



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

Yarn:

Any worsted weight yarn is fine, in the following:

Main Colour (MC): Red

Contrasting Colour 1 (CC1): Yellow

Contrasting Colour 2 (CC2): Green

Contrasting Colour 3 (CC3): Pink

Body

Using MC CO 40 sts.

Distribute evenly on double-pointed needles and join in the round. NOTE: Colour chart is knit in Stst, so you should K all odd-numbered rows and P all even-numbered rows.

Rnd 1: *K 22 sts in colour pattern chart. Rib (in p1, k2) to end of row.*
Rep * to * until all 44 rows of chart complete.

Rnd 45: K all sts in MC.

Rnd 46: K1, kfb, k20, kfb, k2, kfb, k to last 2 sts, kfb, k1. (44 sts).

Top jaw:

K26, turn (you'll now just be working these 26 sts back and forth on 2 needles – put remaining 18 sts on a stitch holder or waste yarn).

K 19 rows in Stst.

Row 67: k1, ssk, k to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1.

Row 68: P.

Rep rows 67 & 68 7 times. (10 sts).

P 1 row, then BO.

Bottom jaw:

Put the 18 sts onto needle and reattach MC.



K 12 rows in Stst.

Row 13: k1, ssk, k to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1.

Row 14: P.

Rep rows 13 & 14 3 times. (10 sts).

P 1 row, then B0.

Inside mouth:

Inside of mouth is knit in Garter Stitch.

Using CC3 CO 8sts.

Row 1: K

Row 2: K1, kfb, k to last 2 sts, kfb, k1.

Row 3: K

Row 4: K

Row 5: K

Rep Rows 2 to 5 2 times (14 sts)

K27 more rows.

Row 41: P

K15 more rows.

Row 57: k1, ssk, k to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1

Row 58: k

Row 59: k

Row 60: k

Rep Rows 57 to 60 3 times. (8sts).

B0.



Finishing:

Attach inside of mouth to snake using mattress st. Attach googly eyes or embroider eyes if you prefer. Make a forked tongue using red or black felt and sew to inside of mouth. Weave in all loose ends.

