



DESCRIPTION

John Kennedy is at it again and this time he's going to show the A-TV kids how to make an AMAZING puppet theater! Watch as John, Tabitha, and Richard transform an ordinary cardboard box into a space-age puppet stage...then create your own!

MATERIALS

- refrigerator box
- black acrylic paint
- assorted other colors of paint
- 4' x 1/2" dowel rod
- shoe laces (four pair)
- 2 small wood screws eyes
- 2 liquid containers filled with rocks or sand (milk jugs or 2 liter bottles work well)
- curtain fabric
- pencil
- box cutter
- paintbrushes
- yard stick
- scissors

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut off the bottom and top of the Refrigerator Box using a box cutter or craft knife.
2. Measure the center of the back of the box and make a line from top to bottom of the box. Cut along that vertical line and turn the box inside out. Any writing on the box will now be inside the stage and the clean side will be facing the audience.
3. Measure the bottom height of your TV screen, from the floor to the bottom of the screen. Measure the screen size of your TV from top to bottom.
4. Lay the whole box down on the floor with the clean side facing up. You will be making some cuts in the box soon so find a surface that you won't damage with your knife.
5. In the front panel of the box mark the bottom screen height along the entire front of the cardboard with your pencil. Then mark the screen size above that and along the entire front of the cardboard. *If you are not building this stage to fit your TV a good height to mark for the bottom of your stage opening is 3 feet from the floor. The top of the stage opening should be 2 feet up from that mark (5 feet from the floor).
6. Measure the center point of the front panel from fold to fold and mark a vertical mark from the top screen size line to the bottom screen height .
7. Do the same for both side panels. Measure the center point of the side panels and mark a vertical mark from the top screen size line to the bottom screen height line.
8. With your knife, make a cut all the way through the cardboard along the top vertical mark from one center side panel mark to the other center side panel mark.
9. With your knife, make a cut all the way through the cardboard along the bottom vertical mark from one center side panel mark to the other center side panel mark.

Did you know there's a free web video for this activity with step-by-step instructions?
See all the fun activities for kids at www.activitytv.com.



10. With your knife, make a scoring cut (this cut only goes half way through the cardboard) on the vertical center side panel marks from the top screen size line to the bottom screen height line.
11. Stand the stage back up again and fold the two back panels in toward the center of the stage (These are now your back wall panels).
12. Push the front, center panel window in at the center cut line, folding the side panels back at the scoring cuts you made. The natural folds on the front of the box will now allow you to bend the two side panels back to the back wall panels.
13. With your scissors, poke matching holes in the cardboard to attach the edge of the side panels to the back panels. Lace shoe laces through the holes and tie bows at each point to secure the panels together.
14. Place the stage in front of your TV. Screw in Wood Screw Eyes into the ends of the 4' x ½" Dowel Rod. Hold the Dowel Rod up to the back, top edge of the stage and mark where the Screw Eyes touch on the cardboard.
15. Pull the stage away from the TV. Poke holes in the cardboard where you made the Screw Eye marks. Lace shoe laces through the screw eyes and through the holes in the cardboard, and tie the laces in a bow.
16. Set the liquid bottles at the back, bottom edge of the stage and mark where they touch on the cardboard. Poke holes through the cardboard at those marks. Lace the bottles to the cardboard to secure the stage to the floor. (This will keep your stage from tipping.)
17. Drape Curtain Fabric over the Dowel Rod and adjust the length to the top screen height of the TV. *To use your puppet theater away from a TV, add a longer curtain to drape over the back of the Dowel Rod to cover up where the TV would be. *To create a fancier look, you can take a smaller curtain fringe, maybe 3" in length to the top, inside of the stage opening.
18. Put the stage in a safe place for painting, remove the laces and curtains, and paint the stage in your desired theme. (You might want to use a drop cloth or news papers for easier clean up.)