

Jenny Mosley's
Top Tips for

Puppet Scripts



Top Tips Series

Positive Press

Some ideas to help you get started with your puppet

1. Getting ready to use your puppet for the first time

Large puppets

Try practising in front of a mirror. Sit your puppet on your lap, at a slight angle so that you can see its side profile. Practise making small movements with the hands and head: head down looking shy, thumbs up, a wave, sucking its thumb and hand over its eyes. It is more effective to make slow movements than fast ones. Choose whether you want to give the puppet a voice. It is less tiring on your hand if you open and close your puppet's mouth at the beginning and end of your sentences. Slow down the movement and pause between sentences to give an air of suspense and intrigue. If you don't want your puppet to have a voice, a whisper can be very powerful. Stretch its body and head to your ear so that you can hear what it is saying.

Hand puppets

Practise using your puppet and feeling comfortable with it. Have the puppet looking out towards your audience and show that it is shy by having it cuddle up to you with its head down; use your other hand to cover its head. Again, you can choose to give the puppet a voice or have it whisper to you.

2. Introducing your puppet in circle time

Create an exciting experience for the children by putting your puppet in a box and wrapping it up in nice paper or an attractive bag. Put a label on the box or bag, addressed to your class. Place a little card inside the parcel with the puppet's name and a message for the children.

Bring the box or bag to your circle and ask the children, 'What do you think is inside?' When everyone has had a guess, say, 'Let's find out.' Carefully open the box or bag and look inside, without the children being able to see. Take out the card and read out the message. (This can be something like 'My name is... Please look after me.')

The crew (large puppets) (getting on with your friends)

Puppet: Hello, children!

Children: Hello, Sunny!

Puppet: I've come to see you because I need help. I keep falling out with my friend. I've heard that your class has some good ideas for getting on with each other. Do you think you could help me today?

Children: Yes.

Puppet: Yesterday me and my friend Jasmine were playing a really good game with the farm animals. I had the toy cow and Jasmine had the toy chicken and we built a little farmyard with some empty boxes and it was really good fun. The only thing missing was a farmer. But we couldn't find the toy farmer so I said I'd be the farmer and Jasmine said she'd be the farmer. We started to argue and in the end I got so cross that I threw my toy cow across the room and told Jasmine that I didn't want to be friends with her and she'd have to play on her own. Now we're not friends any more and we haven't spoken to each other for a whole day. Children, how do you think I'm feeling?

Children: Upset, sad.

Puppet: That's right, I do feel like that. How do you think Jasmine is feeling?

Children: Upset, sad.

Puppet: So that's how Jasmine might be feeling.

Puppet: Children, what do you do that helps you get along with your friends?

Children (or teacher if they need a prompt): I try to be fair when I play a game. I take turns. I share things. I say sorry if I upset my friend.

Puppet: What brilliant ideas you have! If I tried those ideas, how do you think I would feel?

Children: Happy, pleased, glad.

Puppet: Yes, I would feel those things and Jasmine might feel like that as well. Thank you for giving me ideas to help me get on with my friends.

Sunny: The only problem now is that I don't know how to make friends with Jasmine again.

Children: You could say sorry. You could say hello, do you want to play something? You could draw her a picture.

Puppet: Oh, children, thank you for those ideas! You are so kind and helpful. I shall go and find Jasmine right away.

Follow-on work

- Write up the ideas as a cartoon strip to help you remember how to get on with your friends and how to make up if you've had a disagreement.
- Role play the puppet character and Jasmine trying out the ideas suggested by the children.

