

How to Make a Dragon Piñata

*And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.
(Revelation 12:3)*



Suggested Materials:

- a large balloon for the body
- smaller balloons, juice cans, or cardboard tubes to make the dragon's heads
- cardboard tubes to make the dragon's legs (bath tissue or paper towel tubes)
- poster board cut into a long rectangle and then bent (and secured) to make a long cone for the tail
- newspaper strips
- large bowl (for the glue mixture)
- 2 cups flour and 2.5 to 3 cups water (to make the glue)
- scissors
- paint
- string
- optional: Styrofoam balls, red tissue paper, red crepe paper (can purchase rolls of ruffled crepe paper)

Procedure:

1. Inflate a (round or long) rubber balloon to form the body of the piñata.
2. Use smaller balloons, Styrofoam balls, empty juice cans, or cardboard tubes to help form seven heads.
3. Use cardboard tubes to make the legs of the dragon. If you cut 4-5 one inch slits in the bottom of the tube, you can bend these sections outward and then tape these to the body of the piñata.
4. Use masking tape to connect the parts of the dragon before covering with papier-mâché.
5. Cover your work area with several layers of newspaper.
6. Make the glue for your piñata by mixing flour with water in a large bowl until you have a smooth mixture about the consistency of Elmer's school glue. (Start by adding 2.5 cups of water to 2 cups of flour and add more water if it is needed to get the right consistency.)
7. Tear or cut newspaper into long strips (about 1 by 20+ inches) if you haven't already. (You will find that newspaper tears easily if you rip it in the direction of the lines of text.)
8. Dip the strips into the glue and apply to the balloon. (Note: You want the newspaper strips saturated with glue but not dripping. You may want to run your fingers along the strips to remove excess glue.) You want to cover the body of the dragon with 4-5 layers of papier-mâché. (If you put on more layers, it may be too difficult to break later.)
9. After covering the body of the dragon with papier-mâché, work on covering the legs, head, and tail.
10. Let everything dry before painting the dragon with red poster paint. As an alternative, you could dip pieces of red tissue paper into glue and then apply it to the piñata.
11. Add ten horns (could be made out of small cone-shaped paper cups) and seven paper diadems (crowns) to the heads of the dragon. (Three of the heads will have two horns on them).
12. You can decorate the piñata further by painting faces on the dragon's heads, gluing on red crepe paper, putting spines on the back and tail, *etc.*
13. When the piñata is finished, use a serrated knife to cut a rectangular flap in one side of the body of the dragon. Fill the piñata with individually wrapped candies, small toys, *etc.* and then tape the flap shut.
14. Use very sturdy string to hang the piñata securely from a tree branch, ceiling beam, *etc.* Wrap the string around the piñata as if you were tying up a package.

Tips:

- Take care not to have the heads become too heavy or it will be difficult to keep the dragon upright. It may be helpful to use Styrofoam balls for the heads to keep them lighter.
- Be careful to keep the glue on the thin side and put no more than 5 layers on the piñata, or it may be too difficult for the children to break it.
- Paper plates, paper cups, pieces of Styrofoam, *etc.* can also be used to form the piñata.
- Instead of cutting a flap open, you can leave a hole at the top of the balloon (i.e., don't cover it with papier-mâché) and fill the piñata through it (after puncturing the balloon).

“Slaying the Dragon”

1. Have children take turns being Michael and his angels and attack the dragon with a stick or wooden sword until the piñata breaks and the contents fall out to be shared among the group.
2. When using a piñata to enhance your celebration of New Church Day, you may want to consider filling it with small stickers (with good symbolism like stars), red and white candies, *etc.*

Alternative: Paper Bag “Piñata”

If you don't really have time to make a traditional piñata, you might want to substitute this paper bag piñata instead.

Suggested supplies:

brown paper bag
stapler
Poster paint
red poster board (or foam core board)
red tissue paper
glue
string

Procedure:

1. Fill a large grocery bag half way with individually wrapped candies, small toys, *etc.*
2. Carefully fold over the top—at least two times—and staple closed. This is the body or base of your piñata.
3. Draw a red dragon with seven heads on red poster board and cut it out. Ideally, you would make both the front and the back of the dragon. Then attach these to the paper bag piñata.
4. OR use red poster board just to make the heads of the dragon and its tail, and attach these to the paper bag body of the dragon. Cover the body with red poster paint, tissue paper, or crepe paper.
5. Use string to hang the piñata so that children can try to break it.
6. Rather than using a wooden baseball bat or a stick to break the paper bag dragon piñata, substitute tightly rolled newspaper (taped securely) or a foam bat (such as a Nerf bat).

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Dragon Pattern for Paper Bag Piñata

Directions:

1. Use a photocopier to enlarge the dragon to the desired size for your piñata.
2. Color the dragon red.
3. Cut out.
4. Attach to the paper bag piñata that is already filled with candies and/or prizes.

