

Storytelling silhouettes



Storytelling



1 hour



Challenge yourself



Aim of activity

Shadow puppetry is a form of storytelling that can seem almost magical. Use it to entertain your audience and shed new light on a story you know.

What you'll get out of it

- Explore a storytelling tradition
- Develop your performance and presentation skills
- Communicate without words
- Use your creativity

What you'll need

- Paper
- Pens
- Stiff paper or card, 1 A4 sheet per girl
- A selection of magazines suitable for Guides (optional).
- Scissors, 1 between 3
- Tape, 1 roll between 3
- Lollipop sticks or bamboo skewers
- A pale-coloured bed sheet
- A bright torch or lamp



WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

Girlguiding



Shadow puppetry is an ancient art form used to tell stories in many different cultures. Flat shadow puppets are moved with rods, and held up against a translucent screen. A bright light shining on the puppets from behind the screen reveals a silhouette to the audience. Your challenge is to create and perform a short shadow puppet show of your own, re-telling a story you know.

Top tip

Designing characters can be tricky when you don't have long. If you have magazines, try cutting shapes out of them to use as templates for your puppets.

What to do

1 Get into groups of three.

2 Using paper and pens, you have five minutes to brainstorm some ideas for stories you could use in your show. For example, you could use a storyline from a TV show or music video, a recent news story, or a fairy tale. You won't be able to talk during your show and you'll need to tell the story using only simple puppets, so avoid any stories that are too complicated!

3 As a group, choose the story that you'll turn into a puppet show lasting between one and two minutes.

4 Next, spend ten minutes planning out the show's storyline. Keep it simple, as you'll only have a couple of minutes to perform it. As you plan, write lists of things you'll need to make; this should include both puppets and scenery.

5 You have 15 minutes to make your puppets and scenery by drawing them onto card, cutting them out and attaching sticks to use as rods. The audience won't be able to see fine details, so keep the shape of your puppets simple.

6 You now have ten minutes to rehearse your puppet show, making sure that everyone has a part to play.

7 As a unit, make a puppet screen by hanging or holding up a sheet and stretching it tight. Set up your light behind the sheet. The audience will sit in front of the screen.

8 Make the space as dark as possible, and then take turns performing your shows for each other. Position yourselves between the light and the sheet, holding your puppets up so they cast a silhouette onto the sheet, which the audience can see. Be careful not to block the light with any part of your body!

9 After each show, the audience should try to guess what the story was about.

Top tip

Short on time? Your Leader can simplify the activity by allocating a story idea (such as a fairy tale) to each group, rather than choosing your own stories.