

SIMPLE CAT FINGER PUPPETS



A GROWING TOGETHER THROUGH STORY RESOURCE
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GROWING TOGETHER IN FREEDOM



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WELCOME!

Spring is such a wonderful time to bring stories and puppetry to children, especially if you have never ventured into this craft before. Finger puppetry is an easy place to start because finger puppets are quick to make, easy to store and can be used across many different themes.

There are many short folk tales and fables that center around springtime, with endless options for creating finger puppets. In this tutorial we will be making kittens to go along with the Slavic tale of how the plush little cushions on the tips of pussywillows came to be.

MATERIALS

The materials for making finger puppets are minimal. Some wool roving, a felting needle, and felting block are all you'll need.

For these puppets I used a light grey roving for the body and a very small amount of pink and black for the details.



Tear off a small pat of roving. It needs to be slightly longer than your fingers and enough to wrap around on finger with a slight overlap.



Start felting the pat so that the fibers are held in a rectangle. I like to reinforce the bottom edge by rolling it up a bit and felting it tight. The top edge can be left frayed as it will form the ears.



Once you have the pat felted, roll it around your finger with the reinforced edge near your palm.



Felt the seam. I just poked straight through and then every so often pushed my finger into the puppet to make sure it wasn't felted closed.



Make sure to reinforce the seam at the bottom so it doesn't weaken from use.



Once you are happy with your seam closure, roll up a small piece of roving. This will be the head.



Insert the ball into the finger puppet and push it towards the open end, leaving enough roving to shape the ears.



Felt the ears by tucking the unfelted roving down in the middle towards the head.



It will slowly start to take shape. Just continue to shape until you are happy.



Continue shaping and tightening the shape of the kitten just by working the needle around the body.



Now we start to add the detail! Using a small wisp of roving, tack the corners of a triangle on an ear, using the tail to fill in the middle. So the same for both ears.



This will create shape in the ear. Repeat the same process for the other ear.



Using another small wisp of roving, roll it between your palms to create a ball and tack it on to the head as the nose.



Using yet another small wisp, this time of black, we will make the eyes and mouth. I actually feel pink works better for the mouth but didn't realize until after. Roll the wisp between two fingers to create a line.



Tack the middle of the roving under the nose, then tack the ends and work it until you are happy with the shape of the mouth.



Lastly, using the same colour as the body, take a small amount of roving that we will use for the tail.



Roll it between your hands to shape the tail.



Work the tail with the needle, turning it around and around to tidy up the shape.



Once you are happy with the shape of your tail, felt it to the back of the body, and continue shaping and refining the body if necessary.



Repeat the process for each cat puppet you wish to make. These finger puppets are sturdy enough to use as free standing puppets for a standard puppet play or seasonal table.

I would love to see your creations! If you share them on Instagram, tag me
[@growing.together.in.freedom](https://www.instagram.com/growing.together.in.freedom)

A Tale of Three Kittens



Here is a short spring story to tell using your new kitten puppets! It is the Slavic tale of why pussy willows have fuzzy buds.

I used green and blue juggling silks, some medium sized rocks and pussy willow branches as simple props for the story.

In the valley of a mountain, there ran a river. And along that river stood a beautiful willow tree, strong and proud. Alongside that willow tree stood a homestead. And on that homestead was a barn. On this particular day, in that very barn, were three sweet, curious kittens; one, two, three.

After a long cold winter, the sun was finally shining warmly on all the land. The kittens could hear the drip-drip-drip of the snow melting away from everywhere it had rested during winter and were so excited about this beautiful day that they came bounding out of the barn ready to play! They ran across the yard and rolled around on the freshly revealed grass and in their frolicking they came across the river, running swiftly over rocks and boulders.

The water bubbled and splashed as it made its way around the rocks and the kittens were so curious about the sight that they each, one by one, hopped off the bank and onto the rocks where the water swept by.

In their excitement, the kittens did not realize that the rocks were quite slippery from the water splashing about, and as soon as they landed on a rock, they slipped right off and into the rushing water. The kittens struggled to swim and began calling for help.

Further down river stood the beautiful willow tree, strong and proud. The willow heard the calls of the kittens and saw them struggling in the water. At just the right time, the willow slowly bent her branches down towards the water and scooped the three kittens up with her branches, placing them gently onto her boughs.

Once the kittens caught their breath they thanked the willow for saving them and frolicked and played on the willow's branches, leaving little tufts of fur all over the tips.

And every year, when the sun shines warmly and the snow melts away, willow trees grow little tufts of fur on the tips of their branches where those three curious kittens once played.