

# Art Activity

## Make a Llama Finger Puppet

**Grade Level:** All

**Collection:** Pre-Columbian Art

**Culture/Region:** The Andes

**Subject Area:** Fine Arts, Visual Arts

**Activity Type:** Hands-On Activity

**Description:** Create your own llama puppet inspired by the llamas of the Andes.

### What are the Andes?

The Andes is the longest series of mountains in the world; spanning over 5,500 miles, it is the main mountain system in South America. The Andes extend through Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina and part of Venezuela.

For centuries, the llama has been closely associated with Andean cultures. It is a domesticated camel species that serves as both a pack animal and a source of food and wool. Llamas are slender-bodied herbivores with long legs and necks, short tails, small heads, and large, pointed ears.

Llamas can reach a height of up to 6 feet and weigh about 250 pounds. They are strong and can carry up to 130 pounds for 15 to 20 miles per day. Llamas are gentle animals, but when overworked or mistreated, they will lie down and refuse to move. Llamas are typically sheared every two years and their wool is used for knitwear, woven fabrics, rugs, and rope. Llamas are an important resource in the Andes – for textiles and transportation. Create your own llama puppet inspired by llamas of the Andes!

### Materials

- 8.5" x 11" sheet of printer paper for template (llama template can be found [here](#), on Family Day event web-page)
- Scissors
- Crayons or colored pencils
- Glue
- Pencil
- **Optional:** Printable cardstock or construction paper for a more sturdy design template
- **Optional:** Pom-poms, soft felt, buttons, sequins, or other adornments



## Creating your own llama puppet:

1. Print out the llama template. This template can be found on the Family Day event web-page, linked above.
2. Use a pencil to draw your desired patterns and designs onto your llama template.
3. Get inspired by Andean textiles to design your own covering for your llama's back. A covering is a saddle-like garment that is used to protect the llama as it transports goods.
4. Using crayons or colored pencils, color the wool of your llama and your llama's back covering.
5. **Optional:** Arrange pom-poms, sequins, buttons, or any other adornments on your llama template to add texture. Secure with glue.
6. Using scissors, cut out two or four holes along the bottom of your llama template. These cut-outs should be slightly larger than the width of your finger.
7. Insert your fingers into the llama puppet cut-outs and enjoy!



## Be Inspired by VMFA's Collection!



### ***Stirrup-Spouted Vessel in the Form of a Llama***

700-200 BC

Unidentified Chavin Artist

Chavin Culture, Peru, South America

Terracotta with polychrome slips

Pre-Columbian Art, 79.77

Llamas were revered throughout the Andes for both spiritual and practical reasons. Along with dogs and some species of birds, they were the only truly domesticated animals in the New World prior to European contact. Llama wool was used extensively for textiles long before sheep were introduced by Spanish colonists. Because of their natural

habitat high in the Andes, llamas were considered sacred creatures and were worshipped by the Inca as descendants of the gods.