

Middle-earth Studios Audition Information

Below is audition information if you are applying to become a **Storyteller** or **Puppeteer**. You may choose to audition for one or both positions. We encourage people who only want to apply for storytelling to try the puppet portion of the audition – just for the fun of it!

STORYTELLER AUDITION SIDE

For the Storytelling audition you will be asked to retell an excerpt from our story *The Legend of the Unicorn*. You may memorize the script and perform it from memory. You may also audition with the script in front of you for reference. Either choice is acceptable. We are looking for how well you can dramatically tell a story! We want to see how you add color to your voice to create mood and emphasize the story's action. Find moments where you can create a character voice to define the personality of the character speaking. When rehearsing, don't focus too much on memorizing the words verbatim (word for word). Instead, focus on getting the basic gist of the story and tell it dynamically. Most importantly, have fun! The excerpt begins towards the end of the story. The good people of the kingdom have just escaped from a long journey through the dangerous Enchanted Forest. The Serpent has poisoned their magic lake. Only the Unicorn can purify the water, but after weeks of searching, she is nowhere to be found.

The good people of the kingdom had been traveling for days through the forest with nothing to drink. They were dying of thirst. Their legs began to drag, their tongues hung out of their mouths, their knees began to wobble and just when they thought they could go no further, they burst from the line of trees to find the lake! But they saw that it was now nothing more than a small, polluted puddle. Weak and weary they collapsed by the water's edge and began to cry.

Everyone was miserable that day except for one creature, and that, of course, was the serpent. He actually thought this was funny. He said to his trolls, "Trolls, my wicked plan worked! Not only are they all too weak to fight, but we've got them all together at once! Now you ought to be able to dunk their heads in the poison long enough for them to drink. The whole kingdom will become trolls, just like you!"

Quietly the trolls and Serpent began to tiptoe towards the lake. They crouched behind some bushes. But the Serpent made a terrible mistake, for he had crouched behind ragweed bushes. And if there's one thing that makes a troll sneeze, it's ragweed! The Serpent and Trolls began sneezing up a storm. The King noticed he was getting sneezed on and jumped to his feet. "Do you see those bushes over there?" he said. Those bushes are sneezing! Bushes don't sneeze! I don't think that's a sneezing bush, I think that's an AM-bush! Quickly everyone! to the other side of the lake."

PUPPETRY AUDITION

For the first part of the puppet audition we ask you to bring your own puppet or puppets. If you don't have a puppet, you can make one of your own. Marionette artist Martin Stevens defines puppets as "the shape, of an idea, in motion", which means anything can become a puppet: a mask, a wooden spoon, a sock with google eyes glued on, an umbrella, even you own bare hand. What matters most is that your puppet can convey story and character through movement. We are looking to see how well you bring a puppet to life with focus, character voice, movement, and lip-sync (if using a puppet with a mouth).

For performance you have a few options:

1. Create your own short puppet skit. (No more than 10 minutes.)
2. Lip-sync and dance your puppet along to a recorded song, soundtrack or to your own singing. (No more than 5 minutes.)
3. Do a simple stand up routine where your puppet enters, tells a few family friendly jokes, and then dramatically exits.

Focus on making puppet movements that are fluid and organic. Avoid jerking your puppet around like a rag doll. Don't be afraid to incorporate audience interaction into your number. Have fun and be creative. This is your chance to see if you like bringing puppets to life!