

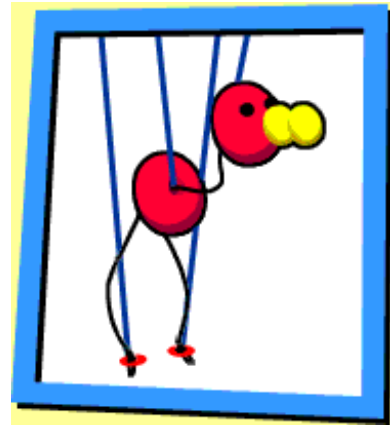


# String Puppets

## Dancing Birds

String puppets, or marionettes, are traditional puppets that are controlled by strings, allowing them to move freely.

Here is an idea for making some dancing bird marionettes.



### Equipment

1. Two large round beads and two small beads.
2. Two buttons and two lollipop sticks.
3. Some feathers, if you can get them (you could always borrow a few from a pillowcase - but ask an adult first!).
4. Some thick wool.
5. Some embroidery thread or thin wool.
6. A darning (or other blunt) needle with a large eye.
7. Some paper fasteners (the kind with split pins).
8. Acrylic paints and some paintbrushes.
9. A pair of scissors and some paper glue.

### Safety Stuff

Always check with an adult before you begin, so that if you need their help they're not taken by surprise. Working with items such as scissors can be dangerous, so be very careful when you use them. Make sure that you never leave them open or lying around where smaller children can reach them.

Before starting to make any of the puppets, cover the work surface you're going to use with some newspaper or an old cloth, and make sure that you're wearing an apron or some old clothes. Then gather together all the items you'll need before you begin.

A lot of the things you'll need can probably be found by hunting around the home, but remember to check with an adult before you take anything. Just because it's there doesn't mean that you can use it!

When you've finished, don't forget to tidy everything away. Wash any paint brushes you've used and remember to put the tops back on pens, paint and glue pots.

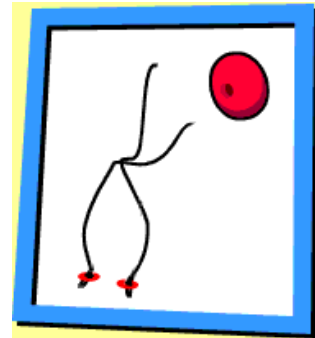
## Steps

### Step One

Cut two lengths of thick wool - one 20cm long and the other 30cm long. Tie a knot at the end of each piece and thread a flat button onto it.

Tie another knot close to each button. Now knot the two lengths of wool together, 12.5cm from the buttons.

Thread both pieces of wool through one of the large round beads. You may need a darning needle to help you do this. Tie a knot close to the large bead and then cut off the shorter end of wool.

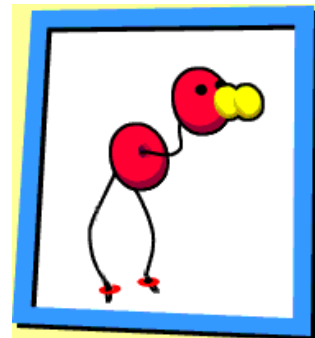


### Step Two

Tie another knot in the remaining piece of wool, about 10cm from the large bead.

Thread the second large bead onto the wool, followed by two smaller beads.

Knot the wool after the final bead and then trim the end of it with a pair of scissors.

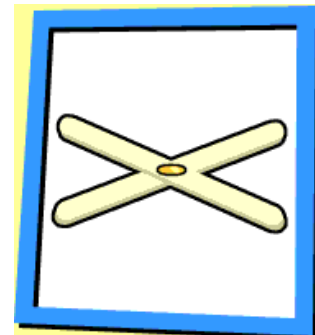


### Step Three

Ask an adult to help you make a hole in the centre of the two lollipop sticks. Put the sticks one on top of the other, so that the holes are overlapping.

Push a paper fastener through the two holes and open it out on the other side. This will hold the lollipop sticks in a cross shape.

You have now made the frame that will control your dancing bird.



### Step Four

Next, hang the bird from the lollipop stick cross. Tie a long length of embroidery thread to each foot, then tie the other end of the thread to the opposite ends of one of the lollipop sticks (so that the foot of the right is tied to the stick on the left, for example).

Attach another piece of thread to the wool by the bird's head, and one close to its body.

Tie the head to the front lollipop stick and the body to the central point where the sticks cross over.

## Step Five

You've now made your string marionette! All that's left to do is to decorate it, if you wish.

When you have made a dancing bird, try to make a larger string puppet, such as a dancing clown. You'll probably find that the lollipop sticks are too small for a large puppet. The paper fastener joining the lollipop sticks may also be too small. Design and make a stronger frame to support your large puppet.

