

LCHS Marionette Project

Supplies needed:

Styrofoam balls (small for head and a larger size for body)

Cotton Cord (for legs), 2 8-inch lengths needed (can use heavy yarn if desired)

Washers (used as weights for feet)

Bead necklace, cut to 3 or 4-inch length

Wiggly eyes

Craft foam, yellow (used for feet and beak)

Feathers (for tail)

Yarn (for "fluff" on head), worsted weight

Tempera paint, small paintbrush (if desired)

Tissue paper (if desired), cut into strips approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 3" – smaller strips handle better

Mod Podge or other type of glue and a bristle paint brush

Hot glue gun and glue sticks

Sewing needle

Fishing line (for strings), crochet cotton could be used if desired. A total of 4 36-inch lengths are needed.

Craft sticks (for controller)

Painter's tape (holds fishing line to controller while making adjustments)

Scotch tape

Toothpicks

Pen



Prepare Styrofoam balls:

Cover small ball with tempera paint. Add a second coat after the first coat has dried white Styrofoam is still visible. Place on inverted plastic cup or a plastic lid to dry.

Working with the larger Styrofoam ball, apply a base coat of Mod Podge before attaching a strip of tissue paper.

Press one strip of tissue paper onto Mod Podge at a time. Seal each strip with more Mod Podge as it is added, making sure that it adheres to the Styrofoam ball. Press out wrinkles as much as possible by rubbing paper strip with your fingers. Continue until entire Styrofoam ball is covered.

Add a final light coat of Mod Podge, and place covered Styrofoam ball on plastic cup or plastic lid to dry. The Mod Podge and tissue paper create a sturdy "shell" for the body.

The same technique can be used on the head if desired. Set aside until thoroughly dry.





Prepare other supplies:

Legs: Cut soft cotton cord in 8" lengths. Need 2.

Feet: Cut out shape of foot in craft foam. Need 4. Each foot has two pieces which "sandwich" the washer that is used for weight. Using hot glue gun, glue washer to each of the "bottom" pieces. Poke small hole through top piece. It is helpful to wrap the end of the cotton cord with tape to help push it through the hole in the top of the foot. Remove tape and leave about a 1/4" of cotton cord extending through the foot. Place the top piece over the bottom to ensure cord doesn't show. Squeeze coating over bottom foot piece, then press top foot, taking care to secure the end of the cord in the glue and seal the foot closed. Set aside and repeat with the other foot.

Neck: Cut a 3 or 4-inch length of bead necklace for neck. While you want movement in the neck for the head, if the neck is too long it will be more difficult to control the movement.

Beak: Cut one "ice cream cone" shape of foam for the beak. Need 1. Place a dot of hot glue on the curved end and pinch closed.



Fluff for head: Holding three fingers together, wrap one strand of yarn around fingers 5-6 times. Cut yarn. Slip the yarn loop from fingers using a loose end, tie around the middle of the bundle to secure. Snip the loops, and fluff yarn. Leave as strands as-is, or separate the ends of the strands to frizz.



Strings for body and head: Cut a toothpick in two. Take a 36" length of fishing line and tie near tapered end of toothpick. Wrap fishing line around the toothpick about four times near the knot. Secure with a dot of hot glue. Trim away extra toothpick (leave a little less than a half inch of toothpick). Carefully roll up remainder of the length of fishing line, and secure with paperclip to keep fishing line from tangling before marionette is strung. Repeat with another 36-inch length of fishing line and set aside.





Assemble head:

Using pen, poke hole into small Styrofoam ball for beak. Squeeze hot glue into hole, then push the pinched end of beak into glue before it cools. Place eyes above beak, securing each with a dot of hot glue. Poke another hole in the top of the head, which will be for the string and the "fluff." Carefully position toothpick in the hole, making sure the fishing line is held toward the back of the head. Add hot glue on top of the toothpick, and carefully place knot of the "fluff" on top of the toothpick. Use another toothpick to help push it into place.





Assemble body:

Using the pen, mark areas on large Styrofoam ball to attach the neck, the tail (this will also be where the toothpick anchors the string for the body), and two holes for the legs on the bottom side. Use the pen to poke a hole on each spot. First, place the toothpick that secures the string, and secure in place with hot glue. Next, attach the legs one at a time. Squeeze hot glue into hole, quickly insert end of cotton cord, using another toothpick to push it into place. Repeat with next leg. Put hot glue into neck hole, and place end of bead string into the hole. Hold in place until glue cools.

Select feathers for bird's tail. Using a toothpick, make an indent around the area where the body string is secured. Take care to keep the string pulled up toward the heads. Insert feathers one at a time by adding a dot of hot glue to an indentation and immediately attaching a feather. Add as many feathers as desired.



Strings for feet:

Thread needle with one strand of fishing line. Poke needle up through the foot and pull it through on the outside edge of the leg cord. Add a knot in the end, creating a loop that will help secure the line to the foot. Gently pull until knot/loop reaches the bottom of the foot, and secure in place with hot glue, spreading the excess glue along the bottom of the foot to seal. As with the strings for the head and body, roll up remainder of fishing line and secure with paperclip.



Stringing the marionette:

Mark middle of one of the craft sticks, attach other craft stick at a 90-degree angle using hot glue. It works best to have a second set of hands to help at this point. Unroll the string for the body, and let the feet "stand" on a surface. Attach the string to the back point of the controller, using the painter's tape to secure. You can easily loosen it to adjust as needed. Next, unroll the string for the head, and attach to the front portion of the controller, again using a piece of painter's tape to secure the string. Attach each leg in the same manner to the respective cross branch of the controller. Adjust as needed to find the correct balance. Experiment with moving legs, bobbing the head and making the bird walk.





