

Popsicle Stick Puppets

Activity created by the Corps members and staff at
Jumpstart Pittsburgh at University of Pittsburgh.

This activity works best with:

- INDIVIDUAL CHILD
- SMALL GROUPS
- CLASSROOMS/LIBRARIES
- ACTIVITY STATIONS AT LARGE EVENTS

Preparation Time: LOW

Materials: \$

OVERVIEW

After reading *The Story of Ferdinand*, children choose their favorite characters or objects (flowers, trees, etc.) from the story to create different popsicle stick puppets. Once created, the puppets can be used to reenact the story or tell new stories about Ferdinand.

MATERIALS & PREPARATION

MATERIALS:

- Popsicle sticks
- Assorted colors of construction paper
- White Computer Paper
- Glue Sticks or tape
- Markers, crayons, pencils and other writing/drawing tools
- Optional materials to enhance project: pipe cleaners, cotton balls, pom pom balls, googly eyes, feathers and other open-ended materials

PREPARATION:

- Trace or photo copy a few pictures of Ferdinand, other characters and/or objects from *The Story of Ferdinand*.
- Using the photo copies or pictures from the book, create a few example puppets by cutting out the figure, decorating it with markers or crayons and gluing it to a Popsicle stick.
- With a marker label the sample puppets with the name of the character on the Popsicle stick.

INTRODUCTION

- Begin the activity by talking about the child(ren)'s favorite characters/objects in the story.
- Explain that today they will be creating Popsicle stick puppets of their favorite characters and objects from the story.
- Then explain that when they are finished they can retell the story or make up new stories using the puppets they create.

ACTIVITY

- Using the photo copied/traced pictures or using the construction paper provided, have children create the characters/objects for their puppets. Allow children the opportunity to choose how they want to create their character/objects; they can create it from scratch or use the photo copies/tracings provided.
- Once the character/object is completely constructed, have the child put glue on the top portion of a Popsicle stick.
- Adhere the character/object to the Popsicle stick leaving the majority of the stick free to create the handle.
- For added literacy, have the child write their name or the character's/object's name on the excess portion of the Popsicle stick.
- After the puppets are created, use them to retell *The Story of Ferdinand* or create new stories with the children.

TIPS FOR CONVERSATION

- Engage children in dialogue about the book and why they may have chosen certain objects and/or characters for their puppets.
- Discuss with children their ideas for a puppet show: "Will you use the puppets to tell the story?" "Should we re-read the book and use the puppets to tell the story?" "Would you like to make a new story with the puppets?"
- Encourage children to talk about the puppets: "It looks like you made something for *The Story of Ferdinand*. Tell me about your puppet." "Why did you choose to decorate your puppet in that way?"
- Use the puppets to engage in conversation with the children, ask the children's puppets questions, or talk to the children's puppets using a puppet you created.

LEARNING CONNECTION

- Story telling with puppets gives children a way to share stories and demonstrates their understanding of the story. Additionally:
- Story telling with puppets builds on children's ideas by introducing new words, their meanings and other information.
- Children's initiative skills are fostered when adults comment on children's work and play along side them with the same materials. This is enabled by adults providing children leadership opportunities and reaffirming what the children are doing.
- Creating a puppet show provides children with an opportunity to work with others.