**Dragon’s Eggs**

Learning Objectives

After studying this lesson your students will be able to:

* Demonstrate how to actually design some real stage props
* Explain how a dramatic production can benefit from stage props
* Explain why props are so important to a stage production

**How to Make Fantasy Dragon Eggs**

What would dragon eggs look like? As a fan of both *Harry Potter* and *A Game of Thrones*, I have been pondering this question for a while.

Materials:

* aluminum foil
* air-dry clay (for art projects, my favourite air-dry clay is [La Doll Premier](http://amzn.to/2kjzDF3); for quick crafts with kids, [Crayola Air Dry clay](http://amzn.to/2jXUiO7) is an economical alternative)
* [liquid watercolours](http://amzn.to/2kYeu2d)/food colouring
* [acrylic beads](http://amzn.to/2jywcgE), jewels and stones; [seashells](http://amzn.to/2jysYd6), [beach glass and rocks](http://amzn.to/2kYkQ1v); anything else that might embellish a dragon’s egg

How to Make Fantasy Eggs

Step 1: Prepare Clay

You can buy coloured air-dry clay or you can get a big tub of white/natural clay and stain it with watercolours or food colouring. That’s what we did. For a more even finish, mix a few drops of paint into the clay before starting to sculpt. On the picture above you can see how the clay looked before and after staining. However, you can also sculpt with whatever colour you’ve got and paint the surface once the clay is dry. We added more colour at that stage, too.

Step 2: Make the Base

Roll aluminum foil into an egg form to create a base. There are two reasons to start with the base: it saves clay, and, most importantly, it creates a solid core. Without one, it’ll be difficult to keep the egg from shifting its form when you start pushing beads and stones into it. Also, if you want to make a surprise egg and let the receiver “hatch it” to find a miniature toy dragon or something similar inside, wrap the present into aluminum foil at this point.

Step 3: Cover the Base with Clay

Start building the clay layer. It needs to be at least 1/2″ deep, so that you have enough depth to push beads into the clay. Roll it into a circle, then wrap the aluminum egg in it. Cover the opening last.

Air-dry clay usually takes about 24 hours to dry, more or less depending on ambient humidity and how thick the layer is, so you don’t need to hurry. But if you start feeling like it’s getting too dry, you can add water to the surface. If you need to pause, put your work and any leftover clay into a zip-lock bag with a few drops of water. You can also use a brush with water for smoothing the surface when doing final touches.

Step 4: Insert the Beads, Jewels, Etc.

Collect beads, jewels, seashells and other pieces you’re going to use for decorating. Besides acrylic beads, we used beach glass and seashells. After all, there can be different kind of fantasy creatures with eggs – a sea dragon or a mermaid. Strings of imitation pearls also worked well for our eggs.

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If you push beads and seashells deep enough into clay, it will stick and stay until the clay dries up. Anselm was three when we made the eggs, and he didn’t have a problem with jamming those stones right in.

When it came to making eggs with seashells, some of them were too big to stick. No problem – we used them as stamps instead, and added some texture to the clay.

Step 5: Let the Eggs Dry.

Usually 24 hours is enough. If you forget yours for longer, it isn’t a problem. They can be done at this point. This is how ours turned out.

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Step 6 (Optional): Accentuate Texture with More Paint

As I mentioned in the beginning, you can also work with clay as it came out of the bag and add colour in the end. We stained our clay, but wanted to add more texture with watercolours. We tried different brush strokes, but my favourite was the texture created by dabbing the clay surface with the tip of the brush to create a uneven polka-dot look.

