

How to make a Crankie Box

A Crankie Box is a fabulous imaginarium invented by Sarah-Jane Blake. It's like a moving diorama, and you can make your own with this very special artist tutorial.

You will need

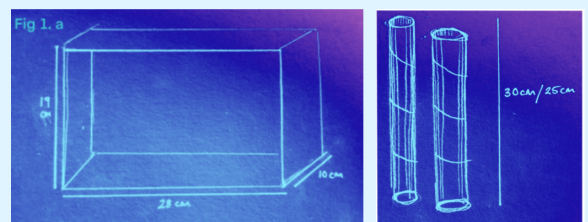
- A shoe box or something similar
- Two cardboard tubes. Paper towel tubes work well.
- Extra cardboard for the box base
- Chopsticks or a couple of small pencils
- Kebab sticks
- Baking paper
- Masking tape
- PVA glue
- Craft knife or sharp scissors (ask an adult to help)
- Stapler
- Ruler or measuring tape
- Pens, pencils, paints
- Extras: found objects, craft materials like buttons, ribbon, beads, paper, shells or whatever you can find lying around the house.



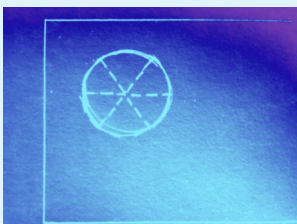
Instructions

1.

Start with your box and two cardboard tubes. On the top of the box, draw circles at each end by tracing round the tubes. Make sure there is enough space between the tube and wall of the box to add your paper film strip later. Your fingers need space to get around the roll.



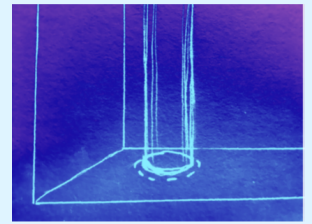
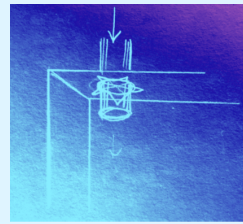
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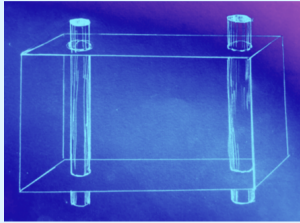
Cut out the circles. The easiest way to do this is to draw triangular cut lines inside the circles. Cut along these lines with a craft knife or sharp scissors.

3.

Push the cardboard tubes through the holes so they meet the bottom of the box. Mark around the tubes at the bottom and cut holes using the same method from Step 2.



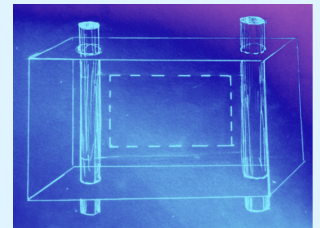
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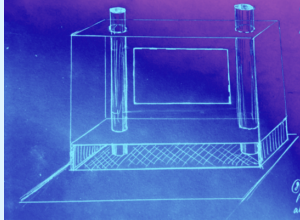
Push the end of both tubes through the bottom of the box. The tubes should now be poking right through the box.

5.

Mark a window shape on the front of the box. This should be just smaller in width than your paper film strip and just smaller than the inner edges of the cardboard tubes.



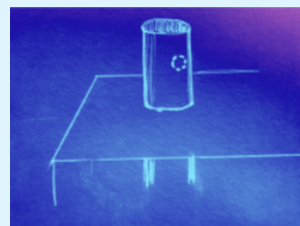
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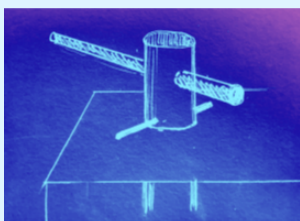
Build a stage under the shoe box. This will let the cardboard tubes spin freely at the bottom. I used more cardboard boxes and cut them down to the same length as the shoe box. Draw lines of PVA glue down the edges of the box and fix with masking tape. This will hold the box as it dries and provide extra reinforcement. You can then glue the whole box to a larger sheet of card; or pin it to a wooden bread board. This will keep your box steady when it comes to show time.

7.

Now for the Crankie handles. I used half a chopstick but you could also use a couple of short pencils or a bit of dowel. Draw two parallel holes at the top of each cardboard tube the same size as your chopstick or pencil. Cut out the holes and poke your handles through.

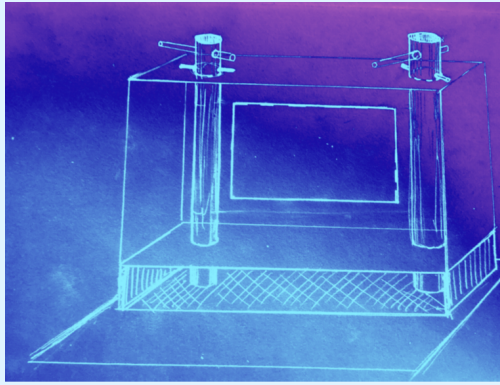


8.



At the base of the top of the tube, poke a short piece of kebab stick through. This will stop the tubes sinking into the box.

Your Crankie Box is nearly complete!



9.

Now for the really fun part - time to design the pictures and story!

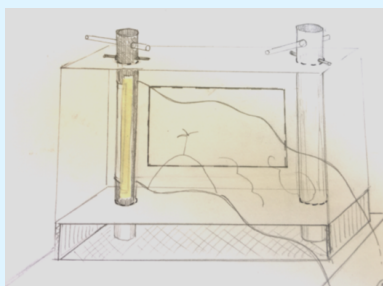
Think of a story you would like to tell your audience or a series of pictures you would like to show. Spend some time listing your ideas, then write your short story in words. Think about how pictures can tell your story and sketch them out.

Transfer your sketches to baking paper. I thought about my story as scenes with each scene being the size of the Crankie Box window. It looks a bit like a film strip. I used pencil to draw my scene first and then I painted on the lines and coloured in with ink and felt tip pens.

You can use whatever paints or colours you have. Be careful though because the paper is quite delicate and can rip.

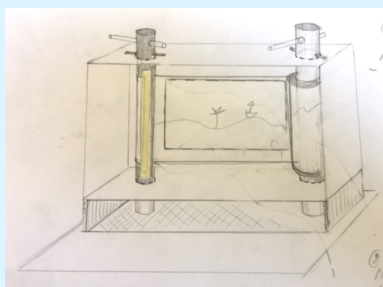


10.



When the scene is complete, stick one end of your film strip to the tube inside the box. Make sure the paper is lined up with the window gap. Check that the front of your film strip faces the window.

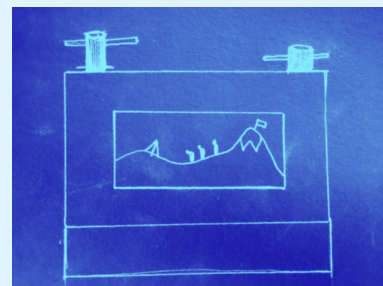
11.



Carefully wind the film strip on to the tube using the crank handle. Then stick the other end of your film strip to the other cardboard tube. Check that the winding mechanism works and enjoy watching the picture go backwards and forwards.

12.

Have a look at the front of the box. You can leave it as it is, or you could decorate the front. Think how the front of the box might go with your story. I thought about a little funny beachside theatre when I decorated my box. I also thought about what it would be like if the story came from the belly of a fish!



13.

To decorate the front, use some extra card and cut a window in its center that is just smaller than your window. Decorate the paper or card with the odds and ends you have lying around the house. Perhaps you have found some shells or have some ribbon or buttons. I covered the base section of my box with a scrap of stripey fabric I had. Stick these items on with PVA or use a stapler.

Your Crankie Box is complete!

Try out the box at nighttime with a lamp or torch behind it and see your scenes glow. Think about sharing your box with an audience and perhaps performing the story as you wind it. And if you don't like performing, your audience could always be the cat!

