

Puppets - easy human glove puppets

You'll need:

- newspaper
- pen
- scissors
- material
- sewing stuff
- an old sock
- stuffing
- a small piece of card
- short piece of wool
- bits and pieces to decorate it: felt, fur, fabric pens, sequins

Instructions:

1. First custom-make your pattern. Fold a long piece of paper in half.
2. Put your hand down on it, with your index finger pointing up along the fold and your thumb sticking out to the side.
3. Draw a very generous margin around the part of your hand on the paper, especially alongside your wrist. If in doubt, make it bigger than you think you'll need it to be. Trust me on this. Make it big.
4. Open out the paper. It should be in the shape of a body with a neck, no legs and two arms sticking out. Like a snow angel or a legless headless gingerbread man.
5. Pin the pattern over a double thickness of material, with the right sides facing in and cut them out.
6. Remove the pattern, hem the bottom edges then sew the two shapes together, right sides together, leaving a hole at the neck. Turn it right way out.
7. Stuff the toe of an old sock with filling (stuffing, old tights, cotton wool etc) for the head. Cut off the rest of the sock, leaving about 8cm below the head.
8. Make a cardboard tube about 8cm long and narrow enough to fit snugly into the neck hole of the dress.
9. Push the tube into the head and tie a piece of wool round the sock and tube, about halfway down the tube to make your head and neck.
10. Slot this into the neckhole, turning the raw edge of the neck fabric as it goes in. Fiddle with it until it feels comfortable and doesn't look too mutant, then stitch it into place.
11. Use wool or fake fur for hair; felt circles or fabric pen for features, and accessorise with scarves, hats, bowties, necklaces, earrings etc.
12. If even I can make this in an hour, with three thumbs and a temperamental sewing machine, most people will be able to knock one together in half that time. Go for it!

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