

Fabric and Fibre Lesson with 3rd to 6th Classes

'Creative Stitching'

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Curriculum Strand: Fabric and Fibre (Visual Arts Curriculum p.58, 76)

Objective: *Explore the possibilities of fabric and fibre as media for imaginative expression (p.58, 76)*
Make small inventive pieces in fabric and fibre (p.58, 76)

Linkage: **Drawing** > *Experiment with the marks, lines, shapes, textures, patterns and tones that can be made with different drawing instruments on a range of surfaces (p.48) demonstrating increasing sensitivity and control (p.66)*
Paint and Colour > *Discover colour in the visual environment and become sensitive to colour differences and tonal variations through colour mixing (p.50)*
Discover pattern and rhythm in natural and manufactured objects (p.68)
Print > *Use a widening range of print-making techniques to make theme-based or non-representational prints (p.52)*
Use a computer art programme to create original images that are not dependent on clip art (p.70)

Integration Possibilities:

Oral Language: *Initiate conversations and respond to the initiatives of others in talking about experiences and activities (p.38)*

Discuss ideas and concepts encountered in other areas of the curriculum (p.53)

Science: *Observe, identify and investigate the animals and plants that live in local environments (p.62); Observe and explore some ways in which plant and animal behaviour is influenced by, or adapted to, environmental conditions (p.84)*

Geography: *Study weather variations during the year and their influence on plants, animals and humans (p.58); Explore the relationship of climate to plant, animal and human life (p.81)*

Mathematics: *Identify line symmetry in the environment (p.74)*

Developing this Activity in Class:

Getting Started: Use cold water dyes with the children to dye pieces of Hessian, A3 or A4 in size. There are some lovely colours available in the Dylon range and they are very easy to use in a classroom. Look at the 'Adding Colour to Fabric' programme on the DVD with the children to see the many ways in which colour can be applied to fabrics to make pictures/appliqués.

Materials Needed: An A3 or A4 piece of Hessian for each child
 Variety of wools and threads
 Scraps of fabrics
 Wool needles or bodkins
 PVA
 Fabric paints and brushes

Stimulus: Insects and Spiders – "Look at pictures of butterflies, dragonflies and other colourful winged insects. See how the patterns on their wings are repeated, how beautiful and colourful they are. Look at spider webs, see how the patterns of the webs are repeated, how delicate yet strong they are. Choose one of these as your inspiration to make an appliqué."

Activity: The children choose the theme for their appliqué, then choose a piece of the dyed Hessian as a backing. Using a variety of wools, they can stitch their design or pattern onto the Hessian. Other fabrics can be stitched or stuck on to add colour and texture to the piece. Encourage the children to talk about what they are doing, if they are finding any difficulties and how they are overcoming them. They might like to use fabric paints to add

colour also. When they are finished, they might like to stitch on their initials. Display their work in the classroom or other suitable place in the school.

Evaluation/Looking and Responding:

This will be happening as the children work. Encourage them to talk about what they are doing, about the yarns chosen and what they think about the textures and patterns they have created. Encourage them to ask questions of each other and to share ideas.

Extension Activities:

The children could use cold water dyes to tie and dye t-shirts. It is very easy to do and the children love to wear their own designs.

ICT Possibilities:

The Victoria and Albert Museum gives children the opportunity to design a textile!
http://www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/microsites/british_galleries/designa/textile/textile.html

Using the I Am An Artist DVD:

The *Fabric and Fibre* programmes on the DVD offer opportunities to see children using fabrics and fibres to make pictures, weavings, puppets and costumes.

Note:

As you can see in one of the Fabric and Fibre programmes, we used a mayonnaise bucket as our dye bath and a ruler to agitate the fabrics in the dye. Children love to use the correct language for this technique, so rather than "stir the bucket" they were delighted to "agitate the dye bath". Restaurants are happy to give away these buckets as they use quite a lot of them and the dyes are not expensive.

Relevant Artists:

Louis le Brocquy
Christo and Jean-Claude

Relevant Websites:

The Butterfly Website, for a huge collection of pictures of butterflies and moths.

<http://butterflywebsite.com/gallery/index.cfm>

Visit Louis le Brocquy's website and see his wonderful tapestries

<http://www.anne-madden.com/LeBPages/Tapestry90thcelebration.html>

The official site of Christo and Jeanne- Claude, famous for the art of wrapping major buildings and landmarks with fabrics

<http://www.christojeanneclaude.net>

Visit this weaving and lace gallery to see lots of sample of hand weaving from around the world.

<http://www.handweaving.net/GalleryList.aspx>

This links page in the Victoria and Albert Museum offers lots of opportunities to learn about textiles.

http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/furniture/textiles_links/index.html

Scoilnet, which is a portal to lots of sites useful in the classroom

<http://www.scoilnet.ie>