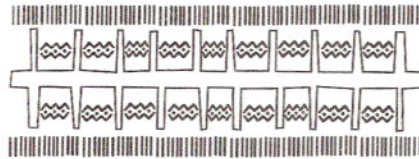


Toe Puppets

African toe puppets were a clever invention from the tribes of the Ivory Coast and Mozambique. They were used to pantomime a story, leaving the storyteller's hands free for playing instruments or clapping rhythms.

The original toe puppets were made from bamboo reeds with animal fur for hair. Vines or plant fibers were used to tie the puppets to the puppeteer's big toe. The sizes of the puppets represented their gender. The taller puppets represented the males while the shorter puppets represented the females.



Project

Design and make African toe puppets.

Materials

- paper towel or toilet paper tubes cut in 4-inch (10-cm) long pieces
- yarn and string
- scissors
- scrap fabric
- colored pens, glitter, feathers, and sequins
- cardboard scraps
- brads
- large beads

Directions

1. Use markers to draw a face on the tube.
2. Use fabric scraps or markers to make traditional African clothes on the puppet.
3. Cut yarn pieces to desired hair length and glue across the top of the tube.
4. Cut arms out of scrap cardboard and attach them to the tube with brads.
5. At the ends of the "arms," make holes. Tie pieces of yarn through the holes. The other end of the yarn will tie on the puppeteer's big toes.
6. String pieces of yarn on the bottom of the cardboard tube. Then string large beads to the yarn for legs.

For the Teacher

Refer to recipe for clay beads (Bead Necklace, page 33.) Have puppeteers clap to African music and wiggle their toes to watch their puppets dance.

