

## TITLE: PAPER MITT PUPPETS

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Artform: Theater Grade: Any Duration: 30-45 minutes

### OVERVIEW

With simple supplies you already have at your school, give your students an immersive experience to create and perform with simple puppets.

This lesson can be easily applied to any grade level or subject.

### SUPPLIES, EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES

White Paper

Colored Pencils

Staples

Puppet Theater: Cut a window in a science fair tri-fold board and staple on a sheer curtain. Voila!

### FINE ART STANDARDS

All grades: Puppetry, Vocal Expression

### INTEGRATED STANDARDS

Any! Have your students create puppets to represent landforms, history, parts of speech, long division, or anything else you are learning about in class.

### OBJECTIVES

Students will use paper mitt puppets to demonstrate any topic.

## TEACHING AND TIMELINE

### INTRODUCTION

Introduce the puppet theater by using a pre-made paper mitt puppet to fit your topic.

### DEMONSTRATION

Demonstrate how the puppet is made and how to use it.

A paper mitt puppet is one piece of plain paper folded in half (hamburger style) and stapled on the top and side, leaving the bottom open for the hand to enter. Then you draw a LARGE character (or even just its large face) on the puppet. The mouth will not open; don't worry about its placement.

Give students guidelines for the puppets you would like them to create. They could create puppets of characters from history, animals from ecosystems you are studying, math symbols, characters from a book you are reading, the students themselves, or ANYTHING your class is learning about.

### **WORK PERIOD**

Give students 20-25 minutes to fold, staple, and draw their puppets. If they only need one puppet, they can draw on one side, but the puppets can also be reversible if you want them to create two characters. For example, students might draw a lion on one side and a mouse on the other, in preparation to perform Aesop's fables. Or, students may draw a Pilgrim on one side and a Native American on the other.

### **CLOSURE/SUMMARY**

Performance:

There are many ways to perform with these puppets. For a quick performance, students may perform improvised puppet shows by making up dialogue while they are performing. If you want an extended project into writing, you can have students write their own puppet shows and then perform. Students can perform individually or in pairs. Or, as in the case of the accompanying video, you can have students perform a poem they are memorizing.

The one important thing with these simple puppets is this: they do not have a mouth. This means it is hard to tell which puppet is speaking, unless the puppeteer adds some movement. Encourage your students to move their puppet any time their puppet is speaking, whether it is a small wave, a wiggle, a bounce, etc. Students are also behind a cardboard barrier, so remind them to speak LOUDLY and CLEARLY when performing.

### **INTEGRATION INFORMATION**

The sky is the limit on this one. What are your students struggling to understand? Teaching others is a great way to learn, and teaching others through puppets is a fun way to do that!

### **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

Without a mouth, how can my audience know my puppet is talking?  
How can I make sure my audience can hear me?  
Determine other questions based on integration topic.

### **DIFFERENTIATION**

Adapt as necessary for students with individual abilities and needs.

### **HISTORICAL ELEMENT**

Puppetry had its origins in ancient Asia, spread through Europe, and influenced many countries in the world leading up to the present day. There are many kinds of puppets: some simple, some sophisticated. These paper mitt puppets are among the simplest to make and use.

### **VOCABULARY**

Paper Mitt Puppet  
Puppet Theater  
Vocal Projection  
Diction

### **ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES**

Did students' puppet shows reflect the concepts from the lesson?  
Could the audience hear the students' voices?  
Was it clear which puppet was talking?

### **OTHER INFORMATION**

Original lesson idea credit: Lisa Bean [lisa.bean@nebo.edu](mailto:lisa.bean@nebo.edu)