is April 15. To learn more about the contest and how to submit a haiku for consideration, contact Kate Finnegan at [Kate\\_administrator@verizon.net](mailto:Kate_administrator@verizon.net).

- Japan Society of Boston: <http://www.japansocietyboston.org/>
- Japanese Performing Arts Center: <http://www.glopac.org/jparc/>
- Japan Foundation of New York: <http://www.jfny.org/>

- And continue the learning after the performance! Explore Japanese culture and performing arts with fun, multimedia resources using Primary Source's Interactive Digital Toolkit. <http://resources.primarysource.org/pinocchio>

## Themes to Explore

*Pinocchio* is a rich source for discussion of some serious issues. The story revolves around the death of Geppetto's wife, and includes the death of the Cricket, the Blue Fairy Child, and Lampwick. Pinocchio kills, lies, and abandons people (and spirits). He considers suicide. He's gullible and easy prey for con men and bullies; he succumbs quickly to peer pressure.

### Lying and Being Lied To

Pinocchio's growing nose betrays his lies.

- Why does Pinocchio lie? What motivates people to lie? Is it ever a good idea to tell a lie? Is it OK to misrepresent your true feelings in order to spare someone else's, or should you always be completely honest?
- Pinocchio's nose is made from bamboo in WFT's production. Create your own growing nose from bamboo, cardboard, vegetables, silly putty, or anything else you can imagine.  
The following websites have suggestions:  
[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_8677842\\_make-theatrical-prosthetic-noses.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_8677842_make-theatrical-prosthetic-noses.html)  
[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_6246931\\_make-fake-nose-silly-putty.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_6246931_make-fake-nose-silly-putty.html)
- The lying game: Ask each student to tell two truths about himself or herself and one lie. The student should try to make the lie seem as true as the other statements. Have the class guess which of the three statements is the lie. Then have the first student reveal the lie by stating it and putting on the false long nose. Discuss what made it easy or hard to guess.

"You're a fool for trusting strangers," says the Ghost Cricket to Pinocchio. While Pinocchio cannot lie without his nose giving him away, the characters that lie to him are not similarly disadvantaged. Pinocchio, often blinded by his own desires, is quick to believe the attractive lies of others.

Consider the "con men" Fox and Cat.

- How do they get Pinocchio to trust them? How can you tell if someone is trustworthy? Do you think you would be able to tell if a stranger were lying to you?
- An article by the American Psychological Association states "Trusting a stranger may have more to do with feeling morally obligated to show respect for someone else's character than actually believing the person is trustworthy..." In other words, we might trust or give in

to someone out of politeness. Imagine or write a scene in which the Fox and the Cat are trying to persuade you to do something. It might be something you would enjoy and know would be harmless. Or it might be something you know is wrong. How do they try to persuade you? How do you resist? Or do you resist?

## Peer Pressure, Bullying, and Temptation

Resisting persuasive strangers is one thing, but resisting pressure from friends or schoolmates can be even more difficult. Pinocchio ends up in Playland partly because it seems so tempting, and partly because Lampwick talks him into it. Not only is he susceptible to the lies of others, but he also gives in easily to peer pressure.

- What is peer pressure? What makes saying NO to a friend or classmate difficult? Divide the class into groups. Have each group brainstorm a scenario in which a student asks a friend or classmate to do something they know is wrong. For example: “I have to go to choir practice tonight and won’t be able to do my homework. Will you give me the answers?” “Let’s skip school today.” Have each group present their scene to the class, with one student acting as the persuader and the other as the resister. The goal of the persuader is to get his or her friend to give in to his or her request or suggestion. While, obviously, the resister should say no, the student should be true to his or her feelings. Afterwards discuss the challenges of saying no, as well as the different strategies the persuader used to try to get his or her friend to comply.
- This exercise can be adapted to address bullying, which also plays a part in *Pinocchio*. The groups can come up with bullying scenarios to be presented to the class. Establish the ground rule that, if a scenario includes any physical contact, such as hitting, students should mime the action in slow motion without direct, actual contact. After each episode the class can evaluate the scenario, discuss how or if it was resolved, and offer other possibilities for how it could be played out.
- Playland at first seems full of everything Pinocchio would enjoy. Create a collage that represents your own Playland. What would the land of your greatest temptations look like? If someone, like the Coachman in *Pinocchio*, approached you, showed you your collage, and said he or she could take you to a land where all of this is possible, what would you do? What questions would you ask before accepting or rejecting the invitation? If you would decline the invitation, what would you say? Write a story or play based on your discussion.

## Transformation

The theme of transformation is a key element of Kabuki theatre, and the idea appears frequently in such classical works as *The Odyssey* and Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, both of which Collodi would have known well. The two characters who undergo physical changes in the story are Pinocchio and the Blue Fairy.

- Describe the different physical changes that Pinocchio undergoes.
- Describe the different incarnations of the Blue Fairy (Tree; Mother/Wife; Blue Fairy Child; Blue Dolphin; Ame Onna). How did the designers help you understand that these are all parts of the Blue Fairy? Why do you think the Blue Fairy has to take on so many different forms?
- Read a fairy tale or a myth in which a human being is transformed into something else. Dramatize the scene of metamorphosis. How would you portray this on stage? How would you portray this in a cartoon? In a movie?
- If you were going to change into an animal or plant, what would you choose to become? Why? Did you pick an animal or plant that you feel represents you, or one that has qualities you wish you had? Describe how this metamorphosis might feel. How could you represent it on stage? Write a story about turning into an animal or plant. Or dramatize and perform the transformation.

Putting on a mask is another doorway into transformation. Since masks cover the human face, which is what we usually look to first in order to communicate with each other, the actor must use his or her entire body to express thoughts and feelings. Try the following exercises focused on moving with masks.

- Set up mirrors. Have students put on animal masks in front of the mirrors and experiment with moving their heads in different directions. How would their animal move its head?
- Have students circulate in an open space, moving their heads as their animals would. See if they can extend the animal movements to other parts of the body.
- Tell students they are in a forest or jungle and ask them to react in character to each other. How would an owl react to a tiger? Focus on full-body movement.
- Divide the class into groups and improvise scenes with the animal characters.

## Telling Stories

In the book and the play, sometimes characters sit down to tell a story, as when the Blue Fairy tells Pinocchio the story of the man who loved his wife to the point of refusing to leave her side.

The man grew to love his wife so much that instead of planting rice each day, he stayed by her side. Weeks passed. With no rice to eat the couple grew hungry. The wife loved her husband dearly, but scolded him for his foolishness. Still, he refused to leave her. Their neighbors became worried and visited the couple. They told the husband he must work in the fields, or they'll have no rice to eat. But the husband was stubborn and turned them away. Now, beside their house stood a strong tree. "I know what I'll do," said the husband. And he gathered his carving tools. "What are you doing, husband?" "Making a likeness of you, my love. When I'm done, you can plant rice. I'll stay here and gaze upon this statue." For three weeks the wife posed, growing weaker each day, as her husband carved the tree. "You rest now," he finally said. "It's almost perfect." An hour later he called his wife, but she didn't come. He ran inside and found her collapsed by the door. That night he held her tight as she turned blue and the sparkle in her eyes faded. By morning, her body was limp. He kissed her a thousand times, but could not bring his beautiful wife back to life. Each day he wept by that tree, unable to leave her.

- Read the story to the class. Why does the Blue Fairy tell this story to Pinocchio? (This tale can also be used as the basis for a puppet play.)
- Why do we tell or write stories? What does telling a story do for the teller? What does it do for the listener?
- Have students take 15 minutes to come up with a story to tell the class. Take turns telling stories, then discuss the experience. How did it feel to tell the story? How did it feel to hear the stories of other class members? Did you learn anything from the stories? Is it necessary for a story to have a moral? Have students vote on their favorite story and explain their choice. What makes a good story? What makes a good story-teller?
- After telling her story, the Blue Fairy says to Pinocchio "Not all stories have happy endings." What makes an ending "unhappy?" List stories with unhappy endings. A number of Hans Christian Andersen's and Grimms' fairy tales are much less happy than the versions that have become more popular and accepted. Read some original fairy tales and discuss how they compare to the versions (for example, Disney's) that are better known.

In Collodi's original serial version of *Pinocchio*, our hero was killed off and then revived. It almost was not a happy ending! Collodi had to come up with new adventures.

- Create your own new adventure for Pinocchio before he becomes a boy.



- Now imagine you are going to write a book called *Pinocchio's Life as a Real Boy*. Create an episode of his life as a boy, and share your story with the class. How do the adventures compare? Which stories do you prefer?

## Dreams

Pinocchio has visions and dreams during the course of the play, which often provide him with warnings or guidance.

- What is a dream?
- Do you dream?
- Have you had a dream that sticks in your mind? Write a paragraph describing that dream. Make a drawing or collage based on your dream. If you have not had a memorable dream, you may make a drawing of one of Pinocchio's dreams or visions.

Pinocchio has dreams while he is asleep, but he also has a constant waking dream of becoming a real boy.

- What is the difference between Pinocchio's dream when he is sleeping and his dream to become a boy?
- When he is just a block of wood, Pinocchio shouts out, "I want to be a space traveler, a cave explorer, an underwater sea monster - Namazu. A mountain climber, a soaring bird, a stealth bomber. Grrrrrr, Godzilla. I'm a sumo wrestler, a hip-hop dancer. Make me a cunning fox." What is it your dream to become? List some possibilities, then make a drawing, painting, or collage based on your list.

## Becoming Human

It takes Pinocchio the length of the play to become human. Director Steven Bogart writes of the puppet's journey:

Pinocchio is an impulsive, strong-willed boy who has a good heart but does not understand the consequences of his behavior on himself or others. Ultimately by committing to work to help Geppetto heal, he learns that real compassion comes by commitment, that words are not enough, that we show our love through behavior. When he learns this, he is finally rewarded by becoming a real boy. I offer you a quote from Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet*, "And he alone is great who turns the voice of the wind into a song made sweeter by his own loving. **Work is love made visible.**"

- What makes someone human? List some adjectives.
- What qualities of humanity does Pinocchio possess at the end of the play that he does not have at the beginning?
- Take Pinocchio’s journey. Pretend to be a block of wood. Change from wood to puppet; from puppet to donkey; from donkey back to puppet; from puppet to human. How did each phase of the journey feel? What did it feel like to transform from a puppet into a human?
- How does Pinocchio demonstrate that “work is love made visible”?

## **A Scene-by-Scene Synopsis of the Play**

A year after his wife’s death Geppetto is still grieving. His wife, in the form of a tree, scolds him. Insisting he get on with his life she throws one of her branches at him. The log seems to have a life of its own, jumping about and demanding that Geppetto carve him into a boy. Geppetto manages to carve a puppet and names him Pinocchio.

Full of joyous spirit, Pinocchio is ready to explore the world and experiment to the fullest in his quest to become a real boy. He rushes into town, pursued by Geppetto, whose attempt to grab the naughty puppet is misinterpreted as child abuse by a local policeman. Geppetto is thrown in jail, and Pinocchio returns home. There a cricket lectures him about becoming a responsible son. Frustrated and annoyed, Pinocchio crushes the bug.

Now starving, Pinocchio heads back to town and begs for food, but ends up doused with water by an old man. Exhausted and cold, he returns home. While drying off, he falls asleep by the fire, and his feet begin to burn. Geppetto arrives in time to rescue him, and carves him new feet.

So that Pinocchio can go to school, Geppetto sells his only coat to buy a book. But on his way to school, Pinocchio sells the book to play Pachinko (a Japanese betting game similar to pinball). His risk pays off when he wins five gold coins, but he will not hold on to them for long. He meets con artists Fox and Cat who persuade him to come with them to the Field of Miracles, where burying his money will produce trees full of coins.

Stopping at the Red Crawfish Inn with his companions, Pinocchio has a vision of a Blue Fairy Child. He is attracted and wants to follow her, but is stopped by Cat and Fox, who manage to ply Pinocchio with beer until he passes out. In a dream Pinocchio is warned by the ghost of the cricket he killed that he is “a fool to trust strangers.” When he awakens his companions are gone and he must pay the Innkeeper one gold piece for the bill.

While searching for the Field of Miracles, Pinocchio is attacked by two thieves, the Fox and Cat in disguise. Unable to snatch his remaining coins, the con artists hang him upside down from a tree, planning to return and find the money once the puppet dies.

The Blue Fairy Child of Pinocchio's vision rescues him. But his refusal to take his medicine almost does him in. He quickly changes his mind when he sees black rabbits readying a stretcher to transport him to another world. Now revived, Pinocchio feels ready for anything. Despite his promise to wait for the Blue Fairy Child he leaves in search of Geppetto.

Geppetto searches for Pinocchio. Wallowing in grief and self-pity he almost gives up. But Ame Onna, the spirit of rain and sadness, convinces him to stop feeling sorry for himself and focus on Pinocchio.

Meanwhile, Pinocchio runs into the Cat and Fox. Still blind to their trickery, he accompanies them to the so-called Field of Miracles and buries his coins. While he sleeps the con men unearth the coins and run off. When he awakens, a parrot informs Pinocchio of the deception. The bird also bears the sad news that the Blue Fairy Child has died because Pinocchio abandoned her.

Overwhelmed with guilt and sadness, Pinocchio cries an ocean of tears, which carry him to a new shore. There he considers ending it all by throwing himself into the sea. But a blue dolphin begins to engage him in conversation, revealing that Geppetto has been swallowed by a giant catfish, Namazu.

They are interrupted by the arrival of a young man, Lampwick, who befriends Pinocchio. Soon after they are confronted by a group of bullies. In the ensuing fight, Pinocchio throws a schoolbook, which accidentally hits Lampwick in the head, knocking him unconscious. A nearby policeman is about to take Pinocchio to jail, but the dolphin transforms into the Blue Fairy, and claims responsibility for him, taking him aside for a heart-to-heart talk about his behavior.

Pinocchio is ready to reform. But on the way to school his buddy Lampwick persuades him to accompany him to Playland, "where every day's a holiday." A coach bound for Playland arrives and the driver lures Pinocchio aboard with promises of a life of fun, while the donkeys pulling the coach try to warn the boys that appearances are deceptive.

Playland is great fun at first, offering endless opportunities to play Pachinko. But before long Lampwick and Pinocchio realize they are turning into donkeys. Lampwick is sold to a farmer, while Pinocchio ends up as part of a circus act. Although he tries to perform as expected, he is distracted by the Blue Fairy, loses his balance, and falls.

Injured and unable to perform, Pinocchio is sold to a drum-maker, who plans to drown him and use his hide to create instruments. The drum-maker throws Pinocchio into the sea—and loses him. Summoned by the Blue Fairy, local fishes eat Pinocchio's donkey skin and change him back into a puppet, just in time for him to become Namazu's lunch.

Inside the giant catfish Pinocchio discovers Geppetto. Together they plan a way to escape. But first they must avoid the deadly “Funa-yurei,” ghosts of dead fishermen who inhabit Namazu’s belly. Although they manage to distract the ghosts, Pinocchio ends up in their grasp, only to be rejected and discarded, much weakened, as “driftwood.”

Geppetto, who was depending on Pinocchio’s swimming abilities to get them to shore, must now go it alone. He straps the puppet to his back and escapes through Namazu’s mouth, swimming as hard as he can to get to shore. The effort completely exhausts and sickens him. Now it is Pinocchio’s turn to care for Geppetto. As he helps his father down the road they meet the Cat and Fox, now genuinely blind and crippled. No longer trusting them, Pinocchio moves on, focusing on strengthening his father. They next meet a farmer, the same one who had purchased Lampwick. But the donkey is now weary and lame. Pinocchio recognizes Lampwick, but can do nothing to prevent his old friend’s death.

The farmer could use a hand, and Pinocchio seizes the opportunity to work for him to provide much needed milk for his father. Pinocchio also manages to educate himself, learning the trade of hat mending, and making enough money to support himself and Geppetto. On the way to buying himself a new jacket, Pinocchio learns from the snail that the Blue Fairy is dying of starvation. He instantly gives the snail all his coins to save her life.

Pinocchio returns to Geppetto, who has carved him a wooden heart. That night Pinocchio and Geppetto have a vision of the Blue Fairy/Geppetto’s Wife. She asks Pinocchio to take care of Geppetto, and Geppetto to stop grieving for her and focus on caring for Pinocchio. As the vision dissolves, Pinocchio realizes that something has changed. He has become a real boy.