

Rad Robot Puppet

Best for: grades 1-3

Description: upcycle household materials while learning to create stability and movement with inanimate objects.

Vocabulary: details, kinetic, swivel

Required materials:

- one-two: tea, butter or band-aid box (a small, clean cardboard box)
- one: microwaveable mac-n-cheese or takeout food carton
- one: metal brad fastener
- one: drinking straw
- one: chenille stem
- scissors
- Elmer's glue
- acrylic paints
- paint palette
- water cup
- paintbrush
- pencil
- beads, buttons or other decorative supplies

Optional materials:

- permanent marker
- duct tape
- foamies



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Instructions

1. Glue/tape shut the ends of small cardboard box (puppet head).
2. With pencil, draw a line just off-center on only three sides of the box and cut on that line. Fold the attached side backwards.



Helpful hint: If an even bite is desired, cut box in exact center.



3. Decide which side of the robot's head will open to talk (the folded side is its mouth). Paint just the inside one color and set aside to dry.



4. If needed, peel any labels off robot body (larger cardboard box). Then, poke a hole through the top with pencil (this will help attach the head) and a hole on each side for the arms.



5. Paint body and sides of the head a different color. Paint all surfaces, letting sides dry one at a time.



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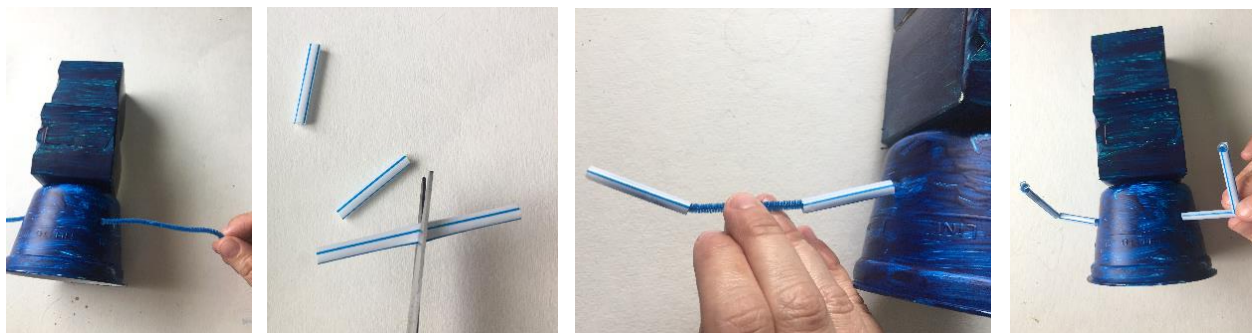
6. Select beads or items to decorate robot's face and body.

Optional: paint beads if necessary and let dry.

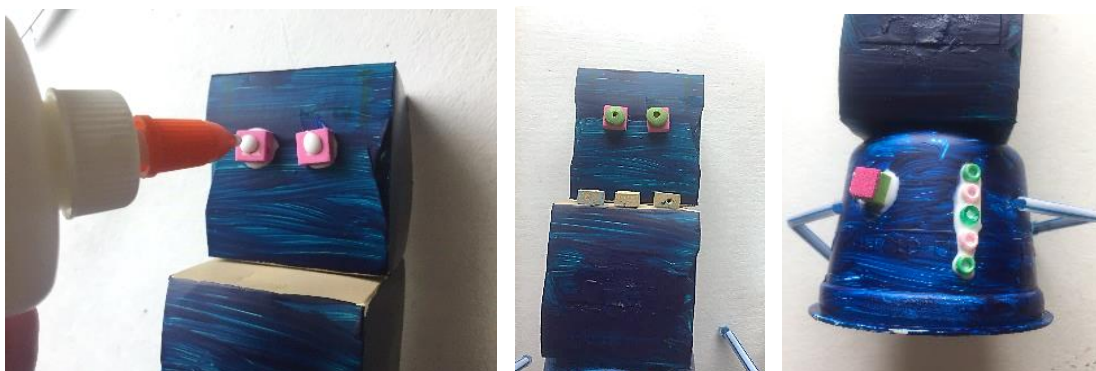
7. Poke hole in bottom of robot's lower jaw. Push metal brad through hole inside mouth, creating a **kinetic**, or movable, neck joint. Then, push brad through the hole in the top of the body. Secure brad so the neck can **swivel**.



8. Thread a chenille stem through the arm holes. Cut straw into four **even** pieces and thread two pieces on each arm. Slip a bead onto the chenille stem and twist ends to make a fist. Thread any extra stem back into the straw.



9. Glue beads onto face for eyes and buttons for knobs onto robot's chest.



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10. Final details: use junk drawer or upcycled supplies to decorate ears, eyebrows, and any other smaller features you would like to include.



11. Place hand into the back of your robot puppet to make it talk. What will it say? What does it like to sing?



Extensions

For a creative spin:

1. Instead of paint, give your robot metallic skin by wrapping with duct tape.
2. Add more kinetic pieces, like antennae or knobs that turn.

Web Resources

[Video: 5 easy puppets to make](#)

[No-sew hand puppet project](#)

[Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry online collections](#)

[View "Living Objects: African American Puppetry" exhibition online](#)

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