

Puppet Vocal Warm Up

to explore vocal expression, character traits & emotions

Planning

Guiding questions- How can this warm up...

- **help kids make connections?** Has your class been talking about character traits in books? Have they been exploring emotions through the statue game and emotion mapping? Have you been working on oral fluency skills?
- **invite kids to bring their full creative and playful selves into their puppet play** and story making through puppetry?

Choose a simple phrase

The kids will repeat this phrase with their bodies, puppets & voices, expressing a variety of prompts. Choose any simple phrase that connects to your kids' interests & that will inspire story making through puppet play.

Examples:

- Look it started to snow!
- Where did that portal take me?
- Time to go to school!

Choose expressive prompts

What **vocal choices, character traits or emotions** will you use to prompt your students' vocal exploration?

Options:

Vocal quality, volume, speed & pitch:

Soft, harsh, smooth, staccato, shaky, rough, melodic, sing song, robotic, whiny, growly, loud, quiet, slow, fast, high, low

Core emotion words:

Happy, mad, sad, scared, surprised, confused, disgusted

Advanced emotion vocabulary:

See the [Advanced Emotion Vocabulary Resource](#)

Character Traits:

Friendly, sweet, kind, helpful, grouchy, impatient, aggressive
brave, powerful, confident, meek, timid, energetic, relaxed, stuffy
mysterious, wicked, sneaky, tricky, bossy, silly, goofy, clever

continued...

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Preparation

How will you support visual, kinesthetic & multi-language learners in your class?

Options to consider:

- Use a visual aid like an [emotion mapping tool](#).
- Post the repeated phrase on a smart board or chart paper.
- Post images of the character traits you will use to prompt.
- Post illustrations of character from books you are referencing.
- Don't skip the step of the warm up where the kids express the prompts with their own body!

Visit the Bridges Vocal Expression Activities webpage to see video of what this looks like in a classroom or view a video using the QR code below.



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Timing

10 minutes

(including passing out puppets)

Additional supports

Visit

TeachwithArtsConnection.org



1. Set up:

Sample script (less than a minute)

- **Share the plan-** In this game, we're going to say the same words over and over. We'll try it first with our own voices & bodies and then we'll do it with our puppets!
- **Practice the phrase-** The words are, "Where did that portal take me?" Let's try it together! "Where did that portal take me?"

Tip

- **Model the phrase in neutral voice for clarity**, but don't be surprised if the kids add expression the very first time they say it! That is ok!

2. Play with our own bodies & voices:

Sample script (3 minutes)

- **Prompt for expression-** This time let's say it like we are thrilled! Show thrilled in your body!
- **Cue the kids-** Let's say it together! "Where did that portal take me?"
- **Describe-** "I notice that some of you were jumping up and down and many of you were smiling! I heard that some people made their voices very high."
- **Repeat** with the other prompts that you will use with the puppets! (options for this portal example: terrified, confused, annoyed)

Tip

- **Kids may have ideas for expressive prompts that you can use as well!**

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3. How do we hold our puppets?

Before you hand out puppets, have an explicit conversation with the kids about how puppets should be handled and used. Generate criteria by asking the kids for advice for how to hold your puppet. Chart responses!

Sample Script (3 minutes)

How should I hold my puppet so that...

- ...it won't break?
- ...my body is safe? The bodies around me are safe?
- ...I can easily move the puppet?
- ...the audience can see my puppet? (see tip)

Tip

- Only introduce awareness of audience if/when they will be presenting. The first time kids play with their puppet they need time to hold it so that **they** can see it. Audience is not important if they're using their puppets to play and generate stories.

4. Play with puppet voices!

Sample Script (3 minutes)

- **Prompt for expression-** Make your puppet say, "Where did that portal take me?" like they are thrilled!
- **Cue puppets-** Say it together. "Where did that portal take me?"
- **Describe-** "I see puppets looking side to side! Some of the puppets started laughing and cheering!"
- **Repeat** with the other prompts that you will use! (Good options for this portal example: terrified, confused, annoyed)

Tip

- **Kids may have ideas for expressive prompts to use as well!**
- **Kids may spontaneously start adding additional puppet dialogue.** That is great! The whole purpose of this warm up is to prepare them to use their puppet voices to create story! Allow time for it!