Punch and Judy Play About Sharing: Punch, Joey and the Ball

Punch won't share his new ball with anyone, until the Crocodile gobbles it up and Punch and Joey can only get it back by working together.

Age
from about 3 years

Time
about 6 minutes, about 15 minutes with the talk afterwards

Puppets
3 hand puppets: Punch, Joey the Clown, Crocodile

Materials
a small soft ball that fits in the Crocodile's mouth, a feather

Getting ready

2 people: person 1 plays Punch on the right hand and the Crocodile on the left; person 2 plays Joey and handles the feather.

Roles

Punch
has a new ball and wants to keep it all to himself at first

Joey
Joey the Clown, Punch's friend, would like to play too

Crocodile
lives down by the river, snaps up everything and doesn't know how to play with a ball

What you need

- ✓ small soft ball
- ✓ feather

Getting ready

Punch is already holding the ball when he appears. The Crocodile waits down on the right-hand side of the stage (as the children see it), and Joey comes in from the

left. Have the feather ready for Joey. Try out beforehand whether the ball stays in the Crocodile's mouth and drops out when the mouth opens.

Tips for the performance

1. Keep the tug-of-war over the ball short and funny. Punch and Joey get loud, but nobody pushes or hits.

2. At first the Crocodile talks with its mouth full and can hardly be understood. That makes the children laugh and makes it less scary.

3. When it's time for the tickling, everything goes quiet. Wait until all the children really are silent; then the big 'Atishoo!' works all the better.

4. Take the children's ideas seriously, even if they don't fit the play. The characters can say: 'Let's try that later.'

5. You can make the counting at the end as long as you like. The children decide whose turn it is next.

Script

Stage directions are in grey. The children's calls are suggestions: every answer is welcome.

Punch comes up holding the ball.

Punch: Hip, hop, hooray, I've come to play! Is everybody here today?

Children: *Yeees!*

Punch: Look what I've got! A brand-new ball! Grandma gave it to me. And it bounces beautifully. Boing! Boing!

Punch bounces the ball on the front of the stage. Joey comes in.

Joey: Hello, Punch! Hello, children! Ooh, a ball! Can I have a go?

Punch: *(hugs the ball tight)* No! It's mine. All mine!

Joey: Just one throw. Please!

Punch: No, no and no again!

Joey: *(reaches for the ball)* Oh, go on, give it here!

They both hold on to the ball and pull it back and forth.

Punch: Mine!

Joey: I want a turn!

Punch: Mine, mine, mine!

The ball slips away and plops down behind the stage on the right-hand side.

Joey: Oh no! The ball's fallen down. Down by the river!

Punch: *(quietly)* That's where the Crocodile lives …

The Crocodile slowly rises up with the ball in its mouth.

Children: *The crocodile! Punch, look out!*

Crocodile: *(with its mouth full)* Mmm! Wha' iff thiff? *(chomps)* An apple?

Punch: That's not an apple, that's my ball! Give it back!

Crocodile: Finders keepers! Snap, snap!

The Crocodile snaps in Punch's direction. Punch jumps back.

Children: *Careful, Punch!*

Punch: Joey, help me! I can't do this on my own.

Joey: Oh, so now you want my help? A minute ago you wanted the ball all to yourself.

Punch: *(quietly)* That's true. That wasn't kind of me. Sorry, Joey.

Joey: That's all right. Two heads are better than one. Children, have you got any ideas?

Let the children make suggestions. Punch and Joey wonder aloud which ones might work.

Joey: I know! Crocodiles have terribly ticklish noses. And I've got a feather right here.

Punch: And when it sneezes, the ball will fall out! Then I'll catch it.

Joey: But quietly. Children, you have to be very, very quiet so the Crocodile doesn't notice. Shhh!

Wait until the children are quiet. Joey creeps up with the feather. Punch gets ready.

Crocodile: *(chomping)* My ball, my ball, all my very own ball …

Joey tickles the Crocodile's nose with the feather.

Crocodile: Ah … ah … aaah …

Punch: *(whispers)* Children, help us! Ah … ah …

Children: *ATISHOO!*

Crocodile: ATISHOO!

The ball drops out of the Crocodile's mouth onto the front of the stage. Punch grabs it.

Punch: Got it! Thank you, Joey! Thank you, children!

Crocodile: *(sniffs)* Now I haven't got anything at all. Nobody ever plays with me.

Joey: That's because you always swallow everything!

Crocodile: *(in a small voice)* But I don't even know how to play with a ball.

Punch: Children, now the Crocodile is sad. A minute ago I wanted the ball all to myself too. Just like the Crocodile. What shall we do?

Let the children answer. Common ideas: take turns, play together, roll the ball back and forth.

Joey: Let's play together, all three of us! We'll roll the ball to each other, and everyone gets a turn.

Punch: But only if you don't put it in your mouth again, Crocodile.

Crocodile: Promise. I'll keep my mouth shut tight. *(snaps its mouth shut)* Mm-hmm.

Punch: Children, will you count with us? I'll roll it to Joey. One!

Children: *One!*

The ball goes round: Punch rolls it to Joey, Joey to the Crocodile, and the Crocodile nudges it back to Punch with its snout.

Joey: Two!

Children: *Two!*

Crocodile: And me … three! *(nudges the ball with its snout)*

Children: *Three!*

Crocodile: This is fun! Much more fun than swallowing balls!

Punch: Hip, hop, hooray, all three of us can play! Bye-bye, children!

Children: *Bye-bye, Punch!*

After the show: questions for the children

- ✓ Why didn't Punch want to give the ball to Joey at first?
- ✓ How do you think Joey felt when Punch shouted 'Mine!'?
- ✓ How did Punch and Joey get the ball back?
- ✓ What can you do when two children want the same toy?

Suitable puppets: Punch from a set of traditional glove puppets, any other human hand puppet as Joey, plus a crocodile hand puppet with a mouth that opens and closes. Traditional glove puppets at Daliono

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