



Ngā karetao | Puppets

Puppets provide an interactive and engaging play resource for tamariki that stimulates their imagination and creativity. Through playing with puppets, tamariki can learn communication skills, empathy, and social interaction. They can make sense of their world through exploring different roles and characters, and expressing themselves in a safe and playful environment. Adults can use puppets to help tamariki learn about different cultural traditions, languages, and customs, and encourage them to appreciate and respect diversity.

Links to Te Whāriki

When tamariki engage in puppet play they discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive. Puppets can be used for creating, telling, and retelling stories (**Communication | Mana reo**). When playing with puppets, tamariki learn to negotiate roles and play and learn with others in a collaborative way (**Contribution | Mana tangata**). Tamariki can use puppets to act out different scenarios and explore different emotions and express their needs in a safe and playful way (**Wellbeing | Mana atua**).





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Puppets can help tamariki to:

- › practise vocabulary, sentence structure, and communication skills
- › learn to take turns and cooperate with each other
- › express and explore feelings
- › think outside the box and develop their own ideas
- › explore and express their identity.

Adults can support tamariki by:

- › modelling puppet play to tell stories and share ideas
- › providing a range of interesting puppets and puppet-making materials
- › sharing rhymes and stories that can then be retold using puppets to act out
- › asking open-ended questions and providing prompts to creative storytelling
- › encouraging them to create puppets that represent themselves, their families, and their cultures.

Providing for puppets

Puppets can be bought or tamariki can make their own. Puppets can be used on the finger, the hand, on a string, or on a stick. Puppets can be integrated into a range of activities, e.g. during mat time or music and movement. Start simply by using puppets to tell a well-known story such as *How Māui slowed the sun* or *Little Red Riding Hood*, or with well-known songs such as *Pusi nofo*, *Five little ducks*, or *Heads, shoulders, knees, and toes*. Use puppets with music and songs the tamariki know well, then encourage tamariki to use the puppets themselves. Make sure puppets are available at children's height.

Ideas for equipment

- › A range of puppets in different shapes and sizes, including hand puppets, finger puppets, and marionettes made from different materials such as fabric, paper, or felt
- › Different materials such as paper bags, bottle tops, felt, pipe cleaners, cardboard tubing, old socks, paper, and pompoms to make puppets
- › A puppet theatre or a place to hide behind to do puppet shows
- › Music to support the puppet show
- › Storybooks to inspire puppet play.