

KAMISHIBAI



WHAT IS KAMISHIBAI?

Kamishibai literally means Paper Theatre in Japanese. It is a series of illustrations on thick card placed in a specific order. On the back of each card there is written text which tells the story illustrated by the pictures. Often these cards are set inside a wooden Kamishibai Box.



The storyteller recites the text of the Kamishibai set while showing the illustration to the audience. The storyteller slides out the first picture card of the story when all the text is read out to reveal the second card. The storyteller then slides the first picture card to the back of the set. Each card is slid out sideways until the last card of the set is reached, at which point the story has ended. The text is organised in such a way that the storyteller can read the appropriate text when the illustration is visible at the front.

Kamishibai was a very popular form of entertainment on the streets of Japan intended for children before and continuing after WWII, before that is TV's were available to most households. This art form is also known as the origin of Anime.

HOW TO MAKE KAMISHIBAI

1. Choose a story that you want to tell.

Kamishibai is a storytelling tool. You have to have a story to share with your audience. Think of the reasons why your chosen story appeals to you and have an awareness of those reasons while you are making your Kamishibai, because that will interest your audience.



Here are three suggestions for your Kamishibai stories. . .



- Tell us a short story about you or someone you know. Imagine you have to introduce yourself or this person to someone you have never met. Tell us about the most curious thing about you or this other person.



- Your favourite object. Tell us why this object is important to you. How did this object end up in your possession?



- Choose a story that you want to tell, which you can either already know or create for your Kamishibai. Remember that there may not be time for you to tell the whole story, so try to edit and choose the bits that you like the most.

1. Choose an appropriate technique

Traditionally Kamishibai uses thick paper card with hand drawn illustrations. But this is the 21st century! Choose the best ways to create your Kamishibai images and how to present them. Consider your making time and the most appropriate style to suit your story. This could be something that you simply want to explore.

Here are my suggestions. . .



- Hand drawing on paper.



- Collage work on paper or on your screen.



- Series of photos.

You have to consider how to present your work.

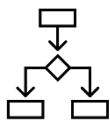
- On paper/thick card.
- On screen



OR



2. Breakdown your stories into small sections.



You need to break down your stories into a structure. Then you need to decide what kind of images would be best to capture the moments within each section of your story. You also need to condense or expand the text to go with each image, telling the story in the best way possible. I have attached the Kamishibai Planner. Please use this to organise your Kamishibai cards.

3. Make the Kamishibai pages



Now you have broken down your story and know which images and text to put onto each card. Create your story images and your story text separately to avoid confusion later – I will explain why when we get there!



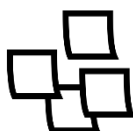
You must consider the size of your Kamishibai set. If you are using paper or card, then what is the size of your paper/card? A4 or A5 to make a small piece or even smaller? If you are using a screen, then which screens are you thinking of? A mobile phone? A large screen in your classroom? A laptop screen?

If you are making your Kamishibai set with paper then you need these materials:

- Paper to print out your text and your images or paper to make illustrations.
- Card (recommend to use at least 200gsm card) to attach images and text to.
- Glue or tape to attach card and paper.
- Drawing materials like pencils, paints, colouring pens.
- Scissors.



Step 1. Create your images on paper or print out to your chosen size.



Step 2. Print out your text. Please print out each section of text on to separate sheets of paper according to its picture card. So for example, your text for Card 2 should not be on the same paper as for Card 1.



Step 3. Make two piles; one pile for images, one pile for text.



Step 4. Have your card ready. Attach each image onto a card. Put the text pile to one side.



Step 5. Line up your cards in the correct pictorial order.

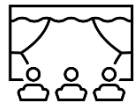


Step 6. Take your story text and add them on to the back of the pictorial cards, with the appropriate card showing at the front. So for example, the story text for Card 1 will be on the back of the last card. The text for Card 2 will be on the back of Card 1, and so on.



If you are using a digital screen, you will need to consider how to organise your images and text. You can use Power Point or have images on your chosen device as well as printed text on paper.

4. Performance



Here are a few tips for you to consider when you are performing your Kamishibai.

- Make sure your audience can hear you and can see your Kamishibai story cards.
- Make sure your hands do not cover the image.
- Consider the pace and quality of sliding and handling your story cards.
- Adopting different voices between your narrator self and the characters you are playing, if the characters do speak.
- Change your performance tempo according to the story's drama.
- You can film your performance so that you can share with others later and keep as a fun reminder.