

# **Wycinanki and Polish Folktales**

## **An Integrated Art and Literature Lesson**

**Grade Level: 3-8**

### **Created by**

**Kathleen Kowalczyk, art educator  
Dean Stadel, art educator  
Sandra Kowalczyk, reading specialist**

### **Objectives**

- Students will use library and Internet resources to locate Polish folktales.
- Students will read and re-tell Polish folktales.
- Students will gain an appreciation of Wycinanki (Polish paper cutting).
- Students will identify and create a symmetrical or an asymmetrical design.
- Students will identify and use positive and negative space.

### **Art Materials**

- Colored papers (origami, gift wrap, craft paper, colored Xerox paper)
- Pencils
- Scissors
- Elmer's Glue

### **Resources**

- *The Dancing Man* by Ruth Bornstein
- Collections of folktales
- World map
- Map of Poland
- Wycinanki examples

### **Reading Activities**

- Provide background information on Poland.
- Have students locate Poland on a world map and Baltic Sea on a map of Poland.
- Read aloud *The Dancing Man*.
- Discuss how folklore, including stories and folk art techniques, is passed from generation to generation.
- Read aloud several short folktale selections.
- Review characteristics of the folktale genre.
- Model oral retellings of the tales.

### **Wycinanki Procedure**

- Provide background information on the folk art of Wycinanki. Point out regional differences in examples shown.
- Have class brainstorm visual images from Polish folktales read.
- Have each student select favorite folktale.
- Draw 3-5 thumbnail sketches using visual imagery from their folktale.
- Select best design.
- Teacher demonstrates techniques of Wycinanki styles.
- Create Wycinanki.
- Oral retelling of folktale and presentation of finished product.

### **Key Terms**

- Folklore
- Folk art
- Folktale genre
- Wycinanki
- Symmetrical
- Asymmetrical
- Positive and negative space

### **Elements of Design**

- Shape
- Space
- Color