



My Marionette

UConn 4-H New London County

Background

Marionettes are puppets that have strings attached to their head, arms, and legs. These strings help the puppeteer control the puppet's movements from above. This makes it look like the puppet is moving by itself! Marionettes, and other types of puppets, can be used to tell stories. A good story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. At the beginning of the story, the characters and plot are introduced. The plot is the series of events that occur in a story. In the middle of the story, the characters face challenges and obstacles that they have to overcome. By the end of the story, the plot is resolved and reaches a successful conclusion for the characters. As a result of the plot, the character may have become stronger or wiser, made new friends, or even found buried treasure!

For this activity, build your marionette and develop its character. Is it a farmer, a dog, a doctor, a frog, a mother, a teacher? Then, make up a story for your puppet. Perhaps your puppet goes on a grand adventure or solves a problem. Let your imagination run wild! Act out your story with your puppet. Ask friends and family to be your audience.

Supplies and Tools

1 craft stick

Thin string or fishing line

One 1" wooden bead

Six 3mm wooden beads (or comparable size)

One 1" wooden spool

Scissors

Markers

Tape



Activity Steps

Notes

Visuals

1. Design the 1" wooden bead and the wooden spool to look like your desired character.



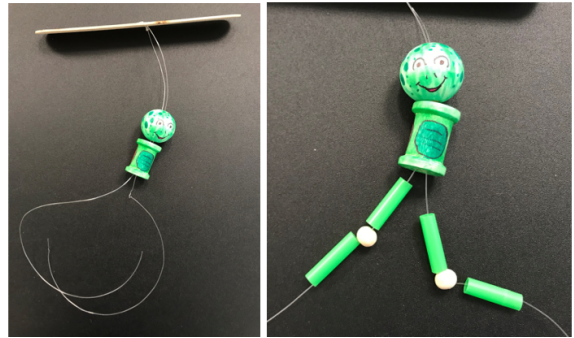
2. Cut eight sections around 3/4" in length from your straw. Use the spool as a guide if you don't have a ruler handy. These pieces will make up the arms and legs.



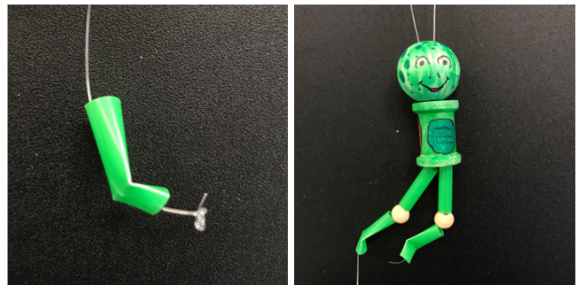
3. Cut a 30" section of string or fishing line. Using an overhand knot, tie the string around your craft stick, with equal lengths of string on each side. Tape the knot in the middle of the craft stick to hold it in place.



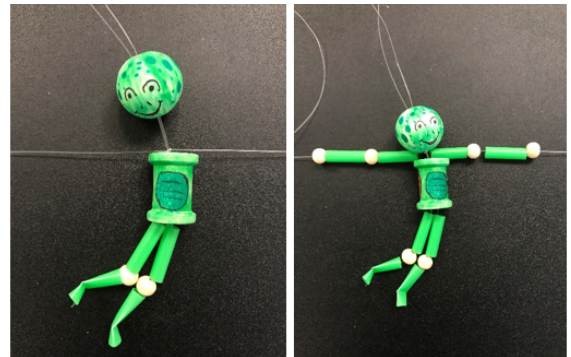
4. Thread both ends of the string through the 1" wooden bead and the spool. Thread one straw section, one small wooden bead, and a second straw section onto one of the strings. Repeat with the other string to form the legs.



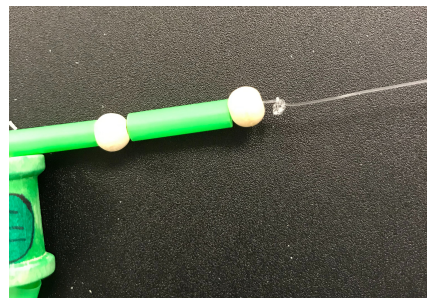
5. At the end of each leg string, tie a few knots as a stopper. Fold the two outer straws in half towards the ends and apply pressure to crease the straws and keep the knots from sliding up the straws. Cut off any excess string, leaving enough that the knots won't unravel.



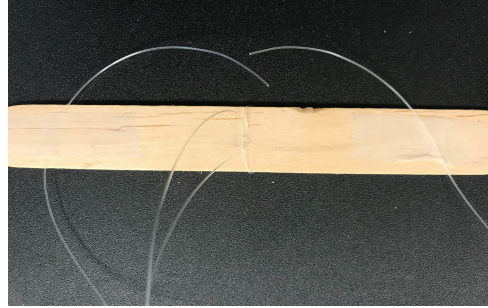
6. Cut another 30" section of string or line. Tie this around the first set of strings between the head (1" bead) and the body (spool). Ensure that there are equal lengths of string on both sides. String one section of straw, a small bead, a second section of straw, and a second bead onto one string. Repeat on the other side to make the arms.



7. Tie a knot at the end of each of the arm strings near the hand beads.



8. Tape the end of each string to the craft stick at the desired length. Experiment with the length until you are happy with the results.



9. Move the craft stick to move your marionette. Make up your character's story and act it out in front of family and friends.



If you enjoyed this project, visit 4-h.extension.uconn.edu to learn more about UConn 4-H. Check out the UConn 4-H New London County webpage to view the video associated with this activity.

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