



DINOSAUR SHADOW PUPPETS



SUPPLIES:

For Puppets:

- Black cardstock (or opaque thin cardboard, like cereal box or milk carton) • Pencil/marker • Tape • Scissors
- White colored pencil or crayon (if using black cardstock)
- 3/16" dowels (or cut the sharp ends off BBQ skewers, or sticks)
- 1/8" brads (or twine/yarn with the ends knotted on either side)
- 1/8" hole punch (or poke small hole and use string/yarn to join)

For Screen:

- Cardboard or foam core (also try using a box) • Table lamp
- White butcher paper or parchment paper (or use 8.5x11 paper to make a small screen)

For Larger Setup:

- White sheet or shower curtain liner • Standing lamp
- Something to drape curtain over (i.e. curtain rod in doorway)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. Make your pattern.** Puppets can have joints, or not. If you make a jointed puppet, consider where the joints will go for the most effective illustration of your movement. Joints on limbs should overlap the body of the puppet. Options for making a pattern:
 - a) Create your own by sketching a character directly onto cardstock and cutting out the parts. Assemble with brads and dowels.
 - b) Print an image, cut it out and trace it onto card stock, creating limbs and moving parts if you wish. Assemble with brads and dowels and perform! c) Print dinosaur puppet templates* below, trace onto cardstock for a more durable puppet, cut out and assemble with brads or string and dowels.
- 2. Cut out and assemble your pattern.** Punch holes where the limbs/moving parts should attach and insert brads or tie with yarn. Tape dowels to sections of the puppet you want to control. Fold a piece of tape over the end of the dowel/skewer so that the tape is half on the dowel and half off. Then tape the flexible folded tape to your puppet. Use two dowels, one for each hand and experiment with which limbs you want to control. Hint: some limbs work well on their own using the tabletop to create movement.
- 3. Make some scenery elements.** Cut out shapes from cardstock or cardboard, or use existing items such as artificial plants. Lots of things at home can make interesting shadows to set your scene.
- 4. Make your shadow screen.** For a tabletop setup, cut a rectangle out of the center of a large piece of cardboard or foam core (should resemble a frame). Tape white butcher paper to one side of the frame, covering the entire opening. Cut two large triangles out of cardboard or foam core and glue or tape these to the back of your frame to make it stand up. Alternately, cut a rectangle out of a box lid, or shallow box (cut at least 1/2" inside the edges) and tape paper over the opening. Position a table lamp behind and above the puppeteer. Put your puppet in front of lamp aimed at a wall. No screen required!
- 5. Set up your screen, light your lamp, and perform!** Write a script! Improvise movements! Explore how the shadows change size and move through the space!



AVAILABLE NOW

*https://nhm.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/dinosaur_shadow_puppets.pdf

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