

Dino Puppet

MATERIALS

FOR STUDENT:
(one per student unless otherwise noted)

- FloraCraft® Make It: Fun® Foam Ball, 2" diameter
- Two 12mm diameter wiggle eyes
- Eleven 1" diameter green pom poms
- Black pony bead (10 mm diameter)
- Craft stick (popsicle stick) (3/8" width x 4" length)
- 6" x 9" green felt (will get two per 9" x 12" sheets)
- 6" length green chenille stem, (will get two per 12" length stem)
- Double-sided tape, 6" and 3" lengths will be needed per student
- Paper plate
- Pencil
- Small plastic bag (to hold parts)



FOR TEACHER:

- FloraCraft® Design It:® Wire Cutter
- Hot melt glue gun (for teacher only) or thick white tacky glue
- Pointed Scissors
- Ruler
- Transparent tape

TEACHER PREPARATION

Note: Read through all instructions first. The intention is for all of the parts to be very secure, for play. Have a glue gun plugged in and ready to use (ideally set on low temperature) and out of student reach. This can give you immediate adhesion when in a hurry to help students. Be sure glue has cooled before returning project to students (takes a minute or so.) It is also recommended that you make one dino puppet first, before preparing the materials for the others, since knowing how the parts fit, might affect how you prepare. Also, suggest that you show your finished project sample only when you want to explain something, or students tend to work ahead by seeing and copying.

[1] To hold puppet, insert 1/2" of end of craft stick into bottom of foam ball. Remove, apply hot glue to the end, and re-insert (or use thick white tacky glue and dry overnight). Hot glue two eyes, side-by-side, about 1/4" apart on each foam ball. Also hot glue one green pom just under eyes for muzzle. Then glue black pony bead nestled into green pom for nose. Repeat for all students and let dry.

[2] Use wire cutter to cut chenille stems into one 6" length per student.

Optional: Fold under about 1/4" on each chenille stem end and tightly pinch to prevent wires from scratching students.

[3] Horizontally place 6" x 9" felt on table. Fold over 1/2" at top and tape to hold in place. Use scissors to make a 1/8" vertical snip approx. every 1/2" across full length (9") of fold. This creates holes for weaving. Remove tape and unfold. Repeat for all students.

[4] Weave chenille stem in and out of holes, allowing felt to gather (or depending on student skills, allow them to weave.)

[5] Just before students arrive, at each student's place, set paper plate, foam head on craft stick, felt with woven chenille stem, and ten pom poms. (Wait to give students their strips of double-sided tape.)

SCIENCE

GRADE LEVEL **EARLY CHILDHOOD – PRE K**

COMPLETION TIME

- 20 minutes



OBJECTIVES

Students learn:

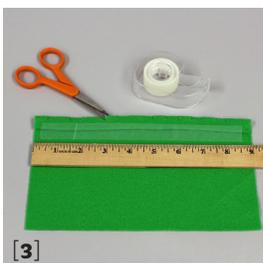
- Information about dinosaurs
- Listening and following step by step instructions
- Use of fine motor skills and afterwards, play

STANDARDS

- Identify parts of living systems
- Answer questions by explaining observations of the natural world
- Use simple tools and materials to solve problems in creative ways
- Recognize that animals have different characteristics that can be used to classify them

LESSON INTRODUCTION

Discuss that dinosaurs lived a very long time ago before there were any cameras. Explain that they are extinct, which means that there are no more alive today and there won't be any more but that we know what they looked like by finding their bones and putting them together. Then, discuss the names of some specific dinosaurs, habitats, and their habits. Tie in the dinosaur puppet into your explanation, explaining that the pom poms are meant to look like the back of a Stegosaurus.



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INSTRUCTIONS

[1] Ask students to use their pencils to write their names on the craft stick of their puppet.

[2] Demonstrate how you wove the chenille stem in and out of the holes in order to gather the green felt. Explain that this represents the body of the puppet and that when they play with it, they can hold the craft stick underneath.

Have them push all the felt gathers to the middle of the stem and set on table. Demonstrate how to wrap felt around the craft stick, just under the head (like a super hero cape). Have students wrap and hold for the next step.



[3] Demonstrate and have students cross one chenille stem end over the other, pinch them where they cross and twist to tighten ends around craft stick. Tuck ends under felt. (You or a helper may want to check and tighten each one to be sure it's secure before proceeding. If necessary, use dot of hot glue on gathered felt at back of neck and press against head/stick, to keep felt from slipping down.)



[4] To show how to attach pom poms, demonstrate how to attach a 3" length of double-sided tape to top of head, going down back of head. Show

them that they need to press the ends down firmly and then carefully peel away their fingers (sideways, not straight up) without pulling off the tape. Remind them not to touch tape after that. Demonstrate how to firmly press four poms in a row along the tape, without touching tape.

Have students count out four poms from their plates and set on table beside them. You and helpers can give each student a 3" length of double-sided tape - having them pinch it between their thumb and forefinger and waiting until all have their tape, to apply to head. Then have them press tape onto heads and attach poms.



[5] Similarly, demonstrate how to attach 5 1/2" length tape going down center back of felt body, starting at gathered neck. Then, demonstrate how to firmly press 6 poms in a row along the tape, without touching tape.

Distribute 5 1/2" lengths tape and have students attach tape and poms.



[6] Have students set dinosaurs back onto plate and collect plates, explaining that they can play with them later. Then, when you have time and before they've played with them, reinforce each pom with a dot of glue from the glue gun. (It won't take long and will allow for greater durability during play.)

MODIFICATIONS

To simplify project:

- Have one helper per two students.
- Eliminate adding the 6 poms to the felt. Just have four poms on top.
- Work in small groups and assemble one dino puppet among several students.

To expand project:

- Have students use glue spots or thick tacky glue to attach eyes, muzzle pom, nose and head to craft stick.
- Demonstrate and then have students weave chenille stem through felt holes.

For multiple ages:

- Younger and older students can work side-by-side with older students being encouraged to make more complex dinosaurs, designing colors, adding chenille stem feet and/or copying the look of dinosaur pictures.
- Have older students design other dinosaurs for younger students to make, or to make for themselves.

ADDITIONAL IDEAS

- Use for a speaking and listening project.
- Create a puppet show with dinosaurs (perhaps including ones of different colors and looks) for dramatic play.
- Create puppets of other animals using the same technique.



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TIPS

- Use large paper cutter to cut 9" x 12" pieces in half. (Keep felt near hinge of cutter and steadily pull arm toward cutter, for sharpest cutting.)
- If students have difficulty holding craft stick while wrapping felt around it, have them take turns with a partner - one holds, while the other wraps and twists chenille stem - and vice versa.
- If students have trouble with double-sided tape sticking to their fingers more than to foam and felt, unplug glue gun and go around to place a dot of glue under ends of tape to hold, remembering not to give back to student for a moment so that glue has cooled enough. When glue gun cools, you'll need to plug in to warm up again, but you can apply a lot of dots before it cools.

REFERENCES

That's Not My Dinosaur by Fiona Watt (Usborne)
How Do Dinosaurs Say Good Night? by Jane Yolen
Let's Look at Dinosaurs by Frances Barry
Little Kids' First Big Book of Dinosaurs by Catherine D. Hughes (National Geographic)