STORY TELLING WITH THE SCISSORS

BY M. HELEN BECKWITH
Story Telling with the Scissors.

By M. Helen Beckwith.

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Introduction.

The pleasure some little children have taken in free-hand paper cutting during the past two years has led to the preparation of this little book. It is hoped that kindergarten and primary teachers who have not tried this occupation with the little ones may be induced to do so, and that it will be helpful to mothers in answering the oft-repeated question, "Mamma, what can I do now?"

The illustrations are not to be used as copies by the children, but are to serve as suggestions for them and for the teachers.

Free-hand cutting is not to take the place of modeling, drawing, or painting, but is to supplement all of these, and afford another method of expression.

In modeling, with little children, we construct the object, in drawing we represent the outline, and in painting we emphasize its color.

In cutting, the child looks at an object and cuts its "front view" from paper with scissors. He represents its plane surface, and is led to see objects in mass rather than in detail, a habit of great value in drawing. He also cuts from dictation, from memory, and illustrates stories. This requires concentrated attention, clear imaging, and connected thought.

MATERIALS.

Scissors.—Pointed ones are best, and there is little danger of children injuring themselves with them—especially when they are old enough to go to school. Blunt ones will do very well, however.

Paper.—White, or manila drawing paper, or the unruled "pencil paper" usually included in school supplies. Colored paper is always attractive to children, but it is wise to use it sparingly, except for backgrounds. The results are usually inartistic, so much better color effects can be produced with water color or colored chalk.

Mounting Sheets.—Coated papers in soft, delicate colors are prettiest; engine colored papers (alike on both sides) are very good, while common brown wrapping paper is not to be despised and is cheapest of all.

Paste.—Add a tablespoonful of gum tragacanth to a pint of cold water. Let it stand for ten or twelve hours and it will be of the consistency of jelly. Add a few drops of oil of cloves and it is ready for use. Each child may be given a little of the paste on a piece of thick paper, but this method is a waste of time and is always inconvenient. Procure, if possible, some of the little brown glass jars with metallic covers that druggists use for ointments. They cost but a few cents each when bought in quantity. Let each child keep one filled with paste in his desk; give him a flat wooden cigar lighter or a toothpick for a paste stick, and he is ready to mount his cutting at a moment’s notice.
THE FIRST LESSON.

Choose an object familiar to all, simple in outline, and large enough to be easily seen, e.g., an apple, a pear, a pitcher, a cup. Question as to size and form; let the children show with their hands how wide it is, how tall, where it is the smallest, where the largest. Then, with no pencil lines or outline of any kind, let them cut from the uncolored paper, previously distributed, the shape of the object. Be sure and cut with the children, showing them that you do not make unnecessary "scraps." Don't be too critical of first attempts, but discourage the cutting of tiny things. The best results may be pinned up on the wall, or mounted on colored paper. Later, when the hand is under better control, let each child mount his own cuttings on a colored mounting sheet. This will teach neatness, arrangement and proportion.

Lessons in dictation and cutting from memory should follow. "Cut the pear we drew yesterday; cut the pumpkin we painted this morning; cut two kinds of leaves, three kinds of fruit," etc.

"What is mamma doing to-day? Washing? Let us sing 'This is the way we wash our clothes.' What does mamma use? You may cut the things, paste them on this paper, and take them home to her."

"How many have a baby at home? What does she like to play with? Cut her dress, her shoes, her playthings."

"It is growing cold. I saw a flock of birds flying south this morning. Cut and paste them for me."

"Cut me the things you saw on your way to school this morning; cut something you have at home and see if I can guess what it is."

Again, show them that by cutting straight in from the edge of the paper and following the outline one has in his mind—not drawn on the paper—the outside margin can be cut in one piece. This margin may then be joined so neatly that the one seam will hardly show. Mount both the cutting and the margin, and you will have two pictures with opposite effects in color. Simple stories may be written on the blackboard for children to read and illustrate for seat work; leaves may be cut and mounted for borders, and number problems may be solved.

Older children can do very effective work in paper cutting. One school at least has made very artistic posters to advertise a little dramatic entertainment, the proceeds of which went to buy pictures for the school. But it is for the little folks that this book is prepared, so as it is easier for them to cut the different objects in the stories, these have been suggested in the illustrations of the simple rhymes. These jingles follow the seasons; and common, every-day subjects that are in use in all kindergartens and primary schools have purposely been selected.
MONDAY.
This is the way we wash our clothes,
Wash our clothes, wash our clothes,
This is the way we wash our clothes,
So early Monday morning.
TUESDAY.
This is the way we iron our clothes,
Iron our clothes, iron our clothes,
This is the way we iron our clothes,
So early Tuesday morning.
WEDNESDAY.
Wednesday comes and our clothes are aired,
Clothes are aired, clothes are aired,
Wednesday comes and our clothes are aired,
And now we'll do our mending.
Thursday comes and our work is done,
Work is done, work is done,
Thursday comes and our work is done,
Now we'll go out calling.
FRIDAY.
This is the way we sweep and dust,
Sweep and dust, sweep and dust,
This is the way we sweep and dust,
So early Friday morning.
SATURDAY.
This is the way we bake our food,
Bake our food, bake our food,
This is the way we bake our food,
So early Saturday morning.
SUNDAY.
This is the Church where we always go,
    Always go, always go,
This is the Church where we always go,
    Every Sunday morning.
A RHYME FOR BABY.

This is the baby
So shy and sweet;

Here are the shoes
For her little feet.

See her new dress
Of color so blue;

Look at her dear
Little sunbonnet, too.
A rattle she has, 
Made of bright tin,

When bedtime comes, 
Out the stars peep,

And baby and kitty 
Both go to sleep.

And this little cart 
To take a ride in.
FRUIT VENDER.
Will you buy my cherries red,
Cherries red, cherries red;
Will you buy my cherries red,
My fair lady?

If you like, here are lemons yellow,
Lemons yellow, lemons yellow,
If you like, here are lemons yellow,
My fair lady.
Here are purple plums so sweet,
    Plums so sweet, plums so sweet,
Here are purple plums so sweet,
    My fair lady.

Choose the ones you like to eat,
    Like to eat, like to eat,
Choose the ones you like to eat,
    My fair lady.

(From an old rhyme.)
LEAVES.

Oak leaves and maple,
Yellow and brown,
Blown by the wind,
Come fluttering down.
SQUIRREL.

"One day as Mr. Squirrel went up his tree to bed,
A very large hickory nut fell upon his head.
'Although I'm very fond of nuts, Mr. Squirrel then did say,
'I'd very much rather that they did not come that way'."

From Small Songs for Small Singers.
By permission of G. Schirmer, pub.
BIRDS.

To the warm sunny South
The dear birds will go,
To stay until Spring,
Away from the snow.
HALLOWE'EN.

Three little bunnies,
- Out for a run
In the bright moonlight,
Oh, what fun!

"Dear," said the little one,
"What is that
Sitting on the fence
With cheeks so fat?

See its big teeth,
And eyes so bright!
Then home they ran
With all their might.
THANKSGIVING.

LANDING OF THE PILGRIMS.

"The breaking waves dashed high On a stern and rock-bound coast, And the woods against a stormy sky Their giant branches tossed.

And the heavy night hung dark The hills and waters o'er, When a band of exiles moored their bark On the wild New England shore."
COLONIAL DAYS.
CHICKENS AND DUCKS.
CHRISTMAS.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

Tall and straight and fair to see
Stands the green-clad Christmas tree.

Here are candles all aglow,
To light its branches high and low.

Gifts in plenty there will be,
Some for you and some for me.

And we'll laugh and clap with glee,
Dancing 'round our Christmas tree.
CHRISTMAS TOYS.
See the pretty Christmas toys
For the happy girls and boys.
A LETTER TO SANTA CLAUS.

'Twas just before Christmas, and Mother Goose said,
One night when the children had all gone to bed,
"A letter to Santa I surely must write
And send it to Northland this very night."

Dear Santa, I write you,
To say if you've presents for my girls
And boys
Do give 'em some things that won't make a noise.

So she put on her glasses and took down her pen,

An umbrella I want for little Bo-peep,
She often gets wet when she goes for the sheep,
And boots for Boy Blue—his shoes are so old
I very much fear the child will take cold.

They may have a few toys, but I can't
stand a din;
A book and a ball, a top that will spin;

Or a boat with a sail, but no whistle or fife,
I've had quite noise enough for the rest
of my life.

Bring a soldier's cap for the Piper's son,
You know last year you brought a drum—
And 'twas rub-a-dub-dub till I thought'
I should die;
Now let me have quiet—dear Santa,
good-by I'
SNOW.

"Here is a snowflake, dainty and white,
Wandering from the sky;
It floats like a feather, airy and light,
Down from the clouds on high.
Open the window and let it come in;
Stay, pretty wanderer, stay;
A beautiful raindrop it once has been,
Soon it will melt away."
TIME.

"Tick-tock, this is the way
Goes the pendulum night and day,
Tick-tock, tick-tock, never ceasing says
the clock.
Time for work and time for fun,
Time to sleep when day is done,
Tick-tock says the clock.
Time to rest each little head,
Time the children were in bed."
THE MINER.

Busy miner, what are you doing
In your deep mine all day long?
Black coal now you see I am digging,
To make fires so bright and warm.
Cling, clang, cling, clang, hear the pick-axe ringing,
Cling, clang, cling, this song 'tis ever singing,
Pick-axe ringing, miner ever digging
Coal to make us snug and warm.
THE BLACKSMITH.

"Ho, Rider! ho, ho!
No longer can your horse go.
I tell you, sir, she wants a shoe,
The blacksmith he will make it you.
Some nails to hold it on her foot
The blacksmith now for you will put,
Then, Master Rider,
You can again bestride her.
Then, Master Rider,
You can again bestride her.

(From an old English song.)
THE SHOEMAKER.

"There's a wee little man in a queer little house,
Lives over the way, you see,
And he sits at his window and sews all day,
Making shoes for you and me.

From Songs of the Child World.
By permission The John Church Co., pubs.
H-hap a-tap tap, a-tap tap, a-tap tap.
Hear the hammer's tick-tick-tick.
H-hap a-tap tap, a-tap a-tap tap.
Making shoes for you and me.
THE CARPENTER.

With my carpenter's tools
I am working away;
Shall I make you a house
Or a barn to-day?
THE WHEELWRIGHT.
THE LIGHTHOUSE.
BOBBY SHAFTOE.

Do you remember the story old
Mother Goose so often told,
Of Bobby Shaftoe, who went to sea
With silver buckles on his knee,
Pretty Bobby Shaftoe?

In this little ship he sailed away,
The day was fair and the sun shone gay,
But in Bobby's eye there gleamed a tear
As he bade good-by to his mother dear,
Loving Bobby Shaftoe.

For many days he saw no land,
Nothing but water on either hand,
With now and then a bird or two
Like a tiny speck in the sky so blue,
Lonely Bobby Shaftoe.
But no voyage can last forever, you know,
And one morning the pilot cried "Land
oh ho!"
A wonderful country it proved to be,
With the biggest windmills you ever did see.
Happy Bobby Shaftoe.

But a windy place it was, I declare,
And every day when the weather was fair
Each boy you would see out flying a kite;
Bob joined in this fun with all his might,
Jolly Bobby Shaftoe.

But in a couple of days he sailed away
To Chinatown, many miles away.
Here he bought for his sister an elegant fan.
And laughed when the boys called him
"Melican man."
Merry Bobby Shaftoe.
He bought for his mother a chest of tea,
And a cup and saucer fair to see;
Then he visited lands of every clime
That are told in story or sung in rhyme,
Roving Bobby Shaftoe.

But the strong east wind was always his friend,
And it carried him safe to his journey's end.
Glad was he when he saw once more
His own dear home and native shore,
Tired Bobby Shaftoe.
FOWLS.
See the little fishes
In the brook at play,
Gliding through the water
Always bright and gay.
SPRING GAMES.
At first it shines and then it rains
Upon an April day,
And then the sunshine comes again
And we go out to play.
FLOWERS.
"The little flowers came through the ground,
    At Easter-time, at Easter-time;
They raised their heads and looked around,
    At happy Easter-time."
And every little bud did say,
'Dear children, bless this happy day,
For all that sleep shall wake some day,
At happy Easter-time.'
ARBOR DAY.
BIRD DAY.

"Do you ne're think what wondrous beings these?
Whose habitations in the tree-tops even
Are half-way houses on the road to heaven?
Think every morning when the sun peeps through
The dim, leaf-latticed windows of the grove,
How jubilant the birds are.
Remember, too, 'tis always morning somewhere,
And from shore to shore
Somewhere the birds are singing evermore."
BOY BLUE.

This is the horn Boy Blue did blow
Out in the meadow long ago.
He was the boy who tended sheep,
And under the haystack fell asleep.

His father told him to watch them well,
And see that no harm to them befell;
But while he took his nap that day
Into the corn the cows did stray.
The lambkins, full of frolic and fun,
Ran into the meadow one by one;
A jolly time they had, no doubt,
With no sharp-eyed boy to drive them out.

For not till the stars began to peep
Did little Boy Blue wake from his sleep.
Oh! his father scolded him well, they say,
For all the mischief done that day.
PATRIOTISM.

“Our country 'tis America,
    Our flag red, white and blue,
And to the land of Washington
    We ever will be true.
Then wave the flag and wave again,
    And give three loud hurrahs
For our beloved America,
    And for the stripes and stars.”