



Circus Cup Puppets

You'll need:

• paper cups • large craft sticks • construction paper • glue • scissors • markers or crayons • yarn or cotton balls • pipe cleaners • fabric, lace, ribbon or wallpaper scraps

What to do:

With scissors, cut a slit the width of a craft stick in the bottom of a paper cup.

To make each puppet head, invite your child to glue 2 circles of construction paper onto the front and back of each craft stick, creating a "lollipop" effect.

Encourage her to add yarn, fabric bits, ribbon scraps or construction paper details. These basic puppet shapes may be decorated to represent circus people and animals.

Show your child how arms may be created from pipe cleaners. Use scissors to make holes in the cups for a pipe cleaner to poke through. Or, help your child fold paper strips accordion-style and tape them onto the cup.

Invite your child to draw on eyes with markers.

She can then insert the head into the paper cup slit.

Encourage her to decorate the body of the cup as she wishes.

How to use:

Set up a pretend circus in your home.

Make the performance ring by placing a circle of masking tape on the floor.

Your child can pretend to be any member of the circus and can perform with her puppets.

Walk the tight rope (tape on floor)

Ring Toss

Juggle Scarves

Elephant Walk

Circus Parade

Pin the Nose on the Clown (just like the donkey game)

Pretend to be a circus animal or performer

TAMBOURINE

2 paper plates
stapler or glue
hole punch
string
jingle bells
crayons

Staple or glue two paper plates together, facing each other. Using a hole punch, make holes around the plates and tie jingle bells to the holes with string. Decorate the tambourine with crayons.

Shake to play.

Note: Heavy duty paper plates may be more durable for this craft.

Safety note: If using a stapler, an adult should do this. When finished be sure to cover the staples with scotch tape.

DRUM

empty oatmeal box with cover
yarn
pen
2 pencils
2 spools
construction paper
crayons

Before beginning, you can decorate the oatmeal box with construction paper and/or crayons for a colorful effect.

Place the cover on the box. Use a pen to make a hole in the center of the cover and in the center of the bottom of the box. Through these holes, pull a piece of yarn long enough to hang around child's neck and down to their waist.

For the drumsticks, place the spools at the ends of the pencils, secure with glue if necessary.

Beat to play.

CHIMES

ruler or stick
washers
nail polish
string
mixing spoon

Hang the washers from the ruler or stick with pieces of string by wrapping the string around the ruler or stick and securing. Strike the washers with the mixing spoon to play.

Note: You can make this craft colorful by painting the washers first with different color nail polishes, such as red, gold, glittery, etc. Parents should supervise this part of the activity closely.

HORN

paper towel roll
waxed paper
rubber band
pen

Cover one end of the paper towel roll with waxed paper, secure it with a rubber band. Punch a row of holes along one side of the roll with the tip of a pen.

To play, sing a tune into the open end of the horn.

CYMBALS

two matching pot covers
yarn or ribbon

Tie the ribbon or yarn around the handles of the pot covers. To play, strike together.

XYLOPHONE

tall glasses or jars
water
mixing spoon

Fill the glasses or jars with different amounts of water. The more water in the glass, the lower the pitch will be. Having less water in the glass or jar will raise the pitch.

To play, gently strike the glasses with a mixing spoon.

Note: This instrument should probably be played by older children in "the band" because of the use of glass.

COMB BUZZER

pocket comb
tissue paper

Fold a piece of tissue paper over the tooth edge of a comb. To play, hum through the tissue paper.

GUITAR

empty shoe box
rubber bands
ruler or stick

Remove the cover from the box. Stretch the rubber bands around the box. Attach the ruler or stick to the back of the box on one end to act as the arm of the guitar.

To play, strum or pluck the rubber bands.

HAND BELLS

2 paper towel rolls
hole punch
4 jingle bells
string or yarn

Punch a hole in each end of the paper towel rolls. Tie two jingle bells to each side of the paper towel rolls by running string or yarn through the holes and carefully tying off.

Shake to play.

Have fun and let creativity and imagination run wild! Record the band's first song and play back for some great giggle time. Enjoy!

Recommended Reading: Kuffner gives us an enormous number of ideas for fun things to do with our children. This is an arts and crafts type of book, and she does something I haven't seen in other activity books. She spends a chapter telling you how to organize for a toddler. She also provides a list of items to buy and old household items to save (dried magic markers, for example). The rest of the book is laid out equally well. There are chapters on rainy day play, water play, kitchen activities, outdoor adventures, how to entertain the kids when you're on errands or travel, nursery rhymes, learning activities, music, arts & crafts, and even birthday/holiday activities. The appendix lists craft recipes, "crazy can" activities, and best toys/books for toddlers. Very comprehensive and varied. (courtesy: Amazon)

Maracas
Supplies:

2 Paper Cups
Rice
Masking Tape

Take 2 paper cups and put a handful of rice in one, tape the 2 cups together with masking tape and voila maracas.
---submitted by Brenda in CT.

Bass Fiddle
Supplies:

Coffee Can
Large Dowel or Broomstick
String
Heavy Tape

Punch a hole in the bottom of the coffee can, thread string thru the hole and secure on the inside. Tie the other end of the string to the end of the dowel. (You might want to put some heavy tape on it so it doesn't slide down.) To play it, put one foot on the can to hold it in place, rest the end of the dowel without the string on the coffee can or on the floor, which ever is more comfortable for the child, and tilt the dowel back until the string is tight. Then pluck it!
---submitted by Barb in Iowa.

Kazoos
Supplies:

Cardboard Roll

Tissue Paper
Rubber Band

Kazoos are very easy to make. Get an empty TP tube and a piece of tissue paper to cover the end. Secure it on with a rubber band. With a needle, poke a small hole near the other end.

---submitted by Barb in Iowa.

Tamborines
Supplies:

Paper Plates
Rice or Dried Beans
Hot Glue or Tape
Items to decorate the plates

Decorate paper plates as desired. Hot glue or tape around the sides; fill with rice or beans before sealing.

---submitted by Gail in OK.

Pan Pipes
Supplies:

Six Straws
Paper, about 1x8
Glue
Markers or Crayons

Let the child color/decorate her piece of paper. Cut or have the child cut the six straws so that they are all different lengths. (None of the lengths should be less than 1".) Now, have the child prearrange the straws from longest to shortest, touching side by side. (Great cognitive exercise.) Put glue on the back of the paper so that the straws will stick to it when dry. The straws must be placed across the paper so that both ends of the straw stick out. One end of the straws should lie even while the other end is at different lengths. Now simply wrap the paper around the center of the straws keeping them flat and let dry.

Play this instrument by holding it in your hands and gently blowing air over the straws - not through. Lips need not touch the straws.

---submitted by Cindy.

Pop Bottle Shakers
Supplies:

Clean, Dry 16 oz. Plastic Soda Bottles
Rice, Beans, or anything that will make noise
Hot Glue

Use empty, dry, 16 oz plastic soda bottles....fill with all kinds of interesting things, such as popcorn, colored paper clips, water, oil, blue color mixture, old beadednecklace, pasta...on and on!!!! Hot glue the top on! Can also glue paper around it and decorate!

---submitted by Hunny.

Bottle Cap Rattles

Supplies:

Metal Bottle Caps
Small Piece of Wood
Nails

Take metal bottle caps and punch holes in the centers, then nail two back to back (loosly) to a small piece of wood.

---submitted by Keri.

Jingle Bell Gloves

Supplies:

Childrens Glove
5 Little Jingle Bells

Take an old or new childrens glove, the stretchy kind is best, then you sew a jingle bell to the end of each finger. You can get the jingle bells in different sizes or you can do them all the same size.

---submitted by Julie in Dallas.