Ways to Make Puppets

Puppets help bring children’s play to life. Creating scenarios for different characters can increase children’s vocabularies and storytelling skills and provide a safe way to express challenging feelings. And putting on a puppet show is just plain fun! Make some of these puppets with the preschoolers in your class.

**Paper bag puppet**

Supplies: paper bag, pencil/pen/marker, glue, extras

- Lay a paper bag flat, with the bottom folded face-up at the top. The bottom flap will be the face.
- Add eyes, a nose, and a mouth.
- Stick your hand in the paper bag and use your fingers and thumb to move the puppet’s mouth.

**Shadow puppet**

Supplies: poster board, scissors, tape, straws or Popsicle sticks, a large piece of cardboard, white paper, a table lamp or flashlight

- Cut the desired shape for your puppet out of the poster board.
- Tape the puppet to a straw or Popsicle stick.
- To make a freestanding screen, fold back the ends of the cardboard so it stands on its own.
- Cut out a large rectangular space from the middle of the cardboard. This will be the screen for the puppets.
- Tape white paper over the cut-out space.
- Shine the table lamp or flashlight behind the screen and grab your puppet. Hold the puppet between the light and the screen. The audience in front will see the puppet shadow.

**Felt puppet**

Supplies: felt in multiple colors (at least two pieces), scissors, markers, glue, extras

- Trace the desired puppet shape on two pieces of felt and cut them out.
- Put the shapes together and glue at the edges. Leave an opening for the hand.
- Decorate with felt scraps and use extras to add hair, clothes, eyes, and other features.

**Finger puppet**

Supplies: old glove, scissors, glue, markers, extras

- Cut the fingers off the glove where they meet the hand. Put the hand part in the scrap box.
- Decorate each finger with markers or extras.

**Cardboard roll puppet**

Supplies: paper towel roll, Popsicle stick, glue, scissors, construction paper, yarn, cloth scraps, googly eyes

- Decorate the cardboard roll with yarn, cloth scraps, googly eyes, and other extras.
- Glue the popsicle stick inside the roll as a handle.

**Extras for personalizing puppets**

- puff balls, many colors
- feathers
- yarn
- googly eyes
- pipe cleaners
- ribbon
- paper strips/curls
- fabric scraps
**Note:** It’s best for adults to work with children to make the last four puppet types.

### Jointed puppet
**Supplies:** cardboard, glue, scissors, markers or crayons, metal paper fasteners, Popsicle sticks, extras
- Cut out the desired puppet shape from the cardboard. Decorate it.
- Cut off the arms and legs.
- Poke holes in the body, near where the arms and legs were joined to it. Poke holes in the arms and legs, near the cut ends.
- Reattach the arms and legs, lining up the holes and securing the limbs with metal paper fasteners.
- Glue the finished puppet onto a Popsicle stick or piece of cardboard.

### Sock puppet
**Supplies:** sock, marker, scissors, cardboard, fabric, glue, extras
- Put your hand in the sock, with fingers in the toe area and wrist in the heel.
- Form a mouth in the sock using your thumb and fingers. With a marker, draw a straight line where the mouth is.
- Remove the sock from your hand and cut along the line.
- Cut out two ovals, three inches wide and five inches long, one from the cardboard and one from the fabric.
- Glue the fabric oval onto the cardboard oval.
- Fold the oval in half, fabric side in.
- Glue the oval in the mouth hole of the sock.
- Decorate the sock puppet.

### Unstuffed animal puppet
**Supplies:** preloved stuffed animal, glue or sewing needle and thread
- Purchase stuffed animals from garage sales or thrift stores.
- Determine where the puppeteer’s hand will go, and cut an opening there in the animal.
- Remove most of the stuffing, but leave the head filled.
- Finish the edges of the hand hole with hand-sewn stitching or glue.

### Two-stick or dragon puppet
**Supplies:** colored paper, scissors, markers or crayons, glue, tape, Popsicle sticks or cardboard, extras
- Draw the head and tail of the dragon on colored paper.
- Cut out the head and tail.
- Cut another piece of colored paper in half lengthwise.
- Fold the two pieces, using accordion folds. Tape them together to make one long piece.
- Glue or tape one end of the folded paper to the dragon head and one end to the dragon tail.
- Glue or tape a popsicle stick to the dragon head and another one to the dragon tail.
- Decorate with extras to make the puppet more colorful.