

## object lessons

Since 2007 I've been experimenting with crafting wordless explanations, in which hands manipulating objects on a small stage are asked to take on the work of explanation that usually rests with language. Over time, I've come to be most curious about the way in which language permits certain kinds of sense to come forward while actively preventing other kinds of sense from being made. Can this play of hands and objects do the work of foregrounding relations such that *the relation itself* becomes the subject? Is it helpful to have "a something" in relation to another "something" if we wish to temper our noun-heavy ways of thinking? And is this just an idiosyncratic wish of my own to see telling take this form, or might this play of hands over and through objects do something useful within the larger project of systems thinking?

Several sets of gathered forms, each a kind of alphabet, now exist. Some of these were made for particular contexts such as generating wordless didactics (videos) for a gallery exhibition, and some were put into play without pre-conceived end (live-streamed rehearsals).

These alphabets have been used as both interruption and supplement to verbal communication, in groups small and large, as preparation for other work and as work in and of itself.