

Fun at home — dragon puppet

Skill level: ★☆☆ Easy

Fun at home activity: Make a dragon puppet

During the *Dragon and Scrolls* winter school holiday program, families were inspired by [The Historical Expression of Chinese Art](#) exhibition.

How to make a dragon puppet



Did you know ... Chinese dragons are mythological animals that can have magical powers. Dragons represent power, strength and good luck.

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Dragon symbols have been represented in Chinese culture for thousands of years. During the late Qing Dynasty, the dragon was even adopted as the national flag.

Today the dragon is an essential part of Chinese celebrations. In the dragon dance it is believed the dragon scares away evil spirits and brings good luck. The dance is performed with a team of dancers carrying a large dragon puppet.

Time: 30 to 40 minutes

Skill level: ★ Easy — you may need an adult to help.

What you need:

- Two A3 sheets of coloured paper (different colours)
- Scissors
- Sticks
- Sticky tape
- Glue to attach things such as eyes
- Pencils or textas to decorate
- Wool, string or ribbon for a tail

Ideas:

- What powers and strength will your dragon have?
- What colours will you use? Will they represent something about the dragon?
Colours have a special meaning in Chinese culture:
 - Yellow: Bravery, beauty, wealth and power
 - Green: Prosperity, health and harmony
 - Red: Happiness, joy, celebration and fire
- Can you find any Chinese dragon stories to retell with your dragon after you have made it?



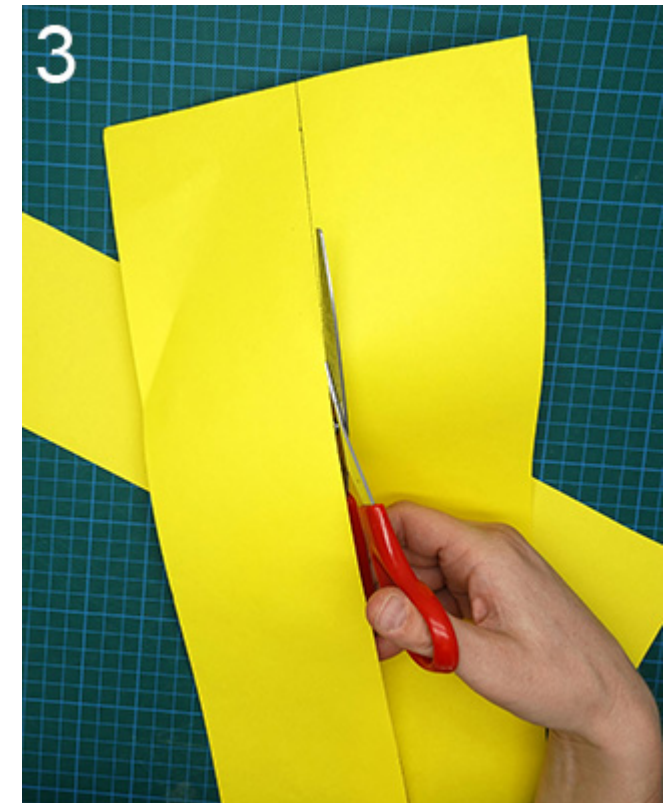
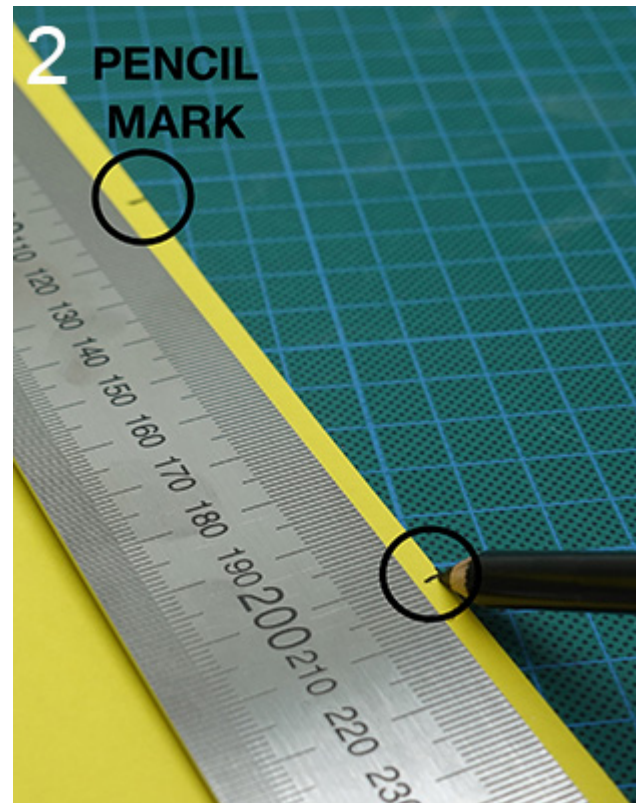
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Extra tips: If you want scales on your dragon, draw them onto the strips before you attach the two colours together.

Steps 1 to 3:

- Gather your materials. What sort of dragon will you create? Perhaps do some research.
- On an A3 paper sheet, measure out three strips (about 10 cm wide and 42 cm long).
- Cut out the strips. Remember scissors are sharp, so ask an adult for help if needed.

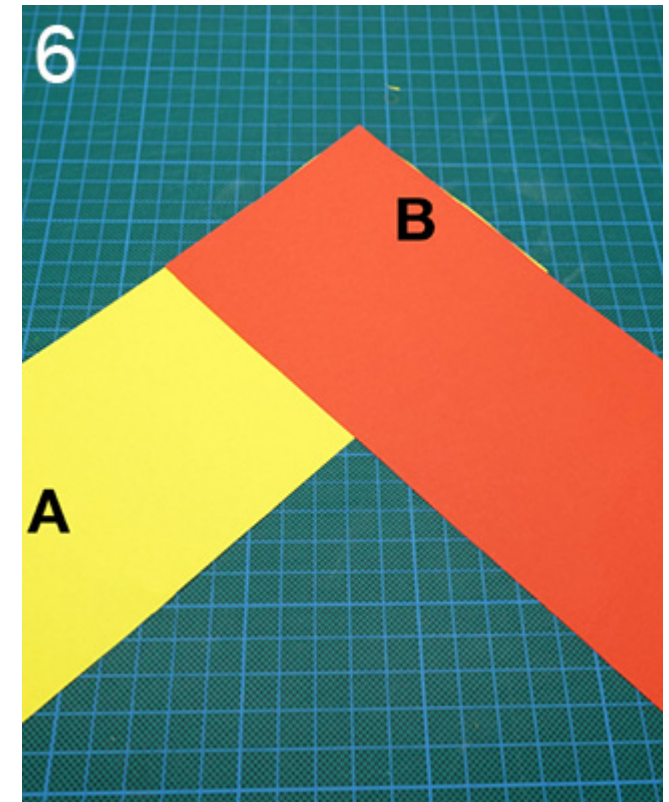
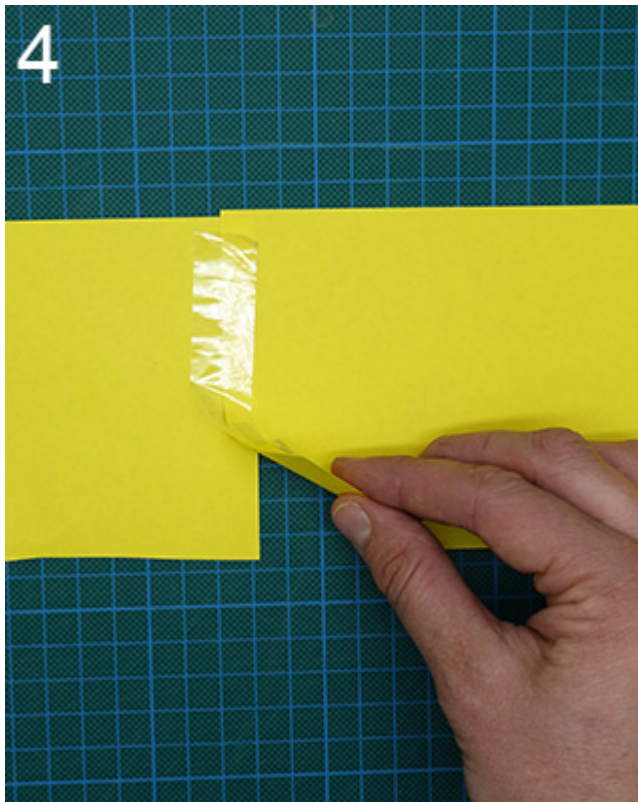


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Steps 4 to 6:

- Tape three strips together at the ends, to create one long strip. Repeat steps 2 to 3, with the other A3 paper sheet. You should now have two long strips of paper 10 cm wide.
- Place one end over the other end, at a right angle, and tape together.
- Fold the bottom strip (A) over the top strip (B), at a right angle, and press down the edge.

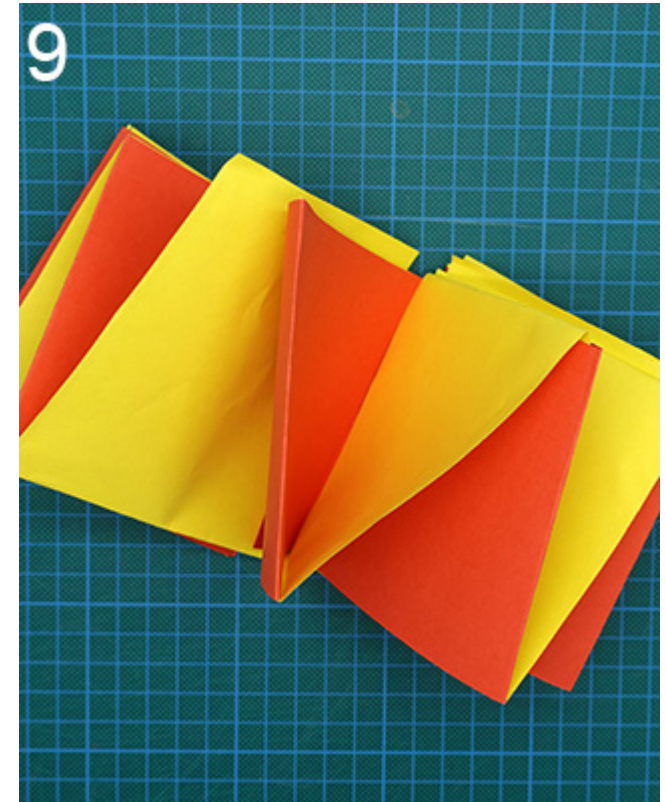


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Steps 7 to 9:

- Repeat this process (steps 5 to 6) until you have reached the ends.
- Tape the ends.
- It should now look like a concertina

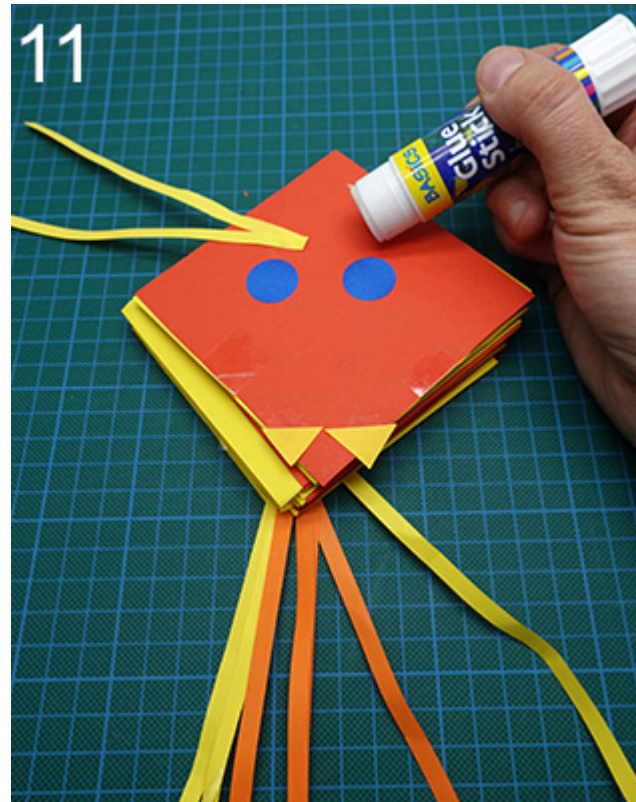


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Steps 10 to 12:

- Tape on a tail to the underside of an end. Experiment with different materials, for example, paper strips, wool, string, ribbon.
- Draw and decorate a head on the opposite end.
- Tape some sticks to the bottom to use as handles.



Celebrate with your puppet!

Can you create a story, song or a dance to perform with your dragon? Perhaps take it to a Chinese festival day ...

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Share your creation

We'd love to see what you make! Ask an adult if you can send a photo or video to schoolholidays@nma.gov.au or check out more [fun at home activities](#) on our website. See what others have made at the Museum during school holidays on the Museum's [Flickr stream](#).

