

Puppet Making Tips

From the Grimsby Public Art Gallery



Puppet Anatomy

Know your puppet anatomy! Let's take a look at the parts of your puppet. How you move the puppet will animate or bring the magical life of the character out.

Action or Movement

Eyes - the direction of the eyes tell the audience where the puppet is looking, and what they are interacting with. With a puppet this will require turning the head or the whole body

Body - which direction it is facing, turning etc. The head is moved by your wrist moving. The up and down of the head can be created from the wrist or the whole arm. Explore which of these movements best express the action you are trying to share.

Arms - learning how to express movement with the arms begins with knowing the limits of the motion range and that you only have one free hand to make the arms move. It's a bit like practicing to use chop sticks- it can take a bit of trial and error to coordinate.

Lip-Syncing

Mouth - learning how to open the mouth to express volume is fun to explore. A big open mouth would express yelling, or yawning or coughing, but when we talk, our mouths only open a bit. Try looking in the mirror to see how you move your mouth and head. This will help with synching the mouth movements to your voice.

Props & Sets

- Look for found objects, toys or create paper props to build story supports.
- Design your own construction paper cut outs for the edges of your Stage windows.

Stages

- Be Creative and Upcycle from what's on hand!
- Recycled boxes
- Recycle an old school project presentation board
- Use a blanket over a table
- Go behind the couch
- Put a sheet over a spring-loaded tension curtain rod in a doorway

The best fun is making sets up!

Create a location with basic paper set pieces. Tape to your window edges for quick scene changes.

- Trees and a campfire for an outdoors camping scene
- Planets and stars for outer space
- Paper balloons and paper cake for a party scene

What themes for sets can you think of?