

# The Gingerbread Man

By David Wood

Recommended for pre-school and up

## Synopsis

Life on the kitchen counter of the Big Ones can be fun and full of adventure. When Cuckoo, the Cuckoo bird in the Cuckoo clock, gets a sore throat and can't perform his chiming duties, Salt and Pepper try to cheer him up and reassure him that he won't be discarded in the dustbin. But things really get interesting when they all notice someone new and sweet-smelling—the Gingerbread Man.

This newly created cookie creature causes quite a commotion, stirring up the spices' sedentary life. They get so excited by the new arrival that they almost forget about Cuckoo's crisis. The Gingerbread Man is determined to help his new friend cure his ailment, and so decides to risk an ascent to the Top Shelf—the home of the gruff Old Bag, a tea bag that has no use for others. Once on her shelf, however, the Gingerbread Man discovers that the Old Bag is really just lonely and feeling left out.

Collaborating to foil the nibbling attempts of Sleek the Mouse, the group comes together in newfound friendship.

## For Children

### In the Night Kitchen

Maurice Sendak

### Mouse Mess

Linnea Asplind Riley

### Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs

Judi Barrett

### How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World

Marjorie Priceman

### If You Give a Mouse a Cookie

Laura Numeroff

### The Little Engine that Could

Watty Piper

### Hoot

Jane Hissey

### Corduroy

Don Freeman

### Tough Cookie

David Wisniewski

## ★ Spotlight

### The Gingerbread Boy

Richard Egielski

This classic folktale follows the adventures of a gingerbread man who escapes from the kitchen and seeks his fortune out in the world.

## Resource List

### For Adults

#### Got Milk? The Cookie Book

Peggy Cullen

#### The Giant Encyclopedia of Art & Craft Activities for Children 3 to 6

Kathy Charner

#### Creative Drama for the Classroom Teacher

Ruth Heining

#### Dramatic Structures

Cecily O'Neill and Alan Lambert

#### Drama for Learning

Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton

The Creative Drama website:

[www.creativedrama.com](http://www.creativedrama.com)

## ★ Spotlight

### Gingerbread for All Seasons

Teresa Layman

Easy to follow instructions and reproducible patterns will have you rolling out your own gingerbread lanterns, lighthouses, and spice-scented estates.

# CHILDREN AT PLAY

Open the door to a child at play and you enter a world where the simple act of putting on a hat or scarf allows the child to become anything from a cowboy to the cowboy's horse. The way children entertain themselves has been studied and discussed for years. Jean Piaget, an authority on child development, theorizes that children aged four to seven are in a stage of development called the *intuitive period*. Children in this stage will often use a particular object to represent something entirely different from what it actually is. A teacup may start out as a teacup at a tea party, but may soon become another person enjoying an afternoon tea. Also during this period children are drawn to, and can relate more easily with, stories that include fantasy coupled with anthropomorphism (attributing human characteristics to animals or things), examples of this can be seen in *The Gingerbread Man*. All the characters seen in the play are inanimate objects the audience must believe to be real. The intuitive period is an ideal time in a child's cognitive development to stretch their creativity.



Teachers custom-make learning experiences to promote the utilization of the imagination in their students. Participants in creative drama have the opportunity to develop language and communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and creativity. Using drama in a classroom can be an exciting and motivating way to promote a positive self-concept, social awareness, empathy towards others, group cooperation, and an understanding of storytelling. Dorothy Heathcote, one of England's best-known educators, suggests that using this type of methodology in the classroom brings out what students already know, but don't know they know.

Outside the classroom there are opportunities for students to explore creative drama at home and in organized classes at many theatre companies in the community. These programs tend to focus on understanding a story or creating an unique environment by having the students imitate and reenact. The students use imagination, movement, sensory skills, and cooperation as ways of expressing themselves. The classes center on students as participants, not as performers.

Winifred Ward, a pioneer of child drama, said "drama comes to the door of school with every child," and in many pre- and elementary school classrooms teachers are using creative drama techniques to activate all types of curriculum areas. Creative drama in the classroom can be defined as an "improvisational, non-exhibitory, process-centered form of drama in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact, and reflect upon human experiences."



EALRs: Communication 3.1, 3.2 Arts 2.3, 3.2

## ACTIVITY:

I can be anything...anything I can be...I can be a ....

This exercise is a way to introduce creative drama in your classroom:

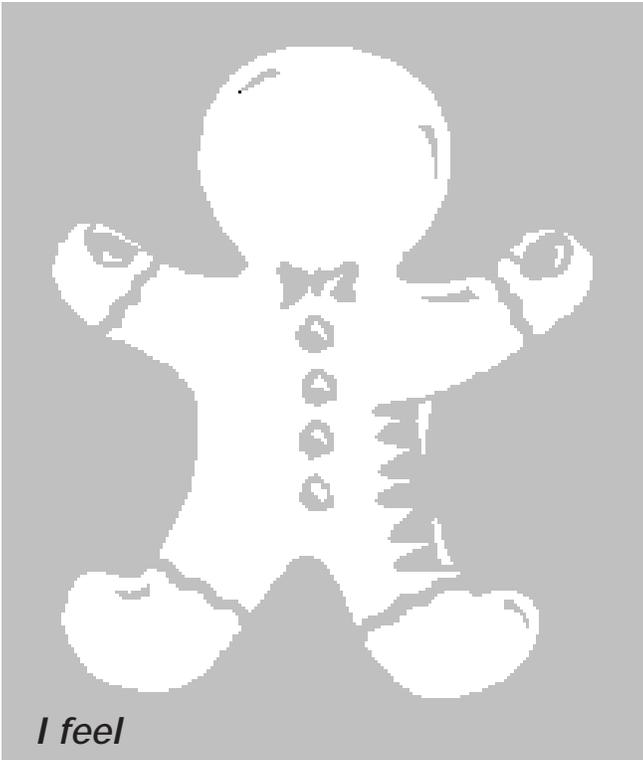
- § The teacher (or leader) and students, with their hands in the air, repeat the words, " I can be anything...anything I can be."
- § The teacher fills in the end of the saying. For example: "I can be anything...anything I can be.. I can be a...mouse," which is the prompt for the students to become mice.
- § The teacher freezes the action by putting his/her hands in the air, which is the prompt for the students to freeze all sound and movement and give their focus to the teacher.
- § As soon as full focus is given a new round is started.
- § After a few rounds the teacher may add more descriptive prompts such as "I can be a...mouse who moves in slow motion."



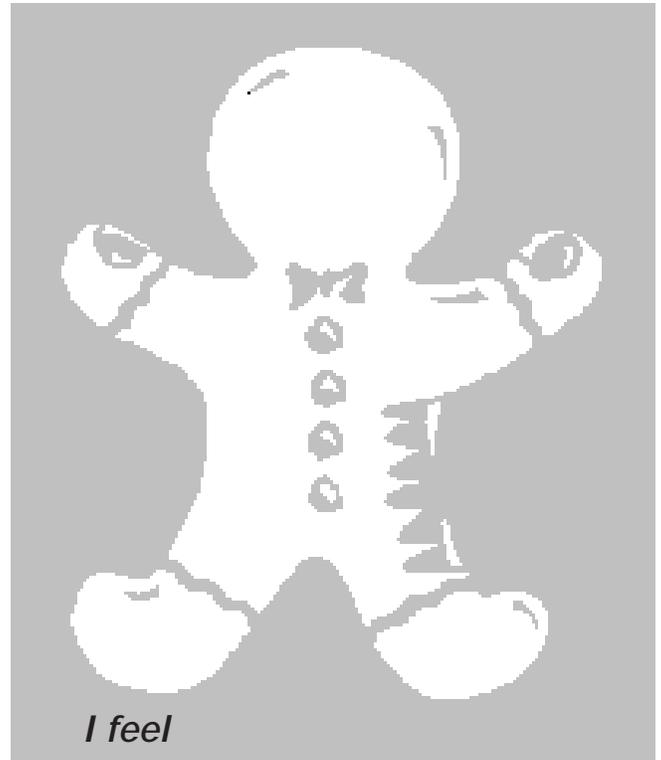
## HELP! GIVE THE GINGERBREAD MAN A FACE

If you had to give the Gingerbread Man eyes, a nose, and a mouth, what supplies would you use? Would you use different things to make him look happy? What would you use to make him look sad or scared?

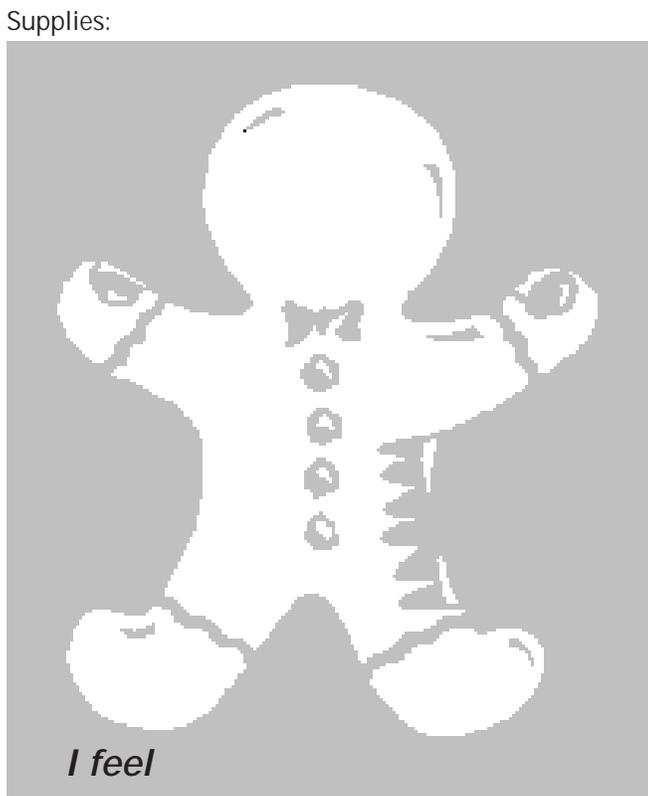
Use the drawings on this page to create four different expressions for Gingerbread Man and list what supplies you would use to make each one.



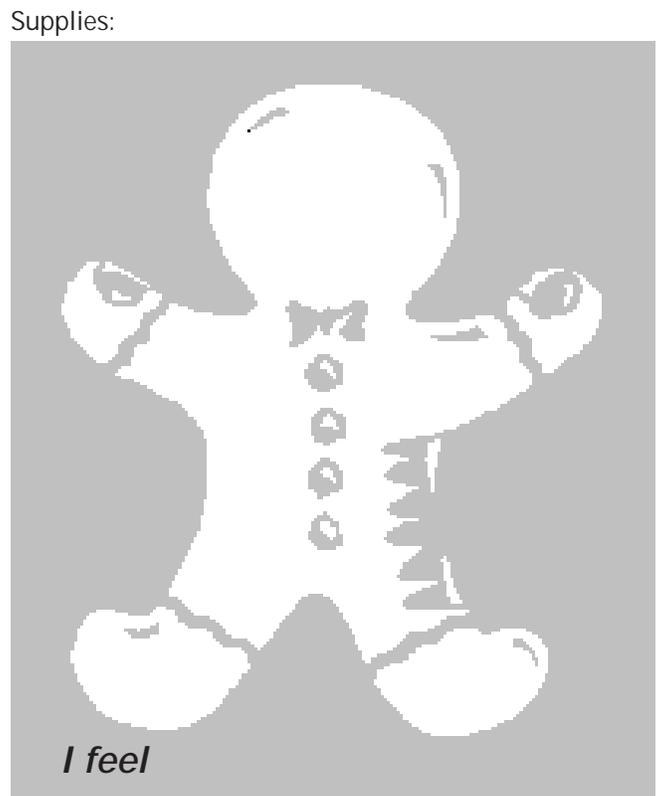
Supplies:



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