

TEXTILE PUPPETS

ART TECHNIQUE

Textile puppets, painting and drama

AGE GROUP

Preschool – Year 6

CONCEPT

Create characters that involve the use of textiles, paint and other materials. This activity encourages individual expression and group participation. Puppetry, as a group activity, links in with other areas of the school curriculum such as literature and drama.

SESSIONS

3 sessions of 1 hour and 30 minutes each

MATERIALS

- **Chroma 2 Washable** paint: warm and cool red, warm and cool yellow, warm and cool blue plus black and white
- 1 medium paintbrush #6 per student
- 1 small paint brush #3 per student
- 6 or 8 plastic containers for water, (ice cream containers are ideal), 2 per group
- 6 or 8 plastic ice cube trays for paint, 2 per group
- 1 roll of cling wrap to cover the paint trays
- 1 roll of sandwich paper cut to A4 size for mixing paint (discard at the end of the painting session)
- 1 x A3 sheet cartridge paper (for creating puppet body pattern)
- 1 x A3 sheet cartridge paper per student (for drawing and painting their puppet group)
- 2 pieces of calico (approx. 35 x 40 cm) per student cut according to the pattern
- 30 Chenille Needles #22 and thread – crochet cotton is ideal (for Years 5–6 only). Younger students may need assistance to sew the puppet bodies.
- 60 pins for pinning the calico bodies onto the newspaper for painting
- 1 old pillow or cushion (for stuffing puppet heads) per class
- 1 x 24 mm roll of masking tape
- 8 cm squares of felt in different colours
- coloured yarns, jute or raffia for puppet hair
- soft leather off-cuts

This project has been design to suit normal classroom conditions and illustrates how the classroom can be adapted to create working space required.



TEXTILE PUPPETS

This project is designed to suit normal classroom conditions and illustrates how to adapt the classroom to create the working space required.

Puppetry is sometimes neglected by teachers as planning and sourcing materials takes some time, but this can be solved by planning ahead and by asking parents to contribute recyclable materials in advance.

Textile puppet making is suitable for any age group, as the techniques can be adapted to different levels of ability. For very young children it is advisable to have a couple of parents come to the classroom to assist.

OBJECTIVE

- To provide students with the steps involved in making a 3D puppet from idea through to end product
- To give students an understanding of how to create a puppet from found and recyclable materials whilst expanding their ability to visualise the character

ROOM SET-UP

Designate an area for storing all the prepared materials needed at different stages of the project.

Put the paint in ice cube trays and the water in ice-cream containers (2 or 3 each per group). Give each student a small and a large paint brush, a piece of rag to wipe the paint brushes and a piece of scrap paper for mixing the paint on (2).

Before you start showing visual references and demonstrating the procedure, make sure everything is in ready at hand.

VISUAL REFERENCES

It is not widely known that Bauhaus artist Paul Klee made hand puppets for his son, using old cut up clothes from around the house, plaster and clay.

The puppets represented the different characters of his village, such as the butcher, the teachers and so on. For more information google search Paul Klee Puppets.

FIRST SESSION

MOTIVATION

To help students to focus on their ideas, gather them in a group, show some samples of Paul Klee's puppets and encourage them to talk about their plans to create their own puppets.

PAINTING

Give each student a pair of cut up calico puppet bodies pinned on a sheet of newspaper to paint (3). Students write their names on their own sheet of newspaper.

Students paint their puppet bodies with **Chroma 2 Washable** Paint, using patterns

and colours suitable for the character they are creating. Allow to dry overnight (4).

SECOND SESSION

For Years 4–6 students, provide needles and cotton to sew the puppet bodies together. For younger students, engage one or two parent helpers to do the sewing.

Create the head using old skin toned or coloured stockings. Stuff with cushion filling to pad out and shape the head giving it volume (5).

Glue the head to upper part of the puppets body. Add features such as hair, eyes, nose and a mouth and then glue on materials to decorate and adorn the puppets, such as lace, buttons, fake fur and beads etc...

Add hands and feet to make the puppets more character like and expressive. (See student gallery for some finished examples.)

THIRD SESSION

DRAWING

Group puppets on the table centres and draw the group on A3 cartridge paper with oil crayons, pastels, charcoal or black pens and washes of the thinned paint.

First draw with charcoal or one colour pastel, then apply different colours mixing and blending in an expressive way as in (6).

Please note: If using charcoal, fix the charcoal drawing with Pastel Fixative before applying colour pastels, oil crayons or paint washes.



1. Room arrangement



2. Art material set up



3. Calico puppet bodies pinned to newspaper — unpainted



4. Painted calico puppet bodies left to dry thoroughly overnight



5. Puppet head

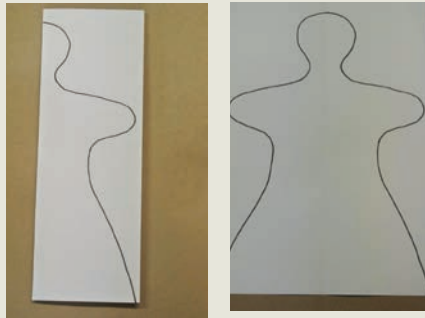
ABOUT THE ARTIST

Raquel Redmond has more than 25 years extensive experience in researching, developing and teaching art programs aimed at primary school students and also conducts in-service programs for primary school teachers. She directed the Visual Art activities, Children's Art exhibitions and Artists in Residence programs for the 'Out of the Box' children's festival from 1992 to 2000. Since 1998 Raquel has been working with students at Queensland University of Technology School of Early Childhood's art studio. She is an active practising visual artist exhibiting her lino and wood cuts throughout Australia.

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HOW TO MAKE A PUPPET PATTERN

Fold an A3 sheet of cartridge paper in half. Draw half the outline of a body shape with a pen or pencil, then cut it out. Open the pattern and place it over two pieces of calico. Pin together and cut around the body shape leaving an extra one centimetre all around so you can still see the outline of the body shape.



Half puppet body pattern on the left, then shown opened on the right.

Make the head of the pattern proportionally a bit longer and larger so the puppet head (5) can be glued onto it at a later stage,

DECORATIVE ITEMS

Beads, buttons, coloured yarns, costume jewellery, cord, fake fur, feathers, fleece, felt, foil trays, jute, lace, leather, pipe cleaners, match sticks, netting, raffia, rhinestones, ribbons, seed pods, sequins, tulle, and wool.

DISPLAY STANDS

For cheap and easy stands, use 1.25ml plastic soft drink bottles with pebbles, sand or clay in the bottom to keep them upright.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

A list of recyclable materials and equipment can be sent home asking parents to provide materials such as:

- a paint shirt with sleeves cut off, extra old T-shirts to cut up for rags, a stack of newspapers to cover the tables
- ice cream containers, discarded ice cube trays and/or plastic egg cartons for water and paint
- any items in the Decorative items list above.

For more information on recyclable materials, refer to the Teachers Help Page at

www.bravaartpress.com

CHROMA 2 WASHABLE PAINT

1 set of 8 x 2L bottles of the 6 primary colours, plus black and white should be sufficient paint supply for a year, for a class of approximately 25 students. Chroma 2 Washable paint is suitable for other art techniques such as printmaking and is also designed to be used on textured surfaces such as clay, timber and fabrics.

STUDENT gallery



6. Drawing of a puppet group

