

AMAZING CLAY ANIMALS

A fun activity exploring the plasticity of clay. Create an animal with modelling clay, let it dry and it will be yours to keep forever!

YOU WILL NEED:

- 1 or 2 blocks of clay
- Sticky white circles
- Pencil



THE POWER OF CLAY

Clay is an amazing material. It can store water, like a sponge. When it has water in it you can easily squish and squash it into different shapes, like playdough or blu tack. We call this squishiness **plasticity**. If you heat up clay or let it dry, it changes. This is because it loses the water in it. Instead of being squishy it goes hard and can't bend. We call this hardness **rigidity**.

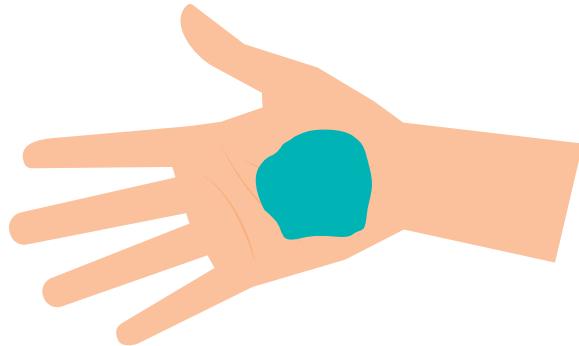
This means clay is a great material to make things with. You can mould it into any shape you want when it is squishy, then let it go hard. Cups and plates made from clay last a long time, so there is less waste. When they do get thrown away, broken pieces don't leak harmful chemicals into the ground. Clay bricks keep buildings warmer in winter and cooler in summer, so less electricity or gas gets used for heating or cooling. Using clay instead of plastic can help the planet.



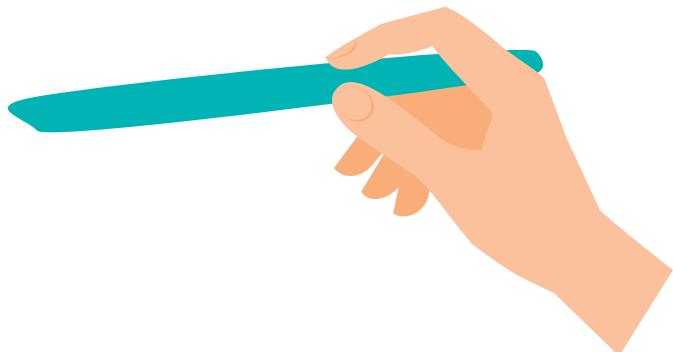
Now you know about clay you can make an amazing model animal. Your task is to make the shape of an animal out of your clay, and then let it dry. As it dries it will go hard, so you can make a model you can keep forever.

In this example, we are going to make a sneaky snake, but you can make whatever you like.

- 1** Roll your clay into a ball.



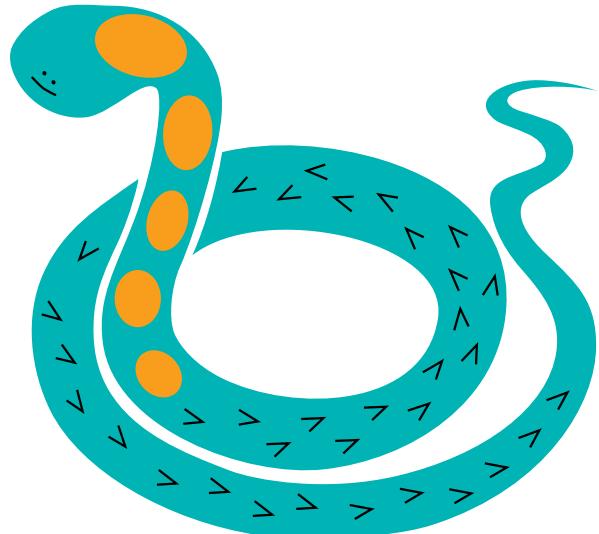
- 2** Place the clay on the table. Using your hand, push down and keep rolling it, so you have a long, thin piece of clay. You don't want it too thin or it will break, but if it's too fat it won't look like a snake! About the thickness of a finger will be best.



- 3** Add some detail. The head will be the thickest end and the tail will be thinnest. Add a mouth line and nose holes using a pencil. You might want to research different snakes!



- 4** Place it in the position you want. You can coil it up, have it long and thin or even rearing up like a cobra. Add any extra detail you want. Try adding texture to the body by making patterns with a pencil, or using your second pot of clay to make your snake multicoloured! When it's perfect let it dry overnight.



- 5** Add some eyes using the sticky white circles and draw in the pupils with a pencil to finish the snake.

