



Understanding Quilting and Patchwork

Talking Textiles

Lesson Plan

Total Time: 2 hours (with optional extension activity - Make a Class Quilt)

Aimed at: KS2

For this lesson, you will need:

Quilt Quiz PowerPoint Presentation (see Quilting Past and Present online resources)

'Textile Treasures' Loans Box

Museum object label sheet and Quilt Questions sheet

'Quilty Consequence' Game sheets

Stitch guide sheets

Pencils and rulers

Sewing equipment - 'Crewel' needles, cotton embroidery thread, fabric scissors, fabric scraps

20cm x 20cm pieces of calico/plain cotton fabric

Single Word Cards for each student with words that make up a poem, phrase or story

Learning Objectives

To learn how stories have been told through textiles in the past and present

To investigate and speak about textile-based objects

To make observations and simple comparisons with modern textiles

To develop imaginative narratives based on real objects

To learn new skills and techniques for creating artwork with different materials

To understand what is involved in effective listening and how to work safely

Before you start...

Set out your classroom so students can work in groups of no more than 6.

You might like to use trays to keep sewing equipment safe and pencils, etc. close to hand

Put needles on scraps of fabric in each box. Write on the fabric the number of needles attached so students know to return the same number of needles at the end.

Keep the quilts from your loans box, paper sheets and equipment out and covered so they're safely hidden away but ready to use at the right moment.

Cut out calico/cotton fabric for the sewing activity and prepare some stitch samples for students to see.

Introduction

Begin the session by introducing what a textile is and how it could tell a story. Show a picture of the Bayeaux Tapestry, Egyptian Hieroglyphics or a cherished textile toy. Explain what a quilt is and that even quilts can tell stories. **(5 minutes)**

Activity (10 minutes)

Play the 'Quilt Quiz' PowerPoint presentation and encourage students to decide their answers as a group.

Teacher's note: The quilts shown in the quiz are the same ones as your loans box. If students have specific questions about their quilts ask them to write down or remember their questions for the next activity.

Object Investigators - Examining quilts for stories

Choose one quilt from your loans box. Show the class the quilt and explain how the quilt tells a story **(5 minutes)**.

e.g. when it was made, how it was made, who made it, what it's made from and how we can guess other bits of the quilt' story because of the way it looks.

Activity (15 minutes)

Give each group a quilt from the loans box, a 'Quilt Questions' sheet and a Museum Object label. Ask them to investigate their quilts and try to answer the questions. They will then use their findings to write a short label for their quilt, just as we do in a Museum.

Creating an imagined story from a textile

Pick a different quilt and ask the students to look at it and imagine they were writing a story about it. What ideas can they generate just by looking at a quilt? **(5 minutes)**

Activity (15 minutes)

Play 'Quilty Consequences' using the quilt already on their table. You might like to demonstrate exactly how to turn the sheet over and remind students that this is an imagination game so they can write any answer they like.

When each group have finished their 'consequence' story ask them to read it out to the group whilst holding up their quilt for everyone to see.

Sewing basics

Collect in all the quilts and work sheets. Put a tray with sewing equipment on each table but remind students not to touch it yet.

Explain that students will now practice a basic sewing stitch called 'running stitch' (or cross stitch if more experienced).

Activity (50 minutes)

Use the stitch guide sheets to help you lead the class. Get each student to cut their own embroidery thread (asking their neighbour for help cutting the thread), thread a crewel needle and tie a knot at the end of the thread (they may need a little help tying the knot). Now ask each student to get a square of fabric from their tray and write their first initial in pencil in the corner (at least 3cm from the edge).

Starting from the back of the fabric, each student should sew using running stitch all the way around their initial. They will need to do a 'repeat stitch' to finish their sewing.

Now pass out the single word cards to each student. They will need to write these words in the middle of their calico in light pencil. They can then use the running stitch (or cross stitch if more experienced) to embroider their word. Make sure each student finishes their sewing securely. If there is time, they can further embroider their square.

Tidy-up trays and equipment at the end and ask students to bring their work to one table.

Closing summary (10 minutes)

Ask students to lay their square down in order so they can read the poem/phrase/story out loud. Ask them if this a talking textile? How is this similar to the quilts they have seen? Could they make a class quilt? (see help sheets in 'Library' for a guide to group quilts).