

# Oh, Brother! Activities

By Donna Erickson - Illustrations by Jay Stephens

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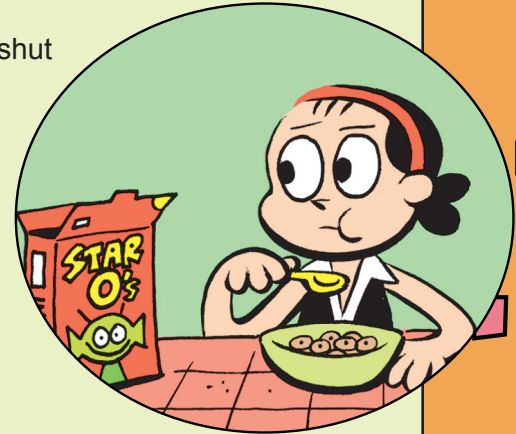
## MAKE A SILLY CEREAL BOX PUPPET

Turn a rainy day into a “play day,” filled with funny box puppets you can make from recycled cereal boxes! Pick your favorite Oh, Brother! characters and retell a story puppet-show style, or create puppets that look like your friends or family members. Use extra props and make funny voices and sound effects for a great performance.

First, collect a few empty food boxes, such as single-portion cereal boxes, which are easy for all ages to manipulate. As your cast of characters grows, use boxes in a range of shapes and sizes.

### Here's the stuff you'll need in your puppet workshop:

- 1 single-portion cereal box, paper lining removed and open end glued shut
- Pencil and markers
- Poster paint and brushes
- Ruler
- Construction paper
- Glue and scissors
- Odds and ends, such as ping-pong balls, plastic milk-jug lids, cotton balls and yarn
- Adhesive-backed paper (optional)



### Here's the fun:

1. With the front of the box facing you, find the center point with your ruler and then, from that point, draw a horizontal line evenly around the middle of the entire box. Ask an adult to help you cut along the line on the front and two narrow sides of the box. Do not cut the line on the back of the box. Instead, make a fold on that line so you can bend back the two connected halves of the box. Test your new puppet by inserting your fingers and thumb in the openings to move the “mouth.” Now it's time to get creative!
2. Paint the outside of the box or cover it with construction paper. If you make safari-style puppets, try using adhesive-backed paper in tiger, lion or zebra prints.
3. Give your character a face! Glue on ping-pong balls or plastic milk-jug lids for eyes, and use a marker to make a dot—pupils—in the center of each one. Add yarn or cotton balls for hair, and felt or craft foam for ears. Don't forget to make a tongue and glue it inside where the box opens and closes. Draw teeth or lips on the outside of the box. Add other details to create a unique personality for each of your characters.

Let the show begin!

### CRAFT TALK:

Jim Henson, the creator of Kermit the Frog, Oscar the Grouch and Miss Piggy, liked to make puppets when he was a kid, too. How many of his Muppet characters can you name?

This activity is by Donna Erickson, a family lifestyle columnist with King Features Syndicate and host of Donna's Day on public television. For more ideas, visit <http://www.donnasday.com>

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