



Australian Theatre of the Deaf

presents

SHOW AND TELL



TEACHER'S NOTES

1996



Australian Theatre of the Deaf



SYNOPSIS

SHOW AND TELL



SHOW AND TELL is a 30 minute show, using Australian Theatre of the Deaf's traditional storytelling methods and sign singing to tell two stories and sing a song. One is an original story devised by the Company to introduce the children to the idea of using hands to tell a story, and the other is an adaptation of the book "**THE FARMYARD CAT**" by Christine Anello.

A show for the youngest people at school **SHOW AND TELL** is designed to be entertaining and fun. By showing children what we can say, using our hands, bodies and faces, we show them there is more than one way of seeing the world.

The children get to try out sign language (AUSLAN - **Australian Sign Language**) for themselves by learning a few signs for the words of a well known song '**MISS POLLY HAD A DOLLY**'. We guide them through the song using the signs we teach them, and by doing this, they learn that not only is sign language a vital communication tool, but another way of having a lot of fun.

This show will be the first contact with Deaf people that most of these children will have and while this is not a "message" show, they will leave knowing that Deaf people can present a very positive image.





Australian Theatre of the Deaf

SHOW AND TELL



THE PRODUCTION

CAST: **Robert Farmer, Nina Mishriky and Medina Sumovic**

DIRECTOR & DEVISER: **Sofya Gollan**

DESIGNER: **Philippa Playford**

BEHIND THE SCENES

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR:- **Mike Canfield**

Decides the artistic programme for the Company and chooses the artistic personnel for each project.

ADMINISTRATOR: **Gillian Minervini**

Responsible for the financial viability of the Company. Plans and co-ordinates the Company's activities with the Artistic Director.

**INTERPRETER/
ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANT**

Pam Spicer

Interprets for the Company from Auslan (Australian Sign Language) to English and vice versa. She also works in the office on Company activities.

SHOW AND TELL

PRE-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

1. The show will involve a well-known song called **MISS POLLY HAD A DOLLY**, and signs (from Australian Sign Language) will be taught to the children. Familiarisation of the song would be a plus.
2. One story '**THE FARMYARD CAT**' will have characterisations of animals, how they move and what they sound like :

Dog
Goat
Cow
Horse
Cat
Chickens

The children can try acting out these animals and making facial expressions of what they think a cow might have, or a goat, etc.

POST PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

1. The children can create puppets using old socks :
 - cut holes for the fingers to make ears
 - draw the various characteristics of each animal
 - use pipe cleaners, wool, cardboard, etc. to make such features as hair or whiskers.
2. Do the children remember the signs for **MISS POLLY HAD A DOLLY**?
3. Do the children remember what characteristics the Actors used for the various animals?

Appendix 1

DEAFNESS

More than ONE AND A HALF MILLION Australians have some sort of hearing loss. People with mild losses have difficulty hearing speech in noisy conditions. Moderate and severe losses result in people only being able to hear when the speaker is close by. All these sorts of losses can be greatly helped by hearing aids. A small number of people have profound hearing loss. Even with hearing aids these people hear only limited parts of speech. They may therefore need to communicate through lipreading and/or signing.

There are two types of hearing loss :

CONDUCTIVE HEARING LOSS: This is due to damage to the eardrum or the small bones of the middle ear. This sort of hearing loss is common in young children following ear infections and can also result from illness or accident. Conductive hearing losses can often be treated by doctors.

SENSORINEURAL HEARING LOSS (or Nerve Deafness): This type of hearing loss is due to damage to some or all of the 'hair cells' - the numerous nerve endings on each ear's single nerve of hearing. Damage to the nerve of hearing cannot be treated. Sensorineural hearing loss can be caused by a number of factors: old age, loud noise (several rock musicians have hearing losses caused by noise) or the effects of illnesses such as Rubella and Meningitis. Sensorineural hearing loss can also be inherited, though the factors are not yet determined.

In Australia, more than two children in 1,000 are born with hearing impairment. This means that most schools have no more than one or two children who require hearing aids. Because hearing deteriorates, however, one in four (25%) of people over 65 years of age need hearing aids.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Paul Cameron, Assistant Manager, Australian Hearing Services, Victoria.

* * * * *

For further information on :

Resources: **DEAFNESS RESOURCES AUSTRALIA,**
33 Argyle Street, Parramatta, NSW, 2150
Telephone: (02) 893 8139, Fax: (02) 893 8172

Sign Language: **ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE FOR DEAF & HEARING IMPAIRED PERSONS,**
PO Box 500, Strathfield, NSW, 2135
Telephone: (02) 764 4600, Fax: (02) 746 8426

What is Auslan (Australian sign language)?

'Auslan' is the name given to the sign language of the Australian deaf community. The language is used by deaf children and adults to communicate with each other at school or at work, and with their families and friends. It is used as the medium of instruction in some schools and classrooms with deaf students. With the aid of sign language interpreters, Auslan is used to convey course content in tertiary education (TAFE and universities) and to facilitate the participation of deaf students in tutorials and classes; it is also used to enable deaf people to access and participate equally in a wide range of work related activities (eg, meetings, conferences, training sessions, etc.) and social situations and services (eg, political, legal, medical, and religious).

There is no one world sign language used by all deaf people. Different countries and different deaf communities have different sign languages. The local sign language has grown and developed over the past two hundred years from three main varieties of sign language brought to Australia from the British isles by teachers, members of religious communities and deaf people. Like users of British Sign Language (BSL), most Auslan signers use a two-handed manual alphabet for fingerspelling, though some older signers with a Catholic or Irish Catholic background use a one-handed manual alphabet. Two varieties of BSL—one a northern (Edinburgh-based) variety and one a southern (London-based) variety—have more or less merged in Australia, but they still account for some regional differences, especially those between Sydney-based and Melbourne-based signers.

Besides fingerspelling, which deaf people use to spell out English words and names using different handshapes or different hand gestures to represent each of the 26 letters of the English alphabet, Auslan consists of a rich system of gestures and signs to represent concepts, ideas and things, just as English speakers use spoken and written words to represent concepts, ideas and things.

The signs of Auslan are put together in sentences in ways that are often quite different from English sentences. This simply means that there is not a simple one-to-one match of Auslan signs to English words. There is nothing unusual about this—the same thing applies to the words of one spoken language and the words of another spoken language. They never match exactly and they are arranged in sentences in different ways (ie, languages have different grammars).

One interesting thing about the grammar of Auslan is that it makes use of facial expression and lots of different sign modifications involving movement and space to convey different types of meaning. With facial expression, for example, when you ask a question you usually have a quizzical look on your face (ie, you open your eyes wide and lift up your eyebrows) as well as use a question sign (such as 'who', 'where', 'when', etc.) if needed. With movement, for example, you can repeat the movement in a sign to show that something happens again and again, or change the direction in a sign to show who does an action and who or what is affected by it.

Also many Auslan signs are iconic. That is, they 'look like' or are obviously connected to the concept, idea, or thing they represent. (Just like some English words 'sound like' what they mean—like 'bang', 'cock-a-doodle-do', or 'whoosh'). However, in the vast majority of signs the connection is not obvious at all and people need to be told the connection in order to learn the sign correctly. Indeed, in many signs there is no connection between form and meaning—just as there is no necessary connection with the English word 'rock', and a rock.

In summary, Auslan is a visual-gestural language unlike English which is primarily an auditory-oral language. It is the language of the Australian deaf community and is different from other deaf sign languages around the world (of which there are many). It is different from English.