



Movement game

Students make some animal shapes using their hands.

Where and why are shadows formed?

A shadow is formed when an opaque body lies in the path of a beam of light. The image of the shadow appears on a surface, or in the space behind a body which is being illuminated by a light source, such as the Sun, a lamp, a street lamp or a torch.

What decides the shape and size of a shadow?

The shadow corresponds with the shape of the object that is in the light beam's path. The size of the shadow's image can be changed by varying the distance between a given object or body, the light source and the screen.

Do objects made of plastic, wood, metal or glass cast the same shadow? Does a light directed onto a clear plastic bag produce a shadow?

No. Transparent objects, such as glass or a plastic bag, cast a fainter shadow. Opaque objects on the other hand, such as those made of wood, metal and opaque plastic, cast a strong and distinct shadow. This happens because the beams of light pass through transparent objects while opaque ones stop the light. This is how a distinct shadow is formed.



Video/ Slide show

Watch the film: Shadow puppet play.

What role does light play in the theater?

In its most basic form, stage lighting functions to make the actors and their surroundings visible to the audience. But it can also be used for the following purposes:

- Evoke the appropriate mood,
- Indicate the time of day and location,
- Shift emphasis from one stage area to another,
- Reinforce the style of the production,
- Make objects on stage appear flat or three dimensional.

Are shadows capable of performing a play in the way real actors do?

A shadow play, also known as shadow puppetry, uses flat articulated figures (shadow puppets) to create cut-out figures, which are held between a source of light and a translucent screen. Various effects can be achieved by moving both the puppets and the light source. A talented puppeteer can make the figures appear to walk, dance, fight, nod and laugh.