

Build your own Shoebox Theatre

This is an easy to make puppet theatre which can be as plain or as elaborate as you like. An adult will need to do the cutting but children can decorate the theatre in a variety of ways. If you have a bigger box the method is the much the same but you get a bigger theatre!

You will need...

A shoebox

Scissors

Coloured card or paper

Sellotape, double-sided tape or glue

Start with...

Your shoe box - take the lid off but keep it for later.



Cut out the back of the box, leaving a border all the way round. Keep the cut outs for later.



Now cut out the top of the box, again leaving a border right round. This allows you to let down backdrops (scenes for your theatre performance) or puppets from the top of the theatre.



Time now to make the theatre a bit more “fancy”!

To decorate the front of the theatre you can use coloured paper or card to make a fancy top and side pieces, using double-sided tape, glue or Sellotape to stick them on.



The theatre is now ready for you to use with small toys, like Lego figures, or you can make special puppets using up your left-over cardboard cut out from the box. We have included some medieval figures templates you could use to recreate your won scenes of Medieval Elgin!



The figures here are made from card, with long strips of the left-over shoe box card stuck to the back to use as “levers” – stick them at the top, up and down, so they can be placed from the hole in the top, or stick them to one side so they can be pushed along the back of your stage. You could use Art Straws or wooden skewers instead or put them on a card base so they stand up.

You can place pictures of different scenes, from magazines or comics or drawings you’ve done yourself, at the back as a backdrop. Cut out objects like houses or trees or hills or flowers could be put on bases to use as scenery. If you put a light in front of the theatre it will spotlight the figures. You can tell stories that you know or write your own plays. All you need is your imagination!

Another type of show is the **shadow puppet** show. Stick a piece of tracing paper or greaseproof paper to the inside of the cut-out window of the box, and have your light at the **back** of the puppets. The shadows of the figures will be projected onto the “screen” of the theatre. We’ve included a template of sea creatures you could use – or you can draw your own figures and shapes!



When you’re finished your performances, you can put the lid back on the box and keep the puppets inside, ready for the next time.

We’d love to see your theatres, so please share a picture of your creations with us by email or on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram!







Coral Reef

Shadow Puppet Set



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