


# Life of pETs: Animal Friends Throughout History

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Hello everyone, I am Jennifer Vanegas Rocha, and I am a Gluck Family Fellow for the 2020-2021 year. I am excited to share with you today my Life of Pets Workshop. This workshop was inspired by my love of animated films and my love of art history. While watching the Secret life of Pets film it dawned on me that animals have always played an essential role in human lives. It is clear when looking at art created in the past that it is common to find animals to be significant enough to document via art. This tradition has now continued in the form of animated films, but it is interesting to dive into the past and see how past civilizations created art with animals. I hope you will join me in creating our own animal friends using some non-traditional everyday materials.

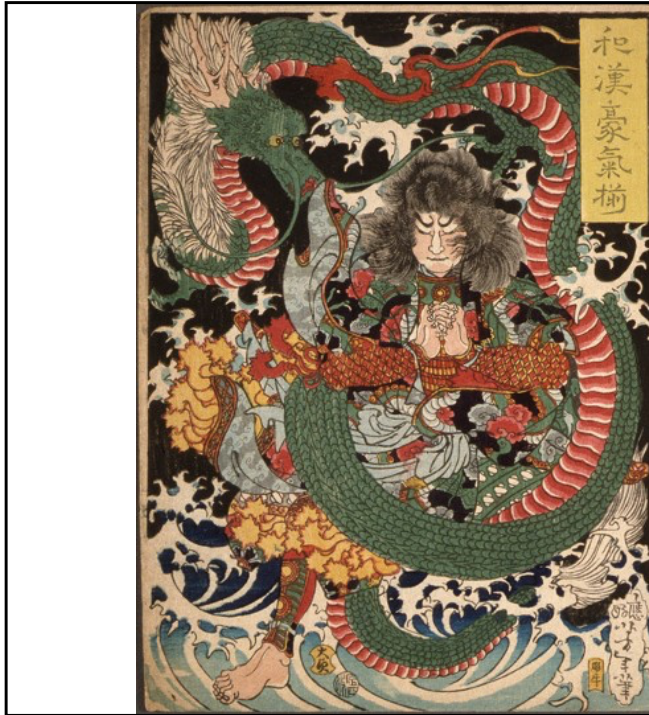


- An example of man's best friend
- Dog sculpture from the Eastern Han Dynasty in China dates back to 25-220 AD
- Realistic face details yet body is simple
- Shape of body and realistic face helps us understand that it is a dog
- Your animal friends do not need to be overly realistic, small details can be enough!

***Funerary Sculpture of a Dog***  
25-220. China, Eastern Han Dynasty  
LACMA, Los Angeles  
Molded earthenware with modeled and carved decoration

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Throughout history humans have always had a strong bond with animals and we can see evidence of this bond in art. Here we have an example of man's best friend which was found inside of a tomb in China. This dog sculpture dates to 25-220 AD and was made using earthenware. Earthenware is a type of pottery that is soft and capable of being scratched. Here we can see that the texture in the face of the dog and his paws were added by carving into the material. This is an example that can help you begin to think about the various animals you can choose from for this project.



- Mythical animals can be friends too!
- Dragon here is protecting samurai Tawaraya Tōda before he goes to battle
- Woodblock print is made by carving into wood by drawing backwards and pressing ink onto paper
- Don't limit yourself to making an animal friend that is a real-life animal—be creative!

***Tawaraya Tōda and a Dragon.*** 1868. Japan. LACMA, Los Angeles, Color. Woodblock print

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Not all animal friends need to be based on “real” animals. Here we have an example of a dragon. This is a Japanese woodblock print which was created by carving a drawing into a block of wood and then placing the ink onto the block before pressing it onto a piece of paper. In the center we can see a samurai in a state of meditation before going off into a battle. The dragon is protecting the samurai as he meditates, his body has fully encircled the samurai and his eyes are alert. This example is meant to help you think outside of the box and feel comfortable to create animal friends that may not be “realistic” animals or inspires you to create your own new animal that pulls various characteristics from different animals.

# Material List

Biodegradable Packing Peanuts



Main material for animal sculpture

Plastic Cup



Use to hold sponges and water

Sponge



Used to retain moisture and wet students finger that will be a tool and gluing agent

Water

Pour water into the cup with sponge to ensure sponge is wet enough to moisten finger when dipped into cup

These are the materials you will be using to create your animal friends. The main material are biodegradable packing peanuts. These are commonly encountered by many in the mail, when one receives packages, some may contain these packing peanuts. You will also need a cup with a bit of water, this cup of water will be used to contain and ensure that your sponge is always wet. Lastly, you will be using a sponge, it can be a dishwashing sponge or a makeup sponge. As you can see here, this presentation is using a photo of a makeup sponge as an example, but realistically a dishwashing sponge can also work, the key is that the sponge must be able to retain the water and stay wet. Once these materials are all gather you can begin the activity!

## Outlines to Guide



Future Dragon



Future Bird

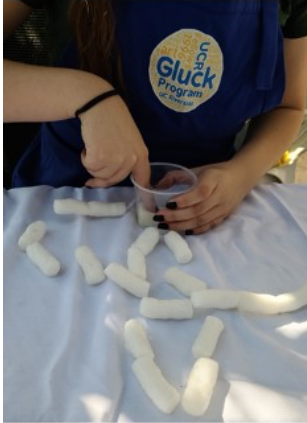
Begin to use packing peanuts to plan out the shape and size of your animal friend with an outline

No water needed during this step!

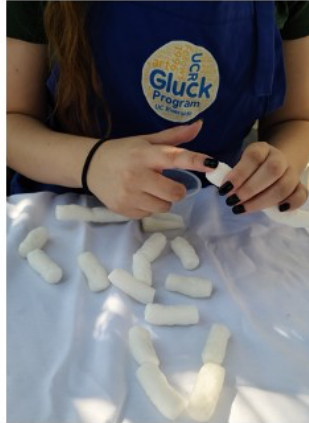
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The first step to create the animal friends will be to create outlines of our desired animals. This outline will help you understand how many peanuts you will need to use based on how large you wish your animal friend to be. Think of this outlining process like that of a sketching process. During this step you do not need use any material other than the packing peanuts. Once you are satisfied with the outline of your animal, feel free to move onto the next step.

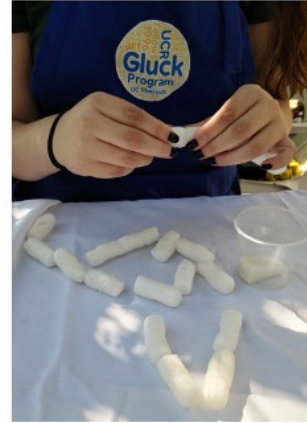
## Gluing Peanuts



Dip your finger to get enough water to help connect peanuts



Grab from outline and wet one side of packing peanut using your finger



Grab the next packing peanut from outline and hold to the packing peanut you just got wet

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For this step you will need your cup with a wet sponge to start connecting the packing peanuts. Grabbing from your outline, pick one packing peanut and then dip one of your index fingers into the cup and gather some excess water from the sponge onto your finger. Once your finger is wet, transfer that excess water onto the end of the packing peanut you first grabbed from your outline. Then grab another, following your outline and hold them together for three seconds.

## Hold for 3 Seconds



Make sure you hold for three full seconds, so you get a strong hold

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Here is an example how to hold them together. Since the packing peanuts are biodegradable, they melt down just enough to dry onto the other packing peanut. It essentially dries in a way that melts the material together. This process is an easy one and very forgiving. If you make a mistake or want to go in a different direction you can easily pull the peanuts apart.

## Caution: too much water

Make sure to not use too much water as it will become too messy, and peanut will shrink

To avoid this, make sure to use your finger like instructions



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Be careful to not use too much water to connect the peanuts. Water will shrink the peanut material because it is biodegradable, using too much water the peanuts will eventually dissolve.

Make sure that when using your finger, the water on your finger isn't dripping too much. A little bit of water works wonders for this material.



## Keep Going



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Just keep following the outline you set out and keep dipping your finger to glue as you go on. Also remember, if you do not like the direction your animal friend is going in you can always pause, pull the peanuts apart and go in a different direction.

## Details



Packing peanuts are easy to manipulate to adapt to a shape you desire!

Roll, tear and cut up with scissors to help create small details!

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As you come to a point with your animal friend where the main body is glued and secure, you can begin to work on adding details. The peanuts are very workable so you can do a lot of detailing work. You can roll the peanuts in between the palms of your two hands to make it thinner as seen here in the left-hand side photo. You can also pull them apart to cause cuts and slits with your fingers or with a pair of scissors.

## Details

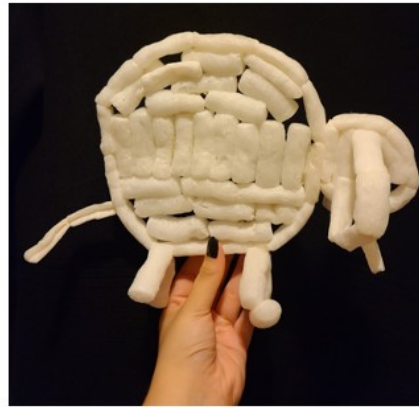


Here are some more detailing examples

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For the dragon example on this slide, you can see that scissors were used to cut the packing peanuts to create triangle like shapes to add detailing on the back of the dragon. Before cutting, the packing peanut was flattened which caused the peanut to take a rectangular like shape which then made it easier to cut diagonally to get the desired effect. You may also use markers to add detailing. As you can see in the right-hand side photo the dragon has red dots added to represent their eyes.

## Final Step!



Ensure to let your animal friends to dry for ten minutes so they can last longer!  
In these minutes you can brainstorm names

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Once you have finished gluing all your packing peanuts and your details, allow ten minutes of drying time. Your animal friend is good to go immediately after you place the last peanut but to make sure it lasts a long time, give them ten minutes to fully dry together before you move them around. Feel free to name them and make more than one!