

Performing Toy Theatre plays

1. Download and print the sheets of the play.
 - a) Print the characters set pieces wings and any cut scenes on thin card.
 - b) Print scenes on ordinary paper.
 - c) Print the playbook cover on yellow paper (tradition).
 - d) Print the playbook double sided on A4 paper.
 - e) Colour any plain sheets. Use bright felt tip pens so that the black lines show through.

If you do not have a printer, copy the download onto a memory stick and take it to a copy shop which will do the printing for you.

2. Fold the playbook text into the playbook cover and staple or stitch along the folded seam to make an A5 page size booklet. Trim the edges if necessary. If others are helping you to perform the play you might make extra copies of the playbook for their use.
3. Cut out the characters. Cut around each figure first to separate them. Cut out the spaces between the legs etc. using a craft knife. Finally cut carefully around the figure. Always leave the yellow shaded area intact to fit into slides. No concession is made to cutting out, so strengthen weak parts using spent matchsticks or wire taped between larger areas on the back. Write the name and plate number of each character on the reverse.



4. Trim scenes. Stick back scenes to thick card, leaving enough at the top to fit the scenery grid. Cut out cut scenes and wings, stick these to thick card which does not have to be as closely cut. For example wings can be stuck to strips of thick card. Set pieces can be stuck to small blocks of wood so they stand up alone.
5. Arrange characters in slides on either side of the stage according to their entrances. It helps to make a shelf either side, stage height, so that they are pushed directly on and offstage rather than have to be lifted up.
6. Change your voice for each character and move the slides to indicate which is supposed to be speaking. It may sound better if there are two performers, one male and one female. The playbook shows which

characters are men and women. Have equipment to hand for music and sound effects.

7. You may prefer to record the dialogue, sound effects and music in advance. This works providing you can pause the device. Make sure your audience can hear it. Write an extract of the play text showing just scene changes, stage directions and cues for entrances and exits.
8. A music box or a simple musical instrument like a xylophone is better than recorded orchestral music.
9. Change scenes quickly. The play should not last more than 30 minutes. Look after your audience.