

PUPPETS

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Picture points2

Drama and music.....3

Dramatisation with puppets; scenery and stage design; adapting stories; writing plays; building self-esteem.

Art and craft.....3

Instructions for making simple classroom puppets.

Resources8

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A selection of character and scenery shapes.

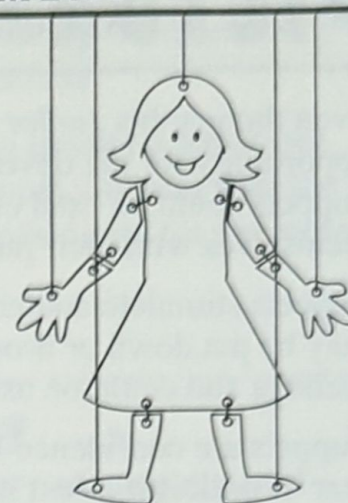
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- develop language and drama skills
- use their imaginations to role-play
- work as a group on a project
- develop fine motor skills
- understand the various ways puppets may be made and used
- make linkages between craft and language
- improve self-expression by choice of material and design
- extend their enjoyment of stories, rhymes and themes
- develop tone and projection in the voice
- gain confidence
- recycle materials.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- Fine motor skills.
- Observation.
- Language—discussion.
- Problem solving.
- Manipulation.
- Co-operation.
- Drawing, painting.
- Cutting, pasting.
- Construction.
- Role-playing.
- Confidence.
- Co-ordination.



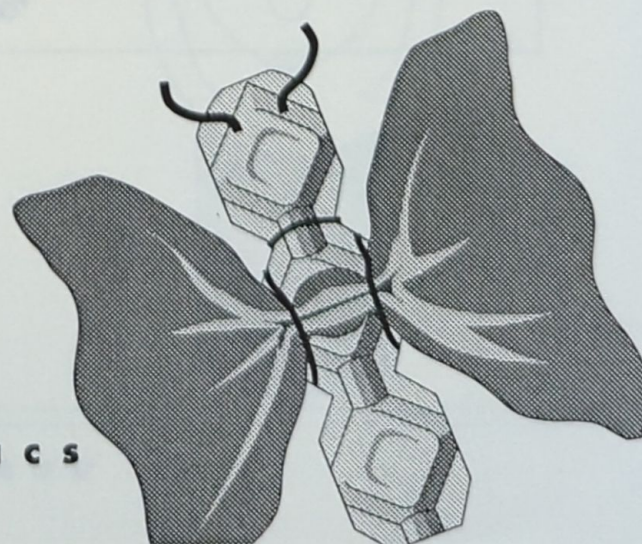
PREPARATION

Before the unit, gather these resources:

- all manner of 'junk' materials, as well as odd socks, pantyhose, iceblock-sticks, wool or string, rubber bands, coloured papers, paint, felt-tip pens, glue, scissors, stapler, buttons and beads, a variety of fabric scraps, paper plates, paper bags and cardboard
- a variety of books, posters, rhymes and songs for inspiration
- pictures or examples of different types of puppet
- tape-recorder and blank tapes
- video recorder and blank tapes.

INTEGRATION

- Link language and puppets through role play and by dramatising stories and rhymes.
- Link maths and puppets by calculating size, shape and balance in stage and scenery designs.
- Link science and puppets by observing how they may be manipulated.
- Link art and craft to puppets by choice of puppet, decoration and media used.
- Link social studies to puppets by studying the types of puppet common to different cultures.



PICTURE POINTS

Even though this *Junior Topics* focuses mainly on art and craft approaches, puppets provide a unique opportunity for the development of language by way of speech, intonation, expression and conversation. Puppets could be used either in a group situation or by an individual student. Encourage students to express themselves with their puppets after they have made them.

Puppets stimulate audience and listening skills and they can provide acceptable behaviour models. They may be put down or brought magically to life in an instant. They aid in the release of hostile or angry feelings and could be used to relate experiences. They entertain, and promote co-operation in play.

Puppets are confidence-builders and students could express their ideas with a puppet without inhibition or fear of criticism. Most importantly, they are made by students and used by them however they wish.

Most students will have some experience with puppets. Discuss puppets that students are already familiar with. For example, 'Sesame Street' and 'Play School' feature puppets which students will recognise.

Display the frieze, which shows students from Masada Primary School in NSW creating their own puppets from patterns provided in this text. The poster provides examples of finished puppets.

Tell us what you think of *Topics*.
We rely on your feedback to
improve the magazine. Do you
have any ideas for future issues?

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


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The blackline masters on the reverse of the frieze may be photocopied for use in the classroom and should not be declared in any return in respect of any photocopying licence.

SYMBOLS USED IN THIS MAGAZINE:

-  Picture points
-  Aims and objectives
-  New skill
-  Integration

DRAMA AND MUSIC

Use puppets to dramatise stories, poetry or rhymes. Music could be incorporated into this as well. Puppet plays provide a challenge for students to co-ordinate speech with specific movements.

Choose a simple story or poem that students know and can recite. Fairytales are familiar, fun and lend themselves to a variety of puppet characters. Stories from other countries and cultures are also an option. Students might like to write their own play for dramatisation.

After selecting a story or rhyme, make the appropriate puppets and choose a piece of background music. Students might even prefer to dramatise a piece of music without using a script. The music could be a simple piece with puppets 'moving' to the rhythm.

When staging a puppet play with young students, elaborate stages are not necessary. Keep the whole thing simple, easy to assemble and easy to store so that it may be used again and again.

Designing a puppet theatre or stage is an excellent way to introduce simple mathematical and scientific concepts. Discuss size, shape, balance, support, weight of material, area needed and the selection of materials to use. Once the type of stage is finalised, students might discuss basic scene decorations.

Old sheets make fine backdrops. Discuss the design and colour. Will the sheet be a plain dark colour or perhaps represent a scene? What size will it be? How will it be attached? Use this problem solving as a class project.

An easy and quick puppet theatre could be made from a small table or desk. Conceal three sides with material or paper to hide the puppeteers below.

ART AND CRAFT

Almost anything can be made into a puppet. Set aside a workshop area in the classroom where the 'makings' may be stored. Include space for the storage and display of puppets. This might be on shelves, in large boxes, on tables, or peg puppets on a string stretched across the room.

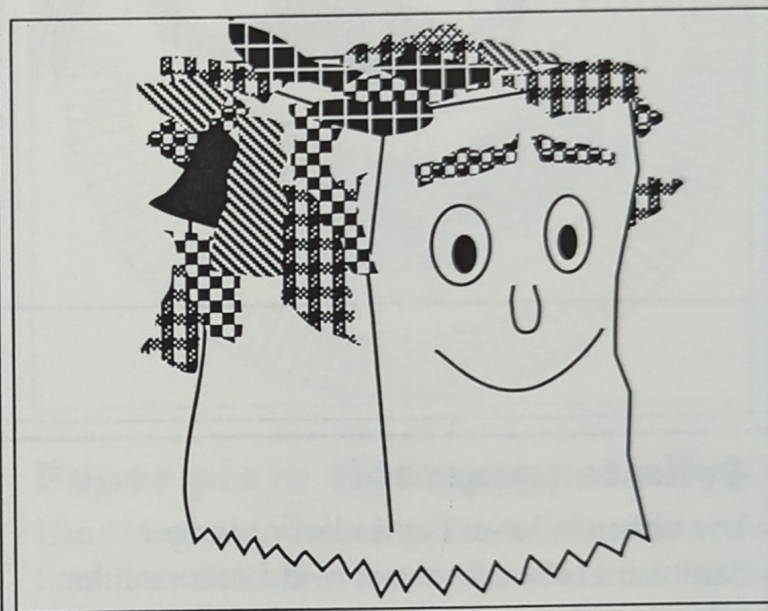
Give younger students puppet designs that are simple to make and use. Some students might not yet have a long enough attention span to

concentrate on the more difficult varieties. Too much teacher input could destroy the spontaneity and enthusiasm of some students.

Simple 'first puppets' might include a paper bag puppet, or a rod or sock puppet. Success with the simpler versions will fire enthusiasm for the more complicated designs.

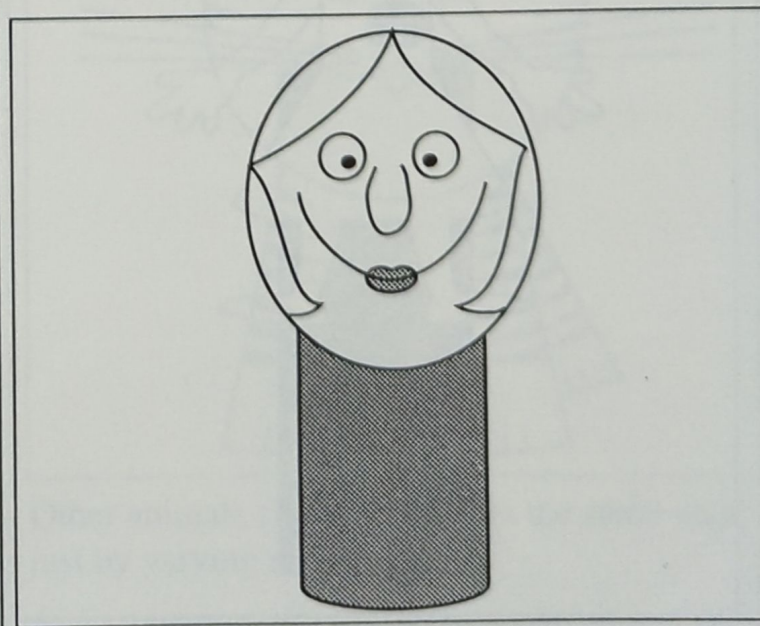
Paper bag puppet

Use paper bags and a variety of scrap material for decoration. Make sure the opening is at the bottom of the bag. Students might draw faces or glue colourful scraps onto the bag to decorate their character. Simply slip the bag over the hand to use as a puppet.



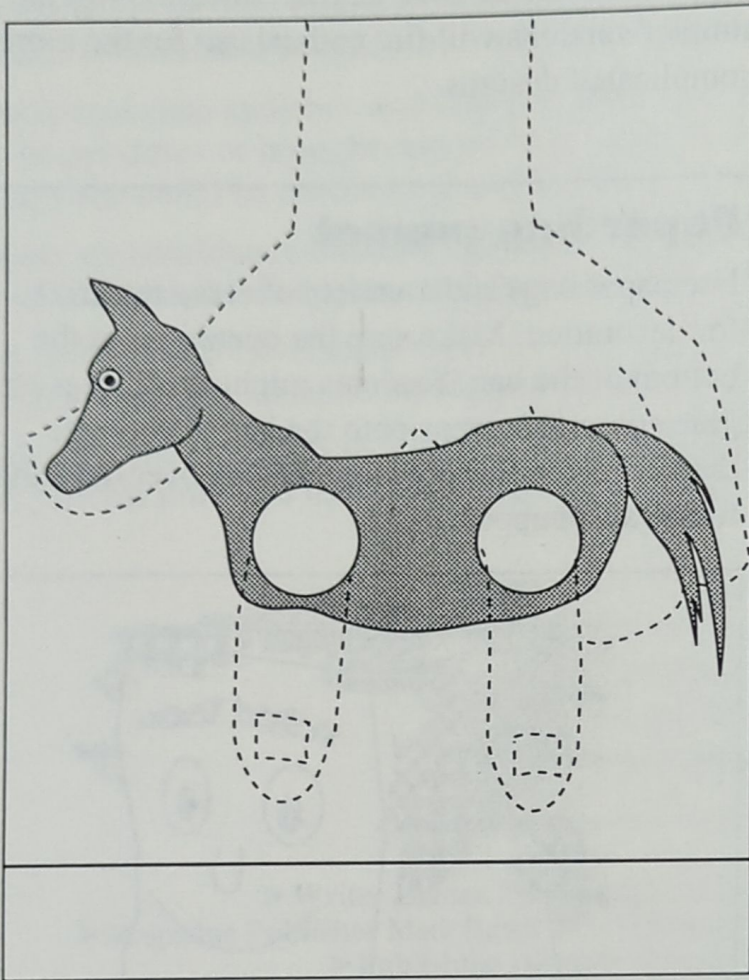
Finger puppet 1

Use cardboard and scrap materials for decoration to make this puppet. Encourage students to make cardboard cylinders to fit their fingers. Cut out a face and glue it onto the top of the cylinder. Children then put their finger into the cylinder to make a puppet.



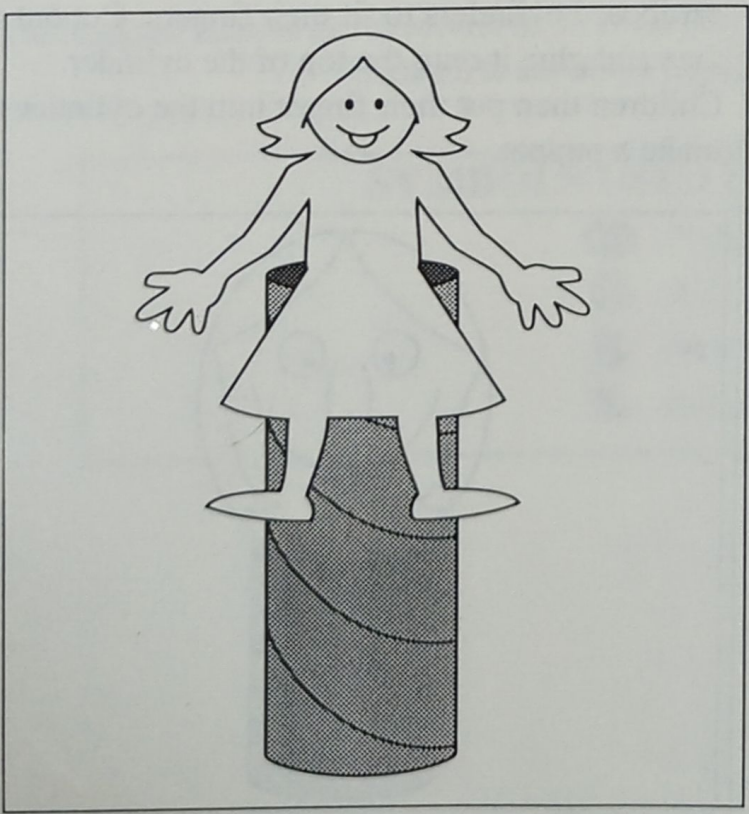
Finger puppet 2

A simple outline of any animal is ideal for this finger puppet. Draw an outline onto card, decorate, and cut holes for the fingers.



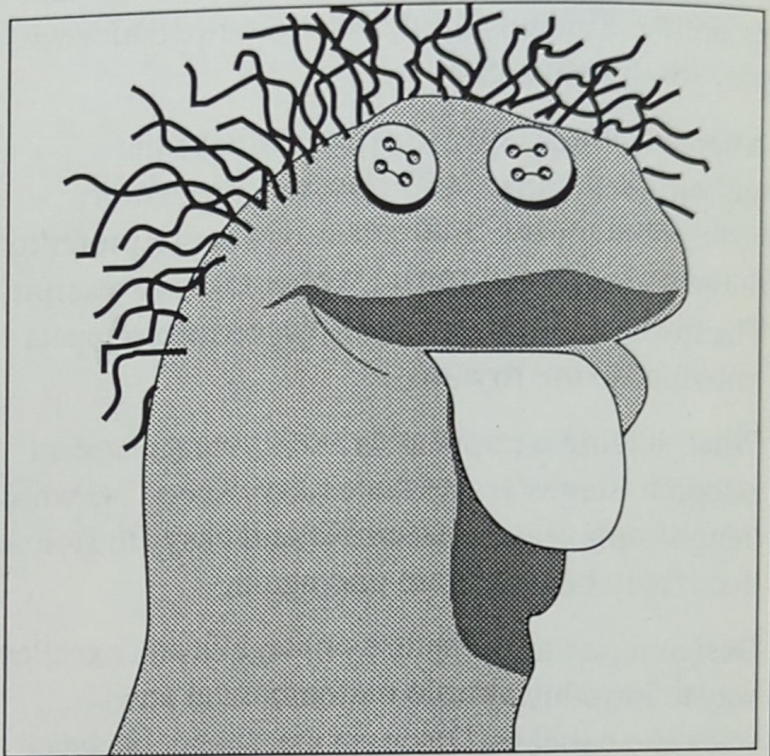
Cylinder puppet

Use either toilet-roll cylinders or longer cardboard tubes. Students could decorate the tubes in either an upright position (for people) or lengthwise (for many animals). To use as a puppet, students slip several fingers into the tube.



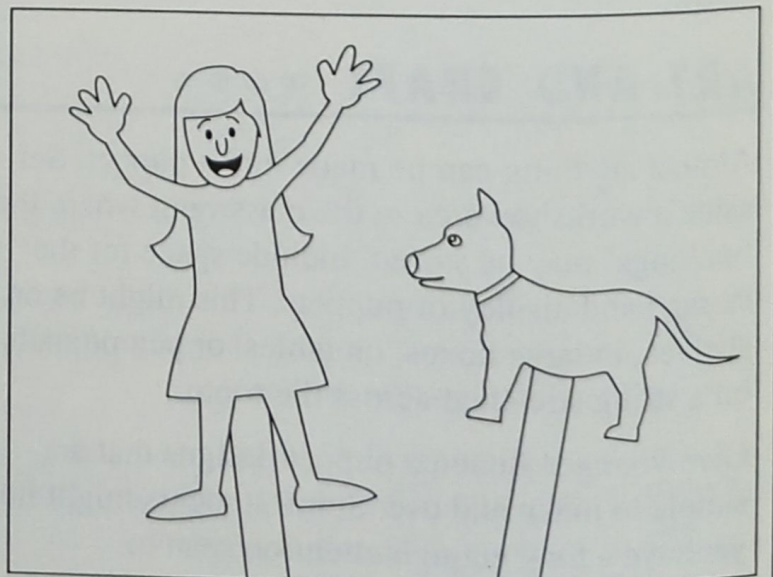
Sock puppet

Slip the sock onto the hand of a student so they know on which side to put the face. Glue on buttons or beads for eyes and a nose. Add scrap wool for hair. Fold in the toe of the sock if a mouth is needed, and add a scrap of material as a tongue. By varying hairstyles and facial features, these socks could be turned into people, animals, snakes or monsters.



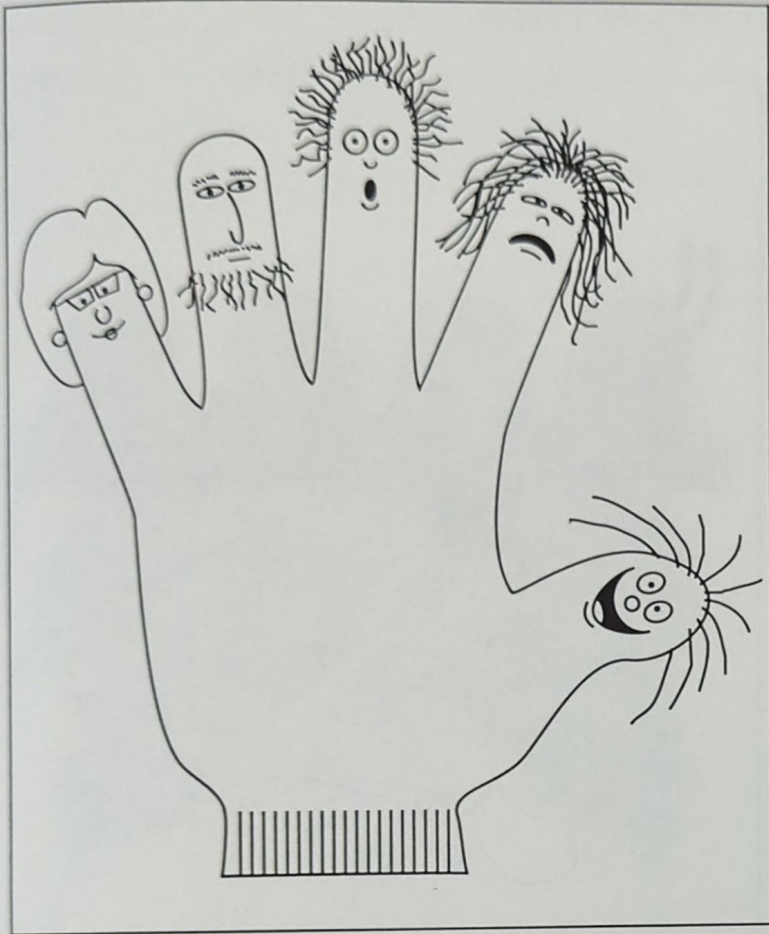
Rod puppets

Make these puppets from scrap cardboard and iceblock-sticks. These are among the most versatile of puppets. They could be almost any shape or character. Cut out a shape or character from cardboard and decorate it. This is an easy way to add movable scenery to a small stage. Children might use cut-outs of trees, houses or clouds. Decorate both sides. These puppets are very manageable for small children. See the blackline masters on the reverse of the frieze for a selection of characters and scenery shapes.

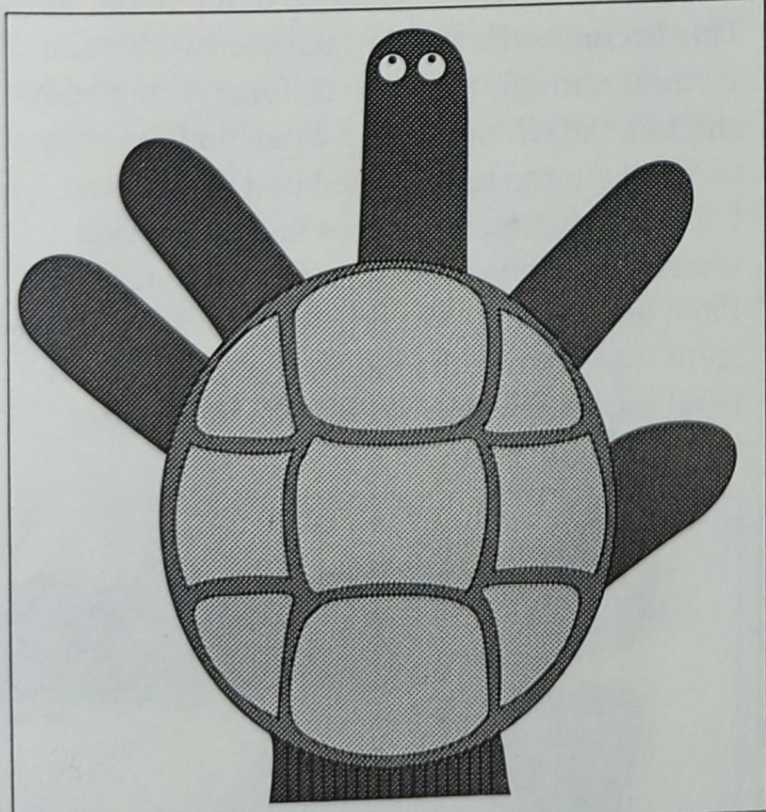


Glove puppet

Gloves may be used for an assortment of puppets. Create five characters from one story by drawing or gluing faces and features on the end of each glove finger.



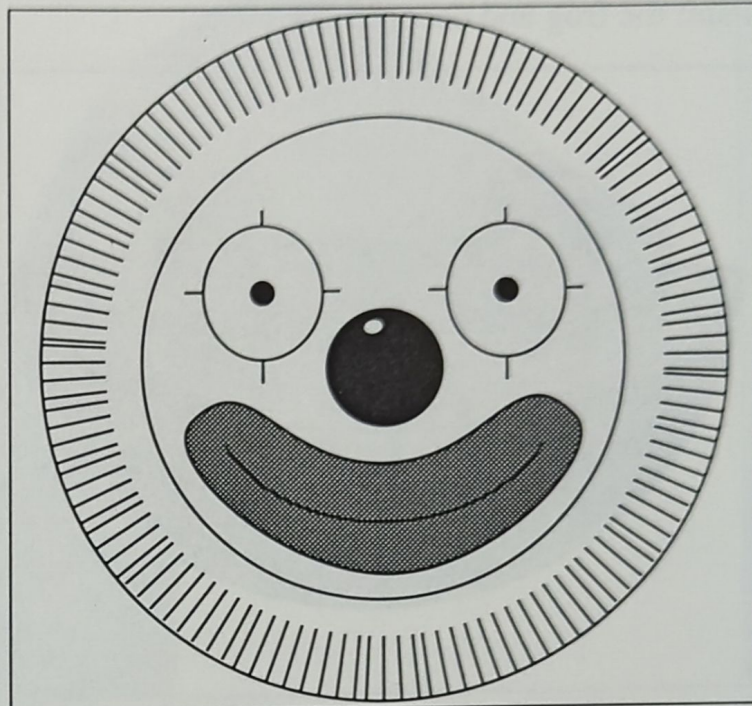
Create a tortoise puppet from a glove. Sew or staple a piece of scrap material onto the back of the glove. Stuff this with old pantyhose or crumpled paper. This forms the shell of the tortoise. Add eyes to the middle finger. This area becomes the neck and head. Students then bend down the other fingers for the legs.



Paper plate puppet

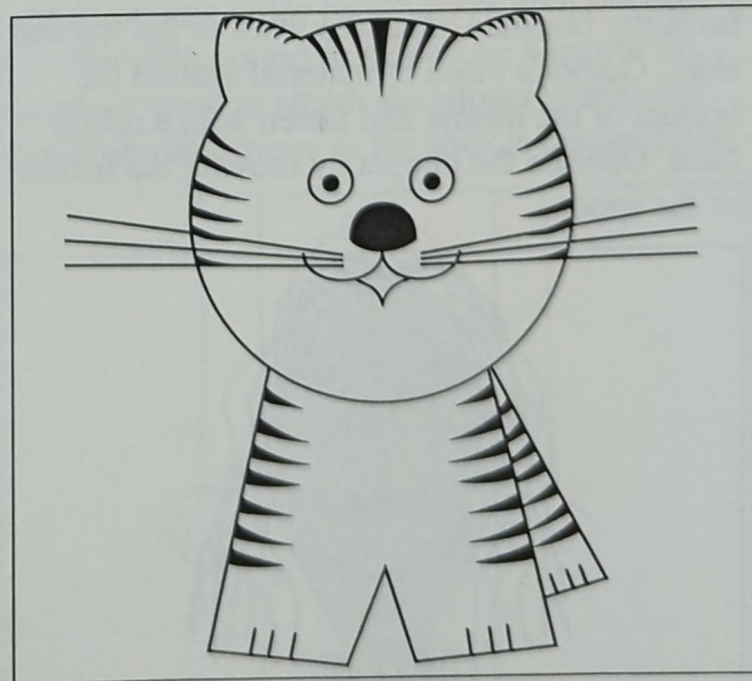
These easy-to-make puppets are very effective. Plates may be of varying sizes, but do not use those which are waxed. They are not suitable for decoration.

The plate could be left as a circle, or cut to the desired shape. Turn the plate into whatever you like! Simply staple a strip of cardboard onto the back for students to slip their hand into.



Paper plate tiger puppet

Use two plates. Cut one plate into the shape of a tiger face. Fold over the second plate and cut for legs. Attach the legs to the face and add a tail. Paint the plates to resemble a tiger. Staple a cardboard strip behind the head and slip it over the hand to make a puppet.

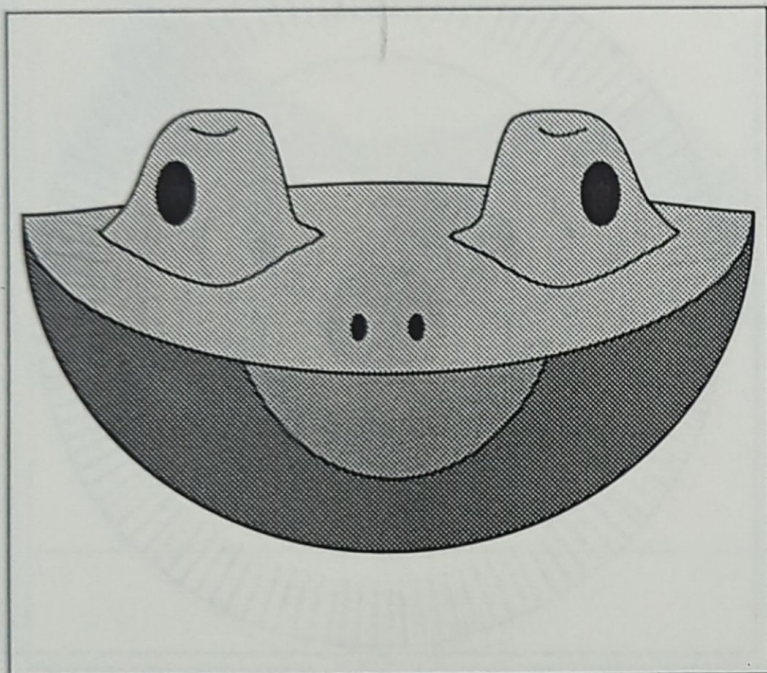


Other animals could be made in the same way, just by varying the face.

Paper plate frog puppet

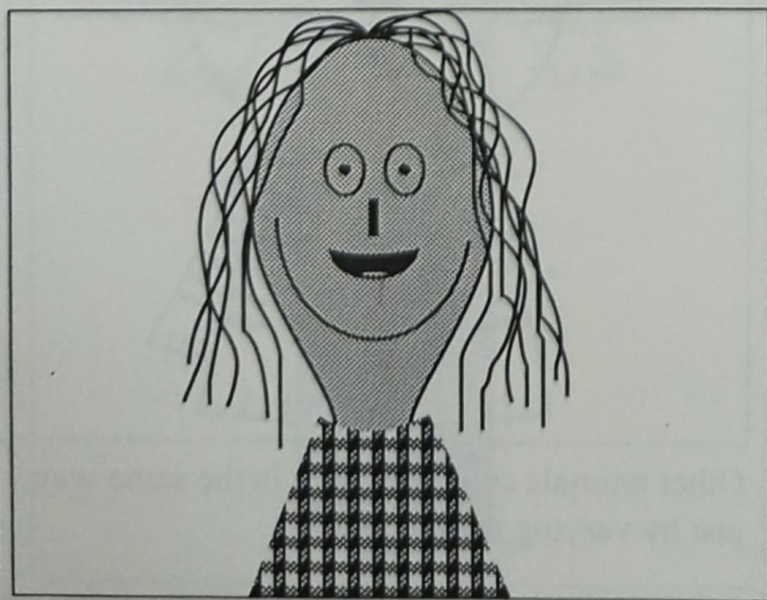
Use two small, round paper plates, two egg-carton segments joined together, staples, paint and glue.

Cut one plate in half. Fold the second plate. Staple the curved edges of the cut plate to each side of the folded plate. To work the mouth, slip your hand into the open 'cut' edge. Glue the egg-carton segments to the top of the cut plate. Paint the frog and decorate the eyes.



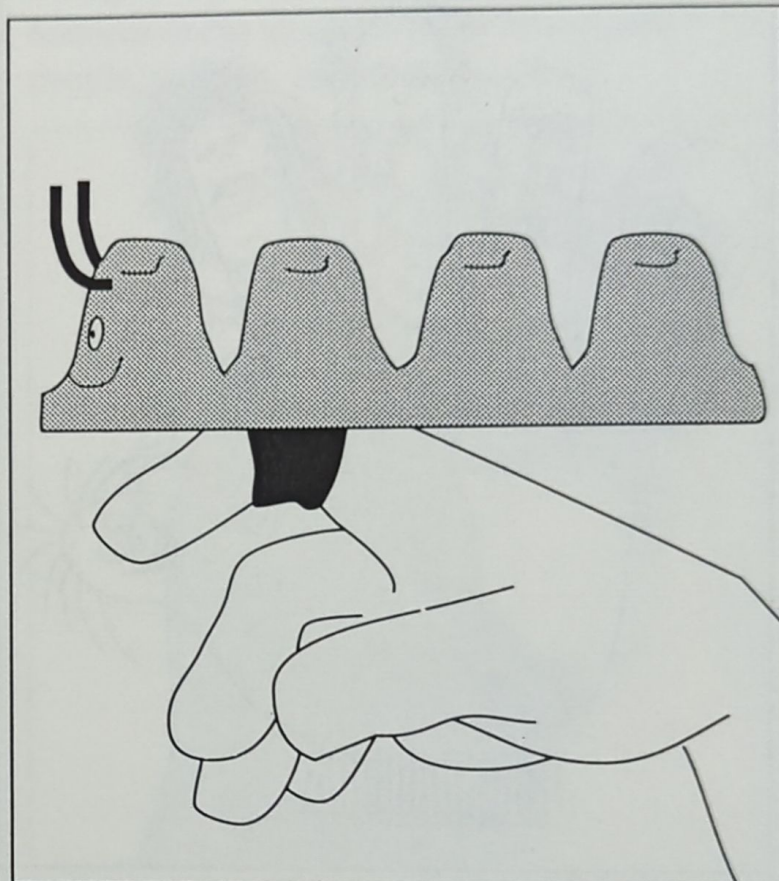
Wooden spoon puppet

You will need a round or oval wooden spoon, a rubber band, wool for the hair, felt-tip pens for the facial features, material and soft paper for clothing. Draw a face on the spoon. Why not put a happy face on one side and a sad face on the other? Or you might draw two characters from a favourite fairytale. Glue the wool to the top and sides. Gather a piece of material around the bottom of the handle and fasten with a rubber band. Operate the puppet by moving the handle of the spoon.



Egg-carton caterpillar

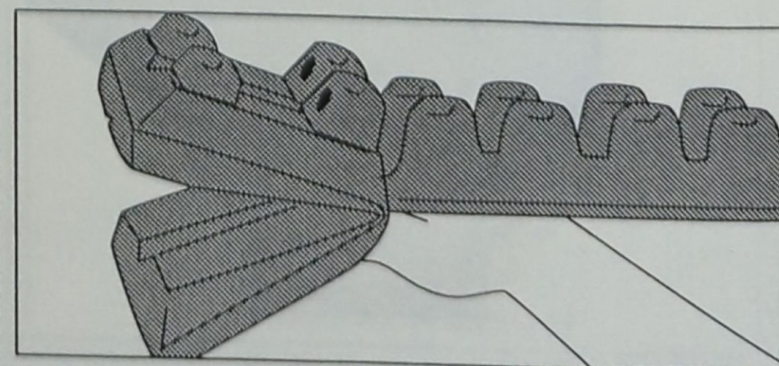
Cut the lower part of an egg-carton in half, lengthwise. Turn this section upside down and decorate it. Attach a wide strip of cardboard to the underside and slip the hand through to operate the puppet.



Egg-carton crocodile

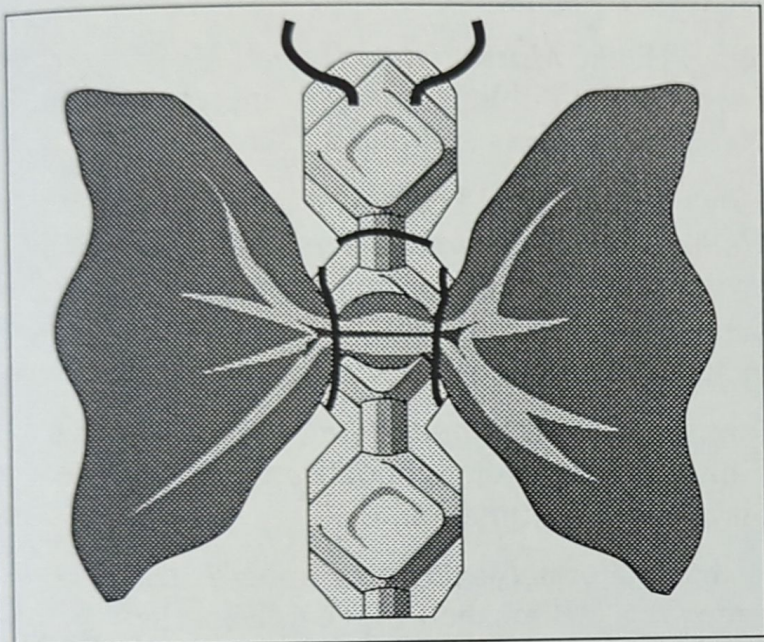
Cut the tops off two egg-cartons. Fold one top in half and cut the other top in half. Staple a cut half to the top and bottom of the folded piece, leaving the edge near the fold opened. This is where the puppeteer's hand slips in.

Cut the bottom three sections to a pointed shape. This becomes the tail. Attach the two bottom sections with glue or tape to form a long body and tail. Attach the head by pushing the body section into the top, opened end of the head. Glue this section in place. Glue egg-carton segments onto the head for eyes and nostrils. Paint and decorate the crocodile. Add cardboard teeth. Manipulate the puppet by putting your hand into the opened section and laying the body along the arm.



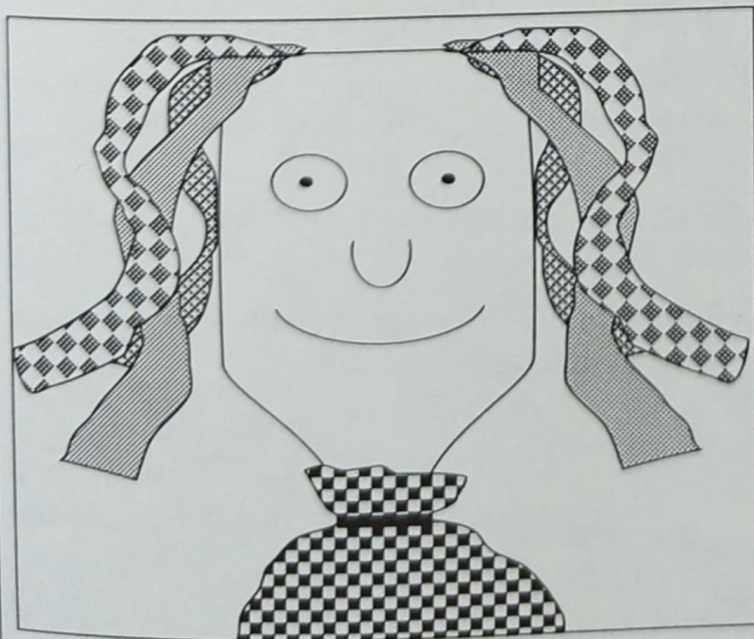
Egg-carton butterfly

Use three egg-carton segments, coloured paper (dip-dyed absorbent paper is effective, as is cellophane), pipe-cleaners and a rubber band. Paint the egg-carton. Attach the wings with a rubber band. Poke pipe-cleaner antennae through the head segment. Operate as a puppet by slipping fingers through the rubber band under the butterfly. Use this puppet with the caterpillar puppet when discussing the life cycle of the butterfly.



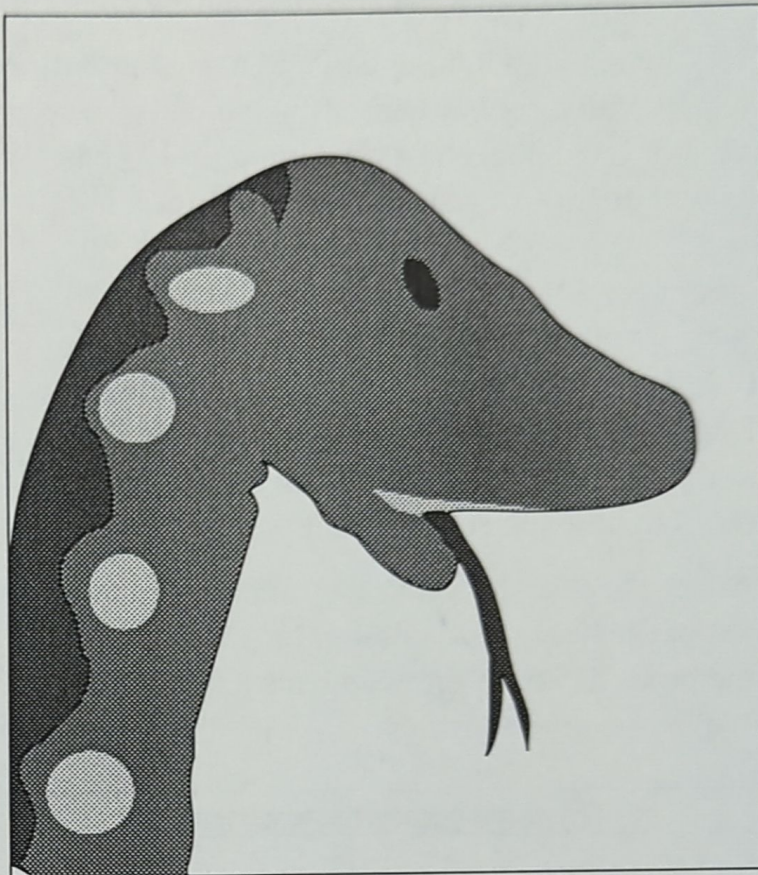
Fruit-juice bottle puppet

Add a new dimension to your dramatisations with this puppet. Make sure to use clean, dry bottles. Keep the lids on. Turn the bottle upside down and use it for the face. Gather material around the neck of the bottle so it fits over the puppeteer's hand. Attach the material with a rubber band. Decorate the face, add wool for the hair and perhaps add a hat. Put peas or rice into the bottle before decorating it and the puppet can be used as a percussion instrument as well.



Pantyhose snake puppet

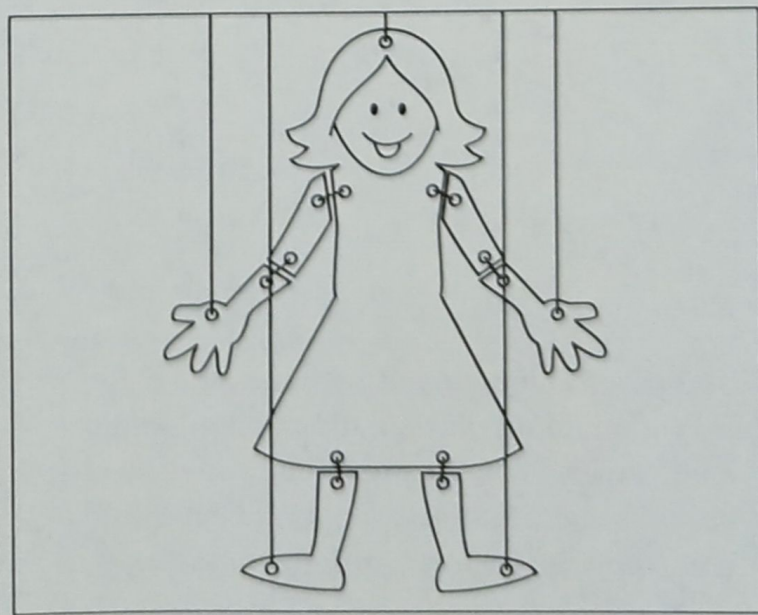
Cut the legs from an old pair of pantyhose or use a pair of stockings. Place them on newspaper and paint brightly. When dry, add eyes and a tongue to the toe end. Slip over the hand and up the arm.



Jointed string puppet

This is a good example of a shadow puppet. Use cardboard, cotton or wool (wool is easier for small hands) and wooden sticks.

Cut out the basic shape that you want for the puppet. Cut off the legs, head and arms. Punch a hole near the edge of the limbs and head. Punch corresponding holes on the body. Join the bits together with cotton or wool. Use a length of cotton or wool to attach the puppet to the stick. The limbs will move as the stick is manipulated.

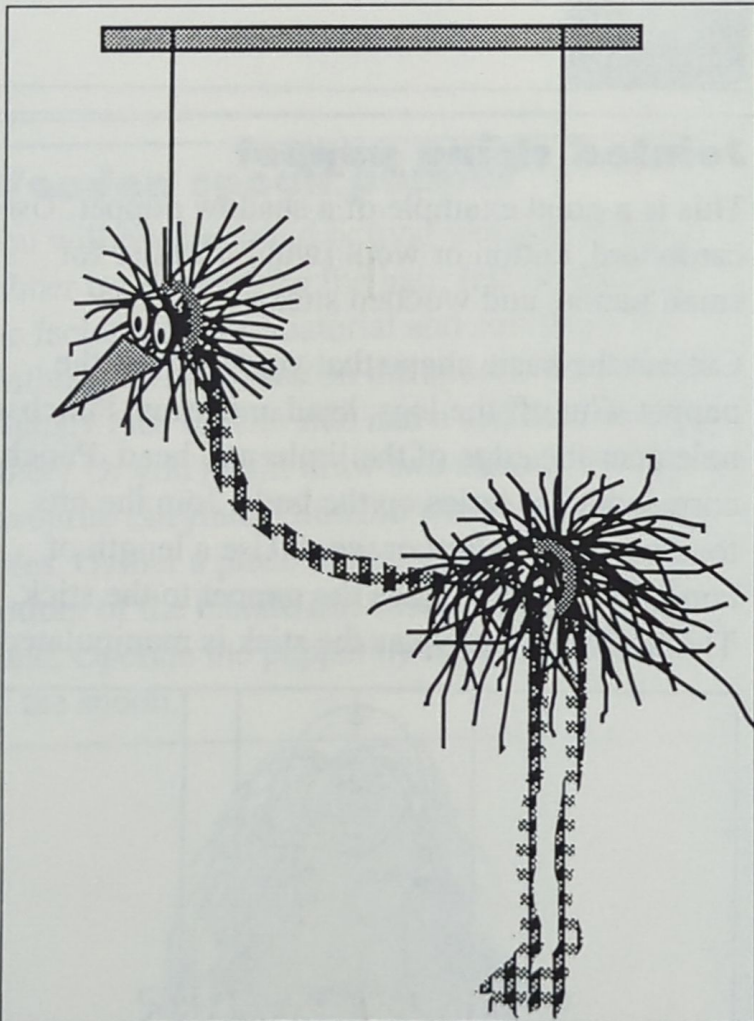


Weird bird puppet

This simple and very effective puppet is fun to make and manipulate. Use long scraps of material, balls of wool, two sizes of pompoms, leis or leftover Christmas tinsel, rubber bands, round shapes for eyes, cardboard beaks, feathers, cotton or wool and wooden sticks.

Roll the leis into a large ball and a smaller ball. Secure with a rubber band. If using balls of wool or large pompoms, just put a rubber band around them. Cut a strip of material for a long neck. Cut out a beak shape and slip under the rubber band on the smaller head. Attach the eyes. Use long strips of material for the legs. Pull these through the rubber band on the body. Draw and cut out some claw feet. Staple these to the ends of the legs. Fluff up the pompoms or tinsel to hide the rubber bands.

Attach wool or cotton to the rubber band at the top of the head. Add another length to the top of the body. Tie onto the wooden stick. The bird will move around freely.



The puppets mentioned here are aimed at maximum child participation and minimum adult supervision. Let your class suggest other ways to make and use puppets. They could come up with ideas that might surprise you.

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