

THREADS & WEAVING

A gentle first year with fiber and cloth for little hands: feeling wool and cotton, weaving paper and yarn, lacing and stitching with a big blunt needle, finger-knitting a scarf to give away, and ending with a shepherd costume and a coat of many colors at the family sewing fair.

Threads & Weaving is a first look at the world of cloth for children in kindergarten through second grade. Over one school year the child meets the sheep and the shepherd, the cotton plant, the silkworm and the factory where people make fleece and nylon; weaves paper strips and yarn on a cardboard loom; learns to lace, to stitch with a big blunt needle and yarn, and to sew on a big button; watches a sewing machine work; makes finger chains and finger-knitting; sews a little pillow and hangs a curtain in a doll house; and ends the year designing, dressing a felt paper doll, making a shepherd costume, and showing everything at a family sewing fair.

Every lesson follows the same gentle path, in very short sentences a parent reads aloud. First comes the story: a real animal, plant, person or place. Then a simple look at how it works: what is happening in the fiber, the weave or the stitch. Then the child makes something real with his or her own hands and keeps a page about it in a sewing notebook. At this age an adult does every bit of sharp or hot work: the adult cuts woven fabric with sharp shears, does all pinning and ironing, and runs the sewing machine while the child watches from a safe spot. The child laces, weaves, threads big blunt needles, ties knots with help, stuffs, sorts, chooses colors and gives gifts.

Cloth is a quiet, happy way to learn that God provides and that hands can serve. God made sheep with wool and plants with fiber, He clothed Adam and Eve, and His people have spun, woven and sewn for one another ever since: Dorcas made coats for the widows, and Hannah brought Samuel a little coat every year. The year ends with a family sewing fair, where the child shows the year's work, and at least one piece is made to give away. *Fabricando fit faber*: by making, one becomes a maker.

Who it is for: Written for children in kindergarten through second grade (about ages 5-8), with the middle of the band in mind. A child is ready when he or she can listen to a

short story, use child-safe scissors on paper and felt with help, and sit with a small task for about ten minutes. No reading is required: a parent reads everything aloud, and the unit reviews are answered out loud, by pointing or by showing. To begin, gather child-safe scissors, big blunt plastic or tapestry needles, yarn, felt, burlap, plastic canvas, cotton balls, cardboard, glue and a few old socks, shirts and pillowcases. There is nothing sharp or hot on the child's side of the table; a sewing machine appears only in Unit 4, run entirely by the adult, and a borrowed machine (or a visit to a sewing friend from church) is fine.

32 lessons in 8 units · Every lesson has a video (links printed in each lesson), a picture study, a sewing project and notebook practice · Online: schoollaunch.org/courses/sewing/grades-k-2/

COURSE GUIDE

Most videos come from trusted teaching sources: farm and museum channels such as George the Farmer, Maryland Farm & Harvest and The Henry Ford; a university extension 4-H agent; the official channel of Lion Brand Yarn; children's Bible-story channels such as Saddleback Kids and LifeKids; children's librarians and art teachers; and careful craft teachers chosen lesson by lesson. Every video was previewed for content, accuracy, safe practice and modest dress. Most are short, two to ten minutes, and are meant to be watched together, with a parent ready to pause and talk. Some show a grown-up using sharp scissors, an iron or a machine; in this course those jobs always belong to the grown-up. Some channels end with an invitation to subscribe or a mention of their products; you can stop the video when the teaching ends.

HOW TO USE THIS COURSE

1. **The weekly rhythm.** The year has 32 lessons, one a week, in two short sessions. Session 1 (about 30–40 minutes) is the warm-up, the video, the story read aloud and the picture study. Session 2 (about 30–40 minutes) is the sewing project: make the thing, count the needles back in, clean up, and add a page to the sewing notebook. In the last week of each unit, add a short third sitting for the unit review (all out loud, no points) and the unit challenge.
2. **A leveled course.** Threads & Weaving is written for the whole K–2 band, not one grade. A kindergartner may do the smaller version of each project, dictate notebook words for a parent to write, and answer everything by pointing and showing. A second grader can make the bigger version, write a word or two, and do the “older students” steps. Look for the “younger children” and “older children” tips in the projects.
3. **An adult does all sharp and hot work.** At this level the child never uses sharp shears on woven fabric, the iron, pins, the hot-glue gun or the sewing machine. The adult cuts fabric, presses, pins (or hands the child clips) and runs the machine while the child watches from a safe spot an arm's length away. The child uses child-safe scissors on paper, yarn and felt, and big blunt plastic or tapestry needles with yarn.

4. **Count the needles.** Even blunt needles are counted out and back in at every session, into a pincushion or a little tin, never the mouth, the clothes or the carpet. Keep needles, buttons, beads and loose yarn away from babies, toddlers and pets: small things can be swallowed, and long yarn is never for necks or play wrapping.
5. **Story, then looking, then making.** The core ideas are written in very short sentences for reading aloud. Read a paragraph, then let the child tell it back. The paragraphs ask the child to touch and look: feel the wool, pull the cotton ball apart, stretch the sock. Let little hands do everything safe.
6. **Picture study.** Each lesson has one painting or old photograph of sheep, spinning, weaving, sewing or home. Look at it quietly together for one or two minutes. Put it away and let the child tell what he or she remembers. Bring it back and play the looking games in the lesson.
7. **The sewing notebook.** Use one scrapbook or a binder with page protectors for the whole year. For every project, the parent writes the date and the child's own words; the child tapes in a yarn or fabric scrap and draws a picture. Make it, keep it, tell about it.
8. **Supplies and cost.** Everything comes from the craft store, the dollar store and the rag bag: yarn, felt, burlap, plastic canvas, cotton balls, big buttons, cardboard boxes, glue, old socks and pillowcases. Read the pattern card a few days ahead and gather what you need. Nothing in this course requires a purchase beyond ordinary craft supplies.
9. **Optional books and tools.** Some units list free pages and simple tools. They are extras. Every project can be made without them.
10. **Unit review and unit challenge.** Each unit ends with a short review of five or six questions, asked out loud with no points: the child may answer by telling, pointing, sorting or showing with his or her hands. Then comes a unit challenge: one real thing made and kept or given, such as a woven mat, a burlap stitching square, a treat bag or a finger-knit scarf. Keep challenge pieces and photographs in a folder for the year.
11. **The family sewing fair.** In the last week the child lays out the year's work with a little card for each piece (a parent writes the words), wears the shepherd costume or the coat of many colors, shows the family how to finger-knit or weave, and gives one piece away with a note.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

UNIT 1 • WEEKS 1–4

Where Cloth Comes From

Where cloth comes from: God made sheep with wool, cotton grows on a plant, silk comes from a little worm, and people make fleece and nylon in factories, with feeling, sorting and twisting projects all along.

- 1.1 God Made Sheep with Wool
- 1.2 Cotton Grows on a Plant
- 1.3 Silk from a Little Worm
- 1.4 Cloth Made in a Factory

UNIT 3 • WEEKS 9–12

Hand Stitching

First hand stitching: lacing cards, the running stitch with a big blunt needle and yarn on burlap, sewing on big buttons, and a whipstitched felt pocket made to give away, like Dorcas made coats.

- 3.1 Lacing Cards
- 3.2 A Big Needle and Yarn
- 3.3 Sew On a Button
- 3.4 Dorcas Made Coats

UNIT 2 • WEEKS 5–8

Fabric Up Close

Fabric up close: over-and-under weaving with paper strips, a yarn coaster on a cardboard loom, the stretchy loops of knit fabric, and why cut edges fray, ending with a woven mat.

- 2.1 Over and Under: Weaving
- 2.2 A Loom of Cardboard
- 2.3 Loops That Stretch: Knit Fabric
- 2.4 Why Edges Fray

UNIT 4 • WEEKS 13–16

Machine Sewing

The sewing machine, watched safely: how the needle and thread work, pins and patterns, a drawstring treat bag the adult sews and the child finishes, and Elias Howe's needle with the eye at the point.

- 4.1 How a Sewing Machine Works
- 4.2 Pins, Clips and Patterns
- 4.3 A Simple Bag
- 4.4 Elias Howe's Needle

UNIT 5 • WEEKS 17–20

Crochet

First crochet: finger chains, a big hook and chunky yarn, a chain-stitch bookmark with a tassel, and a pom-pom, with lots of counting and giving.

- 5.1 Finger Chains
- 5.2 A Big Hook
- 5.3 Chains into Things
- 5.4 A Pom-Pom

UNIT 7 • WEEKS 25–28

Home Sewing: Pillows, Curtains & Cozy Things

Sewing for home: a stuffed felt pillow whipstitched with yarn, a doll-house curtain like the curtains of the tabernacle, a paper-and-fabric patchwork square, and a cozy no-sew fleece pillow.

- 7.1 A Pillow for My Bed
- 7.2 Curtains in God's House
- 7.3 Patchwork
- 7.4 A Cozy Chair

UNIT 6 • WEEKS 21–24

Knitting

First knitting: finger knitting, a long finger-knit scarf, spool knitting on pegs, and finishing the scarf to give to someone who needs warmth.

- 6.1 Finger Knitting
- 6.2 A Long Finger-Knit Scarf
- 6.3 Spool Knitting
- 6.4 Knitting for Others

UNIT 8 • WEEKS 29–32

Design, Clothing & Costumes

Design, clothing and costumes: stripes, checks and polka dots; God clothing Adam and Eve, with a felt paper-doll wardrobe; a shepherd costume for the Christmas play; and Joseph's coat of many colors at the family sewing fair.

- 8.1 Colors and Patterns
- 8.2 God Gave Coats of Skins
- 8.3 A Shepherd for the Christmas Play
- 8.4 Joseph's Coat of Many Colors and the Sewing Fair

WEEKLY PACING CALENDAR

WEEK	PLAN
1	- Session 1: Lesson 1.1 God Made Sheep with Wool: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study - Session 2: Lesson 1.1 sewing project and sewing notebook <i>Two sessions a week is the usual rhythm: one to learn, one to sew. Younger children can split a long session in two. Leave the project out where it can be picked up again during the week.</i>

WEEK	PLAN
2	• Session 1: Lesson 1.2 Cotton Grows on a Plant: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 1.2 sewing project and sewing notebook
3	• Session 1: Lesson 1.3 Silk from a Little Worm: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 1.3 sewing project and sewing notebook
4	• Session 1: Lesson 1.4 Cloth Made in a Factory: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 1.4 sewing project and sewing notebook • Session 3: Unit 1 review and unit challenge
5	• Session 1: Lesson 2.1 Over and Under: Weaving: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 2.1 sewing project and sewing notebook
6	• Session 1: Lesson 2.2 A Loom of Cardboard: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 2.2 sewing project and sewing notebook
7	• Session 1: Lesson 2.3 Loops That Stretch: Knit Fabric: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 2.3 sewing project and sewing notebook
8	• Session 1: Lesson 2.4 Why Edges Fray: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 2.4 sewing project and sewing notebook • Session 3: Unit 2 review and unit challenge
9	• Session 1: Lesson 3.1 Lacing Cards: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 3.1 sewing project and sewing notebook
10	• Session 1: Lesson 3.2 A Big Needle and Yarn: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 3.2 sewing project and sewing notebook
11	• Session 1: Lesson 3.3 Sew On a Button: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 3.3 sewing project and sewing notebook
12	• Session 1: Lesson 3.4 Dorcas Made Coats: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 3.4 sewing project and sewing notebook • Session 3: Unit 3 review and unit challenge

WEEK	PLAN
13	• Session 1: Lesson 4.1 How a Sewing Machine Works: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 4.1 sewing project and sewing notebook
14	• Session 1: Lesson 4.2 Pins, Clips and Patterns: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 4.2 sewing project and sewing notebook
15	• Session 1: Lesson 4.3 A Simple Bag: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 4.3 sewing project and sewing notebook
16	• Session 1: Lesson 4.4 Elias Howe's Needle: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 4.4 sewing project and sewing notebook • Session 3: Unit 4 review and unit challenge
17	• Session 1: Lesson 5.1 Finger Chains: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 5.1 sewing project and sewing notebook
18	• Session 1: Lesson 5.2 A Big Hook: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 5.2 sewing project and sewing notebook
19	• Session 1: Lesson 5.3 Chains into Things: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 5.3 sewing project and sewing notebook
20	• Session 1: Lesson 5.4 A Pom-Pom: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 5.4 sewing project and sewing notebook • Session 3: Unit 5 review and unit challenge
21	• Session 1: Lesson 6.1 Finger Knitting: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 6.1 sewing project and sewing notebook
22	• Session 1: Lesson 6.2 A Long Finger-Knit Scarf: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 6.2 sewing project and sewing notebook
23	• Session 1: Lesson 6.3 Spool Knitting: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 6.3 sewing project and sewing notebook
24	• Session 1: Lesson 6.4 Knitting for Others: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 6.4 sewing project and sewing notebook

WEEK	PLAN
	Session 3: Unit 6 review and unit challenge
25	- Session 1: Lesson 7.1 A Pillow for My Bed: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study - Session 2: Lesson 7.1 sewing project and sewing notebook
26	- Session 1: Lesson 7.2 Curtains in God's House: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study - Session 2: Lesson 7.2 sewing project and sewing notebook
27	- Session 1: Lesson 7.3 Patchwork: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study - Session 2: Lesson 7.3 sewing project and sewing notebook
28	- Session 1: Lesson 7.4 A Cozy Chair: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study - Session 2: Lesson 7.4 sewing project and sewing notebook - Session 3: Unit 7 review and unit challenge
29	- Session 1: Lesson 8.1 Colors and Patterns: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study - Session 2: Lesson 8.1 sewing project and sewing notebook
30	- Session 1: Lesson 8.2 God Gave Coats of Skins: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study - Session 2: Lesson 8.2 sewing project and sewing notebook
31	- Session 1: Lesson 8.3 A Shepherd for the Christmas Play: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study - Session 2: Lesson 8.3 sewing project and sewing notebook
32	- Session 1: Lesson 8.4 Joseph's Coat of Many Colors and the Sewing Fair: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study - Session 2: Lesson 8.4 sewing project and sewing notebook - Session 3: Unit 8 review and unit challenge <i>Last week. Hold a family sewing fair: the student sets out the year's finished pieces with a card for each, shows how to do one skill, shows the sewing notebook, and gives one piece away as a gift.</i>

MATERIALS

Sewing notebook (a scrapbook or a binder with page protectors)

One for the whole year: yarn and fabric scraps taped in, drawings, and the child's words written down by a parent. Clear tape or a glue stick.

Big blunt needles and a pincushion

Large plastic children's needles and big blunt steel tapestry needles (size 13–18), kept in a pincushion or a little tin for the needle count. No sharp needles at this level.

Child-safe scissors and adult fabric shears

Child-safe scissors for paper, yarn and felt. The adult's sharp shears cut all woven fabric, and they live out of the child's reach.

Yarn, chunky yarn and cotton balls

Worsted and chunky (bulky) yarn in happy colors for lacing, weaving, finger chains and finger knitting; a bag of cotton balls for pulling, twisting and gluing.

Felt, burlap and plastic canvas

Craft felt sheets in many colors; a half yard of burlap (its big open weave is perfect for yarn stitching); a few sheets of 7-count plastic canvas.

Cardboard, paper and glue

Cereal boxes and shipping cardboard for looms, lacing cards and pom-pom makers; construction paper; white glue, a glue stick and fabric glue (the adult handles fabric glue and any hot glue).

Big buttons, sewing clips and a shoelace

A jar of big two-hole and four-hole buttons (kept away from little brothers and sisters), plastic sewing clips instead of pins, and a long shoelace for lacing cards.

The rag bag

Old socks, T-shirts, a worn-out sweater, a pillowcase and an old sheet: for feeling, sorting, stretching, and the shepherd costume in Unit 8.

A big crochet hook and a knitting spool

A jumbo crochet hook (N / 9 mm or bigger) for Unit 5. A knitting spool or peg loom for Unit 6, or make one from a cardboard tube and craft sticks.

A sewing machine (Unit 4 only, run by the adult)

Any working home machine. The adult threads it, runs it and keeps the child's hands away; the child watches, chooses fabric and pushes the finished piece along the table. Borrowing one is fine.

GRADING

There are no letter grades in Threads & Weaving. A five- to eight-year-old is learning to love making things with his or her hands, to be safe, and to give. The parent watches three things: Did the child work carefully and happily? Did the child follow the safety

habits, especially the needle count? Is there something real to show, keep or give at the end of each unit?

Scale: No letter grades at this level. The unit reviews are conversations, not tests: every question is answered out loud, by pointing, sorting or showing, and there are no points.

- Keep a project box or shelf where the year's woven mats, stitched squares, pockets, scarves and pillows live until the sewing fair.
- Write one or two sentences of narrative feedback at the end of each unit: what the child made, what the child's hands learned, one habit to keep working on.
- Praise effort, care and kindness, not perfection. Crooked stitches that were made carefully and counted back in are a success.
- If a project flops, let the child watch you laugh gently at your own crooked seams, then make it again together another day.
- Never compare one child's work (or body, in the costume unit) with another's. Measurements, where they appear, are for fit only.

A NOTE TO PARENTS

You do not need to know how to sew to teach this course. Read the story aloud, watch the short video together, and then sit beside your child as the hands of the operation: you cut the fabric, thread the first needle and tie the first knot, and your child does everything safe in between. Ask “What do you think will happen?” and “Show me how you did that,” and you will have done most of what a good teacher does.

At this age the goal is small and happy: fingers that can lace, weave, tie and stitch; eyes that can tell wool from cotton by feel; a habit of counting needles back in; and a heart that likes to make things for other people. Everything else, sharp needles, the iron, the machine, comes in the older courses. If your child begs to sew “like you” on the machine, let him or her sit on your lap and watch, choose the fabric and press the finished seam flat with a bare hand once it is cool; the pedal stays under your foot.

Many projects in this course are made to be given: a felt pocket, a treat bag, a pom-pom garland, a finger-knit scarf, the sewing-fair gift. Cloth is a quiet way to love people, and little children understand giving better than almost anyone. We hope the year fills your house with yarn ends, happy mess and gifts.

WHERE CLOTH COMES FROM

Everything you are wearing came from somewhere. This unit follows cloth back to its beginnings: the sheep in the field, the cotton plant in the sun, the little silkworm on its mulberry leaf, and the big factories where people make fleece and nylon out of tiny plastic beads. Each week you will touch, sort, pull apart and twist real fibers with your own fingers.

God made the sheep with its woolly coat and the cotton plant with its fluffy seeds, and He gave people clever minds to spin, weave and even invent brand-new threads. By the end of the unit you will be able to feel a sock or a sweater and make a good guess: did this come from an animal, a plant, or a factory?

PREREQUISITES

- Can listen to a short story read aloud
- Can use child-safe scissors on paper with help
- Knows that needles and scissors are tools, not toys

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can tell that wool comes from sheep and that shearing is like a haircut.
- ☐ I can tell that cotton grows on a plant, in a fluffy boll full of seeds.
- ☐ I can tell that silk comes from the silkworm's cocoon, one long thread.
- ☐ I can tell that people make fleece and nylon in factories from tiny plastic beads.
- ☐ I can feel wool, cotton and fleece and tell which is which with my eyes shut.

OPTIONAL BOOKS AND TOOLS FOR THIS UNIT

- **A feel-and-sort basket:** A basket or shoebox with a wool sock or mitten, a cotton T-shirt scrap, a polyester fleece scrap, cotton balls and a bit of yarn. You will use it all through this unit. A clean pillowcase makes a good mystery bag.
- ***Charlie Needs a Cloak* by Tomie dePaola:** A picture book about a shepherd who shears his sheep, cards and spins the wool, dyes it, weaves it and sews himself a new red cloak. Most libraries have it. Lovely to read with Lesson 1.1.
- **A bag of craft pom-poms and wiggle eyes:** Inexpensive at any craft store. Handy for the felt caterpillar in Lesson 1.3 and for crafts all year. Keep tiny pieces away from babies and pets.

Not required. Every project in this unit works with ordinary fabric-store supplies. School Launch has no ties to these authors, publishers or companies.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

1.1 God Made Sheep with Wool	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
1.2 Cotton Grows on a Plant	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
1.3 Silk from a Little Worm	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
1.4 Cloth Made in a Factory	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes

1.1 GOD MADE SHEEP WITH WOOL

OBJECTIVES

- Tell that wool grows on sheep and that the shepherd shears it off about once a year, like a haircut that does not hurt.
- Feel wool and tell two things about it: it is warm, and it is springy.
- Sort wool, cotton and fleece by touch.

Warm-up. Play a touch game. A parent puts a wool sock or mitten, a cotton T-shirt and a fleece jacket on the table. Close your eyes and feel each one. Which feels warmest? Which feels smoothest? Which would you want on a snowy day?

WATCH

Wool from Sheep with George the Farmer

George the Farmer · 6:02

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PuPSZY2PHfQ>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch the shearing part twice. See how the fleece comes off in one big soft piece.

Note: A visit to a real Australian sheep farm and a wool mill. The shearers work hard and fast; shearing does not hurt the sheep.

BACKUP VIDEO

Wool: From Sheep to Yarn | MD F&H

Maryland Farm & Harvest · 5:18

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjPwTeFCAjo>

A visit to a shepherd named Lisa and her small wool mill. Watch the carding machine turn tangled wool into a soft cloud.

KEY TERMS

wool

The soft, warm coat that grows on a sheep.

fleece

All the wool from one sheep, shorn off in one big piece.

shearing

Giving the sheep its once-a-year haircut with special clippers. It does not hurt.

shepherd

The person who takes care of sheep, finds them grass and water, and keeps them safe.

CORE IDEAS

The story. A sheep wears a coat all year. The coat is called wool. It grows and grows, just like your hair. Once a year the shepherd gives the sheep a haircut. That haircut is called shearing. The clippers buzz, and the whole coat comes off in one big, soft piece called a fleece. One fleece can weigh as much as two bags of flour. The sheep feels light and cool, and the wool starts growing right back. Shearing does not hurt, any more than your haircut hurts you.

Look closely. Pull a little tuft of wool, or look at a wool sock. Wool is not straight. Every little hair has tiny waves in it, like crimped paper. Squeeze the wool, then let go. It springs back! Those waves trap little pockets of air next to the sheep, and the air holds in warmth. That is why wool keeps the sheep warm on cold hills, and why a wool hat keeps you warm too. Wool even stays warm when it gets damp.

What is happening? God made sheep with wool, and He made people clever enough to use it. The Bible is full of sheep and shepherds. A shepherd boy who grew up to be a king watched his father's sheep, and he wrote, "The LORD is my shepherd." A good shepherd knows every sheep, leads it to grass and water, and keeps it safe. The shepherd takes care of the sheep, and the sheep's wool takes care of the shepherd's family, as warm socks, hats, blankets and coats.

Let's make it! Today you will play the feel-and-sort game with wool, cotton and fleece, and then make a woolly lamb picture with cotton balls. While you glue on your lamb's fluffy coat, think about the real fleece you saw come off the sheep in one piece.

PICTURE STUDY



Shepherdess with Her Flock, Jean-François Millet, about 1863 · Oil on canvas · Musée d'Orsay, Paris

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Jean-François Millet was a French painter who grew up on a farm and loved to paint the people who worked the land. Here a shepherdess stands with her flock at the end of the day. Look at her hands: while the sheep eat, she is knitting, probably with wool from these very sheep.

Look closely

- Count the sheep. Are there more than you can count? What are they all doing?
- Find the shepherdess's hands. She is knitting while she watches. What might she be making?
- Find the little dog. What is his job?
- Look at the shepherdess's warm cloak. Where do you think the wool for it came from?

Talk about it

1. Why do the sheep need a shepherd?

2. The shepherdess is working with her hands even while she stands still. What quiet handwork could you do while you wait?
3. What do you think the field smells and sounds like?

Safety first. A parent or responsible adult supervises all sewing-tool use in this course, and any needles are counted out and back in at the end of every session. Today uses only hands, glue and cotton balls. Keep cotton balls and small craft pieces away from babies, toddlers and pets.

SEWING PROJECT

Feel-and-Sort, and a Woolly Lamb Picture

First your fingers learn the difference between wool, cotton and fleece. Then you give a little lamb the fluffiest coat in the house, one cotton ball at a time.

You will need

- The feel-and-sort basket: a wool sock or mitten, a cotton T-shirt scrap, a polyester fleece scrap
- A pillowcase for a mystery bag
- White glue or a glue stick
- Crayons or markers

WOOLLY LAMB PICTURE

Finished size: one 9 × 12 in (23 × 30 cm) picture · About 25 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 sheet of blue or green construction paper, 9 × 12 in
- About 15 cotton balls
- 1 small piece of black or brown paper for the lamb's face and legs (an adult or the child cuts simple shapes)
- White glue or a glue stick
- A green crayon for grass and a yellow crayon for the sun

How to make it

1. Draw a big, simple lamb body on the paper, like a cloud with a head.
2. Cut the face and four little legs from the dark paper with child-safe scissors. A parent helps with small shapes.
3. Glue on the face and legs.
4. Spread glue inside the lamb's body, one patch at a time.
5. Gently pull each cotton ball a little so it gets fluffy, then press it on. Fill the whole body.
6. Draw grass under the lamb and a sun in the sky.
7. Let it dry flat. Write (or have a parent write) 'Wool comes from sheep' at the bottom.

Fabric check: Cotton balls are easiest to glue, even though real sheep wool would be more true to life! If you have a bit of real wool roving, use it for part of the coat and feel the difference. If anyone in the family is sensitive to wool, just enjoy the cotton.

Steps

1. **Feel first.** Put the wool, the cotton scrap and the fleece scrap in the pillowcase. Reach in without looking. Can you find the wool just by feel? How did you know?
2. **Sort.** Make two spots on the table: 'from an animal' and 'not from an animal.' Put each thing where it belongs. A parent checks the labels inside the clothes with you.
3. Make the woolly lamb picture from the pattern card.
4. **Tell it back.** Show your lamb to someone and tell them: where wool comes from, what shearing is, and whether it hurts the sheep.
5. **Clean up.** Put lids on the glue, sweep cotton wisps into the trash, and put the feel-and-sort basket away for next week.

Tips

- Pull the cotton balls into looser puffs for a shaggier sheep.
- Younger children: a parent draws the lamb outline first.
- Older children: add a shepherd with a crook, and a fence, and write the word 'wool' yourself.

Check your work

- ☐ I can find the wool in the mystery bag with my eyes shut.
- ☐ I can tell what shearing is and that it does not hurt.
- ☐ My lamb has a full, fluffy coat and a title at the bottom.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape a little tuft of cotton ball (or real wool) onto a page. A parent writes the child's words: 'This is how wool feels: ...'
2. Draw a sheep with a big coat and the same sheep after shearing, with a happy face on both.
3. Draw the shepherd's crook and the little dog from the picture study.

From history. Shepherds have watched sheep for thousands of years, since Bible times. Long ago, before clippers, people sheared sheep with big iron scissors called blade shears, and some shearers still use them today.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Thinking shearing hurts the sheep. It is a haircut; the sheep feels cool and light afterward.
- Thinking wool is cut off and the sheep stays bare. The wool grows back all year, just like your hair.
- Gluing cotton balls on flat. Fluff each one first so the lamb looks woolly.

Make it a game • Lost Sheep Round-Up. Your parent hides ten cotton balls around the room while you hide your eyes. You are the shepherd! Gather every 'sheep' into a bowl (the fold) before the timer runs out. Count them in like a good shepherd. Then close your eyes, feel the wool sock and the cotton ball, and say which is which.

Scripture. "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want." (Psalm 23:1, KJV)

A shepherd who once watched sheep in the field wrote this song. The Lord cares for us the way a good shepherd cares for every sheep.

1.2 COTTON GROWS ON A PLANT

OBJECTIVES

- Tell that cotton grows on a plant, in a fluffy boll with seeds inside.
- Pull a cotton ball apart and see that it is made of many tiny fibers.
- Twist cotton fibers with your fingers and see them start to become a thread.

Warm-up. Go on a cotton hunt with a parent. Look at the little labels inside three shirts. Can you find the word ‘cotton’? How many of your clothes have it? Feel each one. Cotton feels soft and cool.

WATCH

Cotton with George the Farmer

George the Farmer • 6:10

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyzEjyHBlqc>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch for the moment the boll cracks open and the white fluff puffs out.

Note: A visit to a real cotton farm at picking time. The big green machine picks the cotton so no one has to pull each boll by hand.

BACKUP VIDEO

How Cotton is Processed in Factories | How It’s Made

Science Channel • 5:11

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QHgNoSYlhYs>

Watch the machines clean the cotton and comb it smooth. There are no people talking, just machines working; a parent can tell what is happening.

KEY TERMS

cotton

A soft, fluffy fiber that grows on the cotton plant, around its seeds.

boll

The round pod on a cotton plant that cracks open when the cotton inside is ripe and fluffy.

fiber

One tiny hair-like thread. Cloth is made of millions of fibers.

thread

Fibers twisted together so they hold on to each other and become strong.

CORE IDEAS

The story. Cotton does not come from an animal. It grows on a plant! The cotton plant grows in warm, sunny fields. First it makes a flower. When the flower falls away, a little green pod grows. The pod is called a boll. Inside, soft white fluff grows around the seeds, packed in tight. One day the boll cracks open, and the fluff puffs out like popcorn. The field turns white, like snow in summer. Then it is picking time. Long ago, people picked every boll by hand, stooping all day in the sun. It was very hard, slow work. Today a big machine rolls down the rows and picks the cotton fast.

Look closely. Hold a cotton ball. Now pull it slowly apart. It does not snap. It stretches out into a soft cloud, and the cloud is made of tiny, tiny hairs. Those hairs are fibers. One fiber alone is weak. You could break it with a puff of breath. But here is the secret people learned long, long ago: twist the fibers together, and they hold on to each other. Twisted fibers make a thread, and thread is strong.

What is happening? Why does the cotton plant make fluff at all? The fluff belongs to the seeds. When the boll cracks open in the wild, the wind can catch the fluffy hairs and carry the seeds away to grow new plants. God packed each boll like a tiny treasure box: seeds for next year's plants, wrapped in the softest fiber in the field. People use that same fluff for T-shirts, towels, socks and sheets, because cotton is soft, cool and easy to wash.

Let's make it! Today you will be a tiny cotton mill. You will pull cotton balls apart, twist a real thread with your own fingers, and then glue a cotton-ball snowman card for someone you love.

PICTURE STUDY



The Cotton Pickers, Winslow Homer, 1876 · Oil on canvas · Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Winslow Homer was one of America's great painters. Here he painted two young women picking cotton in a wide field after the time of the Civil War. The field is full of open bolls. Picking cotton by hand was very hard, tiring work, stooping and reaching all day long. Homer painted the pickers tall and strong, with the whole sky behind them.

Look closely

- Find the open cotton bolls all around them. What does the field look like it is covered with?
- Find the basket and the long sack. Why do pickers need something big to carry?
- Look at their faces. Do they look rested or tired? What might they be thinking about?
- Look at the light. Is it morning or night? How can you tell?

Talk about it

1. Would you rather pick a whole field by hand or have a machine help? Why?

2. The painter made these hard workers look strong and important. Why is it good to honor people who do hard work?
3. How many cotton things are you wearing right now?

Safety first. Today uses only hands, cotton balls, paper and glue. Keep cotton balls and seeds (if you have real cotton) away from little brothers and sisters and pets. Wash sticky hands when you finish.

SEWING PROJECT

Pull It, Twist It, and a Snowman Card

First your fingers find the tiny fibers hiding inside a cotton ball, and twist them into your very first thread. Then the cotton becomes a snowman on a card to give away.

You will need

- A bag of cotton balls
- White glue or a glue stick
- Crayons or markers
- Child-safe scissors

COTTON-BALL SNOWMAN CARD

Finished size: one folded card, 5 × 7 in (13 × 18 cm) · About 25 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 sheet of blue or purple construction paper, folded in half to make a card
- 6 to 8 cotton balls
- Small paper scraps: orange for a carrot nose, black or brown for hat and buttons
- White glue
- Crayons for a scarf, snowflakes and the message inside

How to make it

1. Fold the paper in half to make a card. Press the fold flat with your hand.
2. Draw three circles on the front: small, medium, big, like a snowman.

3. Spread glue in the bottom circle. Press on cotton balls until it is full and fluffy.
4. Fill the middle circle, then the head the same way.
5. Cut a tiny carrot nose and a hat from the paper scraps. A parent helps with tiny pieces. Glue them on.
6. Draw a bright scarf on the snowman. You know about warm clothes now! Draw snowflakes all around.
7. Inside, a parent writes your message, or you write your name. Give the card to someone this week.

Fabric check: Cotton balls from the bag are perfect. If you grew or found a real cotton boll, let the child feel it and find the seeds, but keep seeds away from little ones. Glue sticks are tidier; white glue holds fluffy cotton better.

Steps

1. **Pull it.** Pull one cotton ball apart very slowly. Hold a wisp up to the window. Can you see the tiny fibers? Blow gently. What happens?
2. **Twist it.** Take a thin wisp and roll it between your finger and thumb, always the same way. Keep feeding in more fluff and keep twisting. Look: you are making a thread! Pull gently on your thread. Is it stronger than the loose fluff?
3. **Test it.** Have a parent hold one end of your thread while you hold the other. Pull a little. Does it hold? Now try pulling a loose, untwisted wisp the same way. Which is stronger?
4. Make the snowman card from the pattern card.
5. **Tell it back.** Tell someone: where cotton grows, what is hiding inside the fluff, and what twisting does.
6. **Clean up.** Sweep every wisp into the trash and put the glue away. Decide together who gets the card.

Tips

- Twist with slightly damp fingers; the fibers grip better.
- Younger children: a parent starts the thread and the child keeps it twisting.
- Older children: tape your finger-spun thread into the notebook and label it 'I spun this myself.'

Check your work

- ☐ I pulled a cotton ball into a cloud of tiny fibers.
- ☐ I twisted fibers into a little thread, and it was stronger than the fluff.
- ☐ My snowman card is ready to give away.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in a loose wisp of cotton and, next to it, the little thread you twisted. A parent labels them 'fluff' and 'thread.'
2. Draw the cotton plant's story in three pictures: flower, green boll, open fluffy boll.
3. Draw the big picking machine, or the pickers from the painting, filling their baskets.

From history. Inside every real cotton boll there are seeds tangled in the fluff. Long ago, pulling the seeds out by hand took a whole evening by the fire for just a little basket of cotton. Later, machines called gins began to do that job, and cotton cloth became something almost every family could afford.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Twisting one way, then the other. The thread falls apart. Always twist the same direction.
- Thinking cotton comes from a sheep or another animal. Cotton grows on a plant, around its seeds.
- Using a huge glob of glue for each cotton ball. A small dot holds just fine and dries faster.

Make it a game • Seeds in the Snow. Your parent pulls two cotton balls into loose puffs and hides five dried beans inside each one. You get one puff, your parent gets the other. Ready, set, pick out the seeds with your fingers! Who finishes first? Real cotton is full of seeds just like this. Play again and beat your own time.

Scripture. "She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands." (Proverbs 31:13, KJV)

The good woman in Proverbs gathers fibers and works with her hands, gladly. Your hands did real fiber work today.

1.3 SILK FROM A LITTLE WORM

OBJECTIVES

- Tell that silk comes from the cocoon of the silkworm.
- Tell that a cocoon is spun from one very long thread.
- Wind a long yarn 'cocoon' and unwind it without breaking it.

Warm-up. Feel game: a parent gathers something silky (a scarf, a necktie or a blouse), something woolly and something cotton. Close your eyes and feel. The silky one is smooth and cool and slides under your fingers. Which would a king or queen choose for a feast day?

WATCH

Silkworm lifecycle: worm to cocoon

Jonathan L · 4:31

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvLghveYDIk>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch the little worms grow fat on mulberry leaves, then watch them begin to spin their cocoons near the end.

Note: Real footage of silkworms raised at home in a box, from tiny worms to finished cocoons, set to music with no talking. A parent can say what is happening. (The video stops at the cocoon; nothing sad is shown.)

BACKUP VIDEO

Invention Of Silk | The Dr. Binocs Show | Best Learning Video for Kids | Preschool Learning

Peekaboo Kidz · 5:26

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-w5rVTBs4E>

A cartoon that also tells the old, old story from China about the empress who found the first silk thread. Parts of that story are legend, a tale told for thousands of years.

KEY TERMS

silkworm

A little caterpillar that eats mulberry leaves and spins silk.

cocoon

The soft little case the silkworm spins around itself, made of one very long silk thread.

silk

The smooth, shiny thread unwound from cocoons and woven into shiny cloth.

mulberry

The tree whose leaves are the silkworm's favorite (and almost only) food.

CORE IDEAS

The story. The finest, shiniest thread in the world comes from a little worm. The silkworm hatches from a tiny egg, no bigger than a dot. It eats mulberry leaves, and eats, and eats, and grows. Then one day it stops eating. It lifts its head and begins to spin. Out of its mouth comes a thin, shiny thread, and the silkworm wraps it round and round itself until it is hidden inside a soft white case called a cocoon. People in China learned long, long ago, thousands of years, to unwind that thread and weave it into silk cloth for kings and queens. An old, old story says an empress found the secret when a cocoon dropped into her tea and began to unwind. That story is a legend, a tale so old no one can check it, but the silk is real.

Look closely. Here is the amazing part: the cocoon is not made of many short threads. It is one single thread, wound round and round and round. If you could unwind one cocoon all the way, the thread could stretch about a thousand yards. That is as long as ten football fields! One little worm, one long thread.

What is happening? Why does the silkworm spin? The cocoon is its little room. Inside, the caterpillar slowly changes, and one day it comes out as a soft white moth. The moth lays tiny eggs, and the story starts over: egg, caterpillar, cocoon, moth. God built this whole little circle of life into one small creature, and tucked a treasure, the longest, shiniest thread in the world, inside its cocoon.

Let's make it! Today you will wind a yarn cocoon and race to unwind it without breaking the thread, just like a silk worker. Then you will make a fuzzy felt caterpillar to keep on your shelf while you remember where silk comes from.

PICTURE STUDY



Court Ladies Preparing Newly Woven Silk, Attributed to Emperor Huizong of Song, after a Tang dynasty painting, early 1100s · Ink, color and gold on a silk handscroll · Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

This picture was painted in China about nine hundred years ago, and it is painted on silk! It shows ladies of the emperor's court finishing a new piece of silk cloth. They hold it stretched tight while one lady smooths it with a pan of warm coals, an iron from long ago. Find the little girl in pink who is too small to help. What is she doing?

Look closely

- Find the long white silk they are holding. Why do they pull it tight?
- Find the lady with the long-handled pan. It holds warm coals for smoothing the cloth, like an iron. Who does the ironing at your house?
- Find the little girl in pink. What is she doing under the silk?
- Look at the ladies' own dresses. What do you think they are made of?

Talk about it

1. This painting is on silk, and it shows silk being made smooth. How many silkworms do you think worked for one piece of cloth like that?

2. Ironing was a two-or-three-person job then. What jobs at your house need more than one person?
3. Would you rather be the lady with the iron or the little girl playing? Why?

Safety first. Today uses yarn, felt, child-safe scissors and glue. Never wrap yarn around your neck, your fingers until they hurt, or a brother or sister; long yarn is for winding cocoons only. Keep small craft pieces away from babies and pets.

SEWING PROJECT

The Cocoon Game and a Felt Caterpillar

A silk worker's whole job was to unwind a cocoon without breaking its one long thread. You will try it with yarn, and then make the hungry little caterpillar that starts the whole silk story.

You will need

- A ball of smooth yarn
- A large spoon or a short cardboard tube to wind around
- Child-safe scissors
- White glue or fabric glue (a parent handles fabric glue)

FUZZY FELT CATERPILLAR

Finished size: one caterpillar, about 6 in (15 cm) long · About 25 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 strip of green felt, about 2 × 6 in (5 × 15 cm), cut with child-safe scissors
- 5 or 6 craft pom-poms, or 5 or 6 cotton balls colored with a marker
- 2 wiggle eyes or 2 tiny paper circles
- 1 small leaf shape cut from another piece of green felt
- White glue

How to make it

1. Cut the felt strip and the leaf shape. Felt is easy to cut; a parent helps round the corners.

2. Glue the pom-poms in a line down the felt strip, touching each other, like a caterpillar's body.
3. Glue the eyes on the first pom-pom. Now it has a face!
4. Glue the little felt leaf under its chin, so your silkworm has its mulberry lunch.
5. Let it dry while you play the cocoon game.
6. When it is dry, set your caterpillar on the shelf and tell it: 'One day you will spin one long, long thread.'

Fabric check: Craft felt and pom-poms come in every color; real silkworms are creamy white and love only mulberry leaves, so a white caterpillar with a green leaf is the most true to life. Any colors you love are fine too.

Steps

1. **Wind a cocoon.** Hold the spoon (that is your 'silkworm'). Wind yarn around and around it, neatly, maybe fifty times, until it is hidden in a fat yarn cocoon. Do not cut the yarn from the ball yet; a parent cuts one long piece first, about as long as the room.
2. **The unwinding race.** Now trade cocoons with your parent, or unwind your own: find the loose end and unwind it all the way without breaking or tangling. Slow and gentle wins. Real silk workers unwound thread much finer than a hair!
3. **How long is it?** Stretch your unwound yarn across the floor. Walk beside it heel-to-toe and count your steps. A real cocoon's thread would go out the door and down the whole street.
4. Make the felt caterpillar from the pattern card.
5. **Tell it back.** Tell someone the silkworm's circle: egg, caterpillar, cocoon, moth, and what people unwind from the cocoon.
6. **Clean up.** Wind leftover yarn back into the ball. Yarn on the floor is a trap for toes and for the cat.

Tips

- Winding around a spoon is easier than around fingers, and nothing gets squeezed.
- Younger children: wind a shorter thread, about as long as the table.

- Older children: time your unwinding, then wind it again neater and beat your time.

Check your work

- ☐ I wound a yarn cocoon and unwound it without breaking the thread.
- ☐ I can say the silkworm's circle: egg, caterpillar, cocoon, moth.
- ☐ My felt caterpillar has its mulberry leaf.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Draw the silkworm's circle in four little pictures: egg, caterpillar, cocoon, moth. A parent labels them.
2. Tape in a short piece of your 'cocoon' yarn and tell a parent how many steps long the whole thread was.
3. Draw the little girl playing under the silk from the picture study.

From history. For hundreds and hundreds of years, China kept the secret of silk. Traders carried silk cloth on camels and horses along a long, dusty road all the way to other lands, and that road is still called the Silk Road.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Winding the yarn over the loose end so you cannot find it later. Keep the end sticking out like a little tail.
- Yanking the thread fast when unwinding. It tangles or snaps. Gentle and slow, like a real silk worker.
- Thinking the cocoon is made of lots of short threads. It is one long, long thread, wound round and round.

Make it a game • Mulberry Nibbler. You are the silkworm. Your parent calls the stages in order: 'Egg!' (curl up small), 'Caterpillar!' (crawl and pretend to nibble leaves), 'Cocoon!' (wrap your arms around yourself and hold still), 'Moth!' (flap gently around the room). Then call the stages out of order, faster and faster. Anyone who does the wrong move starts over as the egg.

1.4 CLOTH MADE IN A FACTORY

OBJECTIVES

- Tell that people make some fibers, like nylon and fleece, in factories from tiny plastic beads.
- Tell one thing factory-made cloth does well and one thing natural cloth does well.
- Sort socks and shirts into ‘grown’ and ‘made by people’ using the labels with a parent.

Warm-up. Bring a fleece jacket or blanket to the table. Feel it. It is soft like wool, but look close with a magnifying glass: no little waves, no crimp. A sheep did not grow this. Who made it, then?

WATCH

Polyester Yarn Manufacturing Process

Textile Vlog • 4:12

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNdsOraykNI>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Look for the tiny white plastic beads at the start, the hot machine that melts them, and the shiny new thread winding onto big spools.

Note: A short factory video with music and captions. The first minute shows a chemistry drawing that is for grown-ups; skip ahead to the beads if you like. (The description mentions alcohol in its chemistry sense: polyester is made from chemicals, not from anything you drink.)

KEY TERMS

factory

A big building full of machines where people make things, like thread, cloth and socks.

nylon

A very strong fiber people make in factories. It is in backpacks, jackets and tents.

fleece

Here: a soft, warm cloth people make from plastic. (The wool off one sheep is also called a fleece. One word, two meanings!)

polyester

A people-made fiber that is strong, dries fast and does not wrinkle much.

CORE IDEAS

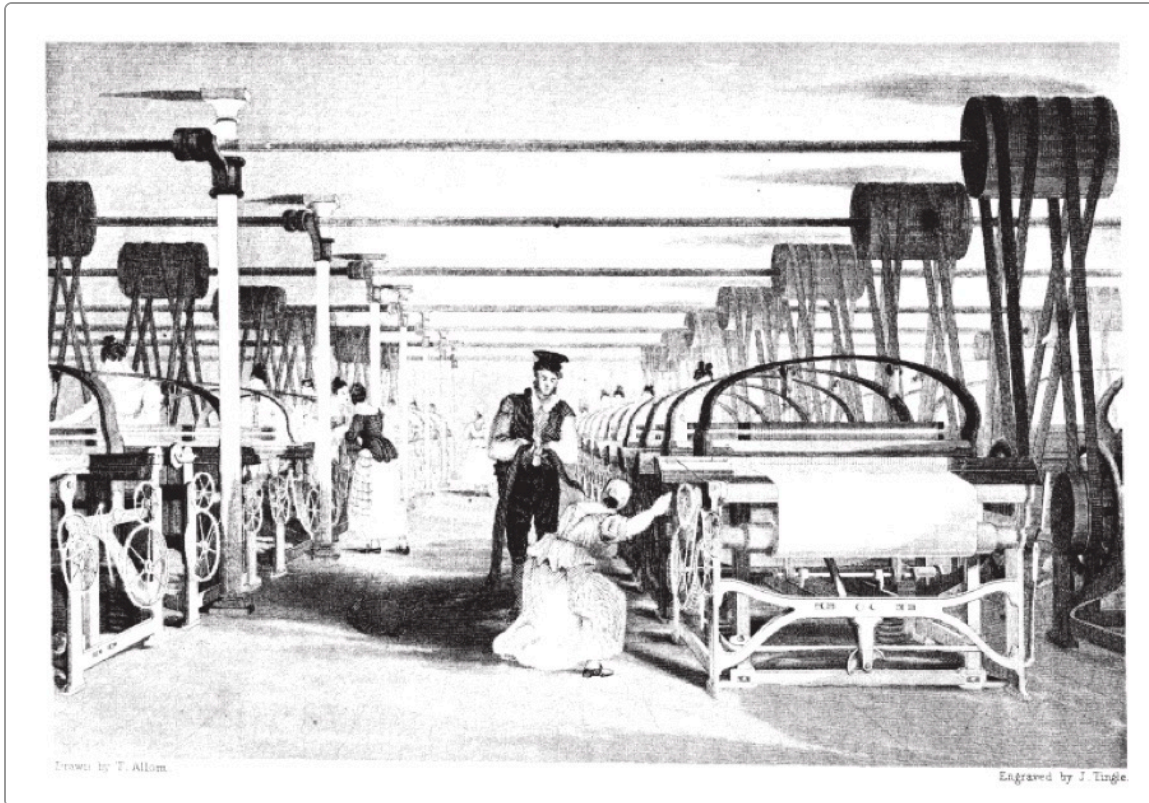
The story. Wool grows on sheep. Cotton grows on plants. Silk comes from a worm. But feel a fleece blanket or a nylon backpack. No animal grew that, and no plant either. People made it! Not very long ago, about the time your great-great-grandparents were young, scientists in white coats worked for years mixing and testing, trying to make a brand-new thread no one had ever seen. And they did it. They learned to melt tiny plastic beads, smaller than rice, and squirt the melted plastic through holes as fine as a shower head. Out came threads thinner than hair, which hardened as they cooled. Nylon! Later came polyester and soft fuzzy fleece.

Look closely. In the factory, the tiny beads pour into the machines like sand. The machines melt them, press the melted plastic through the tiny holes, and wind up the new thread on big spools, miles and miles of it, all day long. Other machines knit or weave the thread into cloth, and cutters and sewers turn the cloth into jackets, socks and backpacks. In the video, watch for the beads, the melting machine and the new thread winding onto spools.

What is happening? Is factory cloth better or worse than wool and cotton? Neither! Each one is good at something. Nylon is very, very strong, good for backpacks that carry heavy books. Fleece is warm, light and quick to dry, and it does not itch. Polyester hardly wrinkles. But cotton feels cooler on a summer day, and wool stays warm even when it is damp. That is why many clothes mix them. People who make clothes pick the right fiber for the job, and now you can too. God gave people clever minds to invent, and inventing new thread is part of the work He made us able to do.

Let's make it! Today you become a fiber detective. You and a parent will raid the sock drawer, read the little labels, and sort the whole pile: grown, or made by people, or a mix of both.

PICTURE STUDY



Weaving Shed with Power Looms, Drawn by Thomas Allom, engraved by James Tingle, for Edward Baines, 1835 · Engraving from *History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain* · Published in London, 1835

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

This picture was made almost two hundred years ago, when cloth factories were brand new and amazing. Before factories, every bit of cloth was woven slowly at home, by hand. Then came rooms like this one: rows and rows of weaving machines called power looms, all running at once, driven by belts from a big engine. One worker could watch over several machines. People came from far away just to see it.

Look closely

- Count the looms. How many weaving machines can you find in this one room?
- Find the belts running down from the ceiling. They bring the turning power to every machine.
- Find the workers. What are they doing while the machines weave?
- Look for the woven cloth rolling out of the nearest loom.

Talk about it

1. One weaver at home made cloth slowly. What changed when one room could run many looms at once?
2. Would you like to work in a room this loud? What would you ask for to protect your ears?
3. The factory in your video is full of machines too. What do the people do in a factory full of machines?

Safety first. Today is a sorting day: socks, shirts and labels. If you use a magnifying glass, it is for looking at cloth, never for the sun. Fold and put away every sock when the sorting is done; a tidy drawer is part of the craft.

SEWING PROJECT

The Great Sock-Drawer Sort

Every piece of clothing wears a tiny secret note: its label. The label tells what the cloth is made of. Today you and a parent will read labels like detectives and sort a whole pile into ‘grown’ and ‘made by people.’

You will need

- A pile of clean socks, shirts and a fleece or nylon something, raided from drawers with permission
- A magnifying glass
- Three big pieces of paper for sorting signs
- Crayons

MY FIBER SORTING CHART

Finished size: one chart page and one sorted drawer · About 30 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 3 signs: a parent writes GROWN with a sheep and a plant drawn on it, MADE BY PEOPLE with a factory drawn on it, and BOTH MIXED
- About 10 socks and 5 shirts or jackets

- 1 notebook page divided into the same three columns
- A crayon for tally marks

How to make it

1. Lay the three signs on the floor, far apart.
2. Pick up one sock. A parent finds the label and reads it aloud: 'cotton'... 'polyester'... 'nylon'... 'wool.'
3. Decide together: grown, made by people, or both mixed? Lay the sock on its sign.
4. Sort the whole pile the same way. Feel each thing as you go. Can your fingers guess before the label tells?
5. Count each pile. Make tally marks in the three columns on your chart page.
6. Circle the winner: does your family wear more grown fiber, more made-by-people fiber, or more mixes?
7. Fold everything and put it back neatly. Detectives leave no mess.

Fabric check: Any clean clothes work. Lots of socks are a mix, like cotton with a little stretchy spandex, because the mix works better than either alone: soft from the cotton, springy from the spandex. 'Both mixed' is a perfectly good answer.

Steps

1. **Guess first.** Before reading each label, squeeze and feel, and make your guess out loud. Then let the label tell the truth. How many did your fingers get right?
2. Sort the pile and fill in the chart from the pattern card.
3. **Look close.** Put the magnifying glass on a fleece scrap and on a wool sock. The wool hairs have little waves; the fleece fuzz does not. Tell a parent which was grown on a sheep.
4. **Tell it back.** Tell someone what tiny plastic beads become in the factory, and name one thing nylon or fleece does really well.
5. **Clean up.** Everything folded, every drawer shut. Tape your chart page into the sewing notebook.

Tips

- No labels in some socks? Sort them by feel and mark them with a question mark on the chart.

- Younger children: sort just socks, and just two piles: grown and made by people.
- Older children: copy one whole label, word for word, into the notebook.

Check your work

- ☐ I sorted the pile with a parent reading the labels.
- ☐ I can name a fiber that people make in factories.
- ☐ I can say one thing factory fiber does well and one thing wool or cotton does well.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in your sorting chart with its tally marks.
2. Draw the factory story: tiny beads, then the melting machine with its tiny holes, then thread winding onto a big spool.
3. Draw your favorite thing made of fleece or nylon and tell a parent why that fiber was the right pick for the job.

From history. When nylon stockings first went on sale, people lined up down the street to buy them, because the new thread was so strong and fine. Soon nylon went into parachutes, ropes, tents and backpacks, and it is still one of the strongest threads people make.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Thinking factory fibers are bad and grown fibers are good, or the other way around. Each one is good at its own job.
- Mixing up the two fleeces: a sheep's fleece is shorn wool; fleece cloth is made by people from plastic. One word, two meanings.
- Dumping the drawer and not putting it back. A fiber detective folds the evidence.

Make it a game • Fiber Detective Dash. Your parent calls out a fiber: 'Wool!' 'Cotton!' 'Made by people!' Run and touch something in the house made of it before the count of ten. The sorting piles from today are home base. Three right touches and you win the magnifying glass crown. Walk, do not run, on the stairs.

UNIT 1 REVIEW

Ask these out loud, cuddled on the couch with the feel-and-sort basket nearby. There are no points and no writing. The child may answer by telling, pointing, sorting or showing with his or her hands. If an answer is fuzzy, look back at the lamb picture, the caterpillar or the sorting chart together.

1. Where does wool come from? Show me with your arms how the shepherd shears the sheep. Does it hurt the sheep?
2. Where does cotton come from? What is hiding inside the fluffy boll?
3. Show me with your fingers how you turned cotton fluff into a thread. Why does twisting make it strong?
4. Tell me the silkworm's circle. What do people unwind from the cocoon?
5. Who makes nylon and fleece, and what do they make it from?
6. Close your eyes. (Hand the child the wool, the cotton and the fleece from the basket, one at a time.) Which is which?

UNIT CHALLENGE: MY TOUCH-AND-TELL FIBER BOX

Make a treasure box of fibers. Find a shoebox and put in four things: something wool, something cotton, something silky and something fleece or nylon (scraps, a sock, a ribbon). A parent helps make a little card for each one with its name and where it comes from: sheep, plant, silkworm, factory.

Then put on a show for the family: family members close their eyes, feel one thing from the box, and guess. The child tells them the answer and one fact about where it came from. Keep the box; you will meet all these fibers again all year.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Four fibers found	The box holds something wool, something cotton, something silky and something factory-made.
Cards made together	Each thing has a card with its name and where it comes from, in the child's words, written by the parent or the child.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
The child can tell it	The child can hold up each piece and say where it comes from without help.
Happy, careful work	The child handled the pieces gently, played the guessing game kindly, and put the box away.

ANSWER KEY

1. Wool grows on sheep. The shepherd shears it off about once a year, like a haircut, and it does not hurt. The fleece comes off in one big piece and the wool grows back.
2. Cotton grows on a plant. The fluff grows in a boll, and seeds are hiding inside the fluff.
3. The child rolls finger and thumb together, twisting. Twisting makes the tiny fibers hold on to each other, so the thread is much stronger than loose fluff.
4. Egg, caterpillar, cocoon, moth. People unwind the cocoon's one very long silk thread and weave it into shiny cloth.
5. People make them in factories, from tiny plastic beads melted and squirted into fine threads.
6. The child names each by feel: the springy warm one is wool, the soft cool one is cotton, the smooth fuzzy one is fleece.

FABRIC UP CLOSE

Now that you know where fibers come from, it is time to look very closely at cloth itself. Some cloth is woven: threads go over and under, over and under, like a basket. Some cloth is knitted: one long thread makes rows of little loops that stretch. This unit you will weave with paper strips and with yarn on a cardboard loom, stretch a sock and a handkerchief to see which one gives, and pull threads out of burlap to find out why cut edges fray.

Weaving is one of the oldest kinds of work in the world. The Bible tells of weavers who made the curtains for God's tabernacle, and of the coat Jesus wore, woven in one piece from the top. When you weave, you are doing the same over-and-under work that weavers have done for thousands of years. By the end of the unit you will weave a mat of your own to use at the table.

PREREQUISITES

- Can tell that cloth is made from fibers twisted into thread (Unit 1)
- Can use child-safe scissors to cut along a straight line on paper, with help
- Knows that the adult cuts woven fabric with the sharp shears

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can weave over and under, and I can point to the warp and the weft.
- ☐ I can weave a little mat on a cardboard loom and push each row down snug.
- ☐ I can show that knit fabric stretches more than woven fabric, and tell why: it is made of loops.
- ☐ I can pull a thread out of burlap and tell why cut edges fray.
- ☐ I can tell one way people stop an edge from fraying: a hem, a row of stitches or a knotted fringe.

OPTIONAL BOOKS AND TOOLS FOR THIS UNIT

- ***Pelle's New Suit* by Elsa Beskow:** A classic Swedish picture book (1912). Little Pelle shears his lamb, and the wool is carded, spun, dyed, woven and sewn into a new suit, with Pelle working for each person who helps him. A lovely bridge between Unit 1 and Unit 2. Most libraries have it.
- **Craft Yarn Council: Standard Yarn Weight System:** Free. A chart of yarn weights from the thinnest (0) to the thickest (7). For the looms in this unit, look for medium worsted yarn, number 4, on the label.
- **A magnifying glass and a bag of big plastic needles:** Inexpensive at any craft or dollar store. The magnifier is for looking at weaves and loops; the big blunt plastic needles carry yarn through a cardboard loom and are used again in Unit 3.

Not required. Every project in this unit works with ordinary fabric-store supplies. School Launch has no ties to these authors, publishers or companies.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

2.1	Over and Under: Weaving	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
2.2	A Loom of Cardboard	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
2.3	Loops That Stretch: Knit Fabric	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
2.4	Why Edges Fray	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes

2.1 OVER AND UNDER: WEAVING

OBJECTIVES

- Tell that woven cloth is made of threads going over and under each other.
- Point to the warp (the threads that run the long way) and the weft (the threads that go across).
- Weave a paper-strip placemat in an over-and-under checkerboard.

Warm-up. Look closely at a dish towel, a pillowcase or a burlap sack with a magnifying glass. Do you see little threads going up and down and other threads going side to side? Trace one thread with your finger. Does it go over, then under, then over again?

WATCH

Simple Paper Weaving

Crazy Art Class · 6:21

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-wJbzJV_Q5c

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch once all the way through. Then get your paper strips ready and watch again, pausing after each strip to weave your own.

Note: A calm art teacher's hands show every step. She cuts the paper with sharp scissors; at home a child uses child-safe scissors on the lines a parent draws, or the parent cuts the slits.

BACKUP VIDEO

Intro to Weaving for Kids (Weaving Part 1)

mrskapitysartroom · 2:10

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ze00r3smVY>

A friendly art teacher explains what weaving is and shows the warp and the weft with her arms and a piece of woven cloth.

KEY TERMS

weaving

Making cloth by sending threads over and under other threads.

warp

The threads that are stretched out first, the long way. They hold still.

weft

The thread that goes across, over and under the warp, row after row.

loom

A frame that holds the warp threads tight so a weaver can weave.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... Long, long ago people learned to weave. They wove grass into mats and baskets. Then they learned to weave thread into cloth. Weavers in Bible times wove linen and wool. A weaver sat at a wooden frame called a loom. The loom held many threads stretched tight, side by side, like the strings of a harp. Then the weaver sent another thread across, over and under, over and under, again and again. Row by row, the cloth grew.

Look closely. The threads stretched tight on the loom are called the warp. They run the long way, and they hold still. The thread that travels across is called the weft. It goes over one warp thread and under the next. On the next row it goes the opposite way: under, then over. That is the secret! Because each row is the opposite of the one before, the threads hug each other and hold together. Look at your dish towel again. You can see the tiny checkerboard.

What is happening? One thread alone is weak and floppy. But woven threads lock together, so the cloth is strong and flat. Pull on the cloth one way, and the warp threads hold. Pull the other way, and the weft threads hold. That is why woven cloth keeps its shape. When Jesus was on earth, He wore a coat that was woven in one piece from the top all the way down, with no seam at all. Someone wove it carefully, row after row.

Let's make it! Today you will be the weaver and the loom will be made of paper. You will weave paper strips over and under to make a bright checkerboard placemat for your own place at the table.

PICTURE STUDY



Weaver, Vincent van Gogh, 1884 · Oil on canvas

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Before Vincent van Gogh became famous for sunflowers and starry skies, he lived in a Dutch village full of weavers. He painted them again and again. Here a weaver sits right inside his big wooden loom, working in his cottage. The loom is almost as big as the room!

Look closely

- Find the weaver. Where is he sitting?
- Find the red cloth. That is the new cloth growing, row by row.
- Find the spinning wheel on the floor. What job does it do before the weaving can start?
- Look at all the wooden beams. Which ones do you think hold the warp threads tight?

Talk about it

1. Why do you think the loom had to be so big?
2. How long do you think it took to weave enough cloth for one coat?

3. Would you like to sit inside a loom and weave? What color cloth would you make?

Safety first. A parent supervises all scissors use. Use child-safe scissors on paper only, cut away from your fingers, and pass scissors handle first. Keep glue sticks and small paper bits away from babies.

SEWING PROJECT

A Paper Weaving Placemat

A sheet of paper with slits becomes your loom, and paper strips become your weft. Over, under, over, under: you will see a woven checkerboard grow under your hands.

You will need

- Child-safe scissors (a parent may cut the slits)
- A ruler and a pencil
- A glue stick
- Clear tape

PAPER WEAVING PLACEMAT

Finished size: one placemat, about 12 × 18 in (30 × 46 cm) · About 30 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 sheet of 12 × 18 in construction paper for the loom (one color)
- 1 sheet of 12 × 18 in construction paper in a second color, cut into 10 strips, each about 1 in (2.5 cm) wide and 12 in long
- A glue stick
- Clear contact paper or packing tape to make it wipeable (optional, put on by a parent)

How to make it

1. A parent folds the loom paper in half the short way and draws straight lines from the fold, 1 inch apart, stopping 1 inch from the open edge.

2. Cut on the lines from the fold, and stop at the end of each line. (Younger children: a parent cuts the slits.) Open the paper. These slits are your warp.
3. Take one strip. Weave it over the first warp, under the next, over, under, all the way across.
4. Slide the strip up to the top. Take a second strip. This time start under, then over. This is the opposite of row one.
5. Keep going: row three starts over, row four starts under. Push each strip up snug against the one before.
6. When the loom is full, dab glue under the ends of each strip so they stay put.
7. A parent may cover the mat with clear contact paper or packing tape so it can be wiped clean.

Fabric check: Construction paper works well because it is stiff enough to slide. Thin printer paper tears; very thick card is hard to bend. Fabric strips can be woven the same way through a paper loom for a softer look: the adult tears or cuts the cotton strips.

Steps

1. **Find the warp and weft.** Before you weave, point to the warp slits on your loom. Then hold up a strip and say, "This is my weft."
2. Weave the placemat from the pattern card.
3. **Check it.** Look at your mat. Do the colors make a checkerboard? If two of the same color sit side by side, find the row where you went over twice, and fix it.
4. **Tell it back.** Show someone your mat and tell them: warp is the long way and holds still; weft goes over and under.
5. **Clean up.** Scissors closed and put away, paper bits in the trash, glue capped.

Tips

- If a strip gets stuck, wiggle the warp slit open with your finger.
- Younger children: use 6 wide strips instead of 10 thin ones.
- Older children: try a pattern. Weave over two, under two for a staircase look, like the diagonal lines on blue jeans.

Check your work

- ☐ I can point to the warp and the weft.

- ☐ My rows go over and under, opposite each time, like a checkerboard.
- ☐ My placemat is ready for my place at the table.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Glue in a small paper-weaving square (four strips is enough) and have a parent label the warp and the weft.
2. Draw the weaver inside his big loom from the picture study.
3. Draw yourself weaving. What color is your weft?

From history. For hundreds of years, many villages had weavers working at home looms, like the weaver in Van Gogh's painting. Later, big weaving machines in factories took over most of the work, but people still weave by hand today for the joy of it.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Starting every row the same way. The strips slide out. Each row starts the opposite way.
- Cutting the slits all the way to the edge. The loom falls apart. Stop 1 inch before the edge.
- Leaving gaps between strips. Push each new row up snug.

Make it a game • The Family Loom. Family members stand in a row, side by side, a little apart. They are the warp! You are the weft. Weave yourself through the row: in front of the first person, behind the next, in front, behind. On the way back, go the opposite way. If you go the wrong way, the warp says "Snag!" and you start that row again.

Scripture. "now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout." (John 19:23, KJV)

Jesus wore a coat woven all in one piece. Someone wove it row by row, the way you wove your mat.

2.2 A LOOM OF CARDBOARD

OBJECTIVES

- Tell what a loom does: it holds the warp threads tight.
- Weave yarn over and under on a cardboard loom and push each row down snug.
- Make a small woven coaster to use or give.

Warm-up. Stretch a rubber band between two fingers. Pluck it. It is tight. Now let it go slack and pluck it. It flops. A loom keeps the warp threads tight like the stretched rubber band. Why would tight threads be easier to weave?

WATCH

How to Weave a Stash Busting Coaster with a Cardboard Loom! - Camp Crafty!

LionBrandYarn · 2:31

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0RI82SPIW2o>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch once, then again with your cardboard loom in your lap, pausing to wind the warp and to weave the first rows.

Note: Quiet close-up hands, no talking, with short captions a parent can read aloud. She uses a big blunt yarn needle, just right for this age.

KEY TERMS

cardboard loom

A piece of stiff cardboard with little notches at the top and bottom to hold the warp yarn tight.

notch

A little V or slit cut in the edge of the cardboard to hold the yarn.

beating

Pushing each new row down snug against the row before, with your fingers or a fork.

selvage

The neat side edge of woven cloth, where the weft turns around to go back.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... Long ago in Holland, a weaver worked in a room full of wooden things. In the picture for today, two weavers lean over a big loom and talk. A spinning wheel waits on one side, and a baby's cradle sits on the other. The whole family lived and worked right there. The loom held the warp threads tight, and the weaver threw the weft across with a little wooden boat called a shuttle.

Look closely. A big loom has a part called the beater. After every row, the weaver pulls the beater toward himself, bang!, to push the new row snug against the last one. That makes the cloth thick and strong with no gaps. On your little cardboard loom, your fingers (or a fork) are the beater.

What is happening? Look at the edges of your weaving. Each time the weft reaches the side, it turns around and goes back. That turning makes a neat edge called the selvage. Selvage edges do not fray, because the thread never ends there; it just turns the corner. If you pull the weft too tight at the turn, your weaving gets narrow in the middle, like an hourglass. Weavers leave a little slack, a gentle hill of yarn, before they push each row down.

Let's make it! Today you will warp a cardboard loom and weave a soft little coaster from yarn, row by row, pushing each row down just like the weaver's beater.

PICTURE STUDY



Weaver's Workshop, Cornelis Gerritsz. Decker, 1659 · Oil on panel · Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

This picture was painted in Holland almost four hundred years ago. Families in those days often worked right at home. Here two weavers talk over their loom. Look carefully: everything they need is in this one room, and so is the baby.

Look closely

- Find the big loom. Where is the cloth?
- Find the spinning wheel. What does it make for the loom?
- Find the cradle. Who might sleep there while the weavers work?
- Find a basket. What might be inside it?

Talk about it

1. What do you think the two weavers are talking about?
2. Why might a family want to work at home together?
3. Is this room tidy or busy? How can you tell?

Safety first. An adult cuts the notches in the cardboard and cuts yarn ends, or the child uses child-safe scissors on yarn. Use a big blunt plastic needle, count it out and back in, and never wrap yarn around a neck or fingers. Keep yarn ends away from pets.

SEWING PROJECT

A Woven Yarn Coaster

A square of cardboard, some yarn and your fingers are all you need to make real woven cloth. Your coaster can sit under a cup at your place, or be wrapped as a gift.

You will need

- A piece of stiff cardboard about 6 × 6 in (15 × 15 cm), from a shipping box
- A big blunt plastic needle (or just your fingers)
- Child-safe scissors for yarn
- A ruler and pencil (for the parent)
- A fork to push the rows down (optional)

CARDBOARD-LOOM COASTER

Finished size: one coaster, about 4 × 4 in (10 × 10 cm) · About 40 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 piece of stiff cardboard, 6 × 6 in
- About 6 yards of smooth worsted-weight (number 4) yarn for the warp, in one light color
- About 10 yards of worsted or chunky yarn for the weft, in one or two bright colors
- 1 piece of masking tape

How to make it

1. A parent marks a dot every ¼ inch across the top and bottom edges of the cardboard, 1 inch in from each side, and cuts a little slit ¼ inch deep at each dot. That makes about 17 notches at the top and 17 at the bottom.
2. Tape the end of the warp yarn to the back. Bring the yarn up through the first top notch, down the front to the first bottom notch, around the back

and up through the second bottom notch, then up the front to the second top notch. Keep going until every notch is full. Tape the end on the back. The warp should be snug, not tight like a drum.

3. Thread the weft yarn on the big plastic needle, about an arm's length at a time.
4. Start at the bottom. Weave over one warp, under the next, all the way across. Leave a 3-inch tail.
5. Come back the opposite way: under, then over. Leave a little hill of yarn before you push the row down with your fingers or a fork.
6. Keep weaving until the coaster is about 4 inches tall. To change colors, leave a tail of the old yarn, start the new yarn in the same row, and keep going.
7. A parent helps slip the loops off the notches two at a time and ties each pair in a snug knot, top and bottom. Tuck the tails into the back of the weaving with the needle.

Fabric check: Use smooth, light-colored yarn for the warp so it is easy to see and does not stretch much. Cotton yarn makes a coaster that soaks up drips; acrylic yarn comes in every color and is fine too. If anyone is sensitive to wool, choose cotton or acrylic.

Steps

1. **Count out.** Put your plastic needle in the pincushion or a little tin, and say “one needle out.”
2. **Test the tight warp.** Pluck one warp thread. Does it twang a little? Then it is ready. If it flops, a parent tightens it.
3. Weave the coaster from the pattern card.
4. **Check the sides.** Lay a ruler across the bottom and across the top. Are they the same width? If the middle got narrow, leave bigger hills next time.
5. **Count in and clean up.** Needle back in the tin: “one needle in.” Wind leftover yarn into a ball and put scraps in the trash.

Tips

- Use your fingers instead of a needle if that is easier. Just tuck the weft over and under.
- Younger children: weave with chunky yarn or fabric strips; the coaster grows fast.

- Older children: try stripes, two rows of one color and two of another.

Check your work

- ☐ I warped my loom and wove over and under, row by row.
- ☐ I pushed each row down snug, with no big gaps.
- ☐ I counted my needle out and back in.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in a short piece of your warp yarn and a short piece of your weft yarn. A parent writes “warp” and “weft” beside them.
2. Draw your cardboard loom with the yarn on it.
3. Tell a parent who will use your coaster, and draw that person with a cup on it.

From history. Children have learned to weave on small, simple looms for a very long time. Some school weaving lessons long ago began with paper mats and cardboard looms, just like yours.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Pulling the weft tight at each side. The coaster gets narrow in the middle. Leave a little hill of yarn before pushing it down.
- Missing a warp thread. Look for two overs in a row, then pull the yarn back and fix it.
- Winding the warp too tight. The cardboard bends. Snug is enough.

Make it a game • Beater, Bang! Lay ten paper strips across a table like weft rows, with gaps between them. A parent calls “Beater, bang!” and you push one strip down snug against the one below, using a fork or your fingers like a weaver’s beater. How many rows can you beat down neat and straight before the timer runs out? Try again and go faster without making gaps.

Scripture. “Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver” (Exodus 35:35, KJV)

When God’s people made the tabernacle, God gave skill to the weavers. Skillful hands are a gift from God.

2.3 LOOPS THAT STRETCH: KNIT FABRIC

OBJECTIVES

- Tell that knit fabric is made of rows of little loops, and woven fabric is made of threads going over and under.
- Look at a sock with a magnifying glass and find the loops.
- Do a stretch test and show that knit fabric stretches more than woven fabric.

Warm-up. Pull on the cuff of a sock. It stretches, then springs back. Now pull on the edge of a handkerchief or a cotton dish towel. Does it stretch the same way? Which would you rather have on your foot?

WATCH

Smartwool | How a Sock is Made

Smartwool · 4:50

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lfRVprgeU5s>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch the round knitting machines spin and knit a sock, loop after loop, in just a few minutes.

Note: A tour of a real sock factory in the United States by the company's sock maker. The machines knit, and the people guide and check. These socks are knit from wool with a little stretchy nylon.

BACKUP VIDEO

Knit Vs. Woven Fabric - What's the diff?

The Apparel Mentor by Mindy Martell · 3:01

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-JDMRTINag>

For parents: a clothing maker explains the difference between knit and woven fabric and how to tell them apart by stretching.

KEY TERMS

knit fabric

Cloth made of rows of little loops pulled through other loops. It stretches.

woven fabric

Cloth made of threads going over and under. It does not stretch much.

loop

A little circle of yarn. In knitting, each new loop is pulled through an old one.

stretch

To get longer when you pull, and spring back when you let go.

CORE IDEAS

The story. Long ago, every sock was knitted by hand, one loop at a time, with thin needles. A grandmother might knit by the fire every evening to keep her family's feet warm. Today most socks are knitted by machines. In a sock factory, rows of round knitting machines spin and whirl. Each machine has a ring of tiny hooked needles that pull loop after loop, around and around. A whole sock is knitted in a few minutes!

Look closely. Hold a sock under your magnifying glass. Look for tiny V shapes in rows, like little stacked letter Vs. Each V is a loop. The yarn goes around in a long wiggly path, and each new loop holds onto a loop in the row below. Now look at a handkerchief or a dish towel. No loops! Only straight threads going over and under.

What is happening? Why does a sock stretch? Loops are curvy. When you pull, the curves straighten out and the fabric grows longer. When you let go, the loops curl back up again. Woven threads are already lying straight, so there is not much to stretch. That is why socks, T-shirts and pajamas are often knit, so they move with you, and why shirts with collars and blue jeans are usually woven, so they hold their shape.

Let's make it! Today you will be a fabric scientist. You will look for loops with a magnifying glass, then do a stretch test with a T-shirt strip and a handkerchief strip, and make a chart to show which one stretches farther.

PICTURE STUDY



Knitting Girl, Albert Anker, 1881

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Albert Anker was a Swiss painter who loved village children. In his time, girls and boys learned to knit at home and at school, and the family's socks and mittens were knitted by hand. This girl is knitting quietly, loop after loop.

Look closely

- Find her knitting needles. How many can you see?
- Follow the yarn. Where does it go?
- Look at her face. Is she in a hurry, or careful and calm?
- Look at her clothes. Which ones do you think are knit, and which are woven?

Talk about it

1. What do you think she is knitting?
2. Why would hand-knitting take a long time?
3. Who in your family knits or sews? What do they make?

Safety first. An adult cuts the fabric strips from the old T-shirt and handkerchief with the sharp shears. Use the magnifying glass only for looking at cloth, never at the sun. Fold and put away every sock when you finish.

SEWING PROJECT

The Great Stretch Test

Scientists test things to find out what is true. Today you will test two strips of cloth, one knit and one woven, and measure which one stretches farther. Then you will make a chart to keep.

You will need

- A magnifying glass
- A ruler or tape measure
- A few socks, a T-shirt and a handkerchief or cotton dish towel to look at
- Crayons

MY STRETCH TEST CHART

Finished size: one notebook page · About 30 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 strip of knit fabric, 1 × 6 in (2.5 × 15 cm), cut by an adult from an old T-shirt
- 1 strip of woven fabric, 1 × 6 in, cut by an adult from an old handkerchief, pillowcase or cotton shirt
- 1 sheet of paper with two columns: KNIT and WOVEN
- A glue stick or tape

How to make it

1. Lay the knit strip on the table next to the ruler. It should be 6 inches long.
2. Hold one end at the start of the ruler. A parent holds the other end and pulls gently, not hard, until it will not go any farther.
3. Read the ruler. How long did it get? A parent writes the number in the KNIT column.
4. Let go. Does it spring back?

5. Do the same test with the woven strip, and write its number in the **WOVEN** column.
6. Draw a star next to the one that stretched farther.
7. Glue or tape both strips onto the chart under their names.

Fabric check: An old cotton T-shirt is perfect for the knit strip, and an old cotton handkerchief or pillowcase for the woven strip. Cut the T-shirt strip across the shirt (side to side), because that is the stretchiest way. Some woven fabrics have a little stretchy fiber mixed in; for a fair test, choose plain cotton.

Steps

1. **Guess first.** Before the test, say which strip you think will stretch more, and why.
2. **Loop hunt.** Look at a sock, a T-shirt and a handkerchief with the magnifying glass. Which ones have little Vs (loops)? Which have over-and-under threads?
3. Do the stretch test and make the chart from the pattern card.
4. **Tell it back.** Tell someone what you found and why knit fabric stretches: the curvy loops straighten out.
5. **Clean up.** Fold the socks and T-shirt, put the magnifying glass away, and tape your chart into the notebook.

Tips

- Pull gently and slowly, so you measure the stretch and do not tear the strip.
- Younger children: skip the ruler and just lay the stretched strip on paper and mark how far it reached.
- Older children: test a third strip cut the other way on the T-shirt (up and down). Does it stretch as much?

Check your work

- ☐ I found the little V loops in a sock.
- ☐ I tested two strips and showed which one stretched farther.
- ☐ I can tell why knit fabric stretches.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in your stretch test chart with both strips.
2. Draw a row of little V loops, like the ones you saw in the sock.
3. Draw something you wear that is knit and something that is woven.

From history. Long ago, families knitted their own stockings and mittens by hand. Later, clever people built machines to knit loops much faster. Now a single machine can knit hundreds of socks in one day.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Pulling so hard the strip tears. A test is gentle and fair.
- Thinking all soft cloth is knit. Flannel is soft but woven. Look for loops.
- Using the magnifying glass in the sunshine. It can make a hot spot. Use it indoors on cloth.

Make it a game • Knit or Woven?. A parent puts ten pieces of clothing in a basket: socks, T-shirts, a handkerchief, a button shirt, a dish towel. Pull one out, stretch it gently and shout “Knit!” or “Woven!” Then check with the magnifying glass for loops. One point for each right answer. Can you get all ten?

2.4 WHY EDGES FRAY

OBJECTIVES

- Pull a thread out of a cut edge of burlap and tell why cut edges fray.
- Tell one way to stop fraying: a hem, a line of stitching or knotted fringe.
- Make a fringed burlap mat with a stitched stop line.

Warm-up. Look at the bottom edge of a worn-out dish towel or an old pair of jeans. Do you see little loose threads hanging down? Now look at the edge of a new dish towel. Why is it tidy? Feel the folded edge.

WATCH

How to Correctly Cut Burlap and Keep it from Unraveling

Sincerely Jean · 2:52

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NT_bFTRGbUM

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch how she finds one thread in the burlap and pulls it out to make a straight line. Then watch her show why the edge comes loose.

Note: She cuts with sharp scissors; in this course the adult does all cutting of burlap. Near the end she uses a little bottle of fabric glue on the edge; that is a grown-up product.

BACKUP VIDEO

Making a Knotted Fringe Burlap Tablecloth - BurlapFabric.com

BurlapFabric.com · 1:35

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ti1H67Y6i_o

Only hands, no talking: pulling burlap threads to make a fringe and tying the fringe in little knots so it stops fraying.

KEY TERMS

fray

When threads come loose from a cut edge of woven cloth and hang or fall out.

raw edge

A cut edge with nothing holding the threads in.

hem

An edge folded under twice and sewn down, so the raw edge is hidden.

fringe

A row of loose threads on purpose, at the edge of a mat or scarf.

CORE IDEAS

The story. Long ago, families did not throw cloth away. When an edge started to come loose, a mother or grandmother sat down with a needle and fixed it right away. An old saying goes, “A stitch in time saves nine.” It means one little stitch today saves you from nine stitches later, when the hole has grown big. In today’s picture, a girl is doing just that.

Look closely. Burlap is a woven cloth with big, easy-to-see threads. Look at a cut edge. Find one weft thread that goes across. Pinch its end and pull gently. It slides right out! Why? At the cut edge, that thread has nothing to hold it. Remember: in the middle of the cloth, each thread is hugged by the threads going over and under it. But at a cut edge, the threads are cut short, and they wiggle loose with every pull and every wash.

What is happening? To stop fraying, people lock the edge. One way is a hem: fold the edge under once, then again, and sew it down so the raw edge is hidden inside. Look at the bottom of your shirt. That is a hem! Another way is a line of stitches that holds the threads in place. And sometimes people let the edge fray on purpose, a little way, to make a fringe, and then stitch or knot it so it stops right there. Remember the selvage on your coaster? It never frays, because the weft never ends there; it just turns around.

Let’s make it! Today an adult cuts a burlap square, and you make a fringe on purpose by pulling threads out of all four edges. Then the fringe gets a stop line of stitches so it stays neat.

PICTURE STUDY



A Stitch in Time, Walter Anderson, before 1890 · Oil on canvas

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

The title of this painting is an old saying: “A stitch in time saves nine.” A girl sits with the family mending basket and fixes a piece of clothing before the little hole or loose edge gets bigger.

Look closely

- Find the mending basket. What is inside it?
- Find the thing she is mending. What color is it?
- Find the tape measure. What is it for?
- Look at her hands. Is she working fast or carefully?

Talk about it

1. What does “a stitch in time saves nine” mean?
2. What might happen to a loose edge if no one fixed it?
3. Is there anything at your house that needs a stitch in time?

Safety first. An adult cuts the burlap with the sharp shears and does any ironing or machine sewing while the child watches from a safe spot. The child pulls threads with fingers and uses only a big blunt plastic needle. Burlap sheds little fibers, so work on a tray and wash your hands afterward.

SEWING PROJECT

A Fringed Burlap Mat

Burlap is perfect for seeing how weaving works, because its threads are big. You will pull threads out on purpose to make a fringe. Then a line of stitches keeps the fringe from fraying any farther. Your mat can go under a plant, a lamp or a fruit bowl.

You will need

- Adult's sharp fabric shears (adult only)
- A big blunt plastic needle
- A tray or a sheet of newspaper to catch fibers
- A ruler

FRINGED BURLAP MAT

Finished size: one mat, about 10 × 12 in (25 × 30 cm) with a 1-inch fringe · About 40 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 piece of burlap, about 11 × 13 in (28 × 33 cm)
- About 2 yards of worsted yarn in a bright color, for the stop line
- A pencil

How to make it

1. The adult straightens the burlap: pull out one thread near each edge to make a straight line, then cut along that line with the shears.
2. Measure 1 inch in from one edge. The child pinches the very outside thread and pulls it out gently, the whole way along. Pull out the next thread, and the next.

3. Keep pulling until you have a fringe 1 inch deep. Do all four sides. Put the loose threads in a bowl; they make good bird nest material in spring!
4. Thread the yarn on the big plastic needle. A parent ties a knot in the end.
5. Sew a running stitch all the way around the mat, just inside the fringe: down through the burlap, up through the burlap, about ½ inch apart. This is your stop line.
6. A parent ties off the yarn on the back. (If you like, an adult may also stitch around the stop line on a sewing machine while you watch from a safe spot.)
7. Shake out the mat and set it in its place.

Fabric check: Burlap is woven from jute, a plant fiber. It is scratchy and sheds little fibers, so it is a working cloth, not a wearing cloth. Any loosely woven cloth with big threads works; an old linen or cotton dish towel with a loose weave works too, but the threads are smaller and harder to pull.

Steps

1. **Find the fray.** Before you start, pull one thread from a scrap of burlap. Now pull one thread from the middle of the cloth. Which is easier? Why?
2. Make the fringed mat from the pattern card.
3. **Watch a hem.** An adult folds an edge of a cotton scrap under twice and sews it, by hand or on the machine, while you watch from a safe spot. Feel the hem. Can you pull a thread out now?
4. **Tell it back.** Tell someone why cut edges fray, and two ways people stop fraying.
5. **Count in and clean up.** Needle back in the tin. Sweep burlap fibers into the trash or the bird-nest bowl. Wash your hands.

Tips

- If a thread snaps, pick out the broken end with the blunt needle and keep pulling the rest.
- Younger children: fringe two sides only, and a parent sews the stop line.
- Older children: tie the fringe in little knots, two or three threads together, like the backup video.

Check your work

- ☐ I pulled threads to make an even 1-inch fringe.
- ☐ I can tell why a cut edge frays.

- ☐ My mat has a stop line so the fringe stays neat.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in a few burlap threads you pulled out, and a little square of burlap with a fringe.
2. Draw a hem: show the edge folding under once, then again.
3. Draw the girl with the mending basket, or draw something at your house that needs a stitch in time.

From history. Long ago, sacks for grain, potatoes and coffee were often made of burlap. Thrifty families washed the empty sacks and turned them into aprons, rugs and even curtains.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Pulling a thread from the middle instead of the edge. Start with the very outside thread.
- Yanking hard. The thread breaks. Pull slowly and gently.
- Forgetting the stop line. The fringe keeps fraying until the mat comes apart.

Make it a game · Stop the Fray! A parent cuts four small squares of burlap. Each player gets one. Ready, set, pull! Who can pull out five threads from one edge first? Then switch: who can sew a stop line of five running stitches first with a big plastic needle? The fastest stop line wins the round.

UNIT 2 REVIEW

Ask these out loud, with your woven mat, your coaster and your burlap mat on the table. There are no points and no writing. The child may answer by telling, pointing or showing with his or her hands. If an answer is fuzzy, weave a few paper strips together again.

1. Point to the warp and the weft on your paper placemat. Which one holds still?
2. Show me with a strip of paper how to weave one row, then the next row. Why does the next row start the opposite way?
3. What does a loom do?
4. Stretch a sock and a handkerchief. Which one is knit? How do you know?
5. Pull a thread out of the edge of a burlap scrap. Why did it come out so easily?
6. Show me the hem on your shirt. How does a hem stop fraying?

UNIT CHALLENGE: MY WOVEN MAT

Weave a bigger mat for the family table. Use a piece of cardboard about 9 × 12 inches as a loom (a parent cuts the notches ½ inch apart), warp it with cotton or acrylic yarn, and weave with chunky yarn or with strips of old T-shirt that an adult cuts 1 inch wide. Beat each row down snug and keep the sides straight.

When it is done, a parent helps tie off the warp. Then make a notebook page: tape in a bit of warp and weft, and a parent writes the child's words about why the edges of the mat do not fray. Set the mat on the table at a family meal and tell everyone how you made it.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Over and under	Every row goes over and under, opposite to the row before, with few skips.
Snug and even	Rows are pushed down snug, and the sides stay fairly straight.
The child can tell it	The child can point to the warp and weft and explain, in his or her own words, why the edges hold.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Careful work	The child counted the needle in and out, kept yarn off the floor, and asked for help with tying off.

ANSWER KEY

1. The warp runs the long way and holds still; the weft goes across, over and under.
2. Over, under, over, under; then under, over. Starting the opposite way makes the threads hug each other and hold together.
3. It holds the warp threads tight so you can weave the weft through them.
4. The sock is knit. It stretches and springs back because it is made of little loops; the handkerchief is woven and hardly stretches.
5. At a cut edge, the thread has nothing holding it, so it slips out. That is fraying.
6. The edge is folded under twice and sewn down, so the raw edge is hidden and held in place.

HAND STITCHING

This is the unit where little hands start to sew. You will begin with a lacing card, pulling yarn in and out of holes. Then you will thread a big blunt needle with yarn and sew a running stitch on burlap, sew big buttons onto felt, and whipstitch a felt pocket closed. Every needle in this unit is big and blunt, and a grown-up ties the first knots and does any cutting of woven cloth.

You will also meet Dorcas, a woman in the Bible who sewed coats and clothes for widows who needed them. When she died, the widows cried and showed Peter all the things she had made, and God raised her to life again. Dorcas shows us that sewing can be a way to love people. At the end of this unit you will give away something you sewed yourself, and you will keep a habit every good sewer has: counting the needles out and back in.

PREREQUISITES

- Can weave over and under (Unit 2)
- Can sit and work on a small task for about ten minutes
- Knows the needle-count rule: needles are counted out and back in, every time

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can lace yarn in and out of the holes of a lacing card.
- ☐ I can sew a running stitch with a big blunt needle and yarn: up, down, up, down.
- ☐ I can sew a big button onto felt, going up one hole and down another.
- ☐ I can sew a whipstitch around the edge of two pieces of felt.
- ☐ I can tell the story of Dorcas and give away something I made.
- ☐ I count my needle out and back in every time I sew.

OPTIONAL BOOKS AND TOOLS FOR THIS UNIT

- ***Corduroy* by Don Freeman:** The picture book about a teddy bear in a department store who is missing a button from his overalls, and the girl who sews one on for him. Lovely to read with Lesson 3.3. Most libraries have it.
- **Jumbo plastic needles, burlap and plastic canvas:** A pack of big plastic children's needles, a half yard of burlap and a few sheets of 7-count plastic canvas cost very little at any craft store. Big blunt steel tapestry needles (size 13 or 14) are a good next step for older children.
- **A jar of big buttons:** Craft-store bags of large buttons, 1 inch (2.5 cm) or bigger, with holes big enough for yarn. Keep the jar up high, away from babies and toddlers.

Not required. Every project in this unit works with ordinary fabric-store supplies. School Launch has no ties to these authors, publishers or companies.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

3.1 Lacing Cards	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
3.2 A Big Needle and Yarn	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
3.3 Sew On a Button	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
3.4 Dorcas Made Coats	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes

3.1 LACING CARDS

OBJECTIVES

- Lace yarn or a shoelace in and out of the holes on a lacing card.
- Tell that lacing is the first step to sewing: in, out, in, out.
- Make two lacing cards, one to keep and one to give.

Warm-up. Look at a shoe with laces. How does the lace go? In one hole, across, out the next hole. Unlace one shoe a little way and lace it back up. You are already sewing!

WATCH

DIY Foam Lacing Cards | Educational for groups, classrooms, OCC Shoeboxes

Craft2Care · 4:35

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fj0yRu2DnGo>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch how she draws a shape, punches the holes and laces it. A parent can make the holes while you choose colors.

Note: She makes her cards from craft foam to tuck into Christmas shoebox gifts for children far away. Cereal-box cardboard works just as well.

BACKUP VIDEO

DIY Lacing Cards || Shapes || Toddler & Preschooler Activity

The Babcocks · 3:24

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8inNavyXN2Q>

A mother makes simple cardboard lacing cards at home, and her little girl laces them on the bed. Watch how slowly and carefully she works.

KEY TERMS

lacing

Pulling a lace or yarn in and out of holes, one after another.

lacing card

A stiff card with holes around a shape, made for lacing.

hole punch

A tool that pushes a small round hole through paper or card. The adult uses it.

aglet

The hard little tip on the end of a shoelace that makes it easy to poke through a hole.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... About two hundred years ago, a teacher in Germany named Friedrich Froebel started a new kind of school for little children. He called it a kindergarten, which means “a garden for children.” In his kindergarten, children played with blocks and balls, sang songs, folded paper, and wove paper strips. They also had sewing cards: cards with little holes around a picture. The children stitched colored yarn in and out of the holes to make the picture bright. Children have been lacing and sewing cards ever since.

Look closely. Look at your lacing card. The holes go around the edge of a shape, like stepping stones. Your yarn goes down through one hole, comes up through the next hole, goes down through the next, up through the next. Down, up, down, up. That is exactly how a needle and thread go in and out of cloth. Lacing teaches your fingers the path before you ever pick up a needle.

What is happening? Why does a shoelace have a hard little tip? The tip is called an aglet. It keeps the lace from fraying, and it is stiff, so it pokes through a hole easily. Soft yarn flops and will not poke through. So we make our own aglet: wrap a little tape tightly around the end of the yarn. Now it is stiff like a needle.

Let's make it! Today you will lace two cards: one to keep and practice on, and one to give to a little friend, a cousin, or a church shoebox gift for a child far away.

PICTURE STUDY



Two Little Girls Being Taught How to Sew, Anna Ancher, about 1910 · Oil on canvas

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Anna Ancher was a Danish painter who lived in a fishing village by the sea. She loved to paint sunlight in rooms and the people of her village at work. Here a woman is teaching two little girls to sew, right by a sunny window.

Look closely

- Find the teacher's hands. What is she showing the girls?
- Find the two little girls. Are they watching?
- Find the green leaves at the window. Why would you sew by a window?
- Look for the bright color. Where is it?

Talk about it

1. Who is teaching you to sew? How is that like this picture?
2. Why is it good to have someone show you a new skill?
3. What do you think the girls will sew first?

Safety first. A parent or responsible adult supervises all sewing-tool use in this course, and needles are counted out and back in at the end of every session. Today the adult uses the hole punch and does any cutting of thick cardboard; the child uses child-safe scissors on paper and yarn. Yarn is for lacing only, never for wrapping around necks or fingers.

SEWING PROJECT

Lacing Cards to Keep and Give

You will choose a shape, color it, and lace yarn all the way around it. Make one for yourself and one to give.

You will need

- A hole punch (the adult uses it)
- Child-safe scissors
- Crayons or markers
- Clear tape

YARN LACING CARD

Finished size: two cards, each about 6 × 6 in (15 × 15 cm) · About 30 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 2 pieces of cereal-box cardboard or craft foam, each about 6 × 6 in
- 2 pieces of worsted yarn, each about 1 yard (90 cm) long, or 2 long shoelaces
- Clear tape for the yarn tips
- Crayons or markers

How to make it

1. Draw a big simple shape on each card: a heart, a star, a sheep, a cross or a fish. A parent helps with the shape.
2. Color the shapes.
3. Cut out the shapes with child-safe scissors if the card is thin enough, or a parent cuts them.
4. The adult punches holes all around each shape, about ½ inch (1 cm) in from the edge and about 1 inch apart.

5. Wrap tape tightly around one end of each yarn to make a stiff tip, like a shoelace's aglet. Tie a big knot in the other end, or tape it to the back of the card.
6. Start at the back. Push the tip up through one hole. Go down through the next hole. Up, down, up, down, all the way around.
7. When you get back to the start, a parent tapes or ties the end on the back.

Fabric check: Cereal-box cardboard is free and stiff enough. Craft foam is softer, washable and long-lasting, which makes it good for a gift. Use smooth yarn or a shoelace; fuzzy yarn catches in the holes.

Steps

1. **Trace the path.** Before you lace, trace the hole path with your finger: down, up, down, up.
2. Make the two lacing cards from the pattern card.
3. **Try another stitch.** Unlace your practice card and lace it again a new way: always come up from the back and wrap over the edge each time. That is a whipstitch, and you will use it in Lesson 3.4!
4. **Tell it back.** Tell someone how lacing is like sewing.
5. **Clean up.** Scissors closed and away, paper bits in the trash. Put the gift card in an envelope with a note.

Tips

- If the yarn tip gets soft, cut it off (child-safe scissors) and wrap new tape.
- Younger children: use a shoelace with its own aglet, and holes 1 inch apart.
- Older children: lace with two colors, or punch the holes closer together for a finer line.

Check your work

- ☐ I laced all the way around without skipping a hole.
- ☐ I can lace down, up, down, up, like a running stitch.
- ☐ I made a card to give away.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Draw your lacing card and show the yarn going in and out with a dotted line.
2. Tape in a piece of yarn with a tape aglet on the end. A parent labels it "my aglet."

3. Draw who will get your gift card.

From history. Froebel opened his first kindergarten in Germany in 1837. Kindertartens spread to England and America, and sewing cards became a favorite quiet activity for little children for many years.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Going up through the same side twice. The yarn wraps around the edge instead. For lacing, go down, then up.
- Pulling the yarn so hard the card bends. Pull until the yarn lies flat.
- Forgetting the knot. The yarn slips all the way out. Knot or tape the end first.

Make it a game • Lacing Race. Make two lacing cards with the same number of holes, one for you and one for a parent. Ready, set, lace! But here is the rule: no skipping a hole, and down, up, down, up the whole way. A skipped hole means you have to go back. The first one finished with no skips wins. Then race again, but this time the grown-up laces with the other hand!

3.2 A BIG NEEDLE AND YARN

OBJECTIVES

- Name the parts of a needle: the eye and the point.
- Thread a big blunt needle with yarn, with a grown-up tying the knot.
- Sew a running stitch on burlap or plastic canvas: up, down, up, down.

Warm-up. Look at a big plastic needle and a big blunt tapestry needle with a magnifying glass. Find the hole at one end. That is the eye. Find the other end. Touch it gently. Is it sharp or round? Then put both needles back in the tin and count them.

WATCH

Sewing Skill Builder on Burlap

Bridget Kudrle · 5:08

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MatNWOxTcsA>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch once, then again with your burlap and needle in hand, pausing after each stitch.

Note: A young student teacher made this for an elementary art class. Her hands show the running stitch and then the whipstitch on a strip of burlap with yarn and a big needle.

BACKUP VIDEO

Plastic Canvas for Kids: Running Stitch

Mrs. Yurk's Art Room · 1:53

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9aaG89s0bo>

An art teacher's hands sew a running stitch on plastic canvas with yarn. Short and clear, good to watch right before you start.

KEY TERMS

needle

A thin tool with a hole at one end that pulls thread or yarn through cloth.

eye

The hole in the needle where the yarn goes.

running stitch

The first and simplest stitch: the needle goes up and down through the cloth in a straight line.

knot

A little lump tied in the end of the yarn so it cannot pull all the way through.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... Needles are some of the oldest tools in the world. Long, long ago, people made needles from slivers of bone or wood. They scraped one end into a point and made a tiny hole at the other end for the thread. Later, needles were made of metal. A needle was so useful and so hard to make that families took great care of every one. In today's picture, two little girls sit close together, and the bigger girl is helping the smaller one learn her stitches.

Look closely. A needle has two ends. The eye is the hole that holds the yarn. The point goes through the cloth first. Your needle is a big blunt one: its point is round, so it slides between the threads of burlap without poking your fingers. Burlap has big holes between its threads, just right for a big needle and yarn.

What is happening? To sew a running stitch, bring the needle up from the back of the cloth. Pull until the knot stops it. Now go down a little way along, and pull. Up a little way along, and pull. Down, up, down, up. On the front you see a row of stitches with little spaces between them, like a dotted line on a road. Remember your woven burlap? The needle slips between the warp and the weft threads, and the yarn goes over and under them. Sewing and weaving are cousins!

Let's make it! Today you will sew rows of running stitches on a burlap square in bright colors of yarn. You will keep this square and add to it, and it will become the start of your unit challenge.

PICTURE STUDY



The Little Embroiderers, Albert Anker, 1875 · Oil on canvas

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Albert Anker painted the children of his Swiss village. Here an older girl helps a younger one with her stitching. The younger girl is sewing with red thread on white cloth. Look how close together they sit.

Look closely

- Find the red thread. Where does it go?
- Find the little basket. What do you think is inside?
- Look at the older girl. What is she doing to help?
- Look at the younger girl's face. Is she trying hard?

Talk about it

1. How can an older brother or sister help a younger one learn?
2. Why do you think the younger girl is sewing with a bright color?
3. What would you stitch if you had red thread?

Safety first. Use only a big blunt plastic or tapestry needle. Count the needle out and back in, keep it in the tin when you are not sewing, never in your mouth or clothes, and sit still at the table while you sew. The adult cuts the burlap with sharp shears; the child cuts yarn with child-safe scissors.

SEWING PROJECT

A Running-Stitch Burlap Square

You will sew three or four rows of running stitches across a square of burlap, each row in a different color. It is your very first piece of real sewing.

You will need

- A big blunt plastic needle or a size 13 tapestry needle
- A needle tin or pincushion for the needle count
- Child-safe scissors for yarn
- Masking tape
- A 6-inch embroidery hoop (optional; it keeps the burlap flat)

RUNNING-STITCH BURLAP SQUARE

Finished size: one square, about 8 × 8 in (20 × 20 cm) · About 30 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 square of burlap, 8 × 8 in, cut by an adult
- 3 or 4 colors of worsted yarn, about 18 in (46 cm) of each
- Masking tape for the edges
- A washable marker

How to make it

1. A parent tapes all four edges of the burlap with masking tape so they will not fray while you work. (Remember Lesson 2.4!) If you have a hoop, a parent puts the burlap in it.
2. A parent draws three or four straight lines across the burlap with the marker, about 1½ inches apart.

3. Thread the needle: push the end of the yarn through the eye, and pull about 4 inches through. A parent ties a big knot in the long end.
4. Start at one end of a line. Bring the needle up from the back and pull until the knot stops.
5. Go down a little way along the line (about two burlap squares), then up a little way along. Pull the yarn snug each time, but not tight.
6. At the end of the line, push the needle to the back. A parent ties a knot and trims the yarn.
7. Sew the next line in a new color. Fill all the lines.

Fabric check: Burlap is easy for beginners because its holes are big. 7-count plastic canvas is a good swap: it is stiff, does not fray, and the holes are easy to see. Use smooth worsted yarn; fuzzy or chunky yarn is hard to pull through.

Steps

1. **Count out.** Put the needle in the tin. Say “one needle out.”
2. **Practice first.** On a scrap of burlap or plastic canvas, sew five stitches. Say “up, down” out loud with each one.
3. Sew the burlap square from the pattern card.
4. **Look at the back.** Turn your square over. What does the back look like? Is it the same as the front?
5. **Count in and clean up.** Needle back in the tin: “one needle in.” Yarn ends in the trash. Keep the square safe; you will add to it.

Tips

- Use a short piece of yarn, about as long as from your hand to your elbow and back. Long yarn tangles.
- Younger children: sew on plastic canvas, and a parent threads the needle.
- Older children: try to make each stitch the same size, and each space the same size.

Check your work

- ☐ I can name the eye and the point of a needle.
- ☐ I sewed a running stitch along a line: up, down, up, down.

- ☐ I counted my needle out and back in.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Draw a big needle and label the eye and the point.
2. Draw a running stitch as a dotted line, and color each dash.
3. Tape in a piece of each yarn color you used.

From history. Some of the oldest needles ever found were carved from bone and are thousands of years old. People have been sewing for almost as long as people have lived.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Using a piece of yarn as long as your arm span. It tangles and knots. Use a shorter piece.
- Pulling so hard the burlap puckers. Pull until the yarn lies flat.
- Putting the needle down on the table. It rolls away and gets lost. It always goes back in the tin.

Make it a game · Up, Down, Freeze! A parent calls out “Up!” and you bring the needle up through the burlap. “Down!” and you push it down. Then the parent says “Freeze!” and you hold still with the needle in your hand. When the parent calls fast, can you keep up? Every few stitches, the parent asks, “Where is your needle?” and you show it. That is a good sewer’s habit.

3.3 SEW ON A BUTTON

OBJECTIVES

- Tell what buttons do and what they were made of long ago.
- Sew a big button onto felt with a big needle and yarn: up through one hole, down through another.
- Make a button flower picture on felt.

Warm-up. Find three things in the house with buttons: a shirt, a coat, a pillow. Count the buttons. Look at the holes. Does each button have two holes or four? Gently tug one. Is it sewn on tight or loose?

WATCH

Life Skills for Kids - Sewing on a Button

Cromwell Belden Public Library · 5:55

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_452RcPiKA

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch how she goes up through one hole and down through the other, again and again, and ties off at the back.

Note: A children's librarian sews a button on felt with a regular sewing needle and thread. In this course a child uses a big blunt needle and yarn with a big button, and a parent ties the knots.

BACKUP VIDEO

Teaching a Child How to Sew With Plastic Needles : Cool & Functional Crafts

eHowArtsAndCrafts · 1:47

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=557F-7A7zwU>

A crafter shows how a child can sew with a plastic needle and yarn, slowly and patiently. Good for parents to watch first.

KEY TERMS

button

A small flat or round piece with holes, sewn onto clothes to hold them closed.

buttonhole

A slit in the cloth, sewn around the edges, that the button slips through.

two-hole and four-hole

Buttons may have two holes or four holes for the thread to go through.

felt

A thick cloth made of fibers pressed together. It does not fray, so it is great for beginners.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... People have used buttons for hundreds of years. Long ago, buttons were made from all sorts of things: wood, bone, brass, silver and shell. In America about a hundred years ago, a town on the Mississippi River called Muscatine, Iowa, made millions of buttons from the shells of river mussels. Workers cut little round buttons out of the shiny shells. Many grandmothers kept a button box or a button jar and saved every button from worn-out clothes. Nothing went to waste!

Look closely. Look at a button. It has holes in the middle, usually two or four. The thread goes up through one hole and down through another, again and again, holding the button tight to the cloth. On the back of the cloth, you can see the little stitches. On a coat, the button goes through a buttonhole: a little slit with stitches all around its edge so it will not fray.

What is happening? A button that is sewn on with only one stitch will soon wiggle loose. A button sewn on with many stitches, up and down, up and down, stays tight. That is why we go through the holes at least three or four times. Today you will sew on felt. Felt is made of fibers squished and pressed together, not woven, so it has no threads to pull out. It does not fray at all!

Let's make it! Today you will sew big buttons onto a felt square to make a flower: one button for the middle, and more buttons for the petals or for a whole garden.

PICTURE STUDY



Portrait of a Child Sewing, Frank Weston Benson, 1897 · Oil on canvas

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Frank Weston Benson was an American painter from Massachusetts who often painted his own children in soft, bright light. This painting is thought to show one of his little daughters, sewing quietly in her white dress.

Look closely

- Find her needle hand. What is she pulling?
- Find her other hand. Why does she hold the cloth up?
- Find the doll in her lap. What might she be sewing for it?
- Look at the light. Where does it shine brightest?

Talk about it

1. What would you sew for a doll or a teddy bear?
2. Why do you think the painter made the background so dark?
3. How does she look while she sews: busy, sleepy or careful?

Safety first. Buttons are a choking danger for babies and toddlers: keep the button jar up high and count your buttons out and back in, just like needles. Use a big blunt needle and yarn. The adult cuts the felt if it is thick; the child may cut thin craft felt with child-safe scissors.

SEWING PROJECT

A Button Flower on Felt

You will sew big buttons onto felt to make a flower picture you can hang up. Every button needs at least three trips through its holes.

You will need

- A big blunt plastic or tapestry needle whose eye fits yarn
- A needle tin
- Child-safe scissors
- A small dish to hold the buttons while you work

BUTTON FLOWER PICTURE

Finished size: one picture, about 6 × 8 in (15 × 20 cm) · About 30 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 piece of stiff craft felt, 6 × 8 in, for the background
- 1 small piece of green felt for a stem and two leaves
- 5 to 7 big buttons, 1 in (2.5 cm) or bigger, with holes big enough for yarn
- About 2 yards of worsted yarn, cut into 18-inch pieces
- A glue stick for the stem and leaves

How to make it

1. Cut a long stem and two leaves from the green felt with child-safe scissors. Glue them onto the background.
2. Lay the buttons on top of the felt to plan your flower: one in the middle and the rest around it like petals. A parent makes a small marker dot under each button.
3. Thread the needle with 18 inches of yarn. A parent ties a big knot in the end.

4. Bring the needle up from the back at the first dot, and up through one hole of the middle button. Slide the button down the yarn onto the felt.
5. Go down through the next hole and through the felt. Pull snug.
6. Up and down again, at least three times. For a four-hole button, make a cross or two lines.
7. A parent ties off on the back. Sew all the buttons the same way.

Fabric check: Stiff craft felt is best: it is easy to sew, does not fray and holds the buttons up. Use big plastic or wooden craft buttons with big holes so the yarn fits. Save small shirt buttons for when you are older and sew with real thread.

Steps

1. **Count out.** Count your buttons into the dish and your needle into the tin.
2. **Practice first.** Sew one button onto a felt scrap. Tug it gently. Is it tight? If it wiggles, add more stitches.
3. Sew the button flower from the pattern card.
4. **Wiggle test.** When you finish, gently wiggle each button. Fix any that are loose.
5. **Count in and clean up.** Count the leftover buttons back into the jar and the needle back into the tin. Put the jar up high.

Tips

- If the needle will not fit through a button hole, choose a button with bigger holes.
- Younger children: sew three buttons only, and a parent threads the needle each time.
- Older children: sew a button onto a felt square, then cut a slit beside it (a parent helps) and try buttoning it.

Check your work

- ☐ I sewed through the button holes at least three times.
- ☐ My buttons are tight when I wiggle them.
- ☐ I counted my buttons and my needle back in.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Draw a two-hole button and a four-hole button. Draw arrows to show where the yarn goes.
2. Glue in a felt scrap with one button sewn on.
3. Draw Corduroy the bear, or draw a coat with all its buttons.

From history. In the early 1900s, Muscatine, Iowa, was famous for its pearl buttons, cut from the shells of mussels in the Mississippi River. Workers made so many that people called the town the Pearl Button Capital of the World.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Sewing through the button only once. It falls off. Go through three or four times.
- Coming up outside the button. The yarn makes a long loop on top. Come up right under the hole.
- Leaving buttons on the floor. Little ones can swallow them. Count them back into the jar.

Make it a game • The Button Box Sort. Pour a handful of big buttons onto a tray. Sort them as fast as you can: two-hole buttons in one pile, four-hole buttons in another, and any other kind in a third. Then sort again by color, or by size from smallest to biggest. At the end, count every button back into the jar. If one is missing, everyone hunts until it is found.

3.4 DORCAS MADE COATS

OBJECTIVES

- Tell the Bible story of Dorcas, who sewed coats and garments for widows.
- Sew a whipstitch around the edge of two pieces of felt.
- Make a felt pocket and give it away.

Warm-up. Talk together: has anyone ever made something for you? A blanket, a sweater, a card? How did it feel to get a gift that someone made with their own hands?

WATCH

Tabitha | Bible Story | LifeKids

LifeKids · 2:21

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhIRTne06es>

WHEN TO WATCH

After you read the story together. Watch it once, and listen for the coats and clothes Dorcas made.

Note: A gentle drawn Bible story. Tabitha (her other name is Dorcas) gets sick and dies, and God raises her to life when Peter prays. Nothing frightening is shown.

BACKUP VIDEO

How to Whipstitch Felt

Wendi Gratz · 6:09

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GwCp-_V-SiA

For the sewing part: a felt-toy maker shows the whipstitch up close on two pieces of felt. Watch before you start your pocket.

KEY TERMS

Dorcas

A woman in the Bible, also called Tabitha, who was full of good works and sewed for people in need.

widow

A woman whose husband has died. In Bible times, many widows were poor.

whipstitch

A stitch that wraps over the edge of the cloth, again and again, to join two pieces together.

pocket

A little cloth pouch for holding things.

CORE IDEAS

The story. In the town of Joppa, by the sea, lived a woman named Dorcas. Her other name was Tabitha. Dorcas loved Jesus, and she was always doing kind things for others. She sewed coats and clothes for the widows, women who had no husband and often had very little. One day Dorcas got sick and died. Her friends were very sad. They sent for Peter. When Peter came, the widows stood around him, crying, and showed him all the coats and garments Dorcas had made for them. Peter prayed, and God raised Dorcas back to life! Many people in Joppa believed in the Lord.

Look closely. Think about those coats. Each one was sewn by hand, stitch after stitch, for one person. The widows kept them and loved them. When they wanted to show Peter how good Dorcas was, they did not just tell him. They showed him the work of her hands. What we make for others can say “I love you” without any words.

What is happening? To join two pieces of cloth, sewers often use a whipstitch. Put two felt pieces together. Bring the needle out at the front. Now wrap the yarn over the top edge to the back, and push the needle through both layers from the back to the front again. Over the edge, through, over the edge, through. The yarn wraps around and around the edge like a spiral, holding the two pieces together.

Let's make it! Like Dorcas, you will sew something for someone else: a little felt pocket, whipstitched around three sides. You can tuck a note or a treat inside and give it away.

PICTURE STUDY



The Hard-Working Mother, Jean-Siméon Chardin, 1740 · Oil on canvas · Louvre Museum, Paris

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Jean-Siméon Chardin was a French painter who loved to paint quiet moments at home. Here a mother is checking her daughter's needlework and showing her how to make it better. Everything in the room is about sewing: the work in her lap, the sewing box, the winder full of thread.

Look closely

- Find the needlework in the mother's lap. What colors do you see?
- Find the daughter. What do you think the mother is telling her?
- Find the sewing box and the little dog.
- Find the wooden stand with thread on it. It is for winding thread.

Talk about it

1. Why is it good to have someone check your work?
2. How is this mother like Dorcas?
3. Who could you sew for, the way Dorcas did?

Safety first. Count the needle out and back in. The adult punches the holes in the felt with a hole punch; the child may cut thin felt with child-safe scissors. Pockets made for little children must not have buttons, beads or long yarn ties that could be swallowed or wrapped.

SEWING PROJECT

A Felt Pocket to Give

You will whipstitch two pieces of felt together around three sides to make a little pocket. Fill it with a note, a bookmark or a treat, and give it to someone like Dorcas would.

You will need

- A big blunt plastic or tapestry needle
- A needle tin
- A hole punch (the adult uses it)
- Child-safe scissors
- Sewing clips or clothespins to hold the felt together (no pins)

WHIPSTITCHED FELT POCKET

Finished size: one pocket, about 4 × 5 in (10 × 13 cm) · About 40 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 2 pieces of stiff craft felt, each 4 × 5 in, in two colors or the same color
- About 1½ yards of worsted yarn, cut into 18-inch pieces
- A small felt shape for the front, like a heart, cross or star, and a glue stick (optional)

How to make it

1. Glue the little felt shape on the front of one piece, if you like.
2. Lay the two pieces together, edges even. Hold them with sewing clips or clothespins.
3. The adult punches holes through both layers around three sides (both long sides and the bottom), about ¼ inch (6 mm) from the edge and ½ inch apart.

Leave the top open.

4. Thread the needle. A parent ties a big knot in the end.
5. Start at the top of one side, between the two layers, so the knot is hidden inside. Push the needle out through the front layer at the first hole.
6. Wrap the yarn over the edge to the back. Push the needle from the back to the front through the next hole. Over and through, over and through, all the way around the three sides.
7. At the end, a parent ties off and tucks the tail inside the pocket.

Fabric check: Stiff craft felt is best for a first pocket: it holds its shape and never frays. Wool-blend felt is softer and lovely if no one is sensitive to wool. Any color works; pick colors the person you are giving it to will love.

Steps

1. **Count out.** Needle in the tin: “one needle out.”
2. **Practice first.** On two felt scraps with holes, whipstitch three holes. Say “over and through” each time.
3. Sew the pocket from the pattern card.
4. **Test it.** Put a folded note inside. Shake the pocket gently upside down. Does anything fall out the sides? If so, add a stitch.
5. **Give it.** Fill the pocket and give it away, like Dorcas. Tell the person you made it yourself.
6. **Count in and clean up.** Needle back in the tin. Felt scraps in the scrap bag.

Tips

- Pull each stitch snug against the edge, but not so tight the felt curls.
- Younger children: the adult punches holes 1 inch apart, and the child sews the bottom edge while the parent sews one side.
- Older children: whipstitch a felt flap across the top and add a felt heart.

Check your work

- ☐ I can tell the story of Dorcas.
- ☐ I sewed a whipstitch: over the edge and through, around three sides.
- ☐ I gave my pocket to someone.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Draw Dorcas sewing, or draw the widows showing Peter the coats.
2. Draw the whipstitch: a spiral of yarn wrapping over an edge.
3. A parent writes: "I gave my pocket to ..., because ..."

From history. Long after Bible times, groups of women in many churches met to sew clothes for the poor, and they often called themselves Dorcas Societies, after the woman of Joppa.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Going in from the front every other time. That makes a running stitch, and the edges gap. Always come from the back to the front.
- Skipping a hole. A gap opens. Go back and fill it.
- Forgetting to leave the top open. Then it is not a pocket!

Make it a game • Pass the Gift. Sit in a circle with the felt pocket. A parent hides a little paper heart inside. Play music or sing a song and pass the pocket around. When the music stops, the person holding it says one kind thing they could do for someone this week, like Dorcas. The last person to hold it opens the pocket and finds the heart.

Scripture. "and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them." (Acts 9:39, KJV)

The widows showed Peter the coats Dorcas made. Our sewing can show love too.

UNIT 3 REVIEW

Ask these out loud with the sewing basket nearby. There are no points and no writing. The child may answer by telling, pointing, or showing with a needle, yarn and a scrap. Count the needle out and back in during the review too.

1. Show me how lacing goes on your lacing card. How is it like sewing?
2. Point to the eye and the point of your needle. What do we do with the needle every time we finish?
3. Sew five running stitches on a scrap of burlap.
4. How many times do we go through the holes of a button? Why?
5. Who was Dorcas? What did the widows show Peter?
6. Show me a whipstitch on two felt scraps. Where does the yarn go each time?

UNIT CHALLENGE: MY STITCH SQUARE

Make a stitch square to show everything your hands learned. On a 10 × 10 inch square of burlap (cut by an adult and taped at the edges), sew: two rows of running stitches in two colors, one big button, and a whipstitched felt shape (like a heart) along one side. A parent helps you plan where each one goes.

Then hang it up or tape it into the sewing notebook, and give a little tour: point to each stitch and say its name. Add a photo or a drawing of the felt pocket you gave away, and who received it.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Three kinds of sewing	The square shows running stitches, a sewn-on button and a whipstitch.
Careful stitches	Stitches lie flat without big tangles; the button is tight when wiggled.
Safe habits	The child counted the needle and buttons out and back in every time, and kept them in the tin.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
A gift given	The child gave the felt pocket to someone and can tell the story of Dorcas in his or her own words.

ANSWER KEY

1. The yarn goes down through one hole and up through the next, down and up, just like a needle and thread going in and out of cloth.
2. The eye is the hole for the yarn; the point goes through the cloth first. We count the needle back into the tin every time.
3. The child brings the needle up, then down, up, down, in a line, with stitches and spaces fairly even.
4. At least three or four times, so the button is tight and does not wiggle loose.
5. A kind woman in Joppa, also called Tabitha, who sewed for widows. They showed Peter the coats and garments she had made.
6. Over the edge, then through from the back to the front, again and again, wrapping around the edge.

MACHINE SEWING

A sewing machine can sew a hundred stitches in the time it takes you to sew one. In this unit you will find out how. You will watch a grown-up sew on a machine, see in slow motion how the top thread and the bottom thread lock together, trace and cut felt shapes from a paper pattern, and help make a drawstring treat bag. At the end you will meet Elias Howe, the American inventor who put the hole at the pointy end of the needle.

At this age a grown-up runs the machine: the adult threads it, keeps a foot on the pedal and keeps every finger safe. Your job is to choose the fabric, watch from a safe spot, help guide the paper or cloth when your grown-up says you are ready, turn the bag right side out and thread the cord. If your family does not have a sewing machine, borrow one from a relative or a friend at church for a few weeks, or visit someone who sews. Every project in this unit can also be sewn by hand by a grown-up.

PREREQUISITES

- Can sew a running stitch with a big blunt needle and yarn (Unit 3)
- Can cut along a line on paper and thin felt with child-safe scissors
- Knows that sharp tools, hot tools and machines belong to the grown-up

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can tell that a sewing machine uses two threads, a top thread and a bobbin thread, that lock together.
- ☐ I can point to the needle, the presser foot, the bobbin and the pedal, and tell who uses the pedal.
- ☐ I can follow the machine safety rules: watch from a safe spot, hands away from the needle.
- ☐ I can trace a paper pattern onto felt and cut it out with child-safe scissors.
- ☐ I can turn a bag right side out, push out the corners and thread a drawstring.
- ☐ I can tell how Elias Howe put the eye of the needle near the point.

OPTIONAL BOOKS AND TOOLS FOR THIS UNIT

- **A sewing machine to watch (borrowed is fine):** Any working home sewing machine. If your family has none, ask a grandparent, a relative or a friend at church who sews if your child may watch them sew for an afternoon. The adult runs the machine in every lesson.
- **Plastic sewing clips:** Small spring clips that hold fabric together instead of pins. Children can use them safely, and they are easy to count back into a box.
- **Smithsonian National Museum of American History: sewing machine patent models:** Free. The museum keeps a collection of small working models that inventors sent to the Patent Office in the 1800s, including Elias Howe's. Search the museum's collections site for "sewing machine patent model."

Not required. Every project in this unit works with ordinary fabric-store supplies. School Launch has no ties to these authors, publishers or companies.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

4.1 How a Sewing Machine Works	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
4.2 Pins, Clips and Patterns	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
4.3 A Simple Bag	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
4.4 Elias Howe's Needle	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes

4.1 HOW A SEWING MACHINE WORKS

OBJECTIVES

- Tell that a sewing machine needle goes up and down very fast, carrying a top thread.
- Tell that a bobbin thread underneath locks with the top thread to make a stitch.
- Follow the safety rules while watching a grown-up sew.

Warm-up. Hold up two pieces of yarn of different colors, one from above and one from below a piece of paper with a hole in it. Can you make them hook together through the hole? That is what a sewing machine does, hundreds of times a minute.

WATCH

Stitch Type 301: Double Lockstitch in Slow Motion

Groz-Beckert · 2:35

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zK9h8ByMcvG>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch the needle go down, the shiny hook spin around underneath, and the two threads lock together. Watch twice; it is in slow motion so your eyes can follow.

Note: A wordless animation from a German company that makes sewing machine needles. A parent can say “top thread” and “bobbin thread” as they move.

BACKUP VIDEO

How a sewing machine works - Animagraffs

Animagraffs · 1:38

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUSeXVt-jU>

Another short animation with labels a parent can read aloud: top thread, shuttle hook, bobbin thread.

KEY TERMS

sewing machine

A machine that sews stitches very fast with a needle and two threads.

bobbin

A little spool of thread that sits underneath, below the needle.

pedal

The part on the floor that makes the machine go. The grown-up's foot is the only foot on the pedal.

presser foot

The little metal foot that holds the cloth flat while the needle sews.

lockstitch

The stitch a sewing machine makes: the top thread and the bobbin thread lock together in the middle of the cloth.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... For thousands of years, every shirt, every dress and every coat was sewn by hand, one stitch at a time. A single shirt took many, many hours. Then, a little less than two hundred years ago, inventors built machines that could sew. Families saved up to buy one. A sewing machine was so important that a mother who sewed for other people might earn the family's living with it. In today's picture, a mother has brought her old machine to a repairman to be fixed, and her little girl watches.

Look closely. On a sewing machine, the needle goes up and down, up and down, very fast. The thread goes through the eye of the needle, and the eye is down near the point. Under the cloth hides a little spool of thread called the bobbin. When the needle pokes down through the cloth, it carries a loop of top thread with it. A spinning hook underneath catches the loop and swings it all the way around the bobbin. Then the needle comes back up, and the two threads pull tight together. That is one stitch! It is called a lockstitch.

What is happening? A machine is fast and strong, so it has safety rules. Only the grown-up's foot goes on the pedal. Hands stay flat on the table and far from the needle. Long hair is tied back. The grown-up turns the machine off before touching the needle or the thread. When you help, your hands go on top of your grown-up's hands, and the grown-up decides when to go and when to stop.

Let's make it! Today you will watch a grown-up sew, find the parts of the machine, and make a paper stitch picture. If your grown-up says you are ready, you will guide the paper with your hands on top of theirs while the machine stitches holes along your lines.

PICTURE STUDY



The Old Sewing Machine (Her Only Source of Support), Robert Koehler, late 1800s · Oil on canvas

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Robert Koehler was a painter who grew up in Milwaukee and studied painting in Germany. Here a mother has carried her sewing machine to the repairman. The painter called it “Her Only Source of Support,” because she earned the money for her family by sewing. She needs it fixed so she can work again.

Look closely

- Find the sewing machine. Who is holding it?
- Look at the mother's face. How do you think she feels?
- Find the little girl. Where is she standing? Is she close to the machine or a safe distance away?
- Find the tools on the wall. What are they for?

Talk about it

1. Why would a sewing machine be so important to this family?
2. What would you say to the mother while she waits?
3. Who fixes things at your house?

Safety first. A grown-up runs the sewing machine at all times: the grown-up threads it, keeps the only foot on the pedal and turns it off and unplugs it before touching the needle. The child watches from a safe spot, hands in lap or flat on the table at least a hand's width from the needle, with long hair tied back. Any guiding is done only when the grown-up judges the child ready, with the child's hands on top of the grown-up's.

SEWING PROJECT

A Machine-Stitched Paper Picture

The sewing machine needle can stitch little holes in paper even with no thread in it. You will draw lines, and the machine will turn them into dotted lines of holes that glow when you hold the paper up to a window.

You will need

- A sewing machine, run by the grown-up
- Crayons or markers
- A big blunt plastic needle and yarn (for the hand-sewn version)
- A hole punch or a thick darning needle for the adult (for the hand-sewn version)

MACHINE-STITCHED PAPER PICTURE

Finished size: one picture on half a sheet of paper, about $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ in (22 × 14 cm) · About 25 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 2 or 3 sheets of plain paper or light cardstock
- A dark marker for the lines
- Crayons for coloring

How to make it

1. Draw a simple picture with big, easy lines: a straight road, a wavy river and a zigzag mountain. A parent helps keep the lines far apart.
2. The grown-up takes the thread out of the machine (no top thread and no bobbin thread needed) and sets it to a slow speed. The machine stays off while the paper goes in.
3. The grown-up lowers the presser foot onto the start of the straight line and sews slowly along it. The child watches from a safe spot.
4. If the grown-up says the child is ready: the child places both hands flat on top of the grown-up's hands on the paper, and together you guide the paper along the wavy line while only the grown-up presses the pedal.
5. Sew the zigzag the same way, stopping with the needle down at each corner to turn the paper. The grown-up does the turning.
6. Hold the picture up to a window. Light shines through the tiny holes!
7. Color the picture. Hand-sewn version: a parent pokes holes along the lines $\frac{1}{2}$ inch apart, and the child sews a running stitch with yarn through the holes.

Fabric check: Plain paper or light cardstock works best. Very thick card can bend the needle. An old needle is fine for paper; the grown-up puts a fresh needle back in before sewing cloth, because paper dulls needles.

Steps

1. **Find the parts.** With the machine off and unplugged, point to the needle, the presser foot, the bobbin under the plate, the hand wheel and the pedal. Say who uses each one.
2. **Watch a real seam.** The grown-up threads the machine and sews a seam on two scraps of cotton while you watch. Then pull the seam open a little. Can you see the top thread and the bobbin thread?
3. Make the paper stitch picture from the pattern card.
4. **Count the holes.** Count the holes in one inch of your straight line. A parent tries a longer stitch. Now how many?
5. **Clean up.** The grown-up turns the machine off and unplugs it. Put the scraps in the scrap bag.

Tips

- The machine is loud and fast at first. Sit beside your grown-up and just watch until you feel calm.
- Younger children: watch and color. The grown-up sews all the lines.
- Older children: help hold the paper straight on the straight line, with hands on top of the grown-up's hands.

Check your work

- ☐ I can name the needle, the presser foot, the bobbin and the pedal.
- ☐ I can tell that two threads lock together to make each stitch.
- ☐ I followed the safety rules and kept my hands safe.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in your machine-stitched paper, or a strip of it.
2. Draw a sewing machine and label the needle, the presser foot and the pedal.
3. Draw two threads, one from the top and one from the bottom, locking together.

From history. Some of the earliest sewing machines were treadle machines: the sewer pushed a big iron foot plate up and down to turn a wheel, so no electricity was needed. Many grandmothers and great-grandmothers sewed on treadle machines.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reaching toward the needle to help. Hands stay flat and far away. The grown-up touches the needle only with the machine off.
- Thinking a machine stitch is one thread. It is two threads locked together.
- Sewing paper with the grown-up's good needle and forgetting to change it. Paper makes needles dull.

Make it a game • Needle and Bobbin. One person is the Needle and stands up. The other is the Bobbin and sits on the floor under a table. The Needle reaches a scarf (the top thread) down past the table edge. The Bobbin grabs it, swings it around, and passes it back up. Each time you lock, count one stitch. How many lockstitches can you make in one minute? Then switch jobs.

4.2 PINS, CLIPS AND PATTERNS

OBJECTIVES

- Tell what a pattern is: a paper shape used to cut cloth the right size.
- Use child-safe scissors safely: hold them right, cut away from your fingers, pass handle first.
- Trace a paper pattern onto felt, hold it with clips, and cut out two matching felt shapes.

Warm-up. Find two things in the house that match exactly: two socks, two slippers, two pillowcases. How do you think the person who made them got both pieces the same size and shape?

WATCH

Teaching Children How to Use Scissors Safely

Cassie Stephens · 5:30

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4zBYMqrm_RE

WHEN TO WATCH

Before you cut. Watch, then practice holding the scissors the way she shows, thumb on top.

Note: A cheerful elementary art teacher teaches safe scissor holding and turning the paper, not the scissors, to cut a curve.

BACKUP VIDEO

Felt Crafts: How to Cut Felt with Freezer Paper

Mollie Johanson · 2:54

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xr8DHauOIh8>

For parents: a crafter shows how to make a paper pattern that sticks to felt, so small shapes cut out neatly. She uses an iron for one step; that is the grown-up's job.

KEY TERMS

pattern

A paper shape you trace or pin onto cloth so you can cut the right size and shape.

tailor

A person whose job is to measure, cut and sew clothes.

pin

A thin, sharp metal stick with a head, used to hold cloth together. At this age, pins belong to the grown-up.

sewing clip

A small plastic clip that holds cloth together instead of a pin.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... In a village long ago, the tailor made and mended clothes for almost everyone. In today's painting by Albert Anker, an old village tailor bends over a coat at his worktable. Before a tailor sewed a new coat, he measured his customer and cut the cloth carefully from a pattern, so every piece was the right size. Pins were costly in those days, and a tailor kept them safe in a pincushion, never in his mouth.

Look closely. A pattern is a paper shape. You lay it on the cloth and trace around it, or pin it on, and then you cut along the line. Want two sleeves the same? Use the same pattern twice. Want two hearts that match for a pillow or a card? Cut them both from one paper heart. The pattern is the secret to matching pieces.

What is happening? Pins are sharp, so at your age the grown-up handles them. You can use sewing clips: little spring clips that pinch the pattern and the felt together without poking anyone. Scissors are sharp too. Child-safe scissors are for paper, yarn and felt. Hold them with your thumb on top, cut away from your fingers, and turn the paper, not the scissors, when you go around a curve. Carry scissors closed, points down, and pass them handle first. The grown-up's fabric shears are only for the grown-up and only for fabric.

Let's make it! Today you will draw a shape, cut out a paper pattern, clip it to felt, trace it and cut two matching felt shapes. Save them! You will stitch them onto a card in Lesson 4.4.

PICTURE STUDY



The Village Tailor, Albert Anker, 1894 · Oil on canvas

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Albert Anker painted the people of his Swiss village at their everyday work. In a village long ago, the tailor made and mended clothes for everyone in town. Here the old tailor bends close over a brown coat, sewing by hand.

Look closely

- Find the coat in his lap. Is he making it or mending it?
- Find the spool of thread and the scissors on the table.
- Look at his hands. How close does he hold his work?
- Look at his face. Is he in a hurry?

Talk about it

1. Why would a whole village need a tailor?
2. Before he sewed this coat, how do you think the tailor got every piece the right size?
3. Who mends clothes at your house?

Safety first. Child-safe scissors only, for paper, yarn and felt: thumb on top, cut away from your fingers, pass handle first, carry closed with points down. Pins and fabric shears belong to the grown-up; children use sewing clips. Count clips back into their box when you finish.

SEWING PROJECT

Felt Shapes from a Paper Pattern

You will make your own paper pattern and use it to cut two matching felt shapes, the way a tailor cuts matching pieces. Keep them for your stitched card in Lesson 4.4.

You will need

- Child-safe scissors
- Sewing clips or clothespins
- A pencil and a washable marker
- A small zipper bag to keep the felt shapes

MATCHING FELT SHAPES

Finished size: two matching shapes, each about 3 × 3 in (8 × 8 cm), plus one paper pattern · About 25 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 piece of plain paper or thin card for the pattern
- 1 sheet of stiff craft felt, 9 × 12 in, in a color you love
- A small scrap of felt in a second color (optional)

How to make it

1. Draw a simple shape about 3 inches across on the paper: a heart, a star, a sheep, a house or a spool of thread.
2. Cut out the paper shape. This is your pattern. Write your name on it.
3. Lay the pattern on the felt near a corner, to save the rest of the felt. Clip it on with two sewing clips.
4. Trace around the pattern with the washable marker.

5. Take off the clips and the pattern. Cut on the line, turning the felt as you go around curves.
6. Clip the pattern on again in a new spot and trace and cut a second shape.
7. Lay the two felt shapes on top of each other. Do they match? Trim any bumps. Keep them in the zipper bag with the pattern.

Fabric check: Stiff craft felt cuts most easily with child-safe scissors and does not fray. Very thin or floppy felt is harder to cut neatly. Woven cotton is cut only by the grown-up with sharp shears.

Steps

1. **Scissor check.** Show a parent how you hold the scissors, how you carry them and how you pass them.
2. **Practice first.** Cut a straight line and a curvy line on scrap paper. Turn the paper on the curve.
3. Make the pattern and the felt shapes from the pattern card.
4. **Watch the grown-up pin.** The grown-up pins a paper pattern to a piece of cotton and cuts it out with sharp shears while you watch from across the table. Count the pins out and back in together.
5. **Clean up.** Count the clips back into the box. Felt scraps go in the scrap bag for later projects.

Tips

- Big simple shapes are easiest. Skip the thin, narrow parts.
- Younger children: a parent draws the pattern and the child cuts it; cut felt shapes with the parent helping steady the felt.
- Older children: make a pattern with a fold. Fold the paper, draw half a heart against the fold, cut, and open it up. Both sides match perfectly!

Check your work

- ☐ I held, carried and passed my scissors safely.
- ☐ I made a paper pattern and cut two matching felt shapes.
- ☐ I used clips, not pins, and counted them back in.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in your paper pattern. Write what shape it is.

2. Draw the village tailor sewing at his table.
3. Draw the right way to pass scissors: handle first.

From history. Long ago, tailors often cut their own patterns from paper or cloth, and kept the patterns for each customer. Paper patterns sold in stores for home sewing came along in the 1800s, and soon families everywhere could sew from them.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Cutting the pattern from the middle of the felt. It wastes cloth. Start near a corner.
- Turning the scissors instead of the felt on a curve. The edge gets jagged. Turn the felt.
- Leaving clips on the floor. Count them back into the box.

Make it a game • Pattern Match. A parent cuts five paper patterns (a heart, a star, a circle, a square, a sheep) and five matching felt shapes, and mixes them up on the table. Close your eyes, pick up a felt shape, open your eyes and race to find its paper pattern. Lay the pattern on top: if it matches exactly, you keep the pair. Who gets the most pairs?

4.3 A SIMPLE BAG

OBJECTIVES

- Tell what a seam is and what a casing is.
- Watch the grown-up sew the side seams and the casing.
- Turn the bag right side out, push out the corners, press it with your hands and thread the drawstring.

Warm-up. Turn a pillowcase or a cloth bag inside out. Look at the inside edges. Can you find the line of stitches that holds the sides together? That line is a seam. Turn it back the right way. Where did the seam go?

WATCH

Easy drawstring bag in 10 minutes! Great for scraps

Thoughtful Creativity - CRAFT, SEW, DIY · 3:26

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TS_EHOcxzGE

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch the whole bag being made once. Then watch the part where she turns the bag right side out and threads the tie, because those are your jobs.

Note: She sews with a machine and a serger and uses an iron; at home the grown-up does every machine and iron step. Her bag holds fruit; yours will hold treats to give.

KEY TERMS

seam

A line of stitches that joins two pieces of cloth.

right side

The pretty side of the cloth, the side that shows on the outside.

wrong side

The back side of the cloth, the side that goes inside.

casing

A little tunnel of cloth at the top of a bag that the drawstring goes through.

drawstring

A cord or ribbon that you pull to close the top of a bag.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... Long ago, children often learned to sew in a sewing class at school, sitting around a big table with their teacher. In today's picture, girls in a sewing lesson work together, and one of them sits at a sewing machine. Simple bags were a favorite first project, because a bag is just a rectangle folded and sewn up the sides. People sewed bags to hold marbles, buttons, seeds, letters and gifts.

Look closely. A drawstring bag starts as one long rectangle of cloth. Fold it in half with the pretty sides facing each other, inside. Sew up the two sides. That makes two seams, and the bag is inside out. At the top, the cloth is folded over and sewn down to make a little tunnel called a casing. The drawstring goes through the tunnel.

What is happening? Why do we sew the bag inside out? So the seams and the cut edges end up on the inside, where they are hidden and safe from fraying. When you turn the bag right side out, the pretty sides show and the seams disappear inside. And why does pulling the drawstring close the bag? The string goes all the way around through the casing. When you pull it, the cloth bunches up, like a crowd of people squeezing through a doorway, and the top closes.

Let's make it! Today your grown-up sews a drawstring treat bag on the machine (or by hand), and you do the finishing work: turning, pushing out the corners, smoothing it flat with your hands and threading the drawstring. Then fill it with treats to give away.

PICTURE STUDY



A Sewing Lesson, Otto Piltz, about 1905 · Oil on canvas

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Otto Piltz was a German painter who loved to paint children in schools and homes. Here girls are having their sewing lesson. They sew by hand at the big table, and the teacher sits by the window at the sewing machine.

Look closely

- Find the sewing machine. Who is sitting at it?
- Find a girl sewing by hand. What is she holding?
- Find the windows. Why do you think the room has so many?
- Find the girl standing by the window. What is she looking at?

Talk about it

1. What do you think the girls are making?
2. Why is it fun to sew with friends at a big table?
3. Would you rather sew by hand or watch the machine? Why?

Safety first. The grown-up cuts the fabric with sharp shears, irons, pins and runs the machine while the child watches from a safe spot. The child turns, finger-presses and threads the cord with a big plastic needle or a chopstick. Drawstring bags and cords are not for babies or toddlers: cords can wrap around a neck.

SEWING PROJECT

A Drawstring Treat Bag

A little drawstring bag is a perfect first project with a machine. Your grown-up sews three straight lines, and you turn it into a finished gift.

You will need

- A sewing machine (run by the grown-up), or a hand-sewing needle and thread for the grown-up's hand-sewn version
- Fabric shears, pins and an iron (grown-up only)
- A chopstick or the blunt end of a pencil for pushing out corners
- A big plastic needle or a chopstick and tape for threading the drawstring

DRAWSTRING TREAT BAG

Finished size: one bag, about 7 × 9 in (18 × 23 cm) · About 30 minutes with the grown-up sewing

Fabric and notions

- 1 rectangle of cotton fabric, 8 × 21 in (20 × 53 cm), cut by the grown-up (an old pillowcase works)
- 1 ribbon or soft cord, 30 in (76 cm) long
- All-purpose thread to match (for the grown-up)
- Masking tape

How to make it

1. The child chooses the fabric and the ribbon. The grown-up cuts the rectangle.
2. The grown-up irons a casing: fold each short end $\frac{1}{4}$ inch to the wrong side, then 1 inch more, and press. (The iron is the grown-up's; the child watches from a safe spot.)

3. The grown-up unfolds the casings, folds the rectangle in half the short way with right sides together, and sews both side seams $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the edge, stopping just below the casing folds. Backstitch at both ends.
4. The grown-up folds the casings back down and sews each one along its bottom edge, leaving the ends open for the cord.
5. The child turns the bag right side out through the top and pushes the corners out gently with the chopstick.
6. The child smooths the bag flat with both hands, like pressing with a cool iron made of fingers.
7. Tape one end of the ribbon to the plastic needle or chopstick. Thread it into the casing on one side, all the way around both casings, and back out where it started. Tie the ends in a knot.

Fabric check: Medium-weight cotton, such as quilting cotton or an old pillowcase, is easiest to sew and turn. Avoid slippery, stretchy or very thin fabrics. Hand-sewn version: the grown-up sews the seams and casings with a small backstitch.

Steps

1. **Inside-out test.** Before the grown-up sews, fold the rectangle right sides together. Is the pretty side inside? Good. That is how seams get hidden.
2. **Watch the seam.** Sit in your safe spot and watch the grown-up sew the side seams. Count out loud how long it takes.
3. Finish the bag from the pattern card.
4. **Pull test.** Pull the drawstring closed. Does the top bunch up and close? Put three small treats inside and shake. Do they stay in?
5. **Give it.** Fill the bag and give it to a grandparent, a neighbor or a friend.
6. **Clean up.** The grown-up unplugs the iron and the machine and counts the pins back in. Fabric scraps go in the scrap bag.

Tips

- Push corners out gently. Poking too hard can make a hole.
- Younger children: the grown-up starts the ribbon into the casing and the child pulls it through.

- Older children: glue or sew a felt shape from Lesson 4.2 onto the front with big running stitches before the grown-up sews the bag.

Check your work

- ☐ I can point to a seam and a casing.
- ☐ I turned the bag right side out and pushed out the corners.
- ☐ I threaded the drawstring all the way around.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in a scrap of your bag fabric and a short piece of the ribbon.
2. Draw the bag inside out and right side out. Where are the seams?
3. Draw who you gave your bag to, and what was inside.

From history. A hundred years ago, many schools taught sewing to girls and some to boys. A drawstring bag, a needle case or an apron was often the first thing a child sewed in class.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Sewing the bag with the pretty side out. The seams show. Pretty sides face each other inside.
- Threading the cord through only one casing. The bag will not close all the way. Go around both.
- Reaching for the iron or the machine to help. Those are the grown-up's jobs.

Make it a game • Mystery Bag. A parent secretly puts one thing inside your new drawstring bag: a button, a spool, a cotton ball, a sock. Pull the string closed. Without looking, feel the bag from the outside and guess what is inside. Then let the parent take a turn while you choose. Use only things from this year's lessons!

4.4 ELIAS HOWE'S NEEDLE

OBJECTIVES

- Tell who Elias Howe was and what he changed about the needle.
- Tell that Howe got a patent for his sewing machine in 1846.
- Make a stitched felt card with a sewing machine picture.

Warm-up. Look at a big plastic needle. Where is the eye? Now imagine a needle with the eye at the pointy end. That sounds silly for hand sewing. But it was the very idea that made the sewing machine work!

WATCH

How the Sewing Machine Changed Daily Life | The Henry Ford's Innovation Nation

The Henry Ford · 3:42

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i3kh2CDAccU>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch the old sewing machines in the museum, and listen for the names Elias Howe and Isaac Singer.

Note: From The Henry Ford museum in Michigan. A museum curator shows real machines from the 1800s and tells how they changed home life.

KEY TERMS

inventor

A person who makes something new that no one has made before.

Elias Howe

An American inventor who built a sewing machine with the needle's eye near the point and got a patent for it in 1846.

patent

A paper from the government that says,
“This invention belongs to this inventor.”

Isaac Singer

An American inventor who built a sewing machine in 1851. His company soon sold sewing machines to families for their homes.

CORE IDEAS

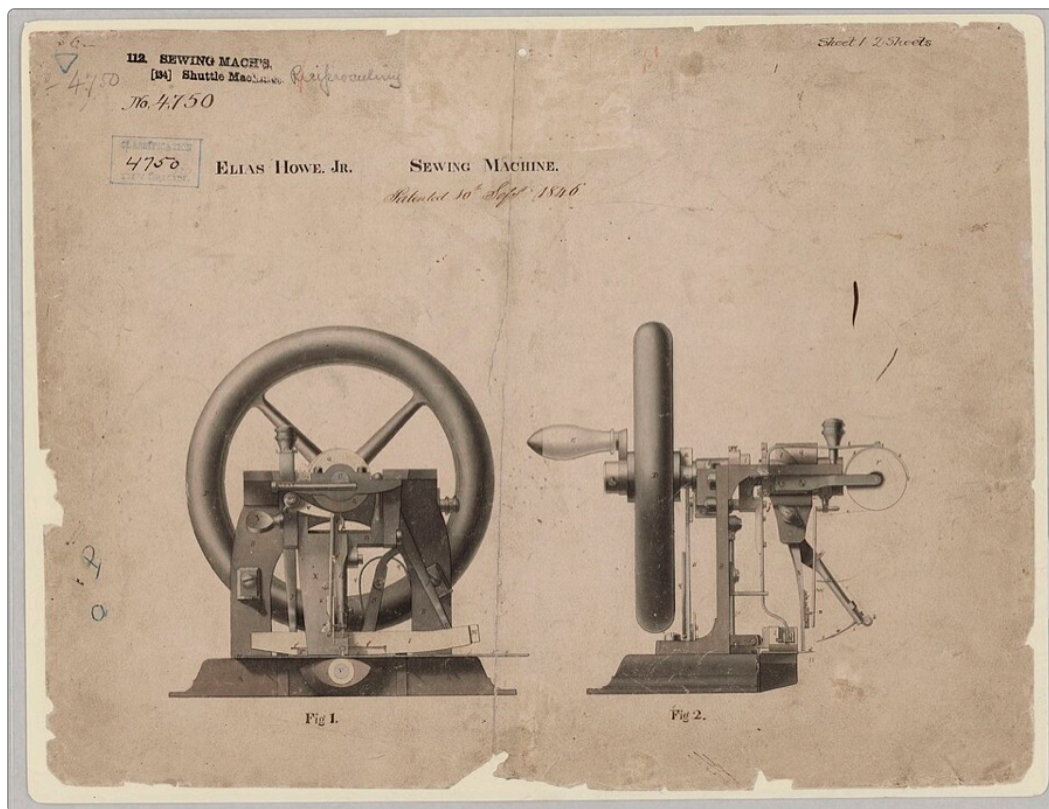
The story. About one hundred eighty years ago, a young man named Elias Howe grew up on a farm in Massachusetts. Later he worked in a machine shop in Boston, where he heard people say that whoever could build a machine that sewed would do very well. Howe began to try. At first he tried to make a machine move a needle just like a person's hand. It did not work. A hand pushes a needle all the way through the cloth and pulls it out the other side, but a machine cannot let go of the needle.

How he figured it out. Howe had a new idea: put the eye of the needle near the point. The needle would only go partway into the cloth, leave a loop of thread underneath, and come back up. Then a shuttle carrying a second thread would pass through the loop and lock the two threads together. He worked hard, built his machine, and in 1846 the government gave him a patent for it. (There is an old story that the idea came to Howe in a dream. It is a famous tale, but no one knows if it really happened.)

What is happening? Howe's needle is the same kind of needle in sewing machines today: the eye is at the bottom near the point. A few years later, in 1851, an inventor named Isaac Singer built a machine that worked well, and before long his company was selling sewing machines to families for their homes. Soon sewing machines were everywhere, and clothes could be made much faster. God made people to be makers and thinkers, and inventing is part of that good work.

Let's make it! Today you will make a card with a sewing machine on the front, using the matching felt shapes you cut in Lesson 4.2, and stitch a dotted border around it like a machine's line of stitches. Give it to someone who sews.

PICTURE STUDY



Elias Howe Jr., Sewing Machine (patent drawing), Elias Howe Jr., for the U.S. Patent Office, 1846 · Ink drawing on paper · National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

When an inventor asks for a patent, he sends careful drawings to show exactly how his invention works. This is the drawing for Elias Howe's sewing machine from 1846. It is kept at the National Archives, where the United States keeps its important papers.

Look closely

- Find the two drawings. How are they different?
- Find the big round wheel. What do you think turns it?
- Find where the needle would go up and down.
- Find the old handwriting at the top. It says Elias Howe Jr. and Sewing Machine.

Talk about it

1. Why does an inventor need to make such careful drawings?
2. How is this machine like a sewing machine today? How is it different?

3. If you could invent something, what would it be?

Safety first. Count the needle out and back in. The grown-up punches the holes in the card with a hole punch or a thick needle. Glue sticks stay capped when not in use.

SEWING PROJECT

A Stitched Felt Sewing-Machine Card

You will make a folded card with a sewing machine on the front and a running-stitch border all around, like the stitch line a machine sews. Inside, write a thank-you to someone who sews for your family.

You will need

- A big blunt plastic needle and a needle tin
- Child-safe scissors
- A glue stick
- Crayons or markers
- A hole punch (grown-up)

STITCHED SEWING-MACHINE CARD

Finished size: one folded card, about 6 × 9 in (15 × 23 cm) when folded · About 35 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 sheet of 9 × 12 in cardstock or construction paper, folded in half
- The two matching felt shapes from Lesson 4.2, or one felt rectangle about 3 × 4 in for the machine body
- Small felt or paper scraps for the wheel and the needle
- About 1 yard of worsted yarn

How to make it

1. Fold the cardstock in half to make a card.
2. On the front, build a sewing machine: glue a felt rectangle for the body, a felt circle for the wheel and a thin strip for the needle. Or glue your two matching felt shapes from Lesson 4.2 on the front as decorations.

3. Draw a spool of thread on top and a dotted stitch line coming out under the needle.
4. The grown-up punches holes all around the edge of the front of the card, about ½ inch in and 1 inch apart.
5. Thread the needle with the yarn. A parent tapes the end inside the card.
6. Sew a running stitch through the holes all the way around: up, down, up, down, like a machine's straight seam.
7. A parent tapes the end inside. Write a message inside, or tell a parent what to write.

Fabric check: Cardstock holds its shape for stitching; thin paper tears. Stiff craft felt glues on well with a glue stick or white glue.

Steps

1. **Eye check.** Look at a real sewing machine needle (the grown-up holds it). Find the eye near the point, like Howe's needle. Then back it goes into its case.
2. Make the stitched card from the pattern card.
3. **Tell the story.** Hold your card and tell someone what Elias Howe figured out.
4. **Give it.** Give the card to someone who sews or mends for your family, or to someone who helped you this unit.
5. **Count in and clean up.** Needle back in the tin. Felt scraps in the scrap bag.

Tips

- Draw the machine first in pencil, then add felt.
- Younger children: glue the felt shapes and draw; the parent starts the stitching and the child finishes it.
- Older children: draw two threads under the machine, one from the top and one from the bobbin, locking together.

Check your work

- ☐ I can tell where Howe put the eye of the needle.
- ☐ I sewed a running-stitch border all around my card.
- ☐ I gave my card to someone.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Draw a hand-sewing needle and a machine needle side by side. Circle the eye on each.
2. Draw Elias Howe's machine from the patent drawing.
3. A parent writes the date 1846 and the child's words about Howe's idea.

From history. Inventors in the 1800s often sent a small working model of their invention to the Patent Office along with the drawings. Some of those little sewing machine models are still kept at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Thinking Elias Howe made the very first sewing machine. Others tried before him, but his needle and shuttle idea worked, and he got a patent in 1846.
- Mixing up Howe and Singer. Howe's patent came first (1846); Singer's machine came a few years later (1851).
- Sewing through two holes at once. Go one hole at a time.

Make it a game • Inventor's Workshop. Give each player a pencil, a piece of yarn and some tape. The challenge: make a "needle" that carries the yarn through a hole in a paper plate with the eye at the point end (tape the yarn near the tip of the pencil). Push the pencil partway through the hole and pull it back out, leaving a loop of yarn underneath. Can a partner underneath catch the loop with another yarn? Then try it with the eye at the top. Which works for a machine?

UNIT 4 REVIEW

Ask these out loud, sitting near the sewing machine (turned off and unplugged). There are no points and no writing. The child may answer by telling, pointing or showing.

1. Point to the needle, the presser foot and the pedal. Whose foot goes on the pedal?
2. How many threads does a sewing machine use to make one stitch? Show me with two pieces of yarn.
3. Show me the safe way to hold, carry and pass scissors.
4. What is a pattern? Why do we use one?
5. Why do we sew a bag inside out?
6. What did Elias Howe change about the needle? When did he get his patent?

UNIT CHALLENGE: A TREAT BAG FOR SOMEONE SPECIAL

Make a second drawstring bag, and this time you choose everything: the fabric, the ribbon and who it is for. Before the grown-up sews it, cut a felt shape from your own paper pattern and sew it onto the front with big running stitches (the grown-up can tack it with a few machine stitches too). The grown-up sews the seams and casing on the machine or by hand; you turn it, push out the corners, smooth it and thread the drawstring.

Fill it with something the person will love and give it with a card. Make a notebook page with a fabric scrap, your paper pattern and a drawing of the person who received the bag.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
My choices	The child chose the fabric, ribbon and felt shape and can tell why.
My jobs done well	The bag is turned right side out with corners pushed out, smoothed flat, and the drawstring goes around both casings.
Safe around the machine	The child stayed in the safe spot, kept hands away from the needle, and left the pedal, iron, pins and shears to the grown-up.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Given with love	The bag was filled and given, and the child can tell the story of Elias Howe's needle.

ANSWER KEY

1. The child points to each part. Only the grown-up's foot goes on the pedal.
2. Two: the top thread and the bobbin thread. They lock together in the middle of the cloth.
3. Thumb on top when cutting; carry closed with points down; pass handle first.
4. A paper shape we trace or clip onto cloth, so we can cut pieces the right size and make matching pieces.
5. So the seams and cut edges end up hidden inside when we turn it right side out.
6. He put the eye near the point so the machine needle could go partway in and leave a loop. He got his patent in 1846.

CROCHET

Crochet is a way of making fabric from one long strand of yarn and a hook, one loop pulled through another. The very first thing every crocheter learns is the chain: a line of loops, each one hanging from the last, like links in a chain. In this unit you will make chains with your fingers, then with a big fat hook and chunky yarn. You will turn your chains into a necklace, a measuring rope, a bookmark with a tassel, and a garland of fluffy pom-poms.

The word crochet comes from a French word that means “little hook.” Crochet became popular about two hundred years ago, and in hard times some families earned their living by crocheting lace to sell. You will count a lot in this unit: loops, chains, and wraps of yarn. And you will give some of what you make away.

PREREQUISITES

- Can pull yarn through a loop or a hole (Units 3 and 4)
- Can count to twenty, or count with a grown-up's help
- Knows that yarn is never wrapped around a neck or fingers until they hurt

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can make a chain with my fingers, pulling a loop through a loop.
- ☐ I can make a chain with a big crochet hook and chunky yarn.
- ☐ I can count my chains.
- ☐ I can make a tassel and a pom-pom with a grown-up's help.
- ☐ I can tell what the word crochet means: little hook.

OPTIONAL BOOKS AND TOOLS FOR THIS UNIT

- **A jumbo crochet hook:** A big plastic hook, size N (9 mm) or bigger, is easiest for small hands. Craft stores sell them alone or in sets. A wooden spoon handle or a finger works too.
- **Craft Yarn Council: Hooks and Needles:** Free. A chart that matches hook sizes (letters and millimeters) to yarn weights. For this unit, look for bulky (5) or super bulky (6) yarn on the label.
- **Chunky yarn in bright colors:** A skein or two of bulky or super bulky acrylic or cotton yarn. Thick yarn makes big loops that little fingers can see and hold.

Not required. Every project in this unit works with ordinary fabric-store supplies. School Launch has no ties to these authors, publishers or companies.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

5.1 Finger Chains	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
5.2 A Big Hook	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
5.3 Chains into Things	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
5.4 A Pom-Pom	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes

5.1 FINGER CHAINS

OBJECTIVES

- Make a slip knot with a grown-up's help.
- Make a chain with your fingers, pulling one loop through another.
- Make a finger-chain necklace or bracelet.

Warm-up. Link two paper clips together. Now link a third onto the second, and a fourth onto the third. Hold it up. That is a chain! Each link hangs from the one before. Today you will make a chain out of yarn loops.

WATCH

How to: Make a CROCHET CHAIN by Hand (without a Crochet Hook)

[Rokolee DIY](#) · 2:45

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_sXQXGr_zU

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch the slip knot part twice. Then make your slip knot with a grown-up and watch the chain part, pausing after every few loops to make your own.

Note: Calm close-up hands, no hook needed. A grown-up can learn the slip knot first and then teach it.

KEY TERMS

crochet

Making fabric by pulling loops of yarn through other loops with a hook. The word means “little hook.”

chain

A line of loops, each one pulled through the one before.

slip knot

A loop with a knot that can slide tighter or looser. Every chain starts with one.

working yarn

The yarn that comes from the ball, that you pull through to make each new loop.

CORE IDEAS

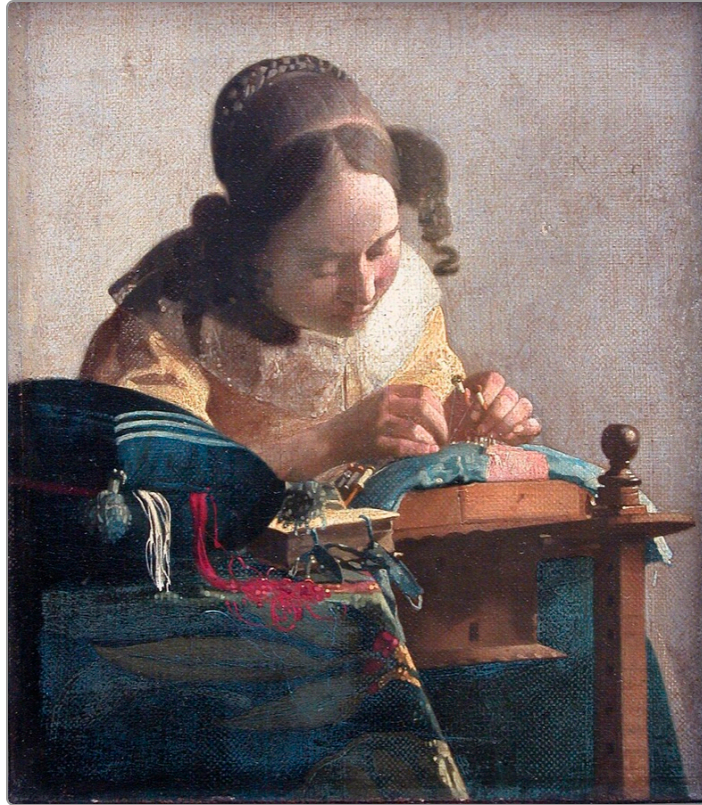
Long ago... About two hundred years ago, crochet became a favorite kind of handwork in many countries. People crocheted lace collars, doilies, blankets and shawls. In Ireland, when times were very hard and food was scarce, many families crocheted beautiful lace to sell, and the money helped them buy what they needed. In today's picture, a young woman bends close over her lace work. Her fingers are busy with fine threads. Your first crochet will use big yarn and your own fingers.

Look closely. Every crochet project starts with a slip knot. A slip knot is a loop with a little knot that slides. Put the loop over your finger. Now reach through the loop, grab the working yarn (the yarn from the ball), and pull it through. You made a new loop! Let the old loop slide off and snug up. Reach through the new loop, grab, pull. Again and again. A chain grows from your fingers.

What is happening? Look at your chain. On one side you see a row of little V shapes, like the knit fabric you looked at in Unit 2. Each loop holds onto the loop before it. If you pull the working yarn, the whole chain stays together. But if you pull the last loop wide and tug the yarn, the whole chain pulls out! Each loop depends on the next. That is why we always finish by pulling the yarn end through the last loop to lock it.

Let's make it! Today you will finger-chain a long necklace or a bracelet in your favorite color, and maybe one more to give to a friend.

PICTURE STUDY



The Lacemaker, Johannes Vermeer, about 1669–1670 · Oil on canvas mounted on panel · Louvre Museum, Paris

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Johannes Vermeer was a Dutch painter who painted quiet rooms full of soft light. This is one of his smallest paintings, about the size of a sheet of notebook paper. A young woman makes lace, working with very fine threads. She is so careful that she does not look up at all.

Look closely

- Find her hands. How many fingers are working?
- Find the red and white threads spilling out of the blue cushion.
- Look at her face. Is she in a hurry?
- Find the little wooden bobbins she holds. They hold her threads.

Talk about it

1. Why do you think she has to be so careful?
2. Lace is made of lots of loops and holes. Where have you seen lace?

3. How is your finger chain like her work? How is it different?

Safety first. Yarn necklaces and bracelets are for wearing while awake with a grown-up nearby: take them off for sleep and for climbing or rough play, and never put one on a baby or toddler. Never wrap yarn tight around fingers. A grown-up cuts yarn with scissors or the child uses child-safe scissors.

SEWING PROJECT

A Finger-Chain Necklace

You will make a long finger chain and tie it into a necklace or a bracelet. Chunky yarn in a bright color makes it fast and fun.

You will need

- Child-safe scissors
- A tape measure or ruler

FINGER-CHAIN NECKLACE OR BRACELET

Finished size: one necklace about 24 in (61 cm) around, or one bracelet about 7 in (18 cm) · About 20 minutes

Fabric and notions

- About 4 yards of bulky or super bulky yarn
- 3 big wooden beads, $\frac{3}{4}$ in (2 cm) or larger, with holes that fit the yarn (optional, older children only)

How to make it

1. With a grown-up, make a slip knot about 6 inches from the end of the yarn, and slip the loop onto your pointer finger.
2. Reach your thumb and pointer finger through the loop, pinch the working yarn, and pull it through to make a new loop.
3. Pull gently on the tail to snug the old loop. Not too tight!
4. Keep going, loop through loop, counting out loud, until the chain is about 22 inches long for a necklace or 6 inches for a bracelet.

5. To finish, cut the working yarn, leaving a 6-inch tail. Pull the tail all the way through the last loop and tug to lock it.
6. If you like, slide the beads onto one tail.
7. A grown-up ties the two tails together in a double knot. Trim the ends.

Fabric check: Bulky or super bulky acrylic yarn shows each loop clearly and comes in every color. Cotton yarn is a good choice for anyone sensitive to wool. Smooth yarn is easier than fuzzy or bumpy yarn.

Steps

1. **Practice the slip knot.** Make three slip knots with your grown-up. Can you make one alone?
2. **Practice loops.** Make ten loops, count them, then pull the end and watch the chain disappear. Now make ten again.
3. Make the necklace or bracelet from the pattern card.
4. **Count it.** Count every loop in your chain. A parent writes the number in your notebook.
5. **Clean up.** Wind leftover yarn back on the ball. Yarn ends go in the trash, not on the floor where pets can find them.

Tips

- Keep the loops loose enough to pinch. Tight loops are hard to pull through.
- Younger children: a grown-up holds the loop open while the child pulls the yarn through.
- Older children: make a second chain in a new color and twist the two together.

Check your work

- ☐ I made a slip knot with my grown-up's help.
- ☐ I made a chain by pulling one loop through another.
- ☐ I locked the end so my chain does not pull out.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in a short finger chain, about 10 loops long. A parent writes how many loops are in your whole necklace.
2. Draw a chain of loops, each one hanging from the one before.
3. Draw the lacemaker's hands and her red threads.

From history. Irish crochet lace became famous all over the world in the 1800s. Teachers traveled from village to village showing families how to crochet lace collars and edgings that could be sold in big cities.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Pulling every loop very tight. The chain gets hard to work. Keep loops loose.
- Pulling the tail instead of the working yarn. Find the yarn that goes to the ball.
- Forgetting to lock the end. The chain pulls out. Pull the tail through the last loop.

Make it a game • Chain Count-Off. Each player makes a finger chain while a parent sets a timer for two minutes. When the timer rings, stop and count your loops out loud together. Who made the most? Now race again, but this time the winner is whoever has the most even loops, all the same size. Hang the chains side by side to judge.

5.2 A BIG HOOK

OBJECTIVES

- Hold a big crochet hook and chunky yarn.
- Make a chain with a hook: yarn over, pull through.
- Make a chain as long as you are tall, and use it to measure a room.

Warm-up. Look at a crochet hook. Find the little hook at the end. Run your finger over it. Is it sharp? (No, it is smooth and rounded.) What do you think the hook is for?

WATCH

How to Crochet a Chain (For The Absolute Beginner!)

Fiber Flux • 2:21

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7v-mssy5rKU>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch once, then again with your hook and yarn in hand. Pause after “yarn over” and “pull through” and do each step yourself.

Note: Clear close-up hands making a slip knot and a chain with a hook. She uses medium yarn; you will use chunky yarn and a big hook, which is easier to see.

KEY TERMS

crochet hook

A smooth stick with a little hook at one end, for pulling loops of yarn through other loops.

yarn over

Wrapping the working yarn over the hook from back to front.

pull through

Pulling the hook, with its new loop, back through the loop on the hook.

chunky yarn

Very thick yarn, also called bulky. It makes big loops that are easy to see.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... Crochet hooks have been made from wood, bone, ivory, steel and, today, plastic and aluminum. In today's picture, a girl stands in a green field crocheting while her goat comes to see what she is doing. Many people liked crochet because they could carry it anywhere: a hook and a ball of yarn fit in a pocket. Shepherds and farm girls could crochet while they watched animals in the field.

Look closely. A hook does the same job your fingers did in Lesson 5.1, but faster and neater. Start with a slip knot on the hook. Wrap the yarn over the hook from back to front. That is called a yarn over. Then turn the hook so it catches the yarn, and pull it through the loop on the hook. Now you have one chain! Yarn over, pull through. Yarn over, pull through. Say it out loud like a little song.

What is happening? A big hook makes big loops, and big loops make a long chain fast. A hook marked N or 9 millimeters is fat and easy to hold. Hold it like a pencil or like a spoon, whichever is comfortable. Your other hand holds the chain just under the hook so it does not wiggle. Every chain you make is one stitch. When grown-ups read a crochet pattern, they see "ch" for chain. Ch 10 means "make ten chains."

Let's make it! Today you will crochet a long chain, as long as you are tall. Then you will use your "me-long" chain as a measuring rope to find out how many of you it takes to cross the room!

PICTURE STUDY



Maid Crocheting in a Field, with a Goat, Edith Martineau, before 1909 · Watercolor

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Edith Martineau was an English painter who painted gentle watercolors of country life. Here a girl crochets out in the field, and a curious goat wants to see. Crochet was work you could carry anywhere.

Look closely

- Find the girl's hands. What is she making?
- Find the goat. What is it doing?
- Look at her clothes: the long dress and the bonnet. Why would she wear a bonnet in a field?
- Find the trees and the white flowers.

Talk about it

1. Why do you think she brought her crochet out to the field?
2. What would you say if a goat came to see your crochet?
3. Where would you like to sit and crochet?

Safety first. Crochet hooks are smooth tools, not for poking: keep the hook pointed down at your work, never toward a face, and put it in the tin when you stop. Never wrap the chain around anyone's neck, and keep long chains away from babies and pets.

SEWING PROJECT

My Me-Long Measuring Chain

You will crochet a chain exactly as long as you are tall. Then use it to measure the room: how many of you does it take?

You will need

- A big crochet hook, size N (9 mm) or larger
- Child-safe scissors
- A tape measure
- A piece of masking tape

ME-LONG MEASURING CHAIN

Finished size: one chain as long as the child is tall, about 3½ to 4½ ft (1.1 to 1.4 m) · About 30 minutes, in short turns

Fabric and notions

- 1 ball of bulky or super bulky yarn in one bright color (about 15 yards is plenty)
- A strip of masking tape for a name flag

How to make it

1. Lie down on the floor. A grown-up lays the yarn from the top of your head to your heels, to see how long the chain must be.
2. Make a slip knot on the hook, about 6 inches from the end of the yarn.
3. Yarn over, pull through. That is one chain. Say “one.”
4. Keep going: yarn over, pull through. Every ten chains, take a short rest and shake out your hands.
5. Stretch the chain beside you on the floor. Keep crocheting until it reaches from your head to your heels.

6. Cut the yarn, leaving a 6-inch tail, and pull it through the last loop to lock it.
7. Wrap a strip of masking tape around one end as a flag, and a parent writes your name and the date on it.

Fabric check: Smooth, bulky acrylic yarn is easiest and shows each loop. Chunky cotton yarn works well too. Avoid fuzzy or very stretchy yarn; it hides the loops.

Steps

1. **Count out.** Put your hook in the tin and say “one hook out.”
2. **Practice first.** Make ten chains. Look at them. Are the loops about the same size? Pull them out and make ten more, a little neater.
3. Make the me-long chain from the pattern card.
4. **Measure the room.** Lay your chain along one wall, end to end, again and again. How many me-longs is the room? Measure a table, a bed and a hallway too. A parent writes the numbers in the notebook.
5. **Count in and clean up.** Hook back in the tin. Coil your chain loosely and keep it for Lesson 5.4.

Tips

- If the hook keeps dropping the loop, turn the hook down a little as you pull through.
- Younger children: hold the hook while a grown-up does the yarn over, then pull through together.
- Older children: also crochet a chain as long as a grown-up is tall, and compare.

Check your work

- ☐ I made a chain with a hook: yarn over, pull through.
- ☐ My chain is as long as I am tall.
- ☐ I measured three things in the house with my chain.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Draw your me-long chain on the floor next to you.
2. A parent writes your measuring numbers: “The kitchen is ... me-longs. The table is ... me-longs.”
3. Draw the girl in the field and her goat.

From history. Before tape measures, people often measured with their own bodies: a foot, a hand, the length from the nose to the fingertips. Tailors and builders later agreed on measures that everyone could share, like the inch and the yard.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Pulling every chain so tight the hook will not fit. Keep loops loose and roomy.
- Wrapping the yarn the wrong way. Yarn over goes from back to front over the hook.
- Measuring with the chain stretched tight one time and loose the next. Lay it flat and straight every time.

Make it a game • How Many Me-Longs?. Guess first! Before measuring each thing, everyone guesses how many me-longs long it is: the couch, the hallway, the kitchen table. Then measure with your chain. Whoever's guess is closest wins a point. After five things, the player with the most points chooses the next thing to measure in the whole house.

5.3 CHAINS INTO THINGS

OBJECTIVES

- Turn a crochet chain into something useful.
- Make a yarn tassel with a grown-up's help.
- Make a chain-stitch bookmark with a tassel.

Warm-up. Look at the end of a curtain tieback, a graduation cap, or a fancy pillow. Do you see a tassel? A tassel is a little bundle of yarn tied at the top. Where else have you seen one?

WATCH

How to make a Tassel - Quick & Easy Yarn Tassel DIY - CRAFT BASICS

Red Ted Art (Maggy Woodley) • 3:02

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h144Rix4MTI>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch how she wraps the yarn around her hand, ties the top, wraps the neck and cuts the loops. Watch it twice, then make your tassel with a grown-up.

Note: Close-up hands only. She cuts with small sharp scissors; at home a child may use child-safe scissors, or the grown-up does the cutting of the loops.

KEY TERMS

tassel

A bundle of yarn strands tied together near the top, with loose ends hanging down.

bookmark

A strip you put in a book to keep your place.

felt strip

A long, narrow piece of felt, the base of your bookmark.

neck

The part of the tassel where yarn is wrapped tight, just below the top.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... In today's painting from Holland, made more than three hundred fifty years ago, a young woman makes lace at a little pillow. Lace is made of threads looped, twisted and joined in tiny patterns, and it was used to trim collars, caps and cuffs. All of it began with simple steps done over and over, like your chain.

Look closely. A chain is a line. But a line can become many things. Lay a chain along the edge of a felt strip, and it becomes a pretty border. Coil it round and round, and it becomes a little mat. Tie a tassel on the end, and it becomes a bookmark tail. Crocheters say that once you can make a chain, you can make almost anything, because every crochet project starts with one.

What is happening? A tassel is many strands folded in half and tied tight at the top. The tie at the top holds them all together. Then a wrap of yarn around the neck, just below the top, squeezes the strands into a round head. When you cut the bottom loops, they fall open into a soft brush.

Let's make it! Today you will make a bookmark from a felt strip with a crochet chain glued around its edge and a yarn tassel hanging from the top. Use it in your favorite book, or give it to someone who loves to read.

PICTURE STUDY



The Lace-Maker, Caspar Netscher, 1662 · Oil on canvas · Wallace Collection, London

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Caspar Netscher painted this in Holland in 1662, at about the same time Vermeer was painting. A young woman sits in a plain, quiet room making lace. She has slipped off her shoes and is working hard.

Look closely

- Find her lace pillow. Where is it sitting?
- Find her shoes on the floor.
- Find the broom against the wall.
- Look at the wall. Is the room fancy or plain?

Talk about it

1. Why do you think she sits so close to her work?
2. How is this painting like Vermeer's *Lacemaker*? How is it different?
3. Where would you like to sit when you do quiet handwork?

Safety first. A grown-up cuts the tassel loops with sharp scissors, or the child uses child-safe scissors with help. White glue stays on the paper plate and is capped when not in use. Keep tassels and short yarn bits away from babies and pets.

SEWING PROJECT

A Chain-Border Bookmark with a Tassel

You will crochet (or finger-chain) a chain, glue it around a felt strip as a border, and tie a tassel to the top. It is a gift any reader will use.

You will need

- A big crochet hook (or your fingers)
- Child-safe scissors
- A hole punch (grown-up)
- White glue and a paper plate
- A piece of stiff card about 4 in (10 cm) long for winding the tassel

CHAIN-BORDER BOOKMARK

Finished size: one bookmark, about 2 × 7 in (5 × 18 cm) plus a 3-inch tassel · About 40 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 strip of stiff craft felt, 2 × 7 in
- About 2 yards of worsted or bulky yarn for the chain
- About 4 yards of yarn for the tassel, in the same or another color
- White glue

How to make it

1. Crochet or finger-chain a chain about 20 inches long, long enough to go all around the felt strip. Lock the end.
2. Spread a thin line of white glue around the edge of the felt strip, about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in.
3. Press the chain onto the glue all the way around. Where the two ends meet, tuck the tails under. Let it dry flat.

4. Tassel: wrap the tassel yarn around the 4-inch card about 20 times.
5. Slide a 10-inch piece of yarn under the wraps at the top of the card and tie it tight. Leave the long ends; they will tie the tassel on.
6. Slip the wraps off the card. A grown-up wraps another piece of yarn around the neck, about ½ inch below the top, and knots it. Cut the loops at the bottom and trim them even.
7. A grown-up punches a hole at the top of the bookmark. Tie the tassel through the hole with its long ends.

Fabric check: Stiff craft felt makes a bookmark that will not flop. Worsted or bulky yarn makes a nice raised chain. Any yarn makes a tassel; acrylic and cotton are easy to cut and hold their shape.

Steps

1. **Practice a tassel.** Make a tiny tassel first by wrapping yarn around two fingers ten times. Tie the top and cut the bottom.
2. Make the bookmark from the pattern card.
3. **Read with it.** When the glue is dry, put the bookmark in a book. Does the tassel hang out the top?
4. **Give one.** Make a second bookmark and give it to someone who reads to you.
5. **Clean up.** Cap the glue. Yarn bits in the trash. Hook back in the tin.

Tips

- Use only a thin line of glue; too much soaks through and gets messy.
- Younger children: finger-chain instead of hook, and a grown-up ties the tassel.
- Older children: glue a second chain in a wavy line down the middle.

Check your work

- ☐ I made a chain and glued it all around my bookmark.
- ☐ I made a tassel with help.
- ☐ I gave a bookmark to someone who reads.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in a tiny tassel.
2. Draw three things you could make from a chain.

3. Draw the lace-maker's shoes on the floor.

From history. Lace made with threads and bobbins on a pillow, like the lace in Netscher's painting, is called bobbin lace. Lacemakers in Holland, Belgium and France made it for hundreds of years.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Making the chain too short to go around. Lay it around the felt before you lock it, and add more chains if needed.
- Cutting the tassel loops before tying the top. The strands fall apart. Tie first, then cut.
- Using a puddle of glue. A thin line is enough.

Make it a game • Tassel Toss. Make three practice tassels. Set a basket on the floor and stand three big steps away. Toss the tassels into the basket. Every tassel that lands inside is a point. Then take one step back and toss again. When you are done, count the tassels back into your sewing box.

5.4 A POM-POM

OBJECTIVES

- Make a cardboard pom-pom maker with a grown-up.
- Wrap yarn around the maker, count the wraps and help tie the middle.
- Make pom-poms for a hat topper or a garland to give.

Warm-up. Look at a winter hat with a pom-pom, or a picture of one. Squeeze the pom-pom. How do you think it is made? Is it one piece, or lots of little pieces?

WATCH

How to Make Easy Yarn Pom Poms with a Cardboard Maker

[Needlepointers](#) • 6:34

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfPne1zVL98>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch how the yarn wraps around and around the cardboard, then how the middle is tied tight before the loops are cut.

Note: A grown-up's hands, calm and slow. She cuts the loops with sharp scissors; that step is the grown-up's job at this age.

BACKUP VIDEO

How to make a Pom Pom maker Tutorial (Craft Basics - Yarn Pom Pom)

[Red Ted Art \(Maggy Woodley\)](#) • 6:48

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXFCO3LBJss>

Another way: a round cardboard pom-pom maker made from two rings traced around a glass. Good for a round, fluffy pom-pom.

KEY TERMS

pom-pom

A fluffy ball made of many short pieces of yarn tied tight in the middle.

wrap

One trip of the yarn around the pom-pom maker.

pom-pom maker

A piece of cardboard (or a plastic tool) that the yarn is wrapped around.

trim

To snip the ends a little at a time to make something neat and round.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... People have made yarn tassels and pom-poms for a long time, to trim hats, caps and shawls. Many old winter caps had a pom-pom on top. In today's picture, a young woman sits by a sunny window with her yarn work, and a basket of yarn waits on the windowsill. Her room is quiet and warm, a good place for handwork.

Look closely. A pom-pom is made from lots of loops of yarn wrapped around and around something, all tied tightly together in the middle. When the loops are cut, every loop becomes two short pieces. All those short ends fluff out in every direction, and the tie in the middle holds them like a belt. The more wraps you make, the fatter and fluffier the pom-pom will be.

What is happening? Count your wraps. Fifty wraps make a thin pom-pom. A hundred wraps make a fat one. That is why counting matters! The tie in the middle must be very tight, or the pieces will fall out. A grown-up pulls it tight and ties a double knot. Then the grown-up cuts the loops, and you fluff and roll the pom-pom between your hands. If some pieces stick out, a little trim makes it round.

Let's make it! Today you will make two or three pom-poms. Tie one on top of a winter hat, or string them on the chain you crocheted in Lesson 5.2 to make a garland to give.

PICTURE STUDY



Young Woman Crocheting at the Window, Rudolf Epp, before 1910 · Oil on canvas

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Rudolf Epp was a German painter who painted country homes and the people in them. Here a young woman crochets by a window in a cozy room. The sunlight shows us everything she needs.

Look closely

- Find her hands. What do you think she is making?
- Find the basket and the ball of thread. What might be in the basket?
- Find the sunlight on the floor. Where is it coming from?
- Find the red geraniums at the window.

Talk about it

1. Why do people like to sit by a window to sew or crochet?
2. How does this room make you feel?
3. Where is the coziest spot in your house for handwork?

Safety first. A grown-up cuts the cardboard and cuts the yarn loops with sharp scissors; the child wraps, counts and fluffs. Pom-poms are a choking risk for babies and toddlers: keep them away from little ones, and do not put pom-poms on a baby's hat.

SEWING PROJECT

Pom-Poms for a Hat or a Garland

You will wrap and count your way to a fluffy pom-pom, and make enough for a hat topper or a garland to hang on a door or give away.

You will need

- Stiff cardboard and sharp scissors (grown-up)
- Child-safe scissors for yarn ends
- Your me-long chain from Lesson 5.2 (for a garland)
- A big blunt plastic needle

CARDBOARD-MAKER POM-POMS

Finished size: two or three pom-poms, each about 2 in (5 cm) across · About 30 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 piece of stiff cardboard, $2\frac{1}{2} \times 4$ in (6×10 cm), with a slit cut down the middle of one short end, about 2 inches deep (grown-up cuts)
- About 15 yards of worsted or bulky yarn per pom-pom
- A 10-inch (25 cm) piece of strong yarn per pom-pom for tying the middle

How to make it

1. Hold the cardboard with the slit at the top. Lay the end of the yarn against the cardboard and hold it with your thumb.
2. Wrap the yarn around and around the cardboard, the short way, across the slit. Count each wrap out loud. Wrap 60 to 100 times.
3. A grown-up cuts the yarn from the ball.
4. Slide the 10-inch tie yarn down through the slit, around the middle of all the wraps, and back up. A grown-up pulls it very tight and ties a double knot.

5. A grown-up slides sharp scissors into the loops on each side and cuts them all.
6. Take the pom-pom off the cardboard. Fluff it and roll it between your hands like a snowball.
7. A grown-up trims any long pieces so it is round. Keep the long tie ends for tying it on.

Fabric check: Acrylic yarn makes bright, fluffy pom-poms and washes easily. Wool yarn makes a dense, soft pom-pom, nice for a hat if no one is sensitive to wool. Thicker yarn needs fewer wraps.

Steps

1. **Guess the wraps.** Before you wrap, guess how many wraps it will take to cover the cardboard so you cannot see it. Then count and see.
2. Make the pom-poms from the pattern card.
3. **Fluffy test.** Make one pom-pom with 50 wraps and one with 100. Which is fluffier? Why?
4. **Make a garland.** Use the plastic needle and the tie ends to tie each pom-pom onto your me-long chain, about 6 inches apart. Hang it over a door, or give it.
5. **Clean up.** Snipped yarn bits go straight in the trash, because pets love to eat them.

Tips

- Wrap evenly across the middle, not all in one bunch.
- Younger children: wrap 40 times with bulky yarn for a quick pom-pom.
- Older children: wrap two colors together for a speckled pom-pom.

Check your work

- ☐ I counted my wraps.
- ☐ I helped make at least two pom-poms.
- ☐ I tied my pom-poms on a hat or a garland.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in a few snipped pom-pom pieces and write how many wraps your pom-pom had.
2. Draw your pom-pom garland or your hat with its pom-pom.

3. Draw the window from the picture study.

From history. Long ago, sailors in some navies wore caps with a pom-pom on top, and many knitted winter caps had one too. Today pom-poms trim hats, slippers and Christmas decorations all over the world.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Too few wraps. The pom-pom is thin and floppy. Wrap more.
- A loose middle tie. Pieces fall out. The grown-up pulls it very tight.
- Cutting before tying. The yarn falls apart. Tie first!

Make it a game • Pom-Pom Count and Catch. Sit across from a grown-up. Toss a pom-pom back and forth, counting each catch out loud. How high can you count without dropping it? If it drops, start over at one. Then try catching it in a basket instead of your hands. When you finish, count every pom-pom back into the sewing box.

UNIT 5 REVIEW

Ask these out loud with your chains, bookmark and pom-poms on the table. There are no points and no writing. The child may answer by telling or showing with yarn and a hook.

1. What does the word crochet mean?
2. Show me how to make three chains with your fingers.
3. Show me one chain with the hook. What do you say while you do it?
4. Why do we pull the tail through the last loop at the end?
5. Which makes a fatter pom-pom: fifty wraps or a hundred wraps? Why?
6. Show me where to hold the hook safely when you are not using it.

UNIT CHALLENGE: A POM-POM GARLAND TO GIVE

Make a garland for a door, a window or a Christmas tree. Crochet a chain at least 4 feet long with your big hook (or finger-chain it), and make five pom-poms in colors you choose. Tie the pom-poms onto the chain, spaced evenly apart, with a grown-up's help. Measure your garland in me-longs.

Give the garland to someone, such as a grandparent, a neighbor or your church's nursery workers to hang up high. Make a notebook page with a few loops of chain, a snipped pom-pom piece, how many chains and wraps you counted, and who received the garland.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
A real chain	The chain is at least 4 feet long, with loops fairly even, and locked at both ends.
Fluffy pom-poms	Five pom-poms, tied tight in the middle, fluffed and spaced along the chain.
Counting	The child counted wraps and chains and can tell the numbers with a parent's help.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Safe and generous	The child kept the hook pointed down and stored, kept yarn bits from pets and little ones, and gave the garland away.

ANSWER KEY

1. Little hook.
2. The child reaches through the loop, pulls the working yarn through to make a new loop, and repeats.
3. Yarn over, pull through.
4. To lock the chain so it does not pull out.
5. A hundred wraps, because more wraps make more short pieces of yarn to fluff out.
6. Pointed down at the work while crocheting, and in the tin when you stop; never toward a face.

KNITTING

Knitting makes fabric out of loops, too, but in a different way from crochet. In crochet, you work one loop at a time. In knitting, a whole row of loops waits on your needles (or your fingers), and each new loop is pulled through a loop in the row below. In this unit you will knit with no needles at all: with your fingers, and with a little knitting spool. You will make a finger-knit snake, a long finger-knit scarf and a spool-knit cord.

Knitting is warm work, and it has always been a way to care for others. A good woman in Proverbs works with wool and reaches out her hands to the needy. During World War I, American schoolchildren knitted scarves and socks for soldiers far from home. At the end of this unit you will finish your scarf and give it to someone who needs warmth.

PREREQUISITES

- Can make a slip knot with help and a finger chain (Unit 5)
- Can sit with a small task for about fifteen minutes
- Knows yarn is never wrapped tight around fingers or necks

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can tell how knitting is different from crochet: a whole row of loops waits, and each new loop goes through an old one.
- ☐ I can finger-knit: lay the yarn across and lift the bottom loops over.
- ☐ I can knit a cord on a knitting spool.
- ☐ I can finish my knitting by taking the loops off and locking the end, with help.
- ☐ I can tell how schoolchildren knitted for others and give my scarf away.

OPTIONAL BOOKS AND TOOLS FOR THIS UNIT

- ***Extra Yarn* by Mac Barnett, illustrated by Jon Klassen:** A picture book about a girl who finds a box of yarn that never runs out and knits sweaters for every person, animal and house in her cold town. A cheerful story about giving. Most libraries have it.
- ***The Mitten* by Jan Brett:** A favorite picture book about a boy whose grandmother knits him white mittens, and the snowy animals that crowd into the one he drops. Lovely borders show knitting and winter cottages.
- **A knitting spool (French knitter):** Small wooden or plastic spools with four pegs are sold at craft stores for very little. Or make one from a cardboard tube and four craft sticks, as in Lesson 6.3.
- **Super bulky yarn for finger knitting:** Super bulky (6) or jumbo (7) yarn makes finger knitting fast and easy to see. Two or three skeins make a child's scarf.

Not required. Every project in this unit works with ordinary fabric-store supplies. School Launch has no ties to these authors, publishers or companies.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

6.1 Finger Knitting	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
6.2 A Long Finger-Knit Scarf	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
6.3 Spool Knitting	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
6.4 Knitting for Others	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes

6.1 FINGER KNITTING

OBJECTIVES

- Tell how knitting makes fabric from rows of loops.
- Finger-knit: weave the yarn on your fingers, lay it across and lift the bottom loops over.
- Make a finger-knit snake.

Warm-up. Hold up your hand and spread your fingers. Count them. Now imagine each finger is a knitting needle holding one loop. How many loops can one hand hold?

WATCH

Learn How To Finger Knit (Easy And Beginner Friendly!)

Fiber Flux • 7:36

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsZsUBYU0qU>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch the start twice. Then weave the yarn onto your own fingers and follow along, pausing after each row.

Note: Clear close-up hands, super bulky yarn and four fingers. A great first lesson for parent and child together.

KEY TERMS

knitting

Making fabric from rows of loops, where each new loop is pulled through a loop in the row below.

row

One trip across all the fingers (or needles), making a new loop on each one.

finger knitting

Knitting with your fingers instead of needles. It makes a soft, thick cord.

lift over

Pulling the bottom loop up and over the top of the finger, so it slips off behind.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... Knitting has been done by hand for hundreds of years. Grandmothers, mothers and children knitted stockings, mittens and caps for the whole family, often in the evening by the fire. In today's picture by Jean-François Millet, a mother sits close behind her little girl and guides her hands as she learns to knit a stocking. It is a knitting lesson, just like yours.

Look closely. When you finger-knit, each finger holds a loop. You lay the yarn across the front of your fingers above the loop. Then you lift the bottom loop up, over the yarn and over the top of your finger, and let it fall behind. Now a new loop sits on your finger, and the old loop hangs behind your hand, holding on. Do that on every finger, and you have knitted one row.

What is happening? Look at the back of your hand. A cord is growing! Each row of loops hangs from the one before. That is how all knitting works, even a sweater on needles: new loops pulled through old loops, row after row. Crochet works with only one loop on the hook at a time. Knitting keeps a whole row of loops waiting on your fingers. Different tools, same idea: loops holding loops.

Let's make it! Today you will finger-knit a long, fat cord and turn it into a friendly snake with felt eyes and a forked felt tongue.

PICTURE STUDY



The Knitting Lesson, Jean-François Millet, 1869 · Oil on canvas · Saint Louis Art Museum

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Jean-François Millet grew up on a farm in France and loved to paint families at their daily work. He painted this knitting lesson more than once. Here a mother wraps her arms around her daughter to guide her needles. The girl is knitting a stocking.

Look closely

- Find the mother's hands. Where are they?
- Find the girl's knitting needles and the ball of yarn.
- Find the stocking. How long is it so far?
- Look at the girl's face. Is she trying hard?

Talk about it

1. Why does the mother sit so close?
2. Who helps you learn new things with your hands?
3. What would you knit first if you had needles?

Safety first. Finger knitting is safe for little hands, but keep the loops loose: if a finger turns red or tingles, slip the loops off onto a pencil and rest. A grown-up cuts the yarn, or the child uses child-safe scissors. The snake is a toy for older children, not for babies or toddlers.

SEWING PROJECT

A Finger-Knit Snake

You will finger-knit a long cord and turn it into a snake that can curl up on your shelf. It is the best way to practice finger knitting, because every row makes him longer.

You will need

- Child-safe scissors
- White glue
- A pencil (to hold your loops if you need a break)

FINGER-KNIT SNAKE

Finished size: one snake, about 2 to 3 ft (60 to 90 cm) long · About 40 minutes, in turns

Fabric and notions

- About 15 yards of super bulky yarn in a bright color (or two colors held together)
- 2 small felt circles for eyes, and a tiny black felt dot for each one (or 2 large buttons, glued on, for older children only)
- 1 thin strip of red felt, about $\frac{1}{2} \times 2$ in, with a little notch cut in one end for a forked tongue

How to make it

1. Hold the yarn tail between your thumb and palm. Weave the yarn in and out of your four fingers, from pointer to pinky and back, so each finger has a loop.
2. Weave across once more so each finger has two loops, one above the other.

3. On each finger, lift the bottom loop up and over the top loop and off the back of the finger. Start with the pinky or the pointer, whichever you like.
4. Weave or lay the yarn across the front again so each finger has two loops. Lift the bottom loops over. That is one row. Push the cord down through the back of your hand.
5. Keep going, row after row, until the cord is as long as you want your snake.
6. To finish, cut the yarn, leaving a 10-inch tail. Thread the tail through each of the four loops and pull them off your fingers. Pull tight to close one end. That end is the snake's head.
7. Glue the felt eyes and the tongue onto the head. Knot the other tail and tuck it in.

Fabric check: Super bulky acrylic yarn is soft, cheap and easy to see. Super bulky wool is lovely and warm if no one is sensitive to wool. Very fuzzy or slippery yarn makes loops hard to find.

Steps

1. **Practice first.** Make three rows, then pull the yarn off your fingers and watch it all pull out. Start again: now you know how.
2. Make the snake from the pattern card.
3. **Take a break the safe way.** If you need to stop, slide a pencil through all four loops and slip them off your fingers. To start again, put them back on in the same order.
4. **Measure it.** Lay your snake beside your me-long chain from Unit 5. How many snakes long are you?
5. **Clean up.** Yarn ends in the trash. Snake on the shelf, away from pets.

Tips

- Keep the loops loose enough to lift easily.
- Younger children: finger-knit on two fingers (pointer and middle). It is quicker to learn.
- Older children: knit with two colors of yarn held together for a striped snake.

Check your work

- ☐ I can lift the bottom loop over the top loop.
- ☐ My cord grew row by row out the back of my hand.

- ☐ I finished the end by pulling the yarn through all the loops.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in a short piece of finger knitting.
2. Draw your hand with a loop on each finger.
3. Draw the knitting lesson: the mother's hands helping the girl's hands.

From history. In many countries long ago, children learned to knit at home or at school before they were ten years old. A family's stockings and mittens were nearly all hand-knitted until knitting machines made them cheap.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Pulling the loops so tight your fingers turn red. Keep them loose and stop if fingers tingle.
- Lifting the top loop instead of the bottom one. The work unravels. Always lift the bottom loop.
- Forgetting which finger you were on. Always work across in the same order.

Make it a game · Simon Says Knit. Everyone holds up one hand. A grown-up plays Simon: "Simon says weave the yarn!" "Simon says lift the bottom loop!" "Lift the top loop!" (Oops, Simon did not say!) Do only the moves Simon says, with real yarn on your fingers. If you lift the wrong loop, you start your row over. Play until everyone has knitted five rows.

Scripture. "She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff." (Proverbs 31:19, KJV)

The good woman in Proverbs works with yarn with her own hands. Your hands are learning to work with yarn too.

6.2 A LONG FINGER-KNIT SCARF

OBJECTIVES

- Finger-knit a long cord, row after row, over several days.
- Join a new ball of yarn with a grown-up's help.
- Keep a row log in the sewing notebook.

Warm-up. Measure a grown-up's scarf with your me-long chain or a tape measure. How long is it? How long would a scarf for you need to be to wrap once around your neck and hang down in front?

WATCH

DIY Finger Knitting Scarf!! How to Finger Knit!

Always Alyssa · 6:51

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjiJINJFRok>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch a brother and sister finger-knit a scarf together, and how long it gets. Then start your own.

Note: Two children from a family channel finger-knit a scarf with a beginner kit. The steps are the same as in Lesson 6.1. At the end they show how to finish and add a fringe.

KEY TERMS

scarf

A long strip of warm fabric worn around the neck.

skein

A bundle of yarn as it comes from the store.

joining yarn

Tying a new piece of yarn to the end of the old one so you can keep knitting.

row log

A chart in your notebook where you mark how much you knitted each day.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... In today's picture by Albert Anker, a Swiss girl knits with her basket on her arm. Children long ago often carried their knitting with them and knitted a few rows whenever they had a spare minute: waiting for supper, watching the cows, or sitting with Grandmother. A little each day made a long scarf or a pair of stockings by winter.

Look closely. A scarf is just a very long finger-knit cord, or two or three cords sewn side by side. To make it long enough, you will knit on many days. When your yarn runs out, a grown-up ties the end of the old yarn to the start of a new skein with a tight knot, and you keep going. Tuck the knot to the back.

What is happening? Big projects are made of small steps. If you knit twenty rows a day, in a week you will have a long scarf. A row log helps you see your progress: each day, measure your scarf and color in a box on your chart. Patience is a kind of strength. Knitting a gift for someone takes patient love, row by row.

Let's make it! Today you will start a long finger-knit scarf. You will keep working on it in Lesson 6.3, and finish and give it away in Lesson 6.4.

PICTURE STUDY



Knitting Girl with a Basket, Albert Anker, about 1897 · Oil on canvas

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Albert Anker painted many Swiss children knitting. This girl carries her basket on her arm and knits as she goes. Her red knitting is bright against her white apron.

Look closely

- Find the red knitting. How many needles do you see?
- Find the basket. What might be in it?
- Look at her hair. How is it tied back?
- Look at her face. Is she watching her knitting or something else?

Talk about it

1. Why would a girl carry her knitting with her?
2. When could you knit a few rows each day?
3. Who would you like to knit a scarf for?

Safety first. Scarves are for older children and grown-ups, never for babies or toddlers. Do not wear a long scarf on playground slides or climbing toys. If fingers tingle, slip the loops onto a pencil and rest.

SEWING PROJECT

A Long Finger-Knit Scarf (Part 1)

You will start a scarf today and keep a row log as it grows. When it is long enough, you will finish it in Lesson 6.4 and give it away.

You will need

- A tape measure
- A pencil for holding loops during breaks
- Child-safe scissors
- A bag or basket to keep the scarf and yarn together

FINGER-KNIT SCARF

Finished size: one scarf, about 4 to 5 ft (1.2 to 1.5 m) long and 2 to 3 in (5 to 8 cm) wide · About 3 hours in all, in short daily turns

Fabric and notions

- 2 or 3 skeins of super bulky (6) or jumbo (7) yarn, about 60 yards in all
- 1 piece of masking tape for a name flag

How to make it

1. Cast on your four fingers just as in Lesson 6.1: weave in and out, then across again so each finger has two loops.
2. Lift the bottom loops over, finger by finger. Lay the yarn across. Lift over. Row after row.
3. Every 10 rows, pull the cord gently down through the back of your hand to keep it even.
4. When you stop for the day, slip a pencil through the four loops and set the work in its bag.

5. Measure the scarf each day and color a box on your row log for every 6 inches.
6. When a skein runs out, a grown-up ties the old end and the new end together with a tight double knot. Keep going.
7. Keep knitting until the scarf is as long as the person you are giving it to is tall from the top of the head to the waist, about 4 to 5 feet.

Fabric check: Super bulky acrylic is soft, washable and inexpensive. For a gift, ask whether the person is sensitive to wool. Choose a color the person will love.

Steps

1. **Plan it.** Decide who will get the scarf. Measure that person (head to waist) with the tape measure, and write the number at the top of your row log.
2. Start the scarf from the pattern card.
3. **Row log.** Draw a ladder of 10 boxes in your notebook. Color one box for every 6 inches of scarf. When all 10 are colored, the scarf is 5 feet long.
4. **Keep it tidy.** Your scarf and yarn live in one bag. Loose yarn on the floor tangles and trips.
5. **Clean up.** Loops on the pencil, scarf in the bag, yarn ends in the trash.

Tips

- Knit a little every day instead of a lot on one day. Fingers get tired!
- Younger children: two-finger knitting makes a thinner scarf; make a shorter one for a doll or teddy bear.
- Older children: knit two long cords and have a grown-up whipstitch them side by side for a wider scarf.

Check your work

- ☐ I started my scarf and knitted every day this week.
- ☐ I kept a row log and colored my boxes.
- ☐ I know who will get my scarf.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Draw your row log: a ladder of 10 boxes. Color one for every 6 inches.
2. Tape in a snip of your scarf yarn.

3. Draw the person who will get your scarf, wearing it.

From history. Wool scarves, called mufflers or comforters long ago, were among the first things many children learned to knit, because a scarf is simple: just straight rows, as long as you like.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Knitting so long in one day that fingers hurt. A little each day is better.
- Leaving the scarf on your fingers when you stop. Put the loops on a pencil.
- Tying a new skein with a loose knot. A grown-up ties a tight double knot.

Make it a game • Row Race Relay. Two players share one scarf. Player one knits five rows, then carefully slides the loops onto player two's fingers (with a grown-up helping), who knits five rows and passes it back. Count the rows together. How many rows can your team knit in ten minutes without dropping a loop?

6.3 SPOOL KNITTING

OBJECTIVES

- Tell how a knitting spool works: pegs hold the loops in a circle.
- Make a knitting spool from a cardboard tube and craft sticks with a grown-up.
- Knit a spool cord and turn it into a coaster or a bookmark.

Warm-up. Look at a cardboard paper-towel tube. Look through it like a telescope. Now imagine four little pegs sticking up around the top edge, each holding a loop of yarn. What would come out the bottom of the tube?

WATCH

How to use a French Knitter

LionBrandYarn · 4:20

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2deLwV1zXmA>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch how the yarn wraps around each peg and the bottom loop is lifted over, and how the cord comes out the bottom of the spool.

Note: Quiet close-up hands with short captions. She uses a little pick to lift the loops; a craft stick, a big blunt needle or a fingertip works too.

BACKUP VIDEO

How to Knit on a Toilet Roll Knitting Loom

Happy Hooligans · 7:09

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCZGUqMJY5c>

Make your own spool! A day-care teacher shows how to make a knitting loom from a toilet-paper tube and craft sticks, and how to knit on it.

KEY TERMS

knitting spool

A tube with pegs on top for knitting a round cord. It is also called a French knitter or knitting Nancy.

peg

A little post that holds a loop of yarn.

cord

A long, round, thin rope of knitting that comes out the bottom of the spool.

lifter

A tool for lifting the bottom loop over the peg, like a craft stick or a big blunt needle.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... Look at today's photograph, taken in 1909, more than a hundred years ago. A girl in a white dress sits on a chair with a little knitting spool in her hands, and a long cord hangs down to a ball of yarn on the floor. Spool knitting has been a favorite for children for a very long time. Long ago, children made knitting spools from old wooden thread spools by tapping little nails into the top.

Look closely. A knitting spool is like finger knitting arranged in a circle. Each peg holds a loop, just like each finger did. You wrap the yarn around the outside of a peg, then lift the bottom loop up and over the top of the peg. Go around and around the circle. The loops pull through each other into the middle of the tube, and a round cord grows out of the bottom.

What is happening? Why is the cord round? Because the pegs make a circle, so the loops go round and round, like a tiny tube of knitting. Big knitting machines in sock factories work the same way: a ring of needles knits a tube of loops around and around. That is how socks come out round! Your little spool is a tiny cousin of the sock machine you saw in Unit 2.

Let's make it! Today you will make a knitting spool with a grown-up, knit a long cord, and coil it into a little coaster or use it as a bookmark tie.

PICTURE STUDY



Spool Knitting Girl, Unknown photographer, 1909 · Photograph
Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

This old photograph was taken in 1909, when your great-great-grandparents might have been children. A girl sits very still, knitting on a little spool. In those days, children often made their own spools from old wooden thread spools.

Look closely

- Find the knitting spool in her hands.
- Find the yarn. Where is the ball?
- Follow the yarn from the ball to the spool.
- Look at her dress and the bow in her hair. How is it different from what you wear?

Talk about it

1. Why do you think this photo is black and white?
2. What could she make with her long cord?
3. How is her spool like the one you will make?

Safety first. A grown-up cuts the craft sticks or cardboard and does any hot-glue work; use masking tape or white glue instead when you can. Lift loops with a craft stick or a big blunt needle, never anything sharp. Long cords are not for babies or for wrapping around necks.

SEWING PROJECT

A Spool-Knit Cord Coaster

You will make a knitting spool from a cardboard tube, knit a long round cord, and coil it into a little coaster.

You will need

- A cardboard tube, such as a paper-towel tube cut to 4 in (10 cm) (grown-up cuts)
- 4 craft sticks
- Strong masking tape or duct tape
- A craft stick or big blunt plastic needle as a lifter
- White glue and a piece of cardboard for the coaster base

SPOOL-KNIT CORD COASTER

Finished size: one cord about 3 ft (90 cm) long, coiled into a coaster about 4 in (10 cm) across · About 40 minutes

Fabric and notions

- About 15 yards of worsted or bulky yarn
- 1 cardboard circle, 4 in across, cut by a grown-up
- White glue

How to make it

1. Make the spool: tape 4 craft sticks around the outside of the tube, evenly spaced, so each one sticks up about 1 inch above the top. These are your pegs.
2. Drop the end of the yarn down through the tube so a 6-inch tail hangs out the bottom. Hold the tail.

3. Wrap the yarn once around each peg, going around the circle in the same direction, so each peg has one loop.
4. Go around again, laying the yarn on the outside of each peg above its loop. Use the lifter to lift the bottom loop up and over the peg and into the middle.
5. Keep going around and around. Every few rounds, tug the tail at the bottom gently to pull the cord down.
6. When the cord is about 3 feet long, cut the yarn with a 10-inch tail. Thread the tail through all four loops with the blunt needle, lift them off, and pull tight.
7. Spread glue on the cardboard circle. Coil the cord round and round from the center out, pressing it into the glue. Tuck the end under. Let it dry.

Fabric check: Worsted or bulky acrylic or cotton yarn works on a homemade spool. Thin yarn makes loose, holey loops; very thick yarn will not fit over the pegs. Cotton yarn makes a coaster that soaks up drips.

Steps

1. **Practice first.** Knit three rounds, then look at the bottom of the tube. Do you see the cord starting?
2. Make the spool and the coaster from the pattern card.
3. **Compare.** Hold your spool cord next to your finger-knit snake. Which is thicker? Why?
4. **Keep going on the scarf.** Knit a few more rows on your finger-knit scarf, and color your row log.
5. **Clean up.** Glue capped, lifter in the tin, yarn in the bag.

Tips

- Always wrap in the same direction around the circle.
- Younger children: the grown-up wraps the first round; the child lifts the loops over.
- Older children: change colors partway for a striped cord.

Check your work

- ☐ I made a knitting spool with a grown-up.
- ☐ I knitted a round cord, lifting each bottom loop over.

- ☐ I coiled my cord into a coaster.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in a short piece of spool-knit cord next to a piece of finger knitting.
2. Draw your knitting spool with a loop on each peg.
3. Draw the girl in the 1909 photograph and her ball of yarn.

From history. Knitting spools have many names: knitting Nancy, French knitter, knitting dolly. Children in many countries have made cords on them for bookmarks, doll scarves and coiled mats for well over a hundred years.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Lifting the top loop instead of the bottom one. The loops pile up. Lift the bottom loop.
- Forgetting to tug the tail. The loops jam in the tube. Pull the cord down every few rounds.
- Wrapping some pegs one way and some the other. Go around in the same direction.

Make it a game • Round and Round. Players sit in a circle on the floor like the pegs on a spool. One player is the yarn and walks around the outside of the circle, tapping each person's shoulder. When tapped, each "peg" stands up and sits back down (lifting the loop over). How fast can the yarn go around three times without skipping a peg? Then switch who is the yarn.

6.4 KNITTING FOR OTHERS

OBJECTIVES

- Tell how schoolchildren long ago knitted for soldiers and how people today knit for others.
- Finish the finger-knit scarf: take it off, lock the ends and add a fringe or tassels.
- Wrap the scarf and give it with a card.

Warm-up. Think: who would be glad to have a warm scarf this winter? A grandparent? A neighbor who walks to work? A family at your church? Talk about who you will give your scarf to, and why.

WATCH

Needle workers donate thousands of items for holidays

City of Bloomington, Minnesota · 2:44

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7GvBBxYDyM>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Look at all the hats, scarves and mittens the needle workers made to give away, and listen to why they do it.

Note: A short news report from a city in Minnesota about a group of knitters and crocheters at a community center who make and give away a couple of thousand warm things to people in need each holiday season.

BACKUP VIDEO

Ending Finger Knitting (easy-peasy!)

Knit With Hannah · 3:00

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vFZMzsEy5XY>

When your scarf is long enough: a knitting teacher shows how to end finger knitting so it does not unravel. The finishing part starts about halfway through.

KEY TERMS

Red Cross

A group that helps people in war, storms and hard times.

knit your bit

A saying during World War I that asked Americans to knit warm things for soldiers.

finishing

The last steps that make a project ready to use: taking it off, locking the ends, tucking in the tails.

fringe

Short pieces of yarn tied on the ends of a scarf.

CORE IDEAS

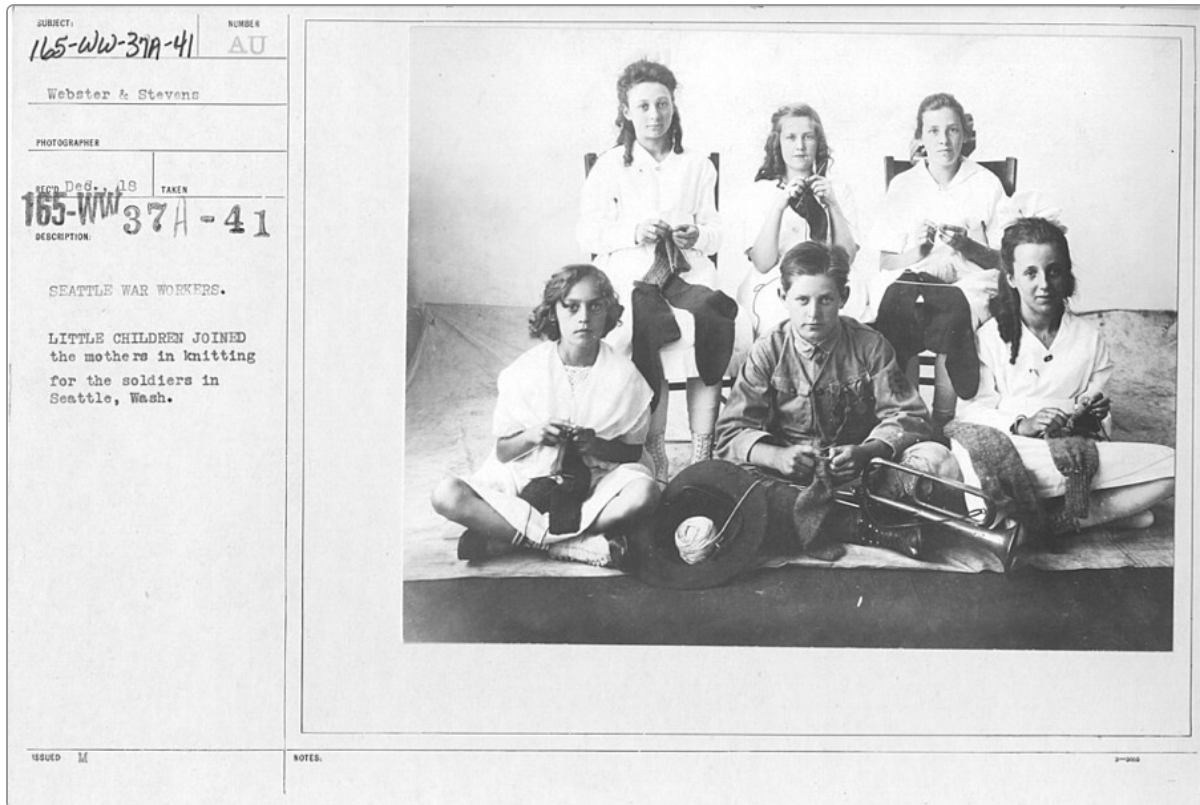
The story. More than a hundred years ago, during World War I, American soldiers went far away to fight, and the winters were cold. The American Red Cross asked people at home to knit warm socks, scarves and sweaters for them. The saying was “Knit your bit!” Mothers, grandmothers, fathers and even schoolchildren knitted. Children in school clubs called the Junior Red Cross knitted squares, scarves and washcloths. In today’s photograph, six children in Seattle sit together, knitting for the soldiers.

How they did it. The Red Cross gave out simple patterns so everyone’s scarves and socks would be the right size. People knitted on trains, in parks, at church and at school. Each finished piece was packed in a box and sent overseas, so a soldier far from home knew someone was thinking of him. Today, many people still knit and crochet for others: hats for hospital babies, scarves for people without warm coats, blankets for the elderly. The needle workers in today’s video give away thousands of warm things at Christmastime.

What is happening? The good woman in Proverbs reaches out her hands to the poor and needy. Your scarf is more than yarn. It is many days of your time and your patience, row by row, and it says to someone, “I thought of you, and I want you to be warm.”

Let’s make it! Today you will finish your finger-knit scarf, add a fringe or tassels, wrap it, and give it with a card you made.

PICTURE STUDY



Seattle War Workers: Little Children Joined the Mothers in Knitting for Soldiers, Webster & Stevens, for the American Red Cross, 1917–1918 · Photograph · National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

This photograph was taken during World War I and kept by the American Red Cross. It is glued on an old record card with typed words at the side. The card says that little children joined their mothers in knitting for the soldiers in Seattle, Washington. Here the children are knitting together.

Look closely

- Count the children. How many are knitting?
- Find the boy in the front. What is lying beside him?
- Find the ball of yarn. What is it sitting in?
- Find the typed words on the card. What do you think they say?

Talk about it

1. Why did people knit for the soldiers?
2. How do you think a soldier felt when he got warm socks from home?

3. Who could you knit or sew for this year?

Safety first. A grown-up cuts the fringe yarn or the child uses child-safe scissors. A scarf is a gift for an older child or grown-up, never for a baby or toddler. Count your blunt needle in and out when you tuck in the ends.

SEWING PROJECT

Finish and Give the Scarf

Your scarf is long and warm. Now you will finish it so it never unravels, add a fringe, and give it away with a card.

You will need

- Your finger-knit scarf on a pencil, from Lessons 6.2 and 6.3
- A big blunt plastic needle and a needle tin
- Child-safe scissors
- A 6-inch (15 cm) piece of card for winding fringe
- Tissue paper or a gift bag, and paper for a card

FINISHED SCARF WITH FRINGE

Finished size: one scarf, about 4 to 5 ft long, plus fringe · About 30 minutes

Fabric and notions

- Your finger-knit scarf
- About 6 yards of the same yarn (or a bright second color) for fringe
- Paper and crayons for a card

How to make it

1. Cut the working yarn, leaving a 12-inch tail.
2. Thread the tail on the big blunt needle. Slip the needle through the four loops, one at a time, taking them off the pencil.
3. Pull the tail tight to close the end. A grown-up ties a knot.

4. Use the needle to weave the tail up and down through the scarf for a few inches, then snip it. Do the same with the starting tail.
5. Fringe: wrap yarn around the 6-inch card 8 times. Cut along one edge to make 8 pieces, each 12 inches long.
6. Fold 4 pieces in half. Push the folded loop through the end of the scarf with your fingers, pull the ends through the loop and tug snug. Do the other end the same way.
7. Trim the fringe even. Fold the scarf, wrap it, and give it with your card.

Fabric check: Use the same yarn as the scarf for a neat fringe, or a bright second color for fun. Tell the person what the scarf is made of, so they know how to wash it: acrylic can go in a gentle wash; wool is washed by hand in cool water.

Steps

1. **Count out.** Needle in the tin: “one needle out.”
2. **Check your row log.** Is the scarf as long as you planned? Color the last box!
3. Finish the scarf from the pattern card.
4. **Try it on.** Wrap the scarf around a grown-up’s neck. Is it long enough to hang down in front?
5. **Give it.** Give the scarf with your card, or take it with a grown-up to a coat-and-scarf drive at church or in your town.
6. **Count in and clean up.** Needle back in the tin, yarn bits in the trash.

Tips

- If you run out of time, give the scarf without fringe. A plain scarf is warm too.
- Younger children: the grown-up threads the needle and takes off the loops; the child adds the fringe.
- Older children: write the card yourself and tell how many days you knitted.

Check your work

- ☐ I finished my scarf so it will not unravel.
- ☐ I added a fringe or tassels.
- ☐ I gave my scarf away with a card.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in a piece of fringe and your finished row log.
2. Draw yourself giving the scarf. Draw the person's face.
3. A parent writes: "I gave my scarf to ... because ..."

From history. In 1917 and 1918, American Red Cross volunteers knitted a great many socks, sweaters, scarves and "helmets" (warm knitted caps) for soldiers and sailors. Schoolchildren in the Junior Red Cross helped too.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Pulling the loops off without the tail through them. The scarf unravels. Thread the tail through every loop first.
- Cutting the tails right at the knot. They can slip out. Weave them in first, then snip.
- Giving a scarf to a baby. Scarves are for older children and grown-ups.

Make it a game • Warm Hearts Delivery. Set up stuffed animals around the house as "people who need warmth." Make little finger-knit or spool-knit scarves (or yarn pieces) for each one. Run a delivery route: knock on each "door," wrap a scarf around the stuffed animal, and say a kind word. How many deliveries can you make before supper? Afterward, pray for someone real who needs warmth.

Scripture. "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy." (Proverbs 31:20, KJV)

The same hands that work with wool reach out to help others. Giving your scarf is reaching out your hands.

UNIT 6 REVIEW

Ask these out loud with your snake, spool cord and scarf nearby. There are no points and no writing. The child may answer by telling or showing with yarn.

1. Show me one row of finger knitting. Which loop do you lift over?
2. How is knitting different from crochet?
3. What do you do with your loops when you need a break?
4. Show me how a knitting spool works. Why is the cord round?
5. Who did schoolchildren knit for during World War I? What was the saying?
6. Who got your scarf? Why did you choose that person?

UNIT CHALLENGE: A WARM GIFT, MADE BY ME

Your unit challenge is the scarf you finished and gave away, plus one more small knitted gift: a spool-knit cord bookmark, a finger-knit headband for a doll, or a coiled coaster. Wrap both together in a gift bag with a card.

Make a notebook page with a snip of yarn, your finished row log, how many days you knitted, and a drawing or photo of the person who received your gift. Tell the family at supper how you made it.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Finished well	The scarf is finished at both ends with the loops locked and tails woven in; it does not unravel when gently pulled.
Patient work	The row log shows knitting on many days, a little at a time.
A second gift	One more small knitted piece (cord, coaster or doll headband) is finished and included.
Given with love	The child chose a person, gave the gift with a card, and can tell why we knit for others.

ANSWER KEY

1. The child lays the yarn across and lifts the bottom loop over the top of each finger.
2. In crochet, only one loop is on the hook at a time. In knitting, a whole row of loops waits on the fingers or needles, and each new loop goes through a loop below.
3. Slide them onto a pencil and slip them off your fingers.
4. Each peg holds a loop; wrap and lift the bottom loop over, around and around. The pegs are in a circle, so the cord is a little round tube.
5. For soldiers far away, through the Red Cross. The saying was “Knit your bit.”
6. The child names the person and tells why, in his or her own words.

HOME SEWING: PILLOWS, CURTAINS & COZY THINGS

A home is full of cloth: pillows on the bed, curtains at the windows, quilts on the couch and cushions on the chairs. In this unit you will make cloth things for real rooms. You will whipstitch a little stuffed felt pillow, hang a curtain in a doll house or puppet theater, piece a patchwork square, and tie a cozy fleece pillow with no sewing at all.

You will also learn about the most beautiful curtains ever made: the curtains of God's tabernacle, woven of fine linen in blue, purple and scarlet. You will see how neighbors long ago sewed quilts together at quilting bees. Cloth makes a house warm and welcoming, and the things you make this unit can welcome people into your home.

PREREQUISITES

- Can sew a whipstitch through pre-punched holes with a big blunt needle (Unit 3)
- Can cut paper and felt with child-safe scissors (Unit 4)
- Can tie a simple knot with a little help

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can whipstitch two pieces of felt together and stuff them to make a pillow.
- ☐ I can tell what God told Moses to make the tabernacle curtains from.
- ☐ I can thread a curtain onto a rod through a rod pocket.
- ☐ I can fit squares together to make a patchwork pattern.
- ☐ I can tie double knots to make a no-sew fleece pillow.

OPTIONAL BOOKS AND TOOLS FOR THIS UNIT

- ***The Quilt Story* by Tony Johnston, illustrated by Tomie dePaola:** A gentle picture book about a quilt sewn by a pioneer mother for her little girl, and how it comforts another girl many years later. Lovely to read with Lesson 7.3.
- **Polyester fiberfill:** Soft, washable stuffing sold in bags at craft and fabric stores. One small bag stuffs several little pillows. Clean old socks or fabric scraps, cut small by a grown-up, work too.
- **A fleece remnant:** Fleece does not fray, so it is perfect for tied, no-sew projects. Look in the remnant bin at a fabric store: two pieces about $\frac{5}{8}$ yard (57 cm) each, in two colors, make a 14-inch pillow.

Not required. Every project in this unit works with ordinary fabric-store supplies. School Launch has no ties to these authors, publishers or companies.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

7.1 A Pillow for My Bed	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
7.2 Curtains in God’s House	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
7.3 Patchwork	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
7.4 A Cozy Chair	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes

7.1 A PILLOW FOR MY BED

OBJECTIVES

- Tell what makes a pillow: a cover and soft stuffing inside.
- Whipstitch two felt squares together around the edges.
- Stuff and close a little felt pillow.

Warm-up. Squeeze your bed pillow. What is inside? Look for the tag. Does it say feathers, cotton or polyester? Look at the edges of the pillowcase. Where are the seams?

WATCH

How to sew a felt heart cushion

Sew a Softie · 7:04

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94uTG3UQ4oc>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch how she sews around the heart, leaves a gap, stuffs it and sews the gap shut. Your pillow is a square, but the steps are the same.

Note: A teacher of children's sewing shows a felt heart cushion with a running stitch. You will use a whipstitch and yarn through pre-punched holes.

KEY TERMS

pillow

A soft cloth cover filled with stuffing, for resting your head or leaning against.

gap

A space left open in a seam so you can put the stuffing in.

stuffing

Soft material put inside a pillow or toy, like fiberfill, cotton or feathers.

fiberfill

Soft, fluffy stuffing made by people from polyester. It washes well and stays fluffy.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... Long ago, families saved goose and duck feathers, a little at a time, until they had enough to stuff a pillow. Pillows were treasures. In today's painting, the artist Vincent van Gogh painted his own bedroom in a little yellow house in France. He wanted the picture to feel restful. Look at his bed: two soft pillows lie at the top, ready for sleep.

Look closely. A pillow is made of two parts. The cover is cloth sewn around the edges like a flat bag. The stuffing is soft and fluffy inside. To make a pillow, you sew the edges almost all the way around, but you leave a gap. Then you push the stuffing in through the gap, a little at a time, into every corner. Then you sew the gap closed.

What is happening? Why does a pillow feel soft? The stuffing is full of tiny pockets of air, just like the waves in wool that trap warm air. When you press down, the air squeezes out, and when you let go, the fibers spring back and the air comes back in. Fiberfill is made by people from polyester, like the fleece you met in Unit 1. It stays fluffy, dries fast, and can go in the wash.

Let's make it! Today you will whipstitch two felt squares together, stuff them, and close them up to make a little pillow for your bed, a doll's bed or a reading nook.

PICTURE STUDY



The Bedroom, Vincent van Gogh, 1888 · Oil on canvas · Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Vincent van Gogh painted this picture of his bedroom in the town of Arles, in the south of France. He used bright, happy colors and wrote that he wanted the room to look restful. Look for the soft things in a room full of wood.

Look closely

- Count the pillows on the bed.
- Find the red bed cover. Is it a quilt or a blanket?
- Count the chairs. What are their seats made of?
- Find the pictures on the wall and the clothes on the pegs.

Talk about it

1. Does this room look restful to you? Why?
2. What soft cloth things are in your bedroom?
3. If you painted your bedroom, what colors would you use?

Safety first. Count the needle out and back in. The grown-up punches the holes in the felt. Keep stuffing away from babies and pets, who might put it in their mouths. A little felt pillow is for a big kid's bed or a doll, not for a baby's crib.

SEWING PROJECT

A Stuffed Felt Pillow

Two felt squares, a row of whipstitches and a handful of stuffing make a soft little pillow. Choose two colors you love.

You will need

- A big blunt plastic or tapestry needle and a needle tin
- A hole punch (grown-up)
- Sewing clips or clothespins
- A chopstick or the blunt end of a pencil for pushing stuffing into corners
- Child-safe scissors

WHIPSTITCHED FELT PILLOW

Finished size: one pillow, about 8 × 8 in (20 × 20 cm) · About 45 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 2 squares of stiff craft felt, each 9 × 9 in (23 × 23 cm), in one or two colors
- About 3 yards of worsted yarn in a contrasting color, cut into 18-inch pieces
- 1 or 2 large handfuls of polyester fiberfill
- A felt heart, star or initial for the front, and white glue (optional)

How to make it

1. If you like, glue a felt shape or your initial on the front square. Let it dry.
2. Lay the two squares together, edges even. Clip them with sewing clips.
3. The grown-up punches holes through both layers all the way around, about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the edge and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch apart.
4. Thread the needle; a grown-up knots the yarn. Start at one corner between the layers so the knot hides inside.

5. Whipstitch around three sides: over the edge, through from the back, over the edge, through. Keep the yarn on the needle at the end of the third side.
6. Push stuffing in through the open side, a small handful at a time. Push some into each corner with the chopstick first, then fill the middle.
7. Whipstitch the last side closed. A grown-up ties off and tucks the tail inside.

Fabric check: Stiff craft felt is easiest and never frays. Wool-blend felt is softer for a pillow you will hug, if no one is sensitive to wool. Polyester fiberfill is washable and does not clump; cotton batting torn in pieces works too.

Steps

1. **Count out.** Needle in the tin: “one needle out.”
2. **Squeeze test first.** Squeeze a handful of stuffing tight, then open your hand. What happens?
3. Make the pillow from the pattern card.
4. **Fluff test.** Squeeze your pillow. Are the corners full? If a corner is flat, open one stitch, poke in a bit more stuffing, and stitch it again.
5. **Count in and clean up.** Needle back in the tin, stuffing bag closed and put away high, felt scraps in the scrap bag.

Tips

- Stuff small pieces, not one big lump. Small pieces make a smooth pillow.
- Younger children: the grown-up punches holes 1 inch apart, and the child whipstitches with chunky yarn.
- Older children: make a second pillow as a gift for a grandparent’s chair.

Check your work

- ☐ I whipstitched around all four sides.
- ☐ I stuffed the corners first, then the middle.
- ☐ My pillow is soft and closed up tight.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in a little tuft of stuffing and a felt scrap.
2. Draw your pillow on your bed, or on a doll’s bed.
3. Draw Van Gogh’s bed with its two pillows.

From history. Long ago, feather pillows were filled with goose or duck down and covered with a tightly woven cloth called ticking, so the feathers could not poke through. A family might save feathers for years to fill one pillow.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Sewing all four sides before stuffing. There is no way to get the stuffing in. Leave one side open.
- Stuffing the middle first. The corners stay flat. Corners first!
- Leaving the stuffing bag on the floor. Babies and pets can get into it.

Make it a game • Pillow Pass and Guess. Put three little bags or socks on the table, each filled with something different: stuffing, cotton balls and dried beans. Close your eyes and squeeze each one. Which would make the softest pillow? The lumpiest? The heaviest? Then rank them from best pillow to worst. Count the bags back into the box when you finish.

7.2 CURTAINS IN GOD’S HOUSE

OBJECTIVES

- Tell what God told Moses to make the tabernacle curtains from: fine linen in blue, purple and scarlet.
- Tell what a curtain rod and a rod pocket are.
- Make a curtain for a doll house or a shoebox puppet theater.

Warm-up. Look at the curtains in your house. How do they hang? Do they slide on rings, or does the rod go through a tunnel at the top? Open and close one. What do curtains do?

WATCH

The Tabernacle Tent - Covering/Curtains - (Exodus 26:1-14).

Bible Scenes · 2:31

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgpV-_27-qo

WHEN TO WATCH

After the Bible story. Watch the colorful curtains being laid over the frame of the tabernacle, layer after layer, like a giant tent.

Note: A wordless 3D model of the tabernacle curtains described in Exodus 26, with gentle music. The description mentions the name of the music track; there is no talking.

BACKUP VIDEO

The Tabernacle - Bible story for kids

Trueway Kids · 1:18

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tbr86AmvdWE>

A very short cartoon that tells how God’s people brought gifts and built the tabernacle together.

KEY TERMS

tabernacle

The special tent God told Moses to make, where God would meet with His people in the wilderness.

fine linen

Smooth, strong cloth woven from flax.

curtain rod

A pole that a curtain hangs from.

rod pocket

A tunnel sewn at the top of a curtain that the rod slides through.

CORE IDEAS

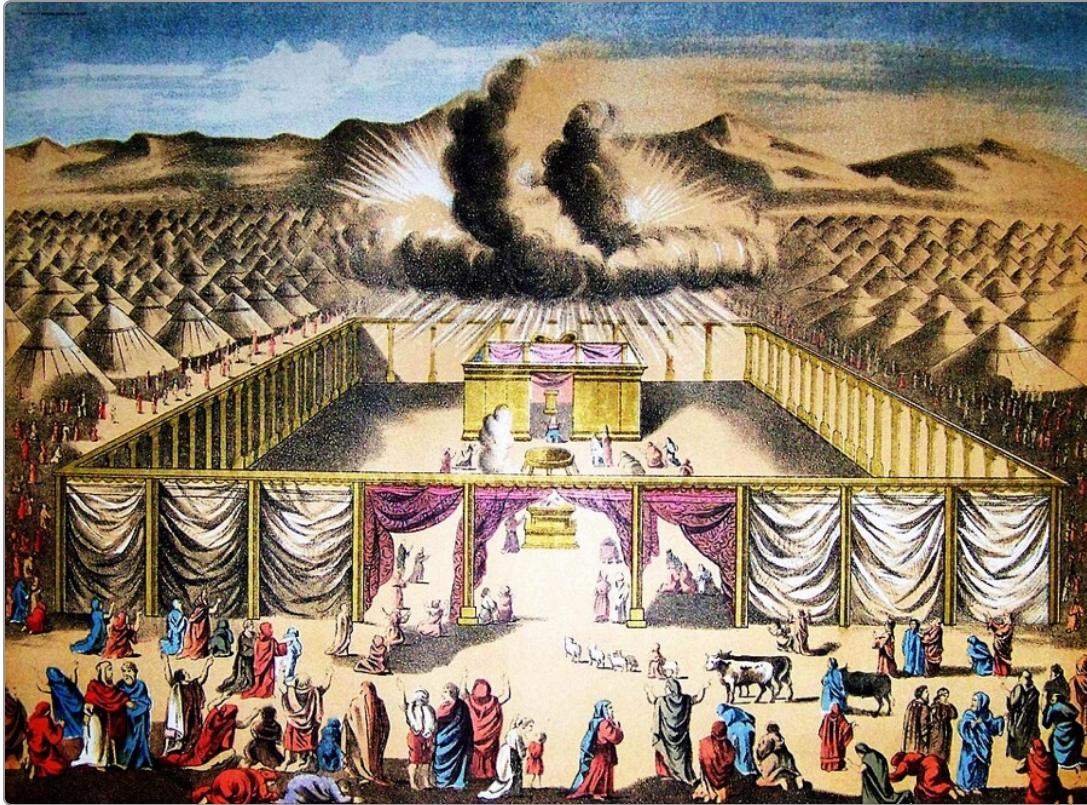
The story. Long ago, after God brought His people out of Egypt, they lived in tents in the wilderness. God told Moses to make a special tent called the tabernacle, where God would meet with His people. God gave exact instructions. The tabernacle was to have ten curtains of fine twined linen in blue, purple and scarlet, with pictures of cherubim worked into them by skillful workers. The people gladly brought gifts of linen, goats' hair, colored yarn and gold, and the skillful women spun and the skillful men and women wove and sewed.

Look closely. The ten curtains were joined together with loops of blue and clasps of gold, so they made one big covering over the frame of the tabernacle. Over them went more coverings to keep out the sun and the rain. Inside, a beautiful curtain called the veil hung in front of the most holy place. Everything was made carefully, because it was for God.

What is happening? Curtains hang from a rod. One simple way is a rod pocket: the top of the curtain is folded over and sewn (or glued) to make a tunnel. The rod slides through the tunnel, and the curtain hangs down in soft folds. When the curtain is wider than the window, it gathers into ripples along the rod. Push it to the side, and the window opens to the light.

Let's make it! Today you will make a little curtain with a rod pocket and hang it on a dowel in a doll house, a shoebox puppet theater, or a little window you draw on a box.

PICTURE STUDY



The Tabernacle in the Wilderness, Illustrators of the Holman Bible, 1890 · Color print

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

This picture comes from a family Bible printed in 1890. The artist imagined what the tabernacle looked like in the wilderness, with God's people camped all around it. Look for the curtains everywhere.

Look closely

- Find the white curtains around the courtyard. What holds them up?
- Find the tabernacle tent in the middle.
- Find the cloud above it. The Bible says God's cloud rested over the tabernacle.
- Find the people and the tents all around.

Talk about it

1. Why do you think God wanted the curtains made so carefully?
2. How many people do you think helped make the tabernacle?
3. What could you make carefully for your church or your home?

Safety first. The grown-up cuts the fabric and the dowel and handles any fabric glue, hot glue or sewing machine. The child chooses colors, threads the rod through the pocket and ties back the curtain. Keep dowels pointed down when carrying.

SEWING PROJECT

A Little Rod-Pocket Curtain

You will make a small curtain with a rod pocket and hang it on a dowel for a doll house window or a shoebox puppet theater. Choose rich colors like the tabernacle: blue, purple or red.

You will need

- Fabric shears and fabric glue (grown-up)
- Sewing clips or clothespins
- A shoebox or a doll house window
- Child-safe scissors
- Markers for decorating the box

PUPPET-THEATER CURTAIN

Finished size: two curtain panels, each about 6 × 8 in (15 × 20 cm), on a 12-inch rod · About 30 minutes, plus glue drying time

Fabric and notions

- 1 piece of cotton fabric, 12 × 10 in (30 × 25 cm), cut by a grown-up into two pieces 6 × 10 in (an old shirt or pillowcase works)
- 1 wooden dowel or a thin stick, about 12 in (30 cm) long and ¼ in (6 mm) across
- Fabric glue (grown-up), or a needle and thread for a grown-up to sew
- 2 pieces of ribbon or yarn, 8 in (20 cm) each, for tiebacks
- 1 shoebox

How to make it

1. The grown-up cuts a window in the bottom of the shoebox, about 8 × 6 inches, leaving a frame around it. Stand the box on its side. That is your

puppet theater.

2. The grown-up pokes a hole on each side of the box near the top of the window, big enough for the dowel.
3. Choose the fabric. The grown-up folds the top edge of each panel over 1 inch to the back and glues it along the bottom of the fold (or sews it). Hold it with clips while it dries. That is the rod pocket.
4. When the glue is dry, slide the dowel through the rod pocket of the first panel, then the second.
5. Push the dowel through the holes in the box so the curtains hang down over the window.
6. Slide the curtains open and closed. Gather each one to the side and tie it with a ribbon tieback.
7. Decorate the theater with markers. Now put on a puppet show!

Fabric check: Medium-weight cotton hangs nicely and glues well. Felt works too and never frays, so it needs no hem at the bottom. Avoid very thin or slippery fabric, which is hard to glue.

Steps

1. **Read first.** Read Exodus 26:1 together. Name the colors of the tabernacle curtains.
2. **Fullness test.** Try one panel that is exactly as wide as the window and one that is twice as wide. Which hangs in soft folds? Which looks skimpy?
3. Make the curtain and theater from the pattern card.
4. **Open and close.** Open and close the curtains ten times. Do they slide? If they stick, the grown-up makes the rod pocket a little bigger next time.
5. **Clean up.** Glue capped (grown-up), scraps in the scrap bag, dowel ends checked for splinters.

Tips

- Make the rod pocket a little wider than the dowel so it slides easily.
- Younger children: use felt panels with the top folded over and clipped with clothespins to the dowel.
- Older children: put on a Bible-story puppet show for the family, such as God's people bringing gifts for the tabernacle.

Check your work

- ☐ I can name the colors of the tabernacle curtains.
- ☐ I threaded the rod through the rod pocket.
- ☐ My curtains open, close and tie back.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in a scrap of your curtain fabric. Color three squares beside it: blue, purple and scarlet.
2. Draw a curtain with a rod pocket at the top and the rod going through.
3. Draw the tabernacle with its curtains around the courtyard.

From history. The Bible tells that the people brought so many gifts for the tabernacle that Moses had to tell them to stop, because there was more than enough (Exodus 36).

COMMON MISTAKES

- Making the rod pocket too tight. The rod will not go through. Leave room.
- Gluing the pocket shut with the rod outside. The pocket is a tunnel; keep both ends open.
- Making the curtain exactly as wide as the window. It looks flat. Wider curtains hang in soft folds.

Make it a game • Curtain Call. Stand behind a doorway with a blanket or sheet hung as a curtain (a grown-up hangs it). One player hides behind the curtain and holds up a piece of cloth: wool, cotton, linen, fleece. The curtain opens for three seconds, then closes. The audience guesses what the cloth is and what it is made from. Take turns being behind the curtain.

Scripture. “Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubims of cunning work shalt thou make them.” (Exodus 26:1, KJV)

God told Moses exactly how to make the curtains. Careful, beautiful work can honor God.

7.3 PATCHWORK

OBJECTIVES

- Tell what patchwork is: small pieces of cloth sewn together to make a bigger piece.
- Tell what a quilting bee was.
- Make a nine-patch paper and fabric quilt square.

Warm-up. Look at a quilt, if you have one, or a picture of one. Can you find the squares and the triangles? How many shapes fit together in one block? Do any of the pieces look like they came from old clothes?

WATCH

Friendship Quilt | Caitie's Classroom | Activities For Kids

Super Simple Play with Caitie! • 1:25

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxxzpFnHhyo>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Look at all the squares sent in by children and how they were sewn together into one big friendship quilt.

Note: A cheerful children's teacher shows a quilt made of squares drawn by children from many places, joined with colored strips.

BACKUP VIDEO

What Is a Quilt? | Quilting

Howcast • 2:09

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7OwcFH_tkls

For parents: a quilting teacher explains what a quilt is (the top, the batting and the back) and a little quilt history.

KEY TERMS

patchwork

Small pieces of cloth sewn together to make a bigger piece.

quilt

A warm blanket made of three layers: a patchwork top, a soft middle and a back, all stitched together.

block

One square of a quilt, made from smaller pieces.

nine-patch

A quilt block made of nine squares, three rows of three.

quilting bee

A gathering where neighbors sit together and stitch a quilt.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... Long ago, cloth was costly, and families did not waste a scrap. When a dress or shirt wore out, a mother cut the good parts into squares and triangles and sewed them together into a quilt. A quilt might hold pieces of a grandfather's shirt, a baby's dress and a sister's apron. In today's photograph, taken in 1940, Mrs. Bill Stagg stands outside her log house in Pie Town, New Mexico, holding up a quilt she made. Her family were homesteaders, farming new land far out west.

How they did it. Sewing a whole quilt by hand took a very long time. So neighbors came together for a quilting bee. They stretched the quilt in a big wooden frame, sat all around it, and stitched and talked and laughed, sometimes finishing in a single day. Then there was often a supper together. Many hands made big work light.

What is happening? Patchwork is like a puzzle. Shapes fit together with no gaps: squares beside squares, triangles beside triangles. The simplest block is the nine-patch: three rows of three squares. If you alternate dark and light squares, you get a checkerboard. Line many blocks up, and a pattern runs across the whole quilt.

Let's make it! Today you will make a nine-patch block from squares of cloth and paper glued onto a paper backing. If several family members make one, you can put your squares together into a family paper quilt.

PICTURE STUDY



Mrs. Bill Stagg with State Quilt, Pie Town, New Mexico, Russell Lee, for the Farm Security Administration, 1940 · Color photograph · Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

This is one of the earliest color photographs of American farm life. Russell Lee took it in 1940 in Pie Town, New Mexico, a small town of homesteaders. Mrs. Bill Stagg made this quilt with a square for each state in the country.

Look closely

- Find the squares. How many can you count in one row?
- Find the pink and green border around the edge.
- Look closely at one square. What is stitched on it?
- Find the log wall behind her. What is her house made of?

Talk about it

1. How long do you think it took to make a quilt like this?
2. Why would a family far out on a farm want to make quilts?
3. If you made a quilt with a picture in every square, what would you put in yours?

Safety first. The grown-up cuts the fabric squares with the sharp shears. The child cuts paper with child-safe scissors and uses a glue stick or white school glue. Keep glue away from little brothers and sisters.

SEWING PROJECT

A Nine-Patch Quilt Square

You will lay out nine squares, dark and light, in a checkerboard and glue them onto a paper backing to make one nine-patch block.

You will need

- Fabric shears (grown-up)
- Child-safe scissors
- A ruler and pencil
- A glue stick and white school glue

NINE-PATCH PAPER AND FABRIC BLOCK

Finished size: one block, 6 × 6 in (15 × 15 cm), mounted on an 8 × 8 in (20 × 20 cm) paper · About 30 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 piece of cardstock, 8 × 8 in, for the backing
- 5 squares of dark cotton fabric, 2 × 2 in (5 × 5 cm) each, cut by a grown-up from old shirts or scraps
- 4 squares of light fabric or patterned paper, 2 × 2 in each
- White school glue
- A marker for drawing stitch lines

How to make it

1. A grown-up draws a 6-inch square in the middle of the cardstock and divides it into a 3 × 3 grid of 2-inch boxes.
2. Lay out the squares on the grid before gluing: dark in the four corners and the middle, light in the other four boxes. It looks like a checkerboard.
3. Check it: does every row go dark, light, dark or light, dark, light?

4. Glue the squares down one at a time, spreading a thin layer of glue in each box and pressing the square flat.
5. Let it dry flat under a heavy book.
6. Draw little dashed lines along the edges between squares, like the stitches that would sew them together.
7. Write your name and the date on the back, like quilters do.

Fabric check: Cotton scraps from old shirts are perfect and glue down flat. Avoid thick or stretchy fabric for this project. If you have no fabric, use squares of wrapping paper, old greeting cards or colored paper.

Steps

1. **Puzzle first.** Before gluing, mix up the squares and lay them out three different ways. Which way do you like best?
2. Make the nine-patch block from the pattern card.
3. **Family quilt.** If others in your family made blocks, lay them side by side on the floor. Tape them together on the back to make a family paper quilt and hang it up.
4. **Tell it back.** Tell someone what a quilting bee was.
5. **Clean up.** Glue capped, scraps in the scrap bag, paper bits in the trash.

Tips

- A thin layer of glue keeps fabric from wrinkling.
- Younger children: make a four-patch (two rows of two) with 3-inch squares.
- Older children: cut one dark and one light square across corner to corner and make triangles.

Check your work

- ☐ I laid out nine squares in three rows of three.
- ☐ My dark and light squares make a checkerboard.
- ☐ I can tell what a quilting bee was.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Draw a nine-patch and color it in two colors.
2. Tape in a scrap of each fabric you used, and write where it came from (an old shirt? a pillowcase?).

3. Draw a quilting bee: people sitting around a quilt frame.

From history. Russell Lee photographed the homesteaders of Pie Town, New Mexico, in 1940 for a government project that recorded American farm life. His photographs of their quilts, log houses and church suppers are kept at the Library of Congress.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Putting two darks side by side. The checkerboard breaks. Check before you glue.
- Too much glue. It soaks through and wrinkles the fabric.
- Gaps between squares. Squares should touch, like puzzle pieces.

Make it a game • Quilt Bee Memory. A grown-up lays nine fabric or paper squares face down in three rows. Take turns turning over two at a time. If they match (two of the same fabric), keep them. If not, turn them back. When all the pairs are found, build a nine-patch together with the squares, like neighbors at a quilting bee.

7.4 A COZY CHAIR

OBJECTIVES

- Tell why fleece is good for no-sew projects: it does not fray.
- Tie double knots in fleece fringe.
- Make a no-sew tied fleece pillow for a chair or reading corner.

Warm-up. Find the coziest chair or couch in your house. What makes it cozy? Count the cushions and pillows on it. Sit there for one minute with a book. What would make it even cozier?

WATCH

No-Sew Fleece Pillow

UT Extension Jefferson County · 3:35

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2ABXoORJRo>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch how she cuts the fringe and ties the knots. The cutting is the grown-up's job; the knots are yours.

Note: A 4-H agent from the University of Tennessee Extension shows a no-sew fleece pillow, step by step.

BACKUP VIDEO

DIY | Heart No-Sew Fleece Tied Pillow

Megan Makes · 1:38

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LxEVKBuVhQ>

Another idea: a tied fleece pillow cut in the shape of a heart.

KEY TERMS

fleece

A soft, warm, fuzzy cloth made by people from polyester. It does not fray.

fringe

Strips cut along the edge of the fleece, to be tied in knots.

double knot

A knot tied twice, so it holds tight.

cushion

A pillow for a chair or couch.

CORE IDEAS

Long ago... In today's picture, the Danish painter Anna Ancher painted a room in her own house. Her little daughter Helga sits by the sunny window in a chair with a soft cushioned seat, doing handwork. Long ago, families stuffed chair seats and cushions with horsehair, wool or feathers and covered them with strong cloth, so a hard wooden chair became a cozy place to sit.

Look closely. Fleece is the soft fuzzy cloth you met in Unit 1, made by people from tiny plastic beads melted and spun into fibers. Fleece is knitted, then brushed to make it fuzzy. Here is its secret: when you cut fleece, the edges do not fray. The fibers are so tangled and fuzzy that they hold on. That means you can cut fleece into fringe and tie it, with no sewing at all.

What is happening? A tied fleece pillow is two squares of fleece, one on top of the other. A grown-up cuts strips into all four edges, through both layers. Then you tie each top strip to the bottom strip under it in a double knot, all the way around. Before you tie the last side, you put in the stuffing or a pillow form. The knots hold the two layers together like stitches.

Let's make it! Today you will tie a fleece pillow for a cozy chair, a reading corner, or a grandparent's rocking chair.

PICTURE STUDY



Sunlight in the Blue Room, Anna Ancher, 1891 · Oil on canvas · Skagens Museum, Denmark

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Anna Ancher painted this room in her family's house in Skagen, a fishing town at the very top of Denmark. The girl by the window is her daughter, Helga, busy with her handwork. Ancher loved to paint sunlight coming into a quiet room.

Look closely

- Find the girl. What is she doing with her hands?
- Find the chairs. What makes their seats soft?
- Find the sunlight on the wall. What shape does the window make?
- Find all the blue things in the room.

Talk about it

1. Why do you think the girl chose the chair by the window?
2. What makes a chair cozy?
3. Where would you put your fleece pillow?

Safety first. The grown-up cuts the fleece corners and fringe with the sharp shears. The child ties the knots. Fleece pillows are for big kids and grown-ups, not for babies' cribs.

SEWING PROJECT

A Tied Fleece Pillow

You will tie two squares of fleece together around a pillow form or stuffing with dozens of double knots. No needle, no thread, no machine: just your fingers.

You will need

- Fabric shears, a ruler and chalk (grown-up)
- A 14-inch (36 cm) pillow form, or a bag of fiberfill

TIED FLEECE PILLOW

Finished size: one pillow, about 14 × 14 in (36 × 36 cm) · About 45 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 2 squares of fleece, 20 × 20 in (51 × 51 cm) each, in two colors that look good together ($\frac{5}{8}$ yard of 60-inch-wide fleece in each color is plenty)
- 1 pillow form, 14 × 14 in, or about 12 oz (340 g) of polyester fiberfill

How to make it

1. Lay one fleece square on the table, fuzzy side down. Lay the other on top, fuzzy side up. Line up the edges.
2. The grown-up cuts a 3-inch square out of each corner, through both layers.
3. The grown-up cuts strips 3 inches long and about 1 inch wide all the way along each side, through both layers. That makes about 14 strips on each side.
4. Start on one side. Take a top strip and the bottom strip under it. Tie them in a knot, then tie again to make a double knot.
5. Tie all the strips on three sides the same way.
6. Slide the pillow form in through the open side, or stuff it with fiberfill, pushing some into each corner.

7. Tie the last side closed with double knots. Fluff your pillow!

Fabric check: Anti-pill fleece looks nicer longer and does not get little fuzz balls. Fleece is soft and warm and never frays, but it is made from polyester, so keep it away from heaters and never iron it hot. A cotton fabric would fray if tied this way, which is why fleece is used.

Steps

1. **Fray test.** A grown-up cuts a strip of fleece and a strip of cotton. Rub the cut edges hard between your fingers. Which one frays? Which stays neat?
2. **Practice knots.** Tie five double knots on fleece scraps before you start.
3. Make the pillow from the pattern card.
4. **Tug test.** When you finish, gently tug each knot. Retie any that come loose.
5. **Place it.** Put the pillow in a real chair or reading corner, or give it to someone. Take a photo or draw it there.
6. **Clean up.** Fleece scraps go in the scrap bag; they are great for doll blankets.

Tips

- Tie knots snug but not so tight that the fleece puckers.
- Younger children: tie single knots, and a grown-up ties the second knot.
- Older children: count every knot and write the total in your notebook.

Check your work

- ☐ I tied double knots all the way around.
- ☐ My pillow is stuffed into the corners.
- ☐ My pillow is in a cozy spot or given to someone.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Tape in a fleece strip and a frayed cotton strip, and label which one frayed.
2. Draw your pillow in its cozy spot.
3. Draw the girl in the blue room in her cushioned chair.

From history. Polyester fleece was invented in the United States in the late 1970s. It was made to be warm like wool but light, quick-drying and easy to wash, and soon it was everywhere: in jackets, blankets and pillows.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Tying a top strip to the wrong bottom strip. The edge puckers. Tie each top strip to the one right under it.
- Single knots only. They slip loose. Tie double knots.
- Forgetting to stuff before tying the last side.

Make it a game • Knot Count Challenge. A grown-up cuts a fleece scrap into ten pairs of strips. Set a timer for two minutes. How many double knots can you tie? Each knot must hold when the grown-up tugs it. Loose knots do not count! Try again and beat your score.

UNIT 7 REVIEW

Ask these out loud, sitting in your cozy corner with your pillows. There are no points and no writing. The child may answer by telling, pointing or showing.

1. What are the two parts of a pillow? Squeeze yours and tell me.
2. Why do we leave a gap when we sew a pillow?
3. What did God tell Moses to make the tabernacle curtains from?
4. Show me how a rod pocket works with your curtain.
5. What is a nine-patch? What was a quilting bee?
6. Why can we tie fleece without sewing it? Show me a double knot.

UNIT CHALLENGE: SOMETHING COZY FOR A REAL ROOM

Choose one of your projects from this unit, the felt pillow, the fleece pillow or the curtain, and put it to work in a real room: on a bed, in a reading corner, on a grandparent's chair, or hung in the playroom. Or make one more to give.

Take a photo or draw a picture of it in its place. Make a notebook page with a fabric scrap, a sentence (written by you or a parent) about who uses it, and one thing you would do differently next time.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Finished and in use	The piece is finished, sturdy and actually being used in a real room or given away.
Neat work	Stitches or knots are snug and even, and stuffing fills the corners.
Safe habits	The child left the shears, glue gun and machine to the grown-up and counted needles in and out.
Telling and improving	The child can tell how it was made and one thing to do better next time.

ANSWER KEY

1. A cloth cover on the outside and soft stuffing inside.
2. So we can put the stuffing in. Then we sew the gap closed.
3. Fine twined linen in blue, purple and scarlet, with cherubim worked into them.
4. The child slides the rod through the tunnel at the top of the curtain.
5. A quilt block of nine squares, three rows of three. A quilting bee was when neighbors sat around a quilt frame and stitched a quilt together.
6. Fleece does not fray, so cut strips stay neat. The child ties a knot and then a second knot.

DESIGN, CLOTHING & COSTUMES

In this last unit you will become a designer. You will look for stripes, checks and polka dots everywhere and design a shirt on paper. You will dress a felt doll in a wardrobe of felt clothes, and make a shepherd costume for the Christmas play from a pillowcase. Then you will make Joseph's coat of many colors and hold a family sewing fair to show everything you made this year.

Clothes are a gift from God. When Adam and Eve were ashamed in the garden, God Himself made them coats of skins and clothed them. Hannah sewed her son Samuel a little coat every year, and Jacob gave Joseph a coat of many colors. Clothes keep us warm, cover us, and can show love. At the sewing fair, you will give one thing you made away.

PREREQUISITES

- Can cut paper and felt with child-safe scissors (Units 4–7)
- Can tie a knot and sew a running stitch with a big needle (Units 3 and 7)
- Has a sewing notebook with pages from the whole year

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can find stripes, checks and polka dots, and I can design a pattern of my own.
- ☐ I can tell how God clothed Adam and Eve with coats of skins.
- ☐ I can dress a felt doll with clothes I cut out myself.
- ☐ I can put on and wear a shepherd costume, with a belt and headpiece I helped make.
- ☐ I can tell the story of Joseph's coat of many colors.
- ☐ I can show my year's work at the sewing fair and give one piece away.

OPTIONAL BOOKS AND TOOLS FOR THIS UNIT

- ***A New Coat for Anna* by Harriet Ziefert, illustrated by Anita Lobel:** A picture book set after World War II. Anna's mother trades her treasures for wool from a farmer's sheep, and the wool is spun, dyed, woven and sewn into a red coat. It sums up the whole year: from sheep to coat. Most libraries have it.
- ***Joseph Had a Little Overcoat* by Simms Taback:** A cheerful Caldecott Medal picture book about a man whose old overcoat wears out and is made into a jacket, a vest, a scarf and smaller things, until it becomes a button. A good story about thrift and mending.
- **A plain pillowcase or an old adult T-shirt:** For the shepherd costume in Lesson 8.3. A brown, tan, gray or striped pillowcase looks best. A rope, a cord or a long strip of fabric makes the belt.

Not required. Every project in this unit works with ordinary fabric-store supplies. School Launch has no ties to these authors, publishers or companies.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

8.1	Colors and Patterns	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
8.2	God Gave Coats of Skins	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
8.3	A Shepherd for the Christmas Play	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes
8.4	Joseph's Coat of Many Colors and the Sewing Fair	2 sessions of 30–40 minutes

8.1 COLORS AND PATTERNS

OBJECTIVES

- Name stripes, checks (plaid) and polka dots, and find them in clothes at home.
- Tell what a repeating pattern is.
- Design a shirt on paper with a pattern you choose or invent.

Warm-up. Go on a pattern hunt. Look through the closets, the linen cupboard and the toy box. Find something with stripes, something with checks and something with polka dots. Bring them to the table and lay them side by side.

WATCH

"PATTERNS" Song 4 kids. Swirls curls, dots spots

The Bopalongs · 3:02

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-NdzJg3moRY>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Sing along and point to every pattern you see: stripes, dots, zigzags, checks, swirls and more.

Note: A bouncy children's song with photos of patterns in fabric, animals and buildings. A clown in a spotted suit appears for a moment.

KEY TERMS

pattern

Shapes or colors that repeat again and again in order.

stripes

Lines of color side by side.

checks

Squares of color in rows, like a checkerboard. Checks with crossing stripes are called plaid.

polka dots

Round dots spaced evenly across the cloth.

designer

A person who plans how something will look before it is made.

CORE IDEAS

The story. About a hundred and forty years ago in England, a designer named William Morris loved to sit in his garden. One summer he saw little birds called thrushes sneaking into his strawberry patch to steal the berries. He drew them, and he turned his drawing into a pattern for cloth called *Strawberry Thief*. The birds, the berries and the leaves repeat again and again across the fabric. People used it for curtains and chair covers, and you can still buy it today.

Look closely. A pattern repeats. On striped cloth, the same stripes come again and again. On checked cloth, the same squares come again and again. Look at the Strawberry Thief: find one bird. Now find another bird just like it. The design repeats like a stamp. Many patterns are woven right into the cloth with colored threads, like stripes and checks. Others are printed on top, like dots and flowers.

What is happening? Designers choose patterns and colors for a reason. Stripes can make a shirt look cheerful. Checks look neat and homey on a kitchen tablecloth. Tiny dots look gentle on a baby's blanket. God is the first and greatest designer: He made the stripes on a tiger, the spots on a ladybug, and the lilies of the field, which are more beautiful than a king's royal clothes.

Let's make it! Today you are the designer. You will choose a pattern, or invent your own, and design a shirt on paper. Maybe one day someone will sew it!

PICTURE STUDY



Strawberry Thief (printed cotton), William Morris, designed 1883 · Printed cotton · Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, New York

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

This is not a painting. It is a piece of real cloth, designed by William Morris in England. He drew the thrushes that stole strawberries from his garden and made them into a repeating pattern for printing on cotton.

Look closely

- Find a bird. Now find another bird that matches it.
- Find the red strawberries.
- How many colors can you count?
- Does the pattern have stripes, dots, or something else?

Talk about it

1. Where would you put this cloth in your house: on a chair, a curtain or a pillow?
2. If you made a pattern from something in your yard, what would you draw?
3. Why do you think Morris chose birds and berries?

Safety first. Today is a drawing and pattern-hunting day. Child-safe scissors for paper only. Fold and put back every piece of clothing you borrowed for the hunt.

SEWING PROJECT

Design a Shirt

You will cut out a paper shirt and fill it with a pattern, then give your design a name, just like William Morris named his.

You will need

- Child-safe scissors
- Crayons, markers or colored pencils
- A ruler
- A glue stick

MY PAPER SHIRT DESIGN

Finished size: one paper shirt, about 8 × 9 in (20 × 23 cm) · About 30 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 sheet of white paper or cardstock, 8½ × 11 in
- A shirt shape drawn by a parent (a T-shirt outline with short sleeves), or traced around a doll's shirt
- Crayons or markers in at least three colors
- Small paper scraps or stickers for buttons or a pocket (optional)

How to make it

1. A parent draws a big T-shirt shape on the paper.
2. Cut out the shirt with child-safe scissors.
3. Choose your pattern: stripes, checks, polka dots, or a new one you invent (stars, hearts, sheep, raindrops).
4. For stripes, use a ruler and draw lines across, then color every other stripe. For checks, draw lines across and up and down, then color every other square. For dots, draw circles evenly spaced.
5. Fill the whole shirt with your pattern. Remember: a pattern repeats!
6. Add a pocket or buttons if you like.
7. Give your design a name and write it (or have a parent write it) on the back.

Fabric check: Plain white paper shows colors best. If you have fabric scraps with patterns, glue small pieces on as patches or a pocket to compare real cloth with your drawing.

Steps

1. **Pattern hunt.** Find stripes, checks and polka dots at home. Count how many of each you find.
2. Design the shirt from the pattern card.
3. **Repeat check.** Point to your pattern and say it out loud: “red, blue, red, blue...” Does it repeat all the way across?
4. **Design show.** Hold up your shirt and tell the family its name and why you chose those colors.
5. **Clean up.** Fold the clothes from the hunt and put them back. Caps on markers.

Tips

- Light pencil lines first make coloring neat.
- Younger children: use stickers in a row for an easy pattern.
- Older children: design two shirts, one for summer and one for winter, and tell why the colors are different.

Check your work

- ☐ I can name stripes, checks and polka dots.
- ☐ My shirt has a pattern that repeats.
- ☐ I gave my design a name.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Glue in your paper shirt, or a small copy of its pattern.
2. Draw three squares: one striped, one checked, one dotted.
3. Draw a bird and a strawberry like the ones in Morris’s pattern.

From history. William Morris printed *Strawberry Thief* with carved wooden blocks and natural dyes, one color at a time. It was slow and costly, but he wanted it done well. It became one of his most popular designs.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Changing the pattern halfway. A pattern repeats the same way.

- Mixing up checks and stripes. Stripes go one way; checks go both ways.
- Leaving the hunt clothes on the floor. A designer takes care of the cloth.

Make it a game • Pattern Detective. A grown-up says a pattern: “stripes!” Everyone races to touch something with stripes. Then “checks!” or “polka dots!” or “flowers!” The first to touch the right pattern gets a point. Then switch: one player starts a pattern with blocks or buttons (red, blue, red, blue...) and the next player must add the next three pieces correctly.

Scripture. “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:” (Matthew 6:28, KJV)

Jesus said the lilies are clothed more beautifully than a king. God is the greatest designer, and He cares for us.

8.2 GOD GAVE COATS OF SKINS

OBJECTIVES

- Tell how God made coats of skins for Adam and Eve and clothed them (Genesis 3:21).
- Tell three things clothes do: they cover us, keep us warm and protect us.
- Make a felt doll with a wardrobe of felt clothes.

Warm-up. Lay out clothes for four kinds of days: a hot summer day, a snowy day, a rainy day and church on Sunday. What is different about each set? Why do we wear different clothes for different days?

WATCH

How to Make a Paper Doll Chain

Miss Lam · 3:22

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3xX5npCOOTQ>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch how folding the paper back and forth makes a chain of dolls holding hands. Then make your own doll from the pattern card and dress it in felt.

Note: Quiet close-up hands folding and cutting a paper doll chain. A grown-up can cut the folded paper if it is thick.

KEY TERMS

coat of skins

A coat made from animal skins. God made coats of skins for Adam and Eve.

clothing

Things we wear that cover us, keep us warm and protect us.

wardrobe

All the clothes a person has, or a cupboard to keep them in.

sheepskin

The skin of a sheep with the wool still on, used to make very warm coats.

CORE IDEAS

The story. In the beginning, God made the world and everything in it, and it was very good. He made Adam and Eve and put them in a beautiful garden. But they disobeyed God, and they felt ashamed. They sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves. Then God did a kind thing. He made them coats of skins, warm and strong, and clothed them Himself. Even when people had done wrong, God cared for them.

Look closely. Clothes do many jobs. They cover our bodies. They keep us warm in the cold and shade us in the sun. Boots protect our feet, and aprons protect our clothes. For a long time, people wore coats made from animal skins and furs, like sheepskin coats with the warm wool still on the inside. In today's picture, look for the furry sheepskin coat hanging over a chair.

What is happening? Every piece of clothing is made for a purpose. A raincoat sheds water. A wool sweater keeps you warm, even when it is damp. A cotton T-shirt is cool on a summer day. A coat for church is neat and clean. When you choose clothes, ask: What kind of day is it? What will I be doing? Is it kind and modest? Does it fit the occasion?

Let's make it! Today you will make a felt doll and cut a whole wardrobe of felt clothes for it: a warm coat, a summer shirt, a rain hat, Sunday clothes and a fuzzy coat like a coat of skins.

PICTURE STUDY



Threading the Needle, Amalia Lindegren, 1858 · Oil on canvas

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Amalia Lindegren was a Swedish painter, one of the first women to study at Sweden's art academy. She loved to paint country families. Here a grandmother is sewing, and her little helper threads the needle for her. Many grandmothers needed young eyes to thread a needle!

Look closely

- Find the needle and thread in the child's hands. Where is the child sitting?
- Find the grandmother's work in her lap. What color is it?
- Find the furry sheepskin coat on the chair. Who is sleeping on it?
- Find the ball of yarn and the scissors.

Talk about it

1. Why would a grandmother ask a child to thread her needle?
2. How do you help the grown-ups in your home?
3. Why would a sheepskin coat be good in a cold Swedish winter?

Safety first. Child-safe scissors for paper and felt. Felt doll clothes are for big kids, not babies: small felt pieces can be swallowed. Count felt pieces back into the doll's storage envelope.

SEWING PROJECT

A Felt Doll and Her Wardrobe

You will make a sturdy paper doll covered in felt, and a whole wardrobe of felt clothes that cling to it without any glue. Felt sticks to felt!

You will need

- Child-safe scissors
- A glue stick and white glue
- A pencil and markers
- A large envelope or zipper bag for the wardrobe

FELT DOLL WARDROBE

Finished size: one doll about 8 in (20 cm) tall, with at least five felt outfits · About 45 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 piece of cardstock, 9 × 12 in, for the doll
- 1 sheet of skin-tone or light felt, 9 × 12 in, to cover the doll
- 1 sheet of plain felt in one color for a long simple tunic the doll always wears
- Felt scraps in many colors for clothes
- A scrap of fuzzy fleece or faux fur for a coat of skins
- Yarn scraps for hair

How to make it

1. Draw a simple doll shape about 8 inches tall on the cardstock (a parent helps), or use one doll from your paper doll chain as a pattern. Cut it out.
2. Glue the cardstock doll onto the felt and cut around it, so the doll is covered in felt.
3. Cut a long, plain tunic from the plain felt, from the shoulders to the knees. Glue it on. This is the doll's base clothing; every other outfit goes on top.

4. Draw a face with markers and glue on yarn hair.
5. Lay the doll on more felt and trace around the body to make patterns for clothes: a coat, a shirt, a skirt or trousers, a hat, boots and an apron. Cut them out a little bigger than the doll.
6. Cut a coat from the fuzzy fleece or faux fur. This is the coat of skins.
7. Press the clothes onto the doll. Felt clings to felt! Keep everything in the envelope.

Fabric check: Stiff craft felt cuts cleanly and clings well. Fuzzy fleece or faux fur scraps from the remnant bin make a good coat of skins. Keep the doll modest: the base tunic always stays on, and outfits go over it.

Steps

1. **Dress for the day.** A grown-up calls out a day: “Snowy day!” “Hot summer!” “Rainy walk!” “Sunday church!” Dress your doll for it, and tell why you chose each piece.
2. Make the doll and wardrobe from the pattern card.
3. **Tell the story.** Use your doll to tell how God made coats of skins for Adam and Eve.
4. **Clean up.** Count the felt clothes back into the envelope. Scraps in the scrap bag.

Tips

- Cut clothes a little bigger than the doll so they cover well.
- Younger children: a grown-up cuts the doll; the child cuts simple clothes like a rectangle coat or a triangle hat.
- Older children: make a second doll and a whole family with clothes for a Bible story.

Check your work

- ☐ I can tell how God clothed Adam and Eve.
- ☐ I made at least five felt clothes for my doll.
- ☐ I can choose clothes that fit the day and tell why.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Draw clothes for four kinds of days: snow, sun, rain and Sunday.
2. Tape in a scrap of the fuzzy fleece you used for the coat of skins.

3. Write (or have a parent write) Genesis 3:21 and draw a warm coat.

From history. Shepherds and farmers in cold countries have worn sheepskin coats for hundreds of years, with the leather outside and the warm wool inside. Some are so warm they are still worn in the coldest winters.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Cutting clothes exactly the size of the doll. They do not cover. Cut a little bigger.
- Thinking clothes are only for looking nice. Clothes cover us, keep us warm and protect us.
- Leaving felt pieces on the floor. Little ones can swallow them.

Make it a game • Dress for the Weather. Put a pile of real clothes in the middle of the room: hats, mittens, sun hats, raincoats, scarves. A grown-up calls out the weather: “Blizzard!” “Heat wave!” “Thunderstorm!” Race to put on the right things (over your clothes) before the grown-up counts to twenty. Everyone gets a turn to call the weather.

Scripture. “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.” (Genesis 3:21, KJV)

God Himself made the first coats and clothed Adam and Eve. Clothing is a gift from His kind hands.

8.3 A SHEPHERD FOR THE CHRISTMAS PLAY

OBJECTIVES

- Tell the story of the shepherds who came to see baby Jesus.
- Tell how Hannah made her son Samuel a little coat every year.
- Wear a shepherd costume made from a pillowcase, with a belt and headpiece you helped make.

Warm-up. Look at a Christmas card or a Nativity set. Find the shepherds. What are they wearing on their heads? On their bodies? What are they carrying? What colors are their clothes?

WATCH

Easy Biblical Costumes

Linda · 9:28

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkZZaBnYYzY>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story. Watch how she makes a tunic, a rope belt and a headpiece for a little girl with no sewing. Notice that the grown-up does all the cutting.

Note: A woman shows quick no-sew Bible-times costumes on a little girl, filmed at home on a phone. Simple and practical.

BACKUP VIDEO

No-Sew Shepherd Costume

SladeRiverfield · 11:09

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LizSGpG40gA>

For parents: another no-sew shepherd costume from old fabric, shown step by step.

KEY TERMS

costume

Clothes worn to play a part in a play or pageant.

tunic

A simple long shirt with a hole for the head, worn in Bible times.

headpiece

A cloth worn over the head, held on with a band, like shepherds wore.

Christmas pageant

A play that tells the story of Jesus's birth.

CORE IDEAS

The story. On the night Jesus was born in Bethlehem, shepherds were out in the fields, keeping watch over their sheep. An angel of the Lord came to them and said, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." The shepherds hurried to Bethlehem and found Mary, Joseph and the baby lying in a manger. In today's painting, the shepherds have come close to see the baby. One has brought a lamb.

Long ago... Long before that, a mother named Hannah prayed for a son, and God gave her Samuel. When Samuel was a little boy, he went to live and serve at the house of the Lord. Every year Hannah made him a little coat and brought it to him. Samuel was growing, so each new coat was probably a little bigger than the last. Every stitch said, "I love you."

What is happening? A shepherd costume is simple, because shepherds wore simple clothes: a long tunic, a belt or sash around the middle, a cloth over the head held on with a band, and maybe a cloak for cold nights. A pillowcase makes a perfect tunic. The grown-up cuts a hole for the head and holes for the arms, and the tunic slips on over your clothes.

Let's make it! Today you and a grown-up will turn a pillowcase into a shepherd's tunic. You will make the belt and the headpiece, and choose a crook. Then you will be ready for a Christmas pageant at church or at home.

PICTURE STUDY



The Adoration of the Shepherds, Georges de La Tour, about 1644 · Oil on canvas · Louvre Museum, Paris
Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Georges de La Tour was a French painter famous for scenes lit by one small candle. Here the shepherds have come to see baby Jesus. Look at their simple clothes and how quietly they gather around the manger.

Look closely

- Find baby Jesus. How is He wrapped?
- Find the lamb the shepherds brought.
- Find a shepherd's staff or crook.
- Find the candle. Who is holding it?

Talk about it

1. What do you think the shepherds felt when they saw baby Jesus?
2. What do you notice about the shepherds' clothes?
3. If you were a shepherd in the play, what would you say?

Safety first. The grown-up cuts the pillowcase with the sharp shears. The head band goes around the forehead, never around the neck, and belts tie at the waist. A cardboard or broom-handle crook is carried pointing up, never swung near faces.

SEWING PROJECT

A Pillowcase Shepherd Costume

A plain pillowcase becomes a shepherd's tunic. You will tie the belt, set the headpiece and carry the crook.

You will need

- Fabric shears and chalk (grown-up)
- Child-safe scissors for cord
- A walking stick, broom handle or cardboard tube for a crook (optional)
- A mirror to see your costume

PILLOWCASE SHEPHERD TUNIC

Finished size: one costume, child size (ages 5–8) · About 30 minutes

Fabric and notions

- 1 standard pillowcase, about 20 × 30 in (51 × 76 cm), in brown, tan, gray or stripes
- 1 piece of rope, cord or a fabric strip, about 1½ yards (1.4 m), for the belt
- 1 dish towel or a 22-in (56 cm) square of plain fabric, for the headpiece
- 1 strip of fabric or a necktie, about 30 in (76 cm), for the head band

How to make it

1. Turn the pillowcase upside down so the closed end is at the top.
2. The grown-up cuts a half-circle neck hole, about 8 inches across, in the middle of the top fold. Try it over the child's head; make it a little bigger if needed.
3. The grown-up cuts an armhole on each side, about 7 inches down from the top corners, about 6 inches long.

4. Put the tunic on over your clothes. The open end hangs near your knees or shins.
5. Tie the rope belt around your waist with a bow or a knot. Let the ends hang.
6. Lay the dish towel over your head so it hangs down the back and sides. The grown-up ties the head band around your forehead and knots it at the back of the head.
7. Pick up your crook. You are a shepherd!

Fabric check: A cotton or cotton-blend pillowcase is comfortable and does not need hemming for a play, because pillowcases are already hemmed at the open end. Striped dish towels make wonderful headpieces. Choose plain or striped cloth rather than bright modern prints.

Steps

1. **Plan it.** Look at the shepherds in the painting and on a Christmas card. Choose your colors.
2. Make the costume from the pattern card.
3. **Move test.** Walk, kneel and sit in your costume. Can you move easily? Does the headpiece stay on? Fix anything that slips.
4. **Practice the part.** Say the shepherds' words from Luke 2:15: "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem."
5. **Clean up.** Fold the costume and keep it in a bag for the pageant and the sewing fair.

Tips

- If the tunic is too long, the belt can blouse it up at the waist.
- Younger children: use a small pillowcase, and skip the head band if the headpiece stays on with a ponytail holder at the back (grown-up puts it on).
- Older children: make a second costume for a little brother or sister, or for a church pageant.

Check your work

- ☐ I tied my belt myself.
- ☐ My costume lets me walk, kneel and sit.
- ☐ I can tell the story of the shepherds and of Hannah's little coat.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Draw yourself as a shepherd: tunic, belt, headpiece and crook.
2. Tape in a scrap of the belt cord.
3. Draw Hannah giving Samuel his little coat.

From history. Christmas pageants, with children dressed as shepherds, angels and wise men, have been held in churches and schools for many years. Simple costumes made from pillowcases, sheets and dish towels have been part of them for generations.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Cutting the neck hole too big at first. Start small and try it on; you can always cut more.
- Tying anything around the neck. Bands go on the forehead, belts at the waist.
- Using a bright cartoon pillowcase. Plain or striped cloth looks like Bible times.

Make it a game • Shepherds and Sheep. One player in the shepherd costume is the shepherd. Everyone else is a sheep and hides around the room. The shepherd counts to twenty, then gently finds each sheep and leads it back to the fold (the couch). Sheep may say “baa” once when the shepherd says “Where are my sheep?” Take turns being the shepherd.

Scripture. “Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year” (1 Samuel 2:19, KJV)

Hannah sewed Samuel a new little coat every year. Sewing for our family is a way of loving them.

8.4 JOSEPH'S COAT OF MANY COLORS AND THE SEWING FAIR

OBJECTIVES

- Tell the story of Joseph's coat of many colors (Genesis 37:3).
- Make a paper or felt coat of many colors.
- Show the year's work at a family sewing fair and give one piece away.

Warm-up. Lay out every color of yarn, felt and fabric scrap you have left from this year. How many colors can you count? If you could make a coat with all of them, which would you choose?

WATCH

Joseph's Coat | Stories of the Bible

Saddleback Kids • 3:11

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNEPXefoe2s>

WHEN TO WATCH

After you read the story together. Watch for the moment Jacob gives Joseph the coat, and how his brothers feel.

Note: A short animated Bible story from Genesis 37. It tells about the coat, Joseph's dreams and his brothers' jealousy, simply and without frightening pictures.

KEY TERMS

Joseph

A son of Jacob in the Bible, who was given a coat of many colors.

coat of many colors

The special coat Jacob made for Joseph, a sign of his love.

sewing fair

A family show where you set out the things you made and tell about them.

display card

A small card beside each piece that tells its name, what it is made of and when you made it.

CORE IDEAS

The story. Long ago, a man named Jacob, also called Israel, had twelve sons. He loved his son Joseph very much, and he made him a coat of many colors. It was a special gift that showed Jacob's love. But Joseph's brothers were jealous, and they did a wicked thing: they sold Joseph to travelers going to Egypt. Yet God was with Joseph the whole time. Many years later, God used Joseph to save his whole family from hunger, and Joseph forgave his brothers.

Look closely. Think about that coat. Someone had to spin the threads, dye them many colors, weave the cloth, and sew it into a coat. That is everything you learned this year! Fibers, spinning, weaving, dyeing, sewing. A coat of many colors was a lot of work, and a lot of love.

What is happening? This year your hands learned to feel fibers, weave over and under, lace, stitch, sew on buttons, finger-knit, crochet chains, tie knots and make costumes. Your sewing notebook is full of scraps and drawings. Now it is time to show your work, the way the widows showed Peter the coats Dorcas made. At a sewing fair, you set out everything you made, tell how you made it, show someone a skill, and give one piece away.

Let's make it! Today you will make a coat of many colors from paper or felt strips, then get ready for your family sewing fair.

PICTURE STUDY



Jacob Blesses Joseph and Gives Him the Coat, Owen Jones, 1869 · Color print from *The History of Joseph and His Brethren*

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Owen Jones was an English designer who loved patterns and color. In 1869 he made a picture book of the story of Joseph with bright borders around every page. Here Jacob puts the coat of many colors on Joseph.

Look closely

- Find Joseph's coat. How many colors can you count?
- Find Jacob. What color is his robe?
- Find the sheep. Why might sheep be in this picture?
- Look at the border. What shapes repeat in the pattern?

Talk about it

1. How do you think Joseph felt when he got the coat?
2. How do you think his brothers felt?
3. What gift could you make to show someone you love them?

Safety first. Child-safe scissors for paper and felt; the grown-up cuts any woven fabric. At the sewing fair, needles, pins and scissors stay in their tins and boxes, and small pieces like buttons and pom-poms are set out of reach of little visitors.

SEWING PROJECT

A Coat of Many Colors, and the Family Sewing Fair

You will make a coat of many colors from strips of paper or felt. Then you will set up a family sewing fair to show everything you made this year.

You will need

- Child-safe scissors
- A glue stick and white glue
- Index cards and a marker for display cards
- A table, a clean sheet or tablecloth, and your whole year's projects and notebook

COAT OF MANY COLORS

Finished size: one coat picture, about 9 × 12 in (23 × 30 cm) · About 30 minutes, plus the fair

Fabric and notions

- 1 sheet of 9 × 12 in cardstock or felt, cut into a simple coat shape (a parent draws a T shape with long sleeves)
- Strips of paper or felt in at least seven colors, about 1 in (2.5 cm) wide
- Yarn and fabric scraps from the year (optional)
- A glue stick (for paper) or white glue (for felt)

How to make it

1. Cut out the coat shape from the cardstock or felt.
2. Lay the colored strips across the coat in stripes, one color after another. Plan the order before gluing.
3. Glue the strips down one at a time, close together, with no gaps.
4. Trim the ends of the strips along the edge of the coat.

5. Add yarn scraps, a pom-pom or a button from the year's projects if you like.
6. Let it dry flat. Write your name and the year on the back.
7. Hang it up as the sign for your sewing fair!

Fabric check: Construction paper strips are easy and bright. Felt strips make a soft coat that lasts. Using scraps from all your projects this year makes the coat a memory of everything you made.

Steps

1. **Gather the year.** Find every project you made: the lamb picture, the woven mat, the stitch square, the treat bag, the garland, the scarf (or its photo), the pillows, the costume and the notebook.
2. Make the coat of many colors from the pattern card.
3. **Make display cards.** For each piece, a parent writes a card with its name, what it is made of and the month you made it. You add a drawing.
4. **Hold the fair.** Set everything on a table with its card. Invite the family (or grandparents and friends). Wear your shepherd costume. Show your sewing notebook. Show someone how to finger-knit or weave.
5. **Give one piece away.** Choose one thing you made and give it to someone at the fair, with a note.
6. **Clean up.** Put every project in a project box, and count the needles back into the tin one last time this year.

Tips

- Set the fair table at child height so little visitors can see, but keep small pieces back from the edge.
- Younger children: choose five favorite pieces to show, and tell about each one.
- Older children: write your own display cards and lead a little tour.

Check your work

- ☐ I made a coat of many colors.
- ☐ I showed my year's work at the sewing fair and told how I made things.
- ☐ I gave one piece away.

SEWING NOTEBOOK

1. Glue in a strip of every color you used in your coat.

2. Draw your sewing fair table with your projects on it.
3. A parent writes the child's words: "This year I learned to ..." and "I gave ... to ..."

From history. Owen Jones was famous for a big book of patterns from around the world, called *The Grammar of Ornament* (1856). He loved bright colors and repeating borders, as you can see in his picture of Joseph's coat.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Gluing strips with gaps between them. Push each strip close to the last.
- Leaving projects in a heap at the fair. Each piece gets its own spot and a card.
- Forgetting to give one away. Giving is part of the fair!

Make it a game • Fair Guide Game. At the sewing fair, a grown-up points to any project and asks one question: "What is it made of?" "What stitch did you use?" "Who taught you?" "What would you change?" Answer and earn a colored strip for your coat. Can you earn all seven colors before the fair is over?

Scripture. "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours." (Genesis 37:3, KJV)

Jacob's coat showed his love for Joseph. The things we make for others can show love too.

UNIT 8 REVIEW

Ask these out loud at the sewing fair table. There are no points and no writing. The child may answer by telling, pointing or showing.

1. Point to something with stripes, something with checks and something with polka dots. What is a pattern?
2. What did God make for Adam and Eve? What does that show us about God?
3. Dress your felt doll for a snowy day. Why did you choose those clothes?
4. Put on your shepherd costume. Tell me about each part and who cut the cloth.
5. What did Hannah make for Samuel every year?
6. Who made Joseph a coat of many colors? What did it show?

UNIT CHALLENGE: THE FAMILY SEWING FAIR

The unit challenge is the sewing fair itself. Set out the year's work with a display card for each piece, wear the shepherd costume (or hang the coat of many colors as your sign), and show your sewing notebook from the first page to the last.

Show one skill to a guest, such as weaving over and under, finger knitting or tying a fleece knot. Then give one piece away with a note, and make a last notebook page: "Skills I learned this year," with a drawing of the fair.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Everything set out	Finished pieces from the year are on display, each with a card that tells its name, what it is made of and when it was made.
Telling about the work	The child explains how several pieces were made, in his or her own words.
Showing a skill	The child shows a guest one skill learned this year, safely and patiently.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Giving	The child gives one piece away with a note, and the last notebook page lists the skills learned.

ANSWER KEY

1. The child points to each. A pattern is shapes or colors that repeat in order.
2. Coats of skins, and He clothed them. It shows that God is kind and cares for us.
3. The child chooses warm clothes like the coat of skins, a hat and boots, and explains that they keep the doll warm.
4. Tunic, belt, headpiece and band, and a crook. The grown-up cut the pillowcase with sharp shears.
5. A little coat, bigger each year as he grew.
6. His father Jacob (Israel). It showed how much he loved Joseph.