

WHAT A PERFORMANCE - PUPPETS

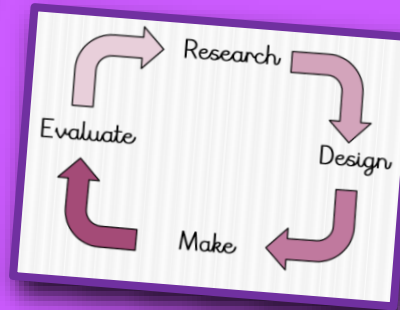
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In this series of lessons, we will pull some strings and put on a show by creating our own puppets! We will investigate different types of puppets and how they can be operated. Then we will design and produce a puppet for a group performance following the Design Technology cycle of research, design, plan, make and evaluate to create a final product.

What is a puppet?

A puppet is a moveable model, animated by the person who controls it using their hands or strings. Puppets usually take the form of a human, mythical figure or an animal. They're used in entertainment, most commonly for storytelling. There are different types of puppets, and they're moved, operated or manipulated in different ways.



The history of puppets

Puppets may have originated in the Egypt of the pharaohs or in India nearly 6,000 years ago. Because the toy form appears long ago in nearly every culture in Asia, Europe, and the Americas, no one really knows where it began.

The ancient Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle wrote of puppets, and ancient puppeteers presented the Iliad and the Odyssey using figures made of clay and ivory. Early Chinese and Japanese puppeteers fashioned miniature figures for religious ceremonies and the telling of folktales and epic stories of gods and heroes. In Europe, the Christian church used puppets to present morality plays.

Eventually puppet theatre included secular stories and comedies, and puppetry became a popular form of rowdy entertainment at carnivals, fairs, and market gatherings.

Glossary

marionette	a puppet worked by strings. It is controlled from above with the strings attached to the puppeteer's fingers
rod puppet	a marionette supported by rods instead of strings. It is controlled from below, with the rods running from the head, through the body.
hand puppet	also known as a glove-puppets and worn over the hand. It is made from cloth and controlled by the hand that fits into it.
flat figure puppet	unlike the other puppets, this puppet is two-dimensional
shadow puppet	this puppets is a type of flat figure puppet where a shadow is projected onto a screen
puppeteer	a person who operates a puppet



Famous puppets

In the 20th century, television spread the popularity of puppets among children and adults and produced some beloved UK icons such as Muffin the Mule, Andy Pandy, Bill and Ben, the Thunderbirds, Sooty and Sweep and Basil Brush.

Punch and Judy

Mr Punch was first recorded in England in 1662 by the famous diarist Samuel Pepys when he saw him as a marionette, operated in Covent Garden by the Italian puppet showman Signor Bologna. Punchinello, as he was then called, was presented within a tent rather than in the type of booth we know today with the audience standing outside.

