



Dear Friends,

We're really pleased that you're considering knitting one of our fabulous hand puppets to be used as part of our 'Read and Write Now' initiative, which aims to dramatically improve literacy rates amongst vulnerable children in the Niger Delta. You'll find all the knitting patterns below, but first of all we'd like to tell you a bit more about our charity and the reasons behind this knitting project.



Stepping Stones Nigeria (SSN) is a UK-based charity that defends and upholds the rights of some of the most vulnerable children in the Niger Delta. We work with grassroots Nigerian partner organisations to transform the lives of disadvantaged and stigmatised children to ensure they get a proper education, healthcare, food and protection.

With high levels of malnutrition, poverty, persistent violent conflicts and being orphaned due to HIV/AIDS, increasing numbers of children in the Niger Delta are being forced to the streets putting them at risk of abuse, rape and being targeted by traffickers. Due to deeply-held beliefs in witchcraft as the source of problems in society, children are the most vulnerable group at risk of accusations of witchcrafts. This stigmatisation can lead to abandonment by their families and communities, torture, public humiliation, disgrace and murder.

We're a small but effective organisation that is passionate about child rights and proud to be partnered with some truly inspirational Nigerian community groups. To find out more please visit www.steppingstonesnigeria.org or our PACT campaign site www.makeapact.org

The Read and Write Now Initiative is an innovative two-year project aiming to dramatically improve literacy rates amongst disadvantaged children in the Niger Delta. Working with the University of Uyo's Institute of Education, the lead training provider for education in Akwa Ibom State, we will train, resource and inspire 3400 teachers from 1146 schools in year one to teach reading and writing to 85,900 children using the fun and successful method of synthetic phonics.

With limited resources, your hand-knitted puppets will be an invaluable resource for teachers to engage young children in learning how to read and write. This will bring lasting hope to the lives of thousands of children by improving life chances for employment, income, health status and housing. Please send your finished puppets to: Stepping Stones Nigeria, 24 St Leonard's House, St Leonard's Gate, Lancaster, LA1 1NN, UK and we will forward them to the schools we are working with on this project.

Thank you for your support and happy knitting!

Kind regards,

Naomi Foxcroft
Literacy Officer



Knitting Patterns

A note on the yarn used in these patterns: I tend to use yarn I've recycled from jumpers, scarves, etc I've found in charity shops. I've mainly knit the patterns here using worsted weight acrylic. Feel free to experiment with different colours and textures!

Gauge: Don't worry too much about gauge, it's probably better we have puppets of slightly different sizes for all the different-shaped hands of the teachers.

Needles: 4 double-pointed 4mm needles.

If you want any help or find there's a problem with any of the patterns please email c.hobson@steppingstonesnigeria.org

Abbreviations used:

BO – Bind off

CO – Cast On

K – Knit

P – Purl

K2tog – knit two stitches together

Kfb – knit front and back

Ssk – Slip, slip, knit (*slip the first stitch as if to knit, slip the second stitch as if to knit, then slide the left-hand needle into the front part of both stitches and knit them together*)

St – Stitch

Rnd - Round

Bee

NOTE: Pattern of bee is worked in 8 rows of Black yarn followed by 8 rows of Yellow yarn throughout.

Body:

Using black yarn, CO 40 sts, distribute evenly on dpns and join in rnd.

K 12 rnds in rib st (k2, p1).

Rnd 13: K1, kfb, k17, kfb, k1, kfb, k to last 2 sts, kfb, k1. (44 sts).

K 26 rnds.

Rnd 40: K24 and turn.

Top of mouth:

Put remaining 20 sts on st holder, you'll now be working 24 sts back and forth on 2 needles.

Row 1: P

Row 2: K1, ssk, k to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1. (22 sts)

Row 3: P.

Rep rows 2 & 3 seven times. (8 sts).

BO.

Bottom of mouth:

Put sts on st holder onto one needle. Re-attach yarn. You'll be working these sts back and forth on 2 needles.

Row 1: K

Row 2: P

Row 3: K1, ssk, k to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1. (18 sts)

Row 4: P

Rep rows 3 & 4 five times. (8 sts) then BO.



Inside mouth:

Using pink yarn (worsted weight acrylic) CO 6 sts.

Row 1: K

* **Row 2:** K1, kfb, k to last 2 sts, kfb, k1. (8 sts)

Row 3: K

Row 4: K

Row 5: K *

Rep * to * 3 times (14 sts)

Row 18: K

Row 19: K

Row 20: P

***Row 21:** K1, ssk, k to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1

Row 22: K

Row 23: K

Row 24: K*

Rep * to * 2 times

Wings (make 2)

Using white yarn (worsted weight acrylic) CO 4 sts.

Row 1: P

Row 2: K1, kfb [twice], k1. (6 sts)

Row 3: P

Rep rows 2 & 3 four times. (14 sts).

Row 12: K



Row 13: P

Row 14: K

Row 15: P

Row 16: K1, ssk, k to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1. (12 sts)

Row 17: P

Rep rows 16 and 17 three more times. (6 sts).

Break yarn and use tapestry needle to pull through all sts.

Finishing

Attach inside of mouth to main body using mattress st. Pinch the CO edge of the wings and sew to give a concave effect. Sew wings to top of body and attach googly eyes, or embroider eyes if you prefer.

