



# Puppets and Jim Henson

**GRADE:** 3 and up      **TIME:** 2 sessions

Developed by Linda Pfisterer, Art Specialist



<p><b>KIT INCLUDES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lesson plan</li> <li>• book, <i>Jim Henson. From Puppets to Muppets</i></li> <li>• transparencies, (11)</li> <li>• Henson and muppet boards (2)</li> <li>• teaching step boards (2)</li> <li>• vocabulary board</li> <li>• DVD of puppet ideas</li> </ul>	<p><b>MATERIALS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• construction paper of varied colors and sizes:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 9" x 12" for the head</li> <li>- 6" x 9" for the body</li> <li>- 4 1/2" x 6" for body parts</li> <li>- 3" x 4 1/2" for small parts</li> <li>- 2" x 5" white for eyes</li> </ul> </li> <li>• black markers</li> <li>• glue</li> <li>• scissors</li> </ul>
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**LESSON DESCRIPTION:**  
Students develop their very own puppet characters using ideas from puppeteer, Jim Henson. They learn the difference between marionettes, puppets and muppets. Construction paper is used to create a puppet with a moveable mouth.

<p><b>VOCABULARY:</b></p> <p>marionette puppet muppet puppeteer texture</p>	<p><b>ART ELEMENTS:</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Line <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shape/Form <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Color <input type="checkbox"/> Value <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Texture <input type="checkbox"/> Space/Perspective</p>	<p><b>ART PRINCIPLES:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pattern <input type="checkbox"/> Rhythm/movement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proportion/Scale <input type="checkbox"/> Balance <input type="checkbox"/> Unity <input type="checkbox"/> Emphasis</p>	<p><b>CONTENT CONNECTIONS:</b></p> <p>Language arts: * Retell a story using the puppets • Write a puppet play with a friend * Perform the play for younger groups of students.</p> <p><b>THEMES:</b> pretending</p>
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**OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:**

1. Students will learn about Jim Henson, a puppeteer and creator of the muppets.
2. Students will learn the difference between a marionette, a puppet, and a muppet.
3. Students will practice folding skills as they make the puppet head with 3D parts.
4. Students will embellish their puppet character using color, line, shapes, and texture.

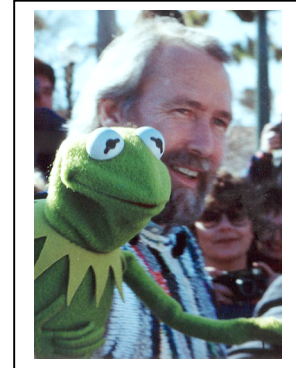
**PREPARE:**

1. Practice making a puppet form and develop it with detail using lines, shapes and texture to give interest to the character of the puppet. Use your example to show how far they can develop their character, but encourage them to use their own ideas to develop a different character, not copy the one you have made.
2. Cut the construction paper of varied sizes and color as suggested above. Place them in small boxes to allow them to choose colors and still keep the papers in order.
3. Set out black markers, scissors and glue.

## ENGAGE AND EXPLORE:

*Use the transparencies in the art kit as you follow this script. (If you don't have the kit, refer to the book *From Puppets to Muppets*.)*

1. Jim Henson was a famous puppeteer! A puppeteer is someone who entertains with puppets or marionettes. Henson was especially creative because he designed and made his own puppet characters. He was also a writer because he decided what they should say and wrote the stories he performed.
2. The characters Jim Henson created for television were neither puppets nor marionettes, yet they had elements of both. Since they were part puppet and part marionette, Henson called his characters “**muppets**.”



Jim Henson and Kermit  
Jeffstuff at Flickr

A **marionette** is a doll whose body parts move by pulling the long strings attached to its body. Rather than using strings like a marionette, Henson used stiff thin wire to move the arms and sometimes legs of his muppet characters. A **puppet** has no strings; the puppeteer shows feelings by moving its body or by changing its tone of voice, yet the face remains unchanged. Henson's **muppets** were made of soft foam, which allowed him to change the muppets' expression by pinching and stretching the face.

3. As Jim got very busy, he hired a “Muppet builder”—Don Sahlin—to help create more characters.
4. Frank Oz joined the muppet team when he was only 21 years old. He created Miss Piggy and was also her voice as he moved her in front of the camera.
5. As Jim Henson and the other performers created a scene for “The Muppet Show,” a TV monitor helped them to see how the muppets appeared to the audience. The camera showed only the puppets, cutting off the puppeteers below.
6. Jim Henson and Frank Oz perform the characters Bert and Ernie on the set of “Sesame Street.” Notice that it took 2 puppeteers for Ernie. Frank Oz used an attached wire to move Bert's arms.
7. In one muppet movie, Frank Oz used the marionette strings to make Kermit the Frog ride a bicycle. Another puppeteer controlled the moving bike. The puppeteers and the strings are not seen in the movie.
8. Brian (Jim's son) and Jim Henson performed for the movie “Labyrinth.” They looked down at the TV monitor to help them move their characters.
9. All five of Jim Henson's children have worked with their dad in television and film. The top photo is of his wife Jane who helped him with his muppet shows even before they were married. Two of his daughters are shown in these pictures.
10. Jim Henson will always be remembered for moving puppetry into television and movies. He was the voice and puppeteer for Kermit the Frog and Ernie.

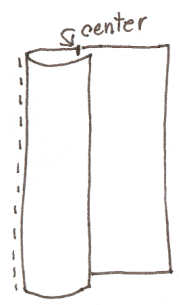
# CREATE:

The **puppet DVD** in this kit is only meant as a motivation for the many possibilities for this style of puppet. To save time, let them watch it while they eat lunch or snack. Then continue with the lesson.

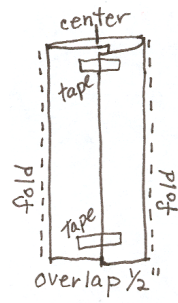
1. Decide if you want your character to be a person or animal with human traits.
2. Choose a 9" x 12" color paper and use these steps to **fold the head**:



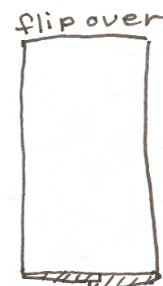
**a.** Vertical paper. Pinch the center at the top.



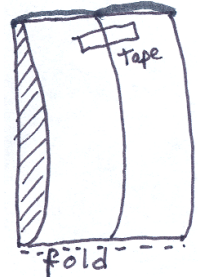
**b.** Make the first vertical fold 1/2" beyond the center pinch mark.



**c.** Overlap the second vertical fold by 1/2." Tape the top and bottom.



**d.** Flip over so the open side is down.



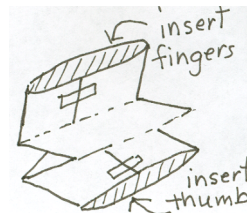
**e.** Fold in half.



**f.** Fold top half down.



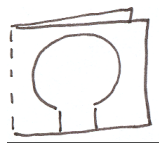
**g.** Flip over and fold down other side.



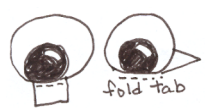
**h.** Place your thumb in the bottom opening, and your fingers in the top to move mouth. See below.



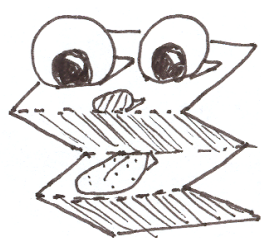
## 3. Create eyes and body parts in the style of Jim Henson.



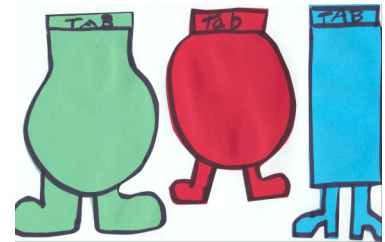
**a.** Fold 3x5 paper. Draw eyes with tab.



**b.** Draw black pupil with white spot. Cut out. Fold tabs



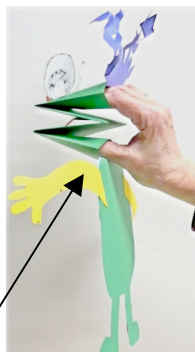
**c.** Glue the tab to center area of the head. The eyes will stand up in 3D fashion. Draw and tab the nose and tongue, add texture.



**d.** Use the black marker to outline all body parts for a strong cartoon effect. Embellish with clothes, wings and beaks, or whatever you need to create a character.



**e.** Insert hair and glue to inside. Glue the body to bottom opening.



**f.** Move the mouth up and down.

## 4. Add more embellishment

If your puppet is a bird, add a beak and wings. Use markers for feather texture and extra detail. Add clothing with more colored paper. Outline each piece for a cartoon effect. Name your puppet!



**CLOSE:**

**FOLLOW-UP:** Students could name their puppets and introduce them to the class. Students could retell a story or write their own story to perform for younger students. Two students could team up and perform a dialog about a specific topic. As a social studies assignment, students could give a puppet report about an event. They could make a background and the teacher could videotape them, focusing in on the puppet, cutting off the puppeteer. Puppets can be displayed on the bulletin board using the sheet provided at the end of the lesson plan.

**ASSESSMENT:**Teacher administered assessment tool

DN	OK	UP	Lesson_____ Teacher_____
			Grade_____ Date_____ Number of Students_____
			Using the thumbs up, ok, and down technique, ask your students the following questions and record their answers. (K=knowledge, S=skills, C= creativity, A=attitude, E=engagement)
			1. Can you name one of the muppets Jim Henson created? (K)
			2. Do you know the difference between a puppet and a marionette? (K)
			3. Did you fold a puppet head with a moving mouth? (S,E)
			4. Did you use tabs to give your puppet 3D eyes? (K,S,E)
			5. Did you embellish your puppet character? (K,S,C,E)
			6. Did you add an imaginative touch to your art? (C)
			7. Did you actively listen and follow directions? (A)
			8. Did you do your best during this lesson? (E)
<u>Teacher self-critique</u>			
			8. My teaching of this lesson:
			1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10
			needed improvement <span style="float:right">was highly successful</span>
			9. What would I do differently next time?

**ALIGNMENT:**

<b>Alignment of Standards:</b> Art: A1,2,3,4,5,7; C4,5; D6 English: A,C	<b>Alignment of GLE's:</b> L.A.: R2.4, R2.6
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**CREDITS:**

Project ARTiculate is supported by the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, the Alaska Arts Education Consortium, and a U.S. Department of Education Development and Dissemination Grant

