

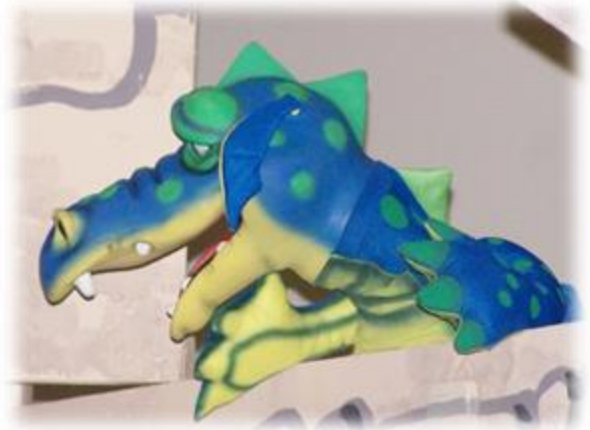
# GETTING STARTED WITH PUPPETS

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## INTRODUCTION:

The use of puppets is a great resource for the Christian worker. This visual is worth the time to build or money to purchase. By learning to use this valuable tool the worker may acquire the desired result in any learning or teaching setting.



## 1. PUPPET SOURCES

A. **BUILT** – A puppet you make yourself. (Sock, Paper-Mache, cloth sewn, etc.)

B. **BOUGHT** – These are puppets that are purchased. These can vary from Christian visual supply houses to professional puppet manufacturers. These can range in price from ten dollars to thousands.  
SOURCES:

1. PUPPET PRODUCTIONS – [www.thepuppetstore.com](http://www.thepuppetstore.com)
2. CREATIVE MINISTRY SOLUTIONS – [www.creativemin.com](http://www.creativemin.com)
3. MONSTER PUPPETS – [www.monsterpuppets.com](http://www.monsterpuppets.com)
4. AXTELL PUPPETS – [www.axtell.com](http://www.axtell.com)
5. PAVLOVS PUPPETS – [www.pavlovspuppets.com](http://www.pavlovspuppets.com)

C. **BUILD** – Decide if your puppet character is a half-body for behind stage use or a full body puppet for vent-style use or a two person puppet.

**2. PUPPET MANIPULATION** – A puppet is only as good as the hand inside it. The key to puppet manipulation is filtering all your speech and mannerisms through your hand. (Your hand is tied to your mouth.)

A. \_\_\_\_\_ POSITION – The eyes of your puppet must be focused on the desired target(s) at all times. Any puppet movement should be planned.

B. \_\_\_\_\_ – The puppet needs to fit its character in posture.

C. **MOUTH MOVEMENT** – A puppet’s dialog always begins and ends with the mouth closed.

1. The key to proper mouth movement is opening and closing the mouth once per syllable. (In other words the word Mississippi has four syllables. So the puppets mouth would open and close four times.) Be careful not to begin with your mouth open, this leads to chomping your words.
2. The mouth movement should be exaggerated on any syllable where you want to place emphasis.

D. **PUPPET PRACTICE** – Practice at home in front of a mirror.

E.                      **USE &** **USE** – Be sure to use the puppet for the proper length of time. Under use means the character has not been established. Over use can lead to boredom.

### 3. PUPPET TECHNIQUES

A. **ENTER AND EXITING**

1. Stair step up and down behind the curtain.
2. Talk coming in and going out. (Not a fast rule)

B.                      **ARMS** – can add more life to your character, (pointing, pledging, saluting). However, it does require two hands to operate the puppet.

1. Temporary
2. Permanent

C. **MONOFILAMENT LINE** – This line can be used instead of rod arms for single hand manipulation. The line, attached permanently, runs from both wrists to the corners of the mouth.

D.    **PUPPET** – can hold objects in a real hand,( a Bible, flowers, another puppet).

E. **OFF HAND USE** – Sometimes a character can be used without talking such as by cradling, carrying, pulling, etc.

F. **SPECIALTY PUPPET** – This puppet has a special feature,( lives in a can, special FX, blinking eyes, squirting mouth, blowing smoke, etc).

G.    – Puppets should be hid away when not in use. Their location should always be a mystery to the audience.

## 4. PUPPET CARE

### A. **STORING YOUR PUPPET** –

Puppets should be stored in a cool, dry, dark place. Each should hang freely on a dowel and not come in contact with another puppet.

### B. **TRAVELING WITH YOUR PUPPET** –

Puppets should be kept in a dark, hard- cased tote with sufficient room for their number.

### C. **PUPPET CLEANING AND REPAIR**

1. Cloth puppets should be cleaned with a damp rag. Avoid excessive handling when not in use as hand oils soil them quickly.
2. Latex puppets should be cleaned every six months with a light application of Armoral.
3. Minor tears or rips can be fixed with sewing, hot glue or cloth tape. (A latex/cloth seam is best repaired with contact cement.)



## CONCLUSION:

Learning how to manipulate a puppet is time well spent. Few visuals can hold the attention of an audience like an established puppet character. This endeavor, once learned, can take you to new heights as a Christian worker.

Answer Key: A. EYE POSITION B. ERECT POSTURE E. UNDER USE & OVER USE  
B. ROD ARMS D. TWO PERSON PUPPET G. MYSTERY