

Shadow puppet theatre

Create exciting storytelling opportunities with parents, carers and others by inviting them to your setting to create a shadow puppet theatre!

Shadow puppet theatres are a great way for children to create and tell stories and sing their favourite rhymes. Children can choose the characters they want, cut them out of card and attach them to sticks to perform a play.

You can store the characters in boxes so children can re-visit stories and adapt them according to their current interests. You can also add props to the stories to bring them to life even more.

Resources

- 1 cardboard box
- 1 sheet of pale coloured tissue paper (large enough to cover one side of your box)
- Sticky tape
- Scissors or a craft knife
- Black marker pen
- Lollipop sticks or craft straws
- Large torch or a lamp
- A table
- Further props as required.



Activity Outline

- Cut the back panel out of your box
- Leave two of the side flaps to keep your puppet theatre stable, but cut off the front flaps (the pieces that close up the box)
- For the front of your theatre, sketch out a smaller square within the front panel - you can make it fancy with an arch and pillars if you want, but really all you need is a smaller square within the main square (like a television set)
- On the inside of the box, tape a piece of tissue paper that covers the opening you have just cut out
- Place the theatre on the edge of a table
- Position a lamp or torch behind, shining directly into the inside, lighting up the tissue paper from within
- Create your shadow puppets (these can be nursery rhyme characters from your child's favourite story or story characters from a family event) and place them between the light and the screen; as close to the screen as possible works best
- Provide bags so parents can take their puppet theatres home so children can re-visit, with wider family members as they wish to.