

Alaska State Symbols Shadow Play

Make shadow puppets and a puppet theater to explore “big” animal facts!

Materials Needed: Shadow Puppets printable (or draw your own), black cardstock, scissors, tape, popsicle sticks, small cardboard box, pencil or marker, wax paper, ruler, flashlight. *Optional:* Craft knife (adults only!).

Instructions: Follow the steps below to build your shadow puppet theater and make shadow puppets.



Step 1: Use a ruler and pencil to trace a rectangle on one side of your box.



Step 2: Carefully cut along the lines to create a window opening in the box.



Step 3: Tape a sheet of wax paper to the opening to create a screen for your theater.



Step 4: Trace the stencils onto black cardstock, and cut them out. Tape popsicle sticks to the back.



Step 5: Enjoy your shadow puppet theater!

Set up your theater so that the audience can view the screen. The puppeteer will sit or stand behind the theater. Dim the lights. Set up the flashlight to shine at the back of the screen. Hold the puppets up to the screen to entertain your audience!

Explore Alaska's animal state symbols. Discover BIG facts!

Land Mammal



Moose

Moose are the biggest member of the deer family. The largest moose ever recorded was found in Alaska and weighed over 1800 pounds!

Marine Mammal



Bowhead Whale

Bowhead whales have the biggest mouths and heads of any animal (almost 25 feet long). They have one of the longest lifespans of any mammal; they may live to be over 200 years old.

Fish



King Salmon

King (or Chinook) salmon are the largest Pacific salmon and can grow to over 100 pounds. Some travel 2000 miles up the Yukon River to spawn.

Bird



Willow Ptarmigan

The well-camouflaged willow ptarmigan likes to spend the winter in large flocks, sometimes up to 2,200 birds!

Fossil



Woolly Mammoth

The word *mammoth* means "huge". Although they were similar in size to African elephants, their tusks were much longer, around 15 feet. Ice Age mammals were some of the largest land animals to ever exist.

Insect



Four-spotted Skimmer Dragonfly

Dragonflies are champion fliers. No human-made aircraft has yet been able to rival a dragonfly. They can hover, fly backwards, take sharp turns, and more!

Alaska has many state symbols. You can see several of them at the Museum of the North!

Learn more about Alaska's state symbols: alaska.gov/kids/student.htm

Shadow Puppets Printable

Trace the stencils on black cardstock and cut them out.

