

Kung Hei Fat Choy!

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- Suggested story concept
- Researched and wrote story and edited instructions and diagrams

Thanks to our young friends from Balmy Beach Community School in Toronto for bringing our dragon to life.



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On Feb. 7 ring in the Chinese New Year – with your friends, family or classmates – underneath this colourful dragon. Don't let his fire-breathing fool you, he's actually easy to make. ▶

Dragon

YOU NEED:

Sturdy corrugated cardboard boxes:
1 large box, approx 28 cm long x 30.5 cm wide x 30.5 cm high (11 x 12 x 12 in), for dragon's head (slips over wearer's head)
1 long box, approx 40.5 cm long x 12.5 cm tall x 20.5 cm wide (16 x 5 x 8 in), for dragon's snout

Six 100 cm (39³/₈-in) lengths of 1/2-in neoprene or plastic tubing or garden hose, or 3 hula hoops cut in half, for body shaping and handles

3.00 m sturdy printed or plain fabric, 115 cm wide, for body

Strips of colourful fabric, each 75 x 3.5 cm (29¹/₂ x 1³/₈ in) for fringe

Scraps of nylon ribbons and fat yarns

Scraps of colourful felt including white and red

10 large pom-poms

15.00 m yellow 1/4-in polypropylene rope

Duct tape

Strong string

Twenty-four 20.5 cm (8-in) plastic cable ties or pipe cleaners

X-acto knife and screwdriver or awl (for adults' use only)

Paint in desired colours

Gesso (optional)

Paintbrushes

Bristol board: red, black, green and orange

4 cardboard egg cartons

2 tennis balls

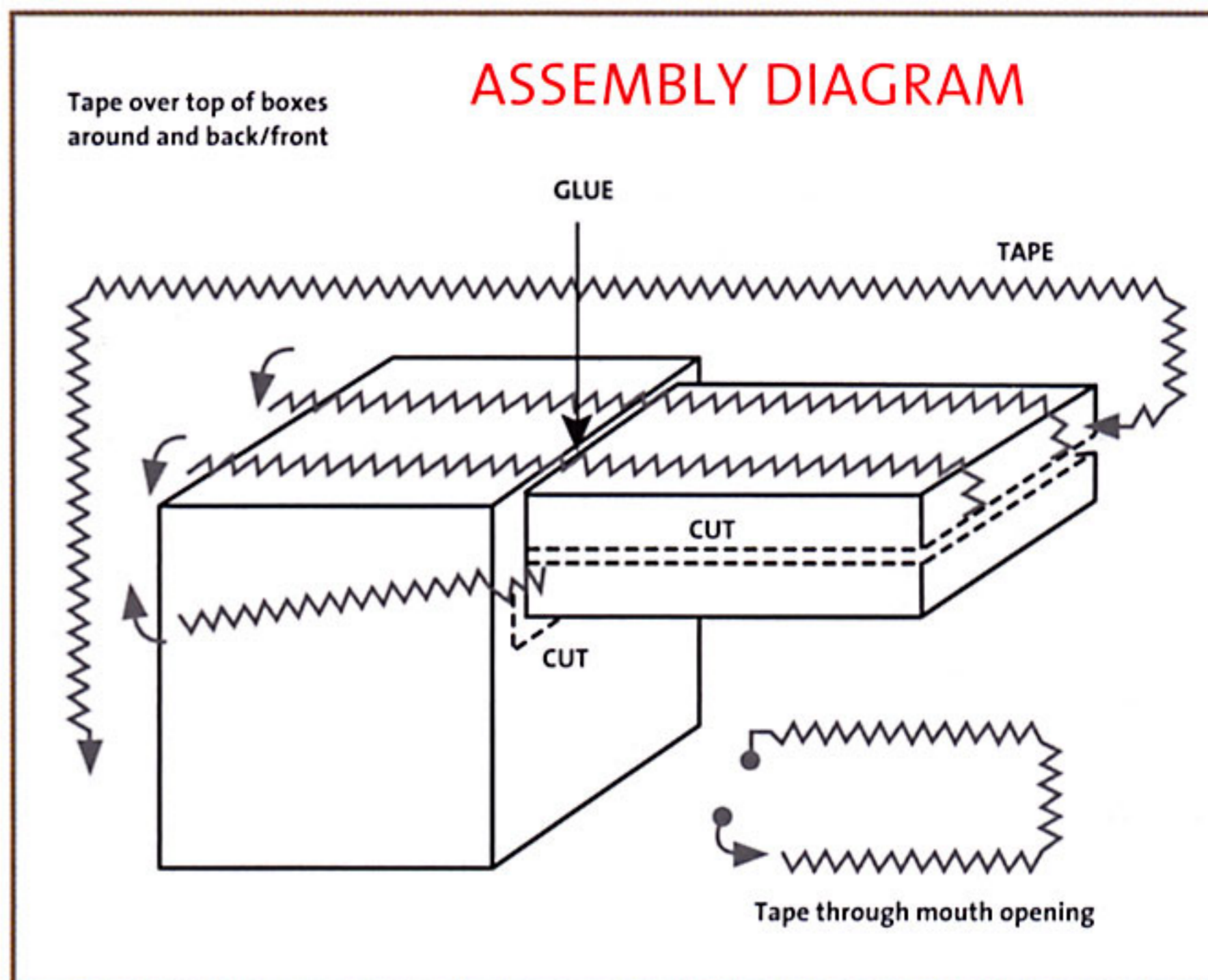
Black nontoxic medium- or fine-tip permanent marker

White glue, glue gun (for kids' use, choose low-temperature model) and glue sticks

TO MAKE:

NOTES:

- Refer to Assembly Diagram (above right) and photos when assembling head.
- To cut bristol board and egg cartons, use scissors.
- *To cut or poke holes through



corrugated cardboard and reinforced fabric, *always ask an adult* to do it with knife and screwdriver, respectively.

1 Head Fold top flaps of large box down inside and glue. Fold long flaps over short on top and bottom of long box and glue in place.

*Cut long box in half around 1 short and 2 long sides, for jaw.

With bottoms flush, glue long box to large box, then turn over (so bottoms are top of head). At each side of snout top, tape along inside of mouth, around jaw and snout, then across top and down back of head, to secure snout. Tape across back of mouth, out at corner of mouth, around large box and back in at other corner of mouth.

*Cut 1 cm (3/8-in) wide slit in head just outside side and bottom edges of lower jaw so mouth opens.

Separate egg cartons into tops and bottoms; cut each lengthwise into strips of big and small bumps. Cut and glue 2 big-bump strips from front to back along head top; glue 2 small-bump strips from front to back along each head side. Cut out 2, separate, big bumps; glue 1 to each top corner of snout, for nostrils. If using gesso (brightens paint colours), brush all over head and snout; let dry. Paint as desired; let dry.

*Cut small slit at centre of head top; cut and thread short lengths of rope through slit, for plume, then tape inside box to secure.

Designer's Tips

- This is a great classroom craft – small groups of kids can make different parts of the dragon before it's assembled.
- Improvise! Recycle crêpe paper, cord, old clothing and fabrics, ribbons, shoelaces and yarn for strips (the lengths can vary if you like).
- Be creative! Make the dragon as plain or as fancy as you want.
- Don't fuss! The measurements for this craft are approximate, give or take 1 cm.
- There are places (and handles) for six children to dance under this dragon. Add extra fabric and hoops, if you like, to lengthen it for more kids.
- After your celebration of Chinese New Year, use monofilament to suspend the dragon from a ceiling.

2 Mouth Paint inside of mouth black. From bristol board, cut 4 strips, slightly longer than side of jaw, with pointed teeth on 1 long edge. One side at a time, glue white felt onto strip; let dry, then trim even with strip edges. Glue teeth inside jaws, bending one tooth on end of each around to front. From red bristol board, cut long forked tongue, then glue red felt onto tongue; let dry and trim even with tongue edges. Glue tongue inside jaw, letting tip protrude.

3 Eyes Spread hand flat on bristol board and trace, drawing points at tips of fingers and thumb and straight line across wrist, then cut out; repeat. Perpendicular to midpoint of wrist edge, cut 5 cm (2-in) slit; overlap and glue slit edges to shape eyelashes. With marker, draw pupil and brow on each tennis ball; glue ball into each eyelash, then glue to head at top of snout.

4 Handles *Poke holes through head front, then through side, 2.5 cm (1 in) from front side edge and 12.5 cm (5 in) from bottom edge. *Poke 2 pairs of 2 holes through head top, each 2.5 cm apart, 1.5 cm (5/8 in) from front top edge and 5 cm from side edge. Curve 1 tube and push into head, up and around edges of front, so ends extend down from front corners for handles; through each pair of holes, push 1 cable tie in, around tube and out, then tighten and attach. If desired, stuff large paper bag with crumpled newspaper and glue up inside head, so head sits high on wearer's head and it's easy to see out. *Poke 4 evenly spaced holes along back of head, 5 cm from bottom edge.

5 Fringe *Poke a series of holes around side and front of head, 3 cm (1 1/8 in) from bottom edge, leaving 10 cm (4-in) gap at centre-front to look out.

Two at a time, thread strips, ribbon or yarn through each hole in sides and front; knot.

6 Body Fold under 4 cm (1 5/8 in) around edge of fabric; secure with strips of tape, to reinforce. Apply 2 or 3 extra strips of tape to 1 (front) end; beginning 50 cm (19 3/4 in) from front end, adhere 5 strips of tape, at 50 cm intervals, to wrong side, right across width.

*Cut 1 cm slits through fabric and tape, 5 to 10 cm (2 to 4 in) apart and

1.5 cm from edge, along back end and side edges. Two at a time, thread strips, ribbon or yarn through each hole; knot. From felt, cut dots; glue all over.

7 Hoops/handles Shape each tube as follows: 20 cm (7 7/8 in) from 1 end, tie string then tape to secure; shape tube into curve, then, 38 cm (15 in) along string from first knot, tie and secure in same manner. From yellow rope, cut twenty 50 cm lengths and tie together in pairs at 1 end, unravelling at other ends; push 1 knot into each tube end and glue.

8 Dragon *Cut pair of 1 cm slits, 2.5 cm apart, through fabric and each crosswise tape, 15 cm (6 in) and 45 cm (17 3/4 in) from each side edge. One at a time, hold each curve under body along crosswise tape, push 1 cable tie in, around tube and out, then tighten and attach. Over sharp end of each tie, glue pom-pom (to protect eyes) or trim off.

Centre bottom edge of head back along front edge of body. *Cut 4 small slits in fabric and tape, corresponding with holes in head back, 4 cm from edge. From string, cut 30 cm (11 7/8 in) length; thread in and out through corresponding holes to lace head to body, knotting ends to secure. Thread 1 or 2 strips through each hole; knot. *Poke hole in centre of each nostril. From red and orange bristol board, cut thin strips; run scissor blade along each, to curl, then glue 5 or 6 strip ends into each nostril, for flames. ●



Where did dragons come from? A colourful new storybook, *Legend of the Chinese Dragon* (North-South, 2007, hardcover, \$19.95) by Marie Sellier, Catherine Louis and

Wang Fei tells how the children of China created an animal that would protect all the people, whatever their tribes. Their creation – the dragon – is a symbol of peace and joy. Alongside beautiful illustrations, the story unfolds in both the English alphabet and Chinese characters.



▶ **Our Chinese Dragon Was a Big Hit**

1. I thought the dragon ("Kids' Craft," February) would be a wonderful project for my kids and me to tackle together. My daughter's school always has a dragon dance, but this year the dragon went missing. The pressure was on to make one they could use for the parade. We had a lot of fun, and it really wasn't that hard.
– *Nancy Taylor, Halifax*

2. A couple weeks ago my school celebrated a Countries of the World theme, and my class studied China. My students added their own creative touches to make their own dragon. It was even used again to celebrate Chinese New Year.
– *Sofie Maurice, Whitehorse*

3. We brought our dragon to my son Kyle's kindergarten class. We had a great time parading in the hallways, and it's thanks to you that we were inspired to make him and celebrate an important Chinese holiday.
– *April Cheng, Quesnel, B.C.*