

Cobbler

“Cobbler Cobbler mend my shoe, have it fixed by half past two...”

A visit to the local shoe shop to try and buy new shoes. So many to choose from...but there's also work to be done. Keep the shop tidy and polish the shoes. A delivery arrives and the stockroom needs sorting. A busy day on the shop floor...

Environment

Create the shoe shop using shelving filled with a variety of different shoes, in various colours and textures. Place chairs in the space for people to sit and try on the shoes. Props and accessories in the space:

- Shoe cleaning table
- Foot measurer
- Mirrors around the room
- Baskets of accessories (clip on flowers, bows, ribbons)
- Dusters, brushes and polish
- Wood instruments, tongue drums and cahons
- Old woman in the shoe puppet, hidden
- Strawberry laces and chocolate buttons

In part of the space, create a stockroom area filled with shoeboxes – you can hide things in the boxes, such as props, sounds and battery powered lights.

Costume - flat caps and dust coats or aprons

Music - The first part of the workshop will benefit from some insistent, rhythmic instrumental music that you can improvise songs to and to accompany making sounds on the boxes. You could try groups like The Lost Jockey or composers like Michael Nyman, who fall broadly into the school of minimal music, often constructing pieces out of repeating patterns and motifs.

Activities

Boots n Shoes - Invite participants into the shoe shop to explore. Encourage them to look at the different shoes – their sizes, colours, feel the textures. Measure participants' feet and encourage them to choose some shoes to try on. Walk, jump, dance, march in the shoes. Look at the shoes on in the mirror. Follow footprints on the floor and listen to the sounds the shoes make on soundboards. Keep the shop and shoes tidy. Clean the shoes, polish with soft dusters and bristly brushes, smell the polish. Ensure pairs of shoes are kept together, match shoes with their pairs.

Boxes - A new delivery! Into the stockroom. Play with the shoeboxes – look inside them, find their lids, pile them up, knock them down, pass them to each other, balance them on top of each other. Listen to the hidden sounds, play rhythms on the boxes. Prepare the shoes for delivery. Pick a pair of shoes, wrap them in tissue paper and box them up.

Cobbler – Cobbler poem heard on looper. Cobbler character needs help to repair shoes. Hammer away on wood instruments, build a cohesive working rhythm together. You can sing whilst you work!

“There was an old woman who lived in a shoe”...There's a voice coming from the locked cupboard. Participants help to encourage her out. She says hello, she wants to be friends. To say thank you for helping her, she gives out strawberry laces and buttons. The shoe shop is closing - the old woman tells you it is time to be on your way.

Links

Puppets prop page

Boxes prop page

Shopping activity page

Video

Cobbler