

Create and Inflate

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING AN INFLATABLE

Artist Claire Ashley created this resource to challenge you to make an inflatable sculpture like the ones she makes, using basic materials like plastic bags and tape.

Ashley uses lots of bright colours in her work, and makes sculptures that are inspired by toys and colourful characters. She doesn't always know what a sculpture will look like until it's inflated, so she experiments with lots of different shapes until she finds something she likes.

Image: Claire Ashley, *Clown (Laughing Stock)*, 2020 at Henry Moore Institute. Photo: John McKenzie



What you'll need:

- Recycled plastic sheet, e.g. a thick plastic bag or plastic packaging (like a Bag for Life)
- Scissors
- Strong tape, ideally duct/gaffa tape. Bright colours work best but use whatever you have (thick sellotape or parcel tape are fine too)
- Things to decorate your inflatable, e.g. marker pens, more coloured tape (e.g. washi or electrical tape), googly eyes, stickers
- String or wool
- If possible, a bike or airbed pump

1. Select a piece of plastic sheeting.
2. Fold the plastic in half so that it has two layers of plastic.
3. Cut one or two shapes out of the edge of the flat shape – see some possible options below:



4. Use the tape to tape together the two sheets around all edges. If you have different colours, try using different tape for each edge. Leave a 5cm opening for the air pump.
5. Then use the colored tape, stickers, googly eyes and markers to create marks and patterns on the surface of the balloon. Make sure you cover both sides.



6. Check to make sure every seam and edge is sealed with tape.
7. Fill with air – use the hand held air pump to fill the shape. If you don't have a pump blow it up with your mouth!
8. Tie a length of string around the air entry point to seal.



Now play with and display your creation. Twirl balloon around your head. Get a photograph taken of you and your inflatable. Parade through the classroom with your inflatable. Hang it up in your classroom to create a group installation.