

Puppet Play in PreK

Supporting Inclusion in SEL, Literacy, & STEM Lessons



Amy Jackson, EdD, Educational Psychology
Mosquero PreK
amyjackson275@gmail.com

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Why Puppets?

Practical (& Fun) Professional Learning Knowledge

Compatible with Multiple Established Frameworks

Compiled from Research-Based Resources

What is Puppet Play?

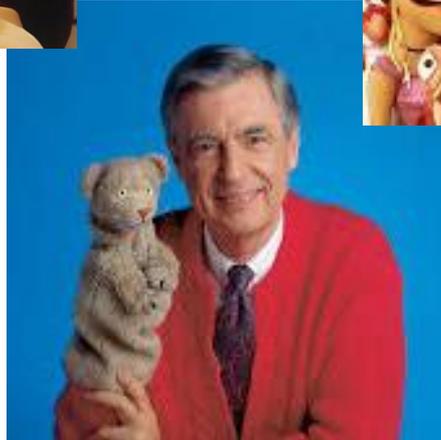
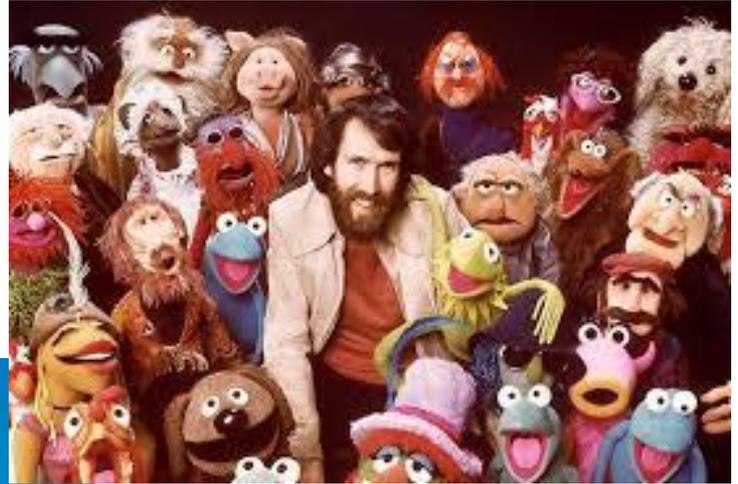
- A puppet is **any object brought to life through movement and voice**. Puppets are a highly visual and tactile medium to enrich instruction, capture attention, and engage students in learning (Karaolis, 2023)
- Puppets can support inclusion for children with diverse needs; puppet interaction need not be verbal and **provides a vehicle for both instructor modeling and student expression** (Karaolis, 2020)



What it is Not!



You Do Not Have to Be...



Teachers' Use of Puppets

- Generate **Communication**
- Supporting a Positive **Classroom Climate**
- Enhancing **Creativity**
- Fostering **Cooperation**
- **Changing** Attitudes

(Kröger & Nupponen, 2019)

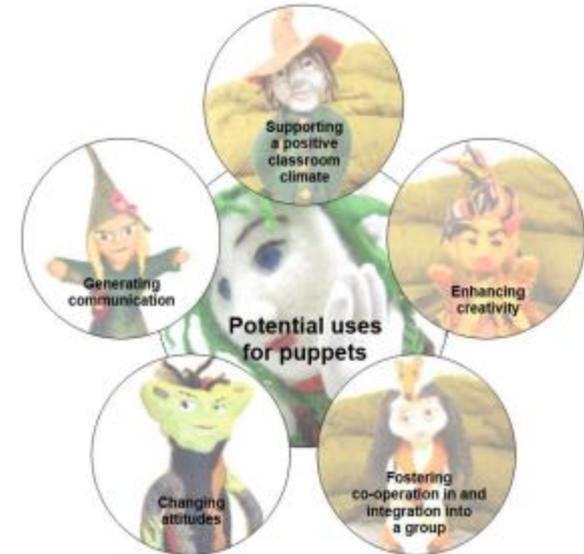


Figure 1. Potential uses for puppets. Pictures are from the website <https://punomo.fi/>.

Teachers' Use for Direct Instruction

- **Attention** Getter
- Protective **Barrier**
- **Classroom Management** Strategies
- **IEP Goal Support** opportunities



Students' Use of Puppets

- **Creative Expression**
- **Dramatic Play**
- **Role Playing**
- **Storytelling**
- **Calming Strategies**

Based on Teacher Modeling



Use of Puppets for Speech Support

- **Expressive Language Modeling**
vocabulary, grammar, pronoun use
- **Receptive Language**
assessment comprehension
- **Social/Pragmatic Language**
topic maintenance, turn taking, greetings, initiating interactions etc

Let the kids correct the puppets!



Points to consider when voicing a puppet

- **Pace** (120)
- **Pitch**
- **Prosody**
- **Point of View**

Puppets can be nonverbal!

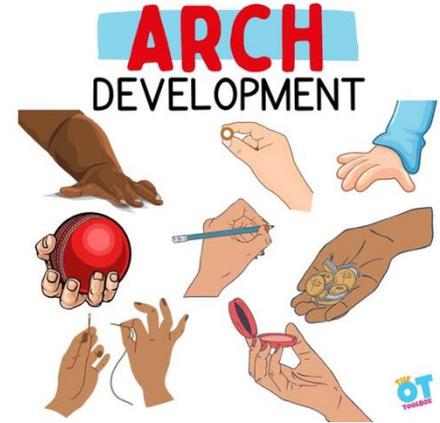


Use of Puppets for OT Support

- **Eye-hand coordination**
moving the fingers in coordination with visual input
- **Visual convergence**
moving the eyes as a team from a far point to a near point
- **Visual Tracking**
moving the eyes to follow a moving target

Use of Puppets for OT Support

- **Finger isolation**
One finger moving in separation from the rest of the hand
- **Distal joint flexion**
Bending the finger joints
- **Separation of the sides of the hand**
Moving the thumb & pointer finger while stabilizing the rest
- **Arch refinement**
Development of the arches of the hand



STEAM

Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math

Making Puppets

OT

- Fine motor dexterity and strength
- Line awareness
- Scissor skills
- Tool use

SLP

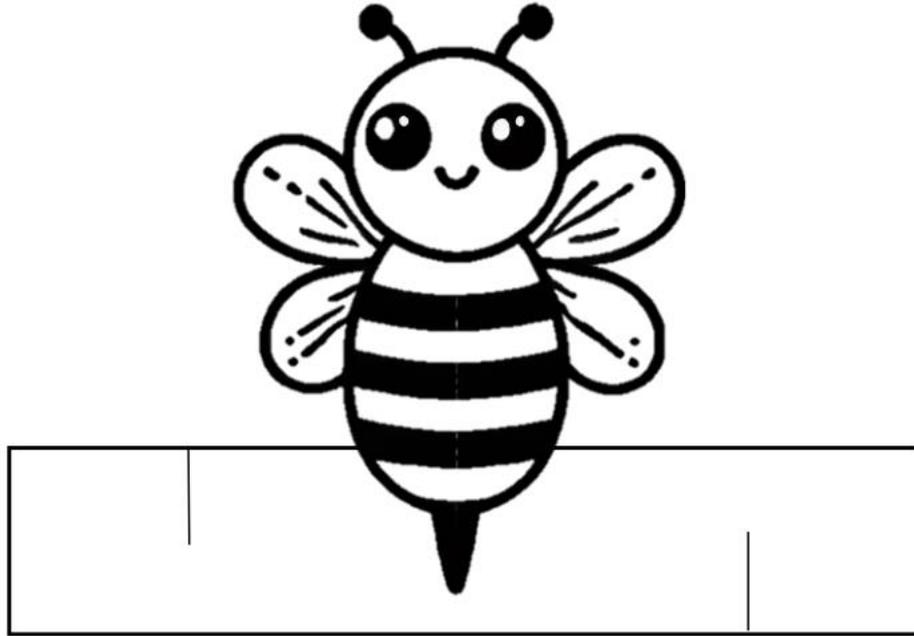
- Language
- Following directions

SEL

- Self-confidence
- Problem solving
- Creativity



Bee Puppet Making



Bee Puppet Making



Using Puppets to Support STEAM Learning

- Demonstrate Abstract Concepts
Pollination, Metamorphosis



- Work as a team through trial and error
Counting, Shape Identification



- Focus attention and provide independent practice



The background is a solid pink color. In the top right corner, there is a geometric pattern consisting of several overlapping shapes: a dark pink square, a medium pink square, and a light pink square, all partially cut off by the edge of the frame. The word "Literacy" is written in white, sans-serif font on the left side of the image.

Literacy

Phonological Awareness



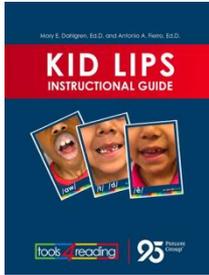
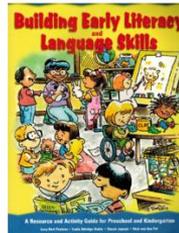
- Bibbity Bobbity Bumble Bee (Alliteration)



- Booster Rooster (Rhyming)



- The Mouth



Alphabet Knowledge



Storytelling



**Bundle includes 30
puppet characters
for seven stories:**





Social-Emotional Learning

Behavioral Modeling

- Teaching social skills through puppet shows reduced behavioral problems because the **undesired behaviors were clearly identified** and **desired behaviors modeled**; children learned through direct, imaginative interactions with the puppet characters (Aminimanesh et al, 2019)
- Also an opportunity to model conversational expectations (volume, pace, etc)



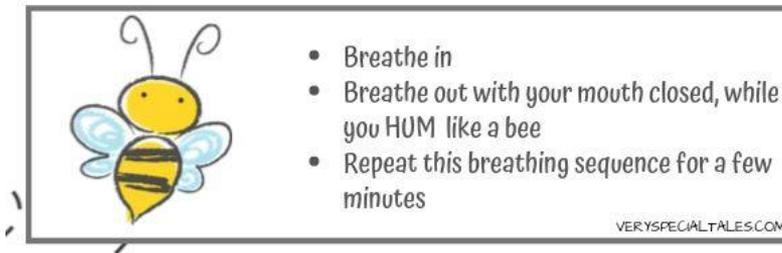
Bee Breathing

Breathing Techniques

Join us for some bumblebee breathing



- Many variations
- Keep it simple with humming only
- Add a kinesthetic element by <-tracing flight lines
- Increase sensory impact by using fingers to block ears (carefully)
- Also called Bhramari Pranayama



Bumble Bee Breath

Humming during exhalation produces an increase of Nitric Oxide, which enhances blood flow, stimulates the vagus nerve, and provides a healing & calming effect on the body.

How to practice:

- Plug ears with the thumb and rest other 4 fingers over the face/head or wherever hand position is comfortable
- Inhale through the nose
- Exhale and make a continuous and smooth humming sound



@mindfulmissk

Pyramid Strategies

- Suri Spider Selects a Solution (Problem Solving)
- Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think (Emotional Regulator)



Executive Functioning

- Cognitive Flexibility, Inhibitory Control, Working Memory
- Efgo (Reflection Sciences) Rule Following Games
 - Baby Stroop
 - Bear and Dragon



Social Skills/Safety

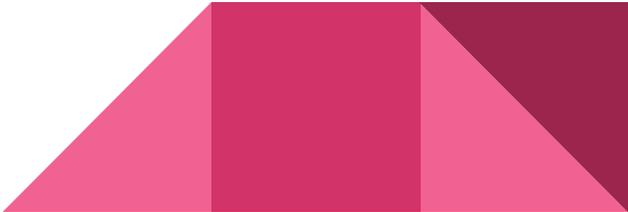
- Introduce children to life events
- Teach character values

Wayang Golek is a type of traditional Indonesian rod puppetry used to model social skills (Halimah et al., 2020)



Social Problem Solving

Puppets can get away with things people can't - exaggerated expression of emotions (especially those emotions with typically negative connotations, i.e. anger, jealousy, etc)

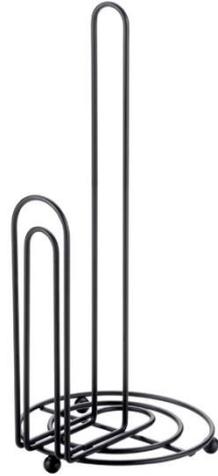
- Medium to disassociate
 - Neutral
 - Tangible
 - Concrete Demonstration of Abstract Concepts
 - Fun, silly way to engage attention
- 

Displaying & Using Puppets

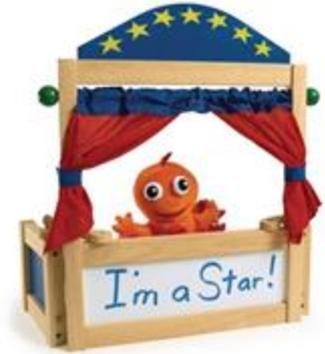
Storing and Setting up
Puppet Centers



Storing



Furniture



Selecting & Caring for Puppets



Keep in mind...

- Safety
- Supervision
- Sensory Issues



Who to choose?

- What is the problem that the puppet is going to help solve? (Communication, interest)
- How do I plan to use the puppet? (Dance, music, greetings, dramatic strategies)
- What do the children like? (favourite animals, creatures, or activities)
- Do they have sensory preferences? What are their preferred colours and textures?

(Karaolis, 2020)

Spectrum from wholly neutral to specifically representative



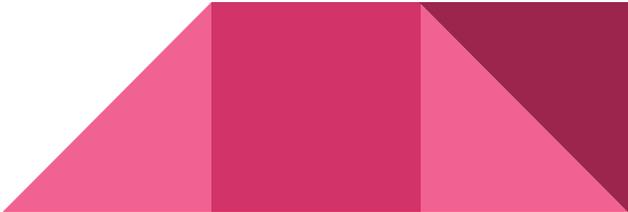
Cleaning



Woolite



Where to Buy



Thank You - Questions?



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amyjackson275@gmail.com



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- Kröger, T., & Nupponen, A.-M. (2019). Puppet as a Pedagogical Tool: A Literature Review. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 11(4), 393–401. <https://www.iejee.com/index.php/IEJEE/article/view/688>