



PUPPET READING

Supplies

-story book

-art materials to make a puppet (i.e. sock, buttons, needle and thread, yarn)

When my son, the first of my two children, began handling books, he could not get enough of them. I have pictures of him when he was one, sitting on our couch next to a large basket of books. He would take them out one-by-one, turn the pages, and look with such interest that you might be fooled into thinking he was already reading! He did this *every* day.

When I introduced books to my daughter, however, there was a very different reaction. Being an extremely active, curious little lady, she really didn't have the time to sit still for reading a story together. I'd try to read to her but she was a mover and a shaker. She had bigger fish to fry! Worried that she would never fall in love with the wonderful world of books, I thought about reading to her while holding a puppet.

We made a simple sock puppet by sewing button eyes, and gluing a nose, ears, and felt mouth to an old (but clean!) sock. As I read to her, I moved the puppet through the pages of the story and imitated their actions. The puppet spoke the main character's dialogue too. Her attention was peaked!

Of course, my daughter had to have a turn too. She put the puppet on her hand and listened to the words of the story. I showed her how to move the puppet's mouth when there was dialogue. We had the puppet "peek" at the next page before we turned to it, as I said, "I wonder what's going to happen next?" She was not only enjoying the story, she was interacting with it!

Needless to say, my daughter began to ask me to read to her more often. Her interest in reading was heightened through her direct physical involvement. Over time, we made several other puppets, some modeled after our favorite story characters. But now that she's older, she doesn't ask for the puppets as much. She wants to read stories! The puppets initially motivated her to pay attention, but the stories created a book lover!