



Hampstead Stage Company  
*Pinocchio* -Educational Materials  
Created by Amanda Pawlik, Education Director

## Recycled Puppet Workshop

### Summary:

- This interactive workshop guides students in creating their own puppets, using common recycled materials
- Three different techniques are provided to adapt to students' age and interests
- Workshop incorporates "Build a Better World" summer reading theme by empowering students to design and engineer their own unique puppets. Focus on using recycled materials to reduce waste supports conversations on simple actions we can take to make our world a better place
- Perfect for a rainy-day activity or story time

**Ages:** 5+

**Time:** 45-60 minutes

### Materials:

*Listed by project in the instructions.*

### Introduction (5 minutes):

#### Introduce *Pinocchio* (5 minutes):

#### Take a moment to check in with students:

- Has anyone read the story of *Pinocchio* or seen a play or movie version (including Hampstead Stage Company's version)?
- For those who are familiar with the story, what is so special about Pinocchio?  
→ He is a puppet that can walk, talk, and think. He wants to become a real boy.
- If students are not familiar with the story, and time is available, it might be fun to read a short version of *Pinocchio*. Several free versions of the text are available online.
- *Today we will be using our imaginations and creating our own puppets, just like Pinocchio.*



### Creating a Puppet (20-35 minutes)

The following provides three options for how students can create puppets. Feel free to choose the option that works best for your students. Another idea would be to lay out materials for all three of the options, creating a “puppet workshop” where students can craft a puppet however they choose! If using this option, it may be helpful to have pre-made examples ready for inspiration.

#### Option #1: Paper Tube Puppets (perfect for older students)

##### Materials:

##### **For the Base:**

- Two popsicle sticks per student
- Two toilet paper tubes per student
- One plastic straw per student
- Yarn or string
- Single hole punch (can be shared among students)
- Clear tape (if desired)

##### **To Personalize:**

- Paint (various colors) and paint brushes, as available
- Scissors and glue shared as needed
- Googly eyes, buttons, cotton balls, fabric scraps, feathers, pipe cleaners, as available
- Scrap paper, construction paper, as available

##### Instructions:

##### **Making the cross bar:**

- Glue two popsicle sticks together, forming a cross. Set aside.

##### **Making the base body**

- **Cut one of the paper tubes in half.** One half will become the head, the other half can be used to cut out ears.
- **Cut out desired ears from one of the paper tube halves.** Depending on the animal the students decide to create, these can be small triangles (cat), long ovals (bunny rabbit or dog depending on coloring and how they are attached), circles (mouse), or something totally different!
- **Paint the base pieces.** Simple coloring works best such as one base color and big stripes or polka dots. Students can also be encouraged to use any colors they want -green cats, purple mice, and blue rabbits are welcome and encouraged! **Reminder -the long tub will become the body, the half tube will become the head.**
- If paint is not available, students can also glue colored paper on the tubes to create a collage effect or draw and color the tubes with markers or crayons.



- Once paint has dried, **punch holes in the short and long tubes.**
  - Punch four holes in the bottom of the long tube for the legs. (two on each end of the tube)
  - Punch one hole on each end of the top portion of the long tube (for the tail and neck)
  - Punch one hole on the bottom and top of the shorter tube, holes should be directly across from each other, on the same end (for the neck and to attach head to crossbars)
- **Create the legs.** Cut two pieces of string or yarn equal lengths. Depending on the animal created, leg sizes will be different.
- Thread one piece through the front “leg holes” and one piece through the back “leg holes”. Tie knots on each end for the “feet” (buttons, charms, or bendy straw pieces may also be attached to the string as desired).
- A small piece of clear tape can be used if desired to help keep string in place (tape on inside of tube)
- **Create the neck.** Cut one piece of string or yarn for the “neck”. Thread first through the top hole on the longer tube, tie a knot at the end to keep string from coming out of the hole.
- Thread plastic straw half onto string (for the “neck”) then thread string through both holes in the shorter tube (attaching the head).
- There should be at least 6” of string coming out of the “head”. Attach this to one end of one of the popsicle sticks on the cross bar.
- **Attach bottom end of body to cross bar.** Cut another piece of string or yarn. Knot one end and thread the other through the hole on the “tail” side of the tube. Attach to the opposite side of the same popsicle stick that the “head string” is attached to.
- **If desired, add a tail.** If desired, add an additional piece of string or yarn for a tail, looping through the same hole as mentioned in the step above. Tails could be decorated with beads, buttons, straws, etc. as available.
- **Glue on ears and any remaining decorations as desired.**

### Option #2: Paper Bag Puppets (perfect for younger students)

#### **Materials:**

##### **For the Base:**

- Small paper bags (lunch bags) (one per student)

##### **To Personalize:**

- Paint (various colors) and paint brushes, as available
- Scissors and glue shared as needed
- Googly eyes, buttons, cotton balls, fabric scraps, feathers, pipe cleaners, as available
- Scrap paper, construction paper, as available



**Instructions:**

- **The base body for this puppet is simply the paper bag itself**, making this version perfect for younger students or for workshops with limited time. The bottom “flap” of the bag (which is folded over) becomes the face for whatever type of puppet students choose to make. By putting their hand in the bag and fingers in the bottom “flap” they can move the “flap” making it appear like the puppet’s mouth is moving.
- To start, demonstrate how a paper bag puppet works, showing students what part of the bag should be the face and what part of the bag should be the body.
- Then, allow students to create whatever type of puppet they would like using the materials available.
- Depending on the group, pre-made ears, eyes, mouths, and other pre-cut shapes could be provided to give students some “inspiration”.
- Students could also all make the same type of puppet (such as a rabbit, cat, monster, etc.) and follow along with the group leader step by step.

**Option # 3: Recycled Puppets (for all ages)**

**Materials:**

- Items from the recycling bin -milk cartons, tin cans (for older students), bottle caps, cereal boxes, paper towel rolls, etc.
- Common household items -rubber bands, yarn/string, etc.
- Available craft supplies -paints, markers, crayons, feathers, pipe cleaners, etc.

**Instructions:**

- This option truly allows students to become “puppet architects”. Students are encouraged to create puppets using any recycled materials available. For instance, a cereal box could become the body of the puppet, while a tin can could become the face, and plastic straws could become arms and legs.
- The emphasis for this option is for students to explore different ways of building a puppet. Remember to encourage students to try as many ideas as they like before they construct their final design.



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#### Wrap-Up (5-10 minutes)

- As time allows, students may share their puppets with the rest of the group, perhaps elaborating if the puppet has a name or the students' inspiration for creating this puppet.
- **Discussion question** → Many of the pieces of these puppets are from recycled materials. How do you think reusing materials for these puppets helps our environment? Why is it important that we do this?

#### Further Resources

**"Paper Tube Puppets"** is adapted from this craft listed in *Parents* magazine:

<http://www.parents.com/fun/arts-crafts/kid/craft-puppy-puppet/>