
Norton Simon Museum

Art-Making Activity Year of the Ox Puppet

Celebrate the Lunar New Year and the Year of the Ox, an animal that symbolizes prosperity through courage and hard work, with this puppet-making project. Gather inspiration from the oxen hard at work carrying cargo along Japan's historic Tōkaidō road in the woodblock print *Otsu: Hashirii Tea House* by Andō Utagawa Hiroshige (Japanese, 1797–1858) to create a moveable ox puppet using cardboard and collage.

Andō Utagawa Hiroshige (Japanese, 1797–1858), *Otsu: Hashirii Tea House*, c. 1833–34, color woodblock, Norton Simon Museum, Gift of Mrs. Ruth W. Burnham, © Norton Simon Museum.



Materials

- Thin cardboard (cereal, snack or tissue box)
- Pencil
- Collage papers
- Twist ties, pipe cleaners or brads
- String or yarn
- Hole puncher
- Glue
- Tape
- Scissors
- Chopstick or popsicle stick



Steps

1

On a thin piece of cardboard, make the different parts of an ox by drawing a circle for the head, a smaller circle for the ear, a large circular shape for the body and ovals for the legs. These simple shapes can be used to create many different kinds of animals.

2

Use the circular shapes as-is for your ox puppet, or you could refine them. Then, cut out the different parts.





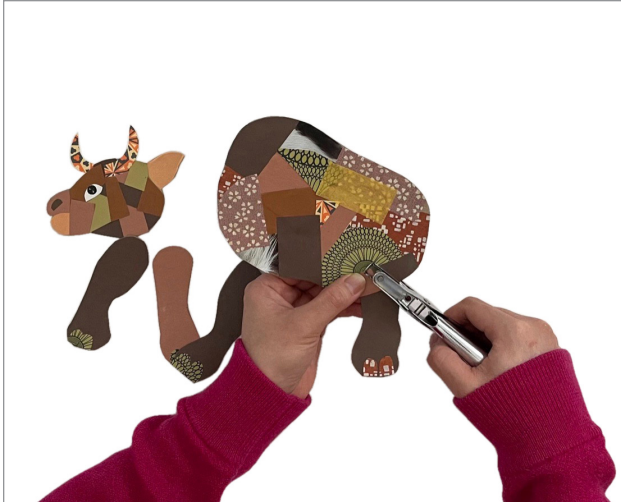
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Decorate the different parts using collage papers, scissors and glue.

4

If you'd like to cut out the exact shape of a part, trace the part onto collage paper, cut out the paper and glue it down onto the part.



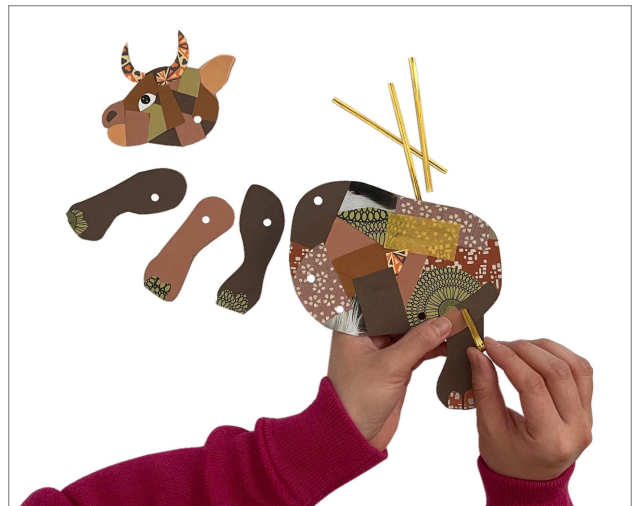


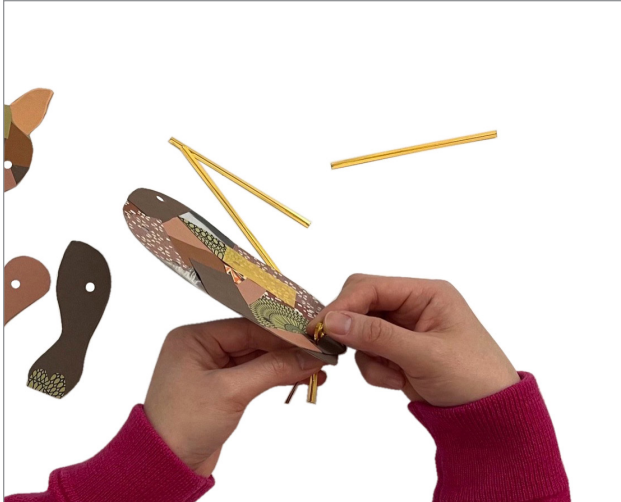
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Then, place each leg and the head under the body and hole punch both parts.

6

Bend a twist tie or a pipecleaner (cut down to about 3.5") in half and put both ends through the hole of both the body and leg parts, leaving about a ½" of the loop outside of the hole.





7

Twist the top loop a couple of times and the bottom ends about 5 times (if using a pipe cleaner, a few times will work).



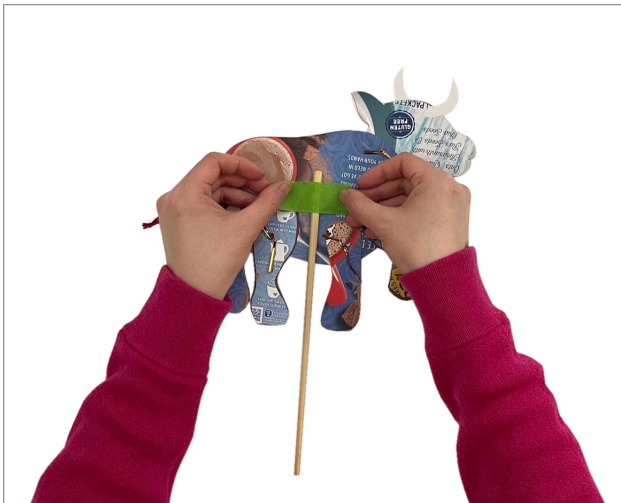
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Then, press the top loop down so that the loop folds over the edges of the hole.

Flip over the body and leg part and press down the ends of the twist tie securely. Repeat the previous few steps for each of the parts and use tape if needed.

9

Hole punch the back of the body and tie string or yarn through the hole to make the tail.



10

Flip over your ox puppet and tape a chopstick or popsicle stick to the middle of your puppet.



**Explore moving the different parts
of your ox puppet and welcome the
Lunar New Year!**

