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Puppetify!

Puppet Making Guides

How to make a paper plate puppet



About Puppetify!

Puppetify! is a creative advocacy project. It explores how puppet making can start wellbeing conversations between children and the adults who care for and support them.

In Puppetify! workshops, we invite children to make a puppet version of themselves. Making a puppet of yourself lets you share how you feel about who you are, your life, and the world around you.

Chatting about the puppets gives children a chance to explain their creative choices. Sharing the puppets and operating each others' puppets promotes empathy, care, and shared experiences.

If you are interested in Puppetify!, or would like a workshop in your school or setting, please contact Dr. Amy Skinner, the project leader: A.E.Skinner@hull.ac.uk

This guide shows you how to make one of the puppets that we use in Puppetify! workshops.



How to make a paper ball puppet: a step-by-step guide

This simple puppet is designed for use with children at Key Stage 1 and above.

It is made using a paper plate, card, fabric, a small wooden spoon, and tape.

You can use anything you like to decorate the puppet.

You can chose to make a rod puppet (with a stick to hold), or you can add string to make a simple marionette (string puppet).

If you find this guide helpful, please let us know! You can email Dr. Amy Skinner (A.E.Skinner@hull.ac.uk).

Don't forget to share your puppet with us on Instragram #PuppetifyMe and tag us @puppetifyme

Step one: make your puppet's head

Start with a paper plate

- Turn your plate upside down. This will be your puppet's head.
- Decorate the back of your plate with your puppet's face.
- You might want to add eyes, ears, a mouth, hair, and a nose - or anything else you think your puppet needs!



Step two: make your puppet's hand

Cut a hand shape

- Cut a hand shape from card.
- Decorate your hand.

You only need to make one hand for this puppet - but if you want, you can add a second one.



Step three: assemble your puppet

Joining the body and head

- Choose a square piece of fabric to be your puppet's body
- Take one corner of the fabric and tape it to the back of your puppet's head. Make sure it's really well stuck!
- Take another plate and stick a small wooden spoon to the back of it.
- Sandwich your two plates together, with the spoon and material in the middle. Tape the edges of the plates together.



Adding the hand

- Lay your puppet flat, so you can see the whole of its body.
- Find one of the fabric corners next to the puppet's head.
- Tape your hand to this corner



Your puppet is ready to use!

Try your puppet out:

Hold your puppet's head in one hand, and your puppet's hand in your other hand.

- Can your puppet wave?
- Can your puppet take a bow?
- Can your puppet dance?
- How might your puppet move if it was happy?
- What about if it was sad? Or scared? Or excited?



Making a marionette

How to turn your puppet into a marionette (string puppet)

- To make a marionette, you'll need two pieces of string and two puppet hands. You won't need the wooden spoon.
- Attach your second puppet hand to the corner of the fabric opposite your first hand
- Tape the material for your puppet's body to the back of its head. Remember to tape it at the corner!



How to turn your puppet into a marionette (string puppet)

- Tape the first piece of string to your puppet's head: start by taping one end of the string to one side of the puppet's head. Then tape the other end to the other side, making a big loop
- Put your second plate on the back of your puppet's head, making a sandwich with the material and string in the middle. Tape the plates together.
- Attach your puppet's hands to the ends of your second piece of string, so you have one hand at each end of the string



How to use your marionette

Hold one of the loops of string in each hand.

Move your hands up and down to make the puppet's head and arms move.

Top Tip:

If your strings are too long, you can make them shorter by tying a knot.



Puppetify! puppet making guides

You can download our puppet making guides on the Puppetify! website.

If you'd like more information on using the puppets to start conversations, you can also download our top tips for talking about the puppets.

All of the puppets photographed in this guide were made by our collaborators at Castledyke Primary School and the University of Hull



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Thank you

Please let us know if you find this guide useful!

You can email Dr. Amy Skinner A.E.Skinner@hull.ac.uk

Share your puppets with us on Instagram #PuppetifyMe and tag us @puppetifyme