

How to make... an envelope hand puppet

Suitable for ages 7 - 11 independent working

Suitable for ages 4 - 6 with some adult help

You will need:

- C5 Envelope (A5 size) which opens at the short end
- Masking tape
- Tissue paper/magazine pages/wrapping paper in various colours
- Glue stick
- Scissors



Photo: Ellie Kurtz

Inspired by our production of *The Paper Dolls*.

In the show Rosie's mum has an oven glove which is like a crocodile. In Rosie's imagination, the crocodile comes to life and snaps at the paper dolls.

A puppet worn on the hand is called a glove puppet or hand puppet – here's how you can make a simple puppet with a mouth that can open and close – or go snap snap snap!

You could create any kind of creature using this method – a bird, frog or fox, or maybe a dragon or an imaginary monster. Or how about making your own tiger or crocodile, just like the ones in our show?

There is more information at the end of this sheet for further ideas inspired by this make and also what to do with the puppets you have created.

Instructions

Step 1: First you need to make a mouth by re-folding the envelope.

Put your hand inside the envelope and push the middle of the closed end inwards.



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Step 2: Keep pushing inwards until you create a mouth shape with two pointed lips.



Step 3: Now flatten out the envelope so that it has folds along the sides that were previously flat.



Step 4: If you want to, you can make the lips a different shape (e.g. curved) by folding inwards and taping, or trimming with scissors, and re-sealing the ends with masking tape.

Step 5: You can add on other features such as ears, horns, wings etc by cutting out and taping on card shapes.

Step 6: Now you are ready to decorate your puppet – use tissue paper to cover the envelope all over so it no longer looks like an envelope. Create the texture of fur or feathers by scrunching paper, or cutting feather shapes and layering the paper. If you don't have tissue paper you could use magazine pages or wrapping paper offcuts. You can add eyes by sticking on balls of tissue paper and add teeth or a tongue inside the mouth. Note, if you don't have paper for decorating you can colour your envelope with felt pens or paint it (leave it to dry if you paint it before finishing the rest of the decoration).



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What Next?

How to use your puppet: Wear your puppet on your hand with your fingers in the top part of the mouth and thumb in the bottom part of the mouth so you can make it open and close.

Bring your puppet to life: How does your puppet move? Can your puppet talk or does it just make an animal noise? Can it eat, yawn or nibble someone's fingers? Does it have a name? Is it happy? Grumpy? Scared? How can you show that?

Make a puppet show: If you make more than one puppet you can make a show to entertain your family! One person can act with two puppets at a time. One on each hand! If you need more than two characters you can swap puppets over, or get more puppeteers involved.

How to perform with these puppets: Hand puppets work best if you can't see the puppeteer. Hide behind a bed or a table and hold the puppets up so the audience can only see the puppets. Drape a cloth over your 'stage' so the audience can't see the puppeteers hiding behind.

Show theme ideas: Think of a story or book you really like with animals (or substitute the people characters with animals instead) and re-enact the story with your puppets. You could also make your own version of the story or think about 'what happens next'. Julia Donaldson's book *The Gruffalo* would be a good story to tell with these puppets.

Write a script and practise: Write down a simple script so you know what to say. The great thing about hand puppets is you can hide the script behind the stage and read it as you perform so you don't have to learn the lines off by heart! But do lots of practice because it's hard to read a script and be a puppeteer at the same time, so if you know the lines well and don't have to look at the script too much your puppeteering will be better.

Film your show: If someone can film a rehearsal for you to watch you can see what it looks like and change things if you need to. If you film your show when it is finished you can also share it with your friends and family online!

Online links: Julia Donaldson shows you how to make some paper dolls and reads her book *The Paper Dolls* - watch it [here](#).