



Pumpkin Shadow Puppet



Children explore symmetry and shadows when they make these spooky cutout pumpkin puppets.

MATERIALS

- ⊙ 9- by 12-inch orange construction paper
- ⊙ pencils
- ⊙ scissors
- ⊙ craft sticks
- ⊙ tape
- ⊙ table lamp or large flashlight



Read the poem below with children. Then invite them to move their puppets closer to and farther away from the light source and explore how the sizes of the shadows change.

Shadow Show

Shadow, shadow
On the wall,
Your playful tricks
Are magical.
First you shrink down
Oh so small,
And then you grow up
Twelve feet tall!

—Thomas Singh

1 Give each child a sheet of construction paper, pencil, scissors, tape, and a craft stick. Show children how to fold and make cuts in the paper:

- ⊙ Fold the paper in half the short way (“hamburger” fold).
- ⊙ Starting at the fold, draw half a pumpkin shape, or simply a half circle. Cut out the shape and unfold to reveal a whole pumpkin.
- ⊙ Refold the paper. On the center fold, draw half a nose and mouth and cut out. Make another fold in the eye area, draw half an eye, and cut out. Unfold and reveal the complete face. The two sides of the face match each other exactly—they are symmetrical.



2 Have children follow these steps to make their own pumpkin face. Then have them tape a craft stick to make a puppet. (Give children time to hold the pumpkins in front of their faces and use them as masks.)

3 Darken the room, shine a light on the wall, and invite children to hold up their puppets between the light source and the wall. What changes do children notice? (*The color of the paper disappears; only the features of the pumpkin are visible.*)