



MACKENZIE ART GALLERY SCHOOL TOURS | PRESENTED BY 

TEACHER'S RESOURCE GUIDE

Prairie Interlace: Weaving, Modernisms and the Expanded Frame, 1960-2000

Organized and circulated by Nickle Galleries and the MacKenzie Art Gallery. This project has been made possible in part by the Government of Canada.



Introduction	3
<hr/>	
FOR TEACHERS	4
Learning Goals	4
Related Books, Websites & Resources	4
Curricular Connections	5
<hr/>	
EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS	9
Lesson 1	12
Lesson 2	19
Lesson 3	29
Lesson 4	35
Unit Wrap-up	41
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INTRODUCTION

Prairie Interlace: Weaving, Modernisms and the Expanded Frame, 1960-2000

A collaboration between the Nickle Galleries (Calgary, Alberta) and the MacKenzie Art Gallery (Regina, SK).

This resource can be used to prepare for your visit to *Prairie Interlace* at a participating gallery location, or alongside the *Prairie Interlace* website: www.prairieinterlace.ca

This resource includes both information for teachers and a short unit with four lesson plans that can be shared directly with students. Each lesson delves into one of the main ideas in *Prairie Interlace* and features an artwork of one of the artists.



Prairie Interlace: Weaving, Modernisms and the Expanded Frame, 1960-2000 (installation view), Nickle Galleries. Photo: Dave Brown, LCR PhotoServices.

LEARNING GOALS***Prairie Interlace: Weaving, Modernisms and the Expanded Frame, 1960-2000***

Through this resource and the *Prairie Interlace* exhibition, students will learn:

- What textile arts and weaving are, and how they fit into the world of art.
- The history of textile arts in Canada and on the prairies.
- How textile arts and weaving relate to marginalized voices.
- How textile artists were part of the modernist art movement.
- How textile arts can relate to the land and to places.

RELATED PICTURE BOOKS:

Abuela's Weave (Mar 1993), Author: Omar S. Castaneda.

The Weaver (Apr 2010), Author: Thacher Hurd.

The Spider Weaver: A Legend of Kente Cloth (Feb 2001), Author: Margaret Musgrove.



CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

KEY THEMES: Key themes: community, environment, Saskatchewan voices, identity, place, and social issues

Here are some of the outcomes this unit can cover from the Arts Education and Visual Arts sections of the Saskatchewan Curriculum. You can check them off as you cover them in class.

(For 10, 20, and 30 levels, Arts Education outcomes will be denoted with “AE”, and Visual Arts outcomes will be denoted with “VA”.)

OUTCOMES

CREATIVE/PRODUCTIVE

Investigate creative processes for producing arts expressions. CP10.1AE



Apply creative processes for producing arts expressions within a local context. CP20.1AE



Create visual art works that express ideas about the natural, constructed, and imagined environments. CP3.7



Investigate and use various visual art forms, images, and art-making processes to express ideas about place. CP7.11



Create artworks that express own ideas. Use different visual arts concepts, forms, tools and mediums. Demonstrate increased skills at problem-solving in art making. CPK.4, CP1.8, CP2.8, CP3.8, CP4.8, CP5.8, CP6.12, CP7.12, CP8.12, CP9.12, CP10.3AE, CP20.3AE, CP30.1AE, CP10.2VA, CP20.1VA, CP30.3VA



Create art works, using various practices (e.g., drawing, painting, crafting, printmaking, digital technologies, sculpture, installation), that respond to diverse worldviews. CP20.3VA



OUTCOMES

LESSON 1 LESSON 2 LESSON 3 LESSON 4

Use inquiry to create a work of art inspired by the work of national and/or international artists whose work responds to socially relevant topics. CP20.4VA, CP30.4VA



CRITICAL/RESPONSIVE

Demonstrate understanding that arts are a way of expressing ideas, and how these ideas can come from the artists' communities and personal perspectives. CR1.1, CR2.1, CR4.1, CR10.2VA



Create personal responses to a variety of arts expressions (e.g. using poetry, writing, discussion, visual art, music, analysis, personal interpretation, and research). CRK.1, CR6.1, CR7.1, CR8.1, CR9.1



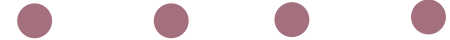
Examine various creative processes and ways of thinking. CR10.1AE



Identify and analyse criteria for critiquing and valuing various forms of visual art. CR20.1VE



Investigate how the arts engage people holistically, including physically, spiritually, intellectually and emotionally. CR30.1AE



Investigate and describe various reasons for creating arts expressions. CR1.2



Use inquiry and technology to investigate a variety of arts expressions. CR2.2



Respond to arts expressions that use the environment (natural, constructed, imagined) as inspiration. CR3.2, CR10.2AE



Investigate and identify ways that the arts can express ideas about identity. CR6.2



Investigate and identify ways that the arts can communicate a sense of place. CR7.2



Investigate and identify ways that today's arts expressions often reflect concern for social issues. CR8.2



OUTCOMES

LESSON 1 LESSON 2 LESSON 3 LESSON 4

Investigate and identify ways that today's arts expressions can inspire change. CR9.2



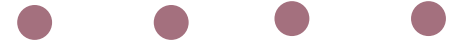
Examine how artists use arts to raise awareness about place and sustainability (e.g., social, economic, environmental). CR20.2AE



Examine arts expressions and artists of various times and places. Learn about and describe how these expressions of reflect diverse experience, values, beliefs, ways of knowing, and worldviews. CR6.3, CR7.3, CR8.3, CR20.1AE, CR30.2AE, CR20.2VA



Investigate and identify how arts expressions can challenge thinking about values, ideas, and beliefs. CR9.3



Respond critically to art works of professional artists, including Indigenous artists, to explore intent. CR10.3VA



CULTURAL/HISTORICAL

Learn to describe and identify the arts and cultural traditions found in own home and school community. CHK.1, CH1.1, CH2.1



Investigate and share discoveries about the arts in Saskatchewan through collaborative inquiry. CH4.1



Investigate how personal, cultural, or regional identity may be reflected in arts expressions both past and present. CH6.1, CH10.3AE



Investigate how artists' relationship to place may be reflected in their work. CH7.1


























Investigate and discuss the role of artists in raising awareness or taking action on topics of concern. CH9.1



TEACHER'S RESOURCE GUIDE



OUTCOMES	LESSON 1	LESSON 2	LESSON 3	LESSON 4
Investigate how the arts can challenge, reinforce or draw attention to ideas, values and/or beliefs. CH10.1AE				
Describe, identify, analyze and respond to the arts expressions of Saskatchewan Indigenous artists. Consider how Indigenous artworks express cultural identity. CHK.2, CH1.2, CH2.2, CH3.2, CH4.2, CH6.2				
Investigate the impact of visual culture on students' lives and the human condition. CH10.2VA				
Analyze and describe how arts and pop culture expressions convey information about the time and place in which they were created. CH5.3				
Investigate and identify a variety of factors that influence artists, their work, and careers. CH7.3				
Investigate diversity of artistic ideas, styles, and media in contemporary arts expressions. CH9.3				
Investigate how the arts support, influence and shape diverse communities. CH20.3AE				

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Prairie Interlace: Weaving, Modernisms and the Expanded Frame, 1960-2000

IMPORTANT WORDS

fibre: a long, thin piece of something. Fibres often come from plants, animal hair, silk and plastics. Sometimes fabric fibres are even made of metals or minerals!

thread: fibres can be twisted together to create even longer, stronger threads.

interlace: to cross threads over each other to make fabric. This is often done in complicated patterns. Weaving, twining, knitting, knotting, felting, rug hooking, latch hooking, and crocheting are all examples of interlacing.

weaving: making fabric by crossing threads over and under each other, often on a loom.

curator: a person that selects artworks to make an art exhibition (show) in a gallery. They think about how the artworks will tell a story together.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Prairie Interlace: Weaving, Modernisms and the Expanded Frame, 1960-2000

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Prairie Interlace: Weaving, Modernisms and the Expanded Frame is an art exhibition about textile and fibre arts on the Canadian Prairies. It focuses on artworks from the 1960s to the early 2000s that are made by interlacing threads. The artists who made this work are either from the Prairie Provinces, or have lived or worked on the Prairies in the past.

Prairie Interlace was created by both the Nickle Galleries (from Calgary) and the MacKenzie Art Gallery (from Regina). It is curated by Michele Hardy, PhD (Curator and Acting Director, Nickle Galleries, University of Calgary), Timothy Long (Head Curator, MacKenzie Art Gallery) and Julia Krueger, PhD (Independent Curator and Scholar).



Prairie Interlace: Weaving, Modernisms and the Expanded Frame, 1960-2000 (installation view), Nickle Galleries. Photo: Dave Brown, LCR PhotoServices.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Prairie Interlace: Weaving, Modernisms and the Expanded Frame, 1960-2000

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION (continued)

Like the threads that criss-cross in these artworks, there are many big ideas in this exhibition that overlap. In this unit you will learn about four of those ideas:

- Crafts as Art
- Modernism and Postmodernism
- Under-represented voices in Art, and
- Places

WHAT DO YOU ALREADY KNOW?

1. Have you made any textile art projects?
2. Does anyone you know make textile art? What do they make?
3. Where do you see textile arts in your everyday life?



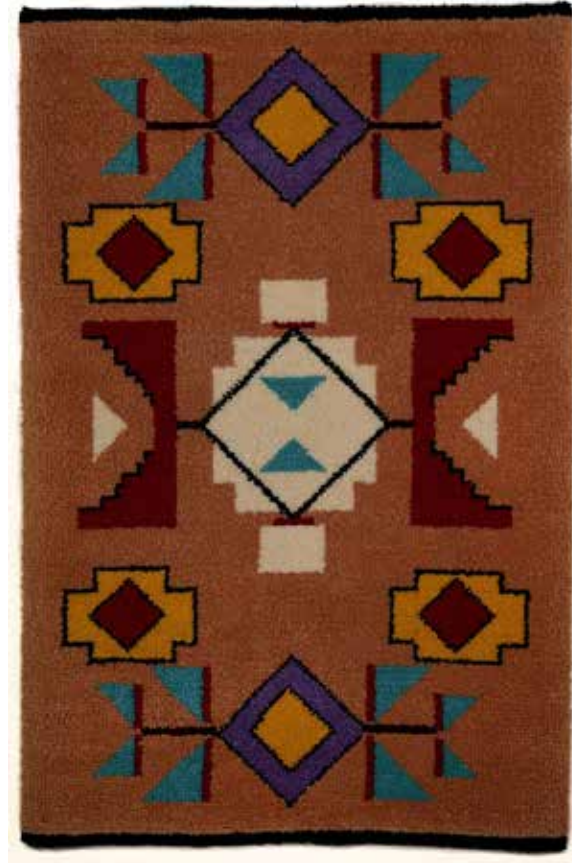
Prairie Interlace: Weaving, Modernisms and the Expanded Frame, 1960-2000 (installation view), Nickle Galleries. Photo: Dave Brown, LCR PhotoServices.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 1: Art and Craft: Is There a Difference?



Marjorie Yuzicappi, Tapestry (Ta-Hah-Sheena), 1970. latch hooked; wool, linen, 365 x 183 cm. Collection of University of Regina President's Art Collection.



Evelyn Goodtrack, Dakota Rug, 1968. latch hooked; wool, cotton, 174.5 x 113.5 cm. SK Arts Permanent Collection, N70.3.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 1: Art and Craft: Is There a Difference?

IMPORTANT WORDS

artworks: creative works. Art can be expressive, imaginative, beautiful, interesting, emotional, tied to culture, technically skilled, and can make us think.

artist: someone who creates art in any medium. Artists make art for many reasons. These include expressing themselves, connecting to their culture, making a living, sharing ideas, recording history and stories, making something beautiful, making something useful, and making people think.

craft: making something skillfully, often with your hands. Art forms that are thought of as craft often focus on the process of making something and the materials used. Crafts often create objects that have a specific use. Crafts use creativity, expression, and cultural knowledge. Sometimes people label artworks as crafts to make them seem less important. However, crafts are important art forms, and people who make crafts are artists.

marginalized people: people whose power is often taken away by society's systems.

Indigenous people: The first groups of people to live in a place. In Canada, Indigenous peoples include the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. The word Indigenous can also be used to describe something belonging to Indigenous peoples.

cultural knowledge: the skills, stories, histories, and life lessons shared in a culture. This will often include knowledge about art making.

Sioux: a name sometimes used for the Lakota, Nakota, and Dakota peoples. Some people prefer not to use the term Sioux, as it was created by colonizers. The word comes from French settlers hearing the Ojibwe people call the Lakota, Nakota, and Dakota people snakes, or enemies. Many people from Lakota, Nakota, and Dakota nations are reclaiming this name.

Ta-hah-sheena: a Dakota word for decorated robes worn at social gatherings and ceremonies.

Latch hooking: a way of creating rugs and wall hangings. Latch hooking uses small pieces of yarn that are knotted onto a fabric grid.



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 1: Art and Craft: Is There a Difference?

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

These large, latch hooked wall hangings have bold triangles and squares in their designs. These geometric (straight-sided) designs were inspired by traditional Dakota patterns. The shapes and designs have specific meanings that the artists learned from elders in their community. The pattern on *Tapestry (Ta-Hah-Sheena)* was created with the support of Dakota Elder Clifford Goodwill. *Dakota Rug* shows a flower pattern that Evelyn learned from a woman she describes as “a grandmother from Prince Albert.” Passing down cultural and family knowledge was important in the making of both these artworks.

Marge describes her piece as a ta-hah-sheena. Historically, a ta-hah-sheena was a robe used for ceremonies in Dakota culture. When the Dakota people lived in teepees, these robes were often hung on the inside between ceremonial use. They made these living spaces beautiful while also making them warmer.

Creating these large rugs was a lot of work. *Tapestry (Ta-Hah-Sheena)* is so big that Marge couldn't lay it flat in her house! She had to roll parts of it up as she worked. Evelyn says that she mostly worked on her rugs in the evenings under lamp light, since her home didn't have electricity at the time.

Some people label textile works as craft instead of art, and treat craft as less important than art. The label of craft is often given to the artworks of marginalized people. Labelling someone's art as less important can be part of marginalizing them, or taking away their power. Many museums and galleries have collected textile artworks without recording who made them (even when they had the opportunity to)! This is like saying the creators of these works aren't artists. A lot of skill important cultural knowledge goes into making textile arts; these artworks and artists deserve to be valued.

Tapestry (Ta-Hah-Sheena) was made to hang in the Dr. John Archer Library at the University of Regina. *Dakota Rug* is now part of SK Arts' Permanent Collection.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 1: Art and Craft: Is There a Difference?

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

You can read more about *Tapestry (Ta-Hah-Sheena)* and Dakota Rug on the Prairie Interlace website. The site also has a video of Marge Yuzicappi and Evelyn Goodtrack discussing their artwork.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS AND THE SIOUX HANDCRAFT COLLECTIVE

Marjorie (Marge) Yuzicappi and Evelyn Goodtrack are Dakota women from the Tatanka Nagi (Standing Buffalo) First Nation. Marge and Evelyn's mother passed away when they were young. The sisters learned a lot about creating art from their grandmother, who beaded and made moccasins.

When they were young, these sisters created rugs with the Sioux Handcraft Co-operative. This co-operative started in 1967 as a way for the women of Standing Buffalo First Nation to earn extra money. However, it became much more than that. The members of the co-operative gathered at an old daycare centre, where they would laugh and talk while working together. The group would learn about traditional Dakota designs from community elders, then use these teachings to plan patterns for the rugs.

Each artist would take their rugs home to work on them. Some of the artists would work with family members. Their sisters, brothers, or children helped with the long latch hooking process.

The Sioux Handcraft Co-operative ended in 1972. In that time, they made around 182 rug designs. The work of the Sioux Handcraft Co-operative inspired many other artists, such as Florence Ryder.

Today, Evelyn and her husband Hartland Goodtrack (of Wood Mountain Lakota First Nation) serve their community as Elders. Evelyn doesn't create latch hooked rugs anymore, but she does make shawls and ribbon skirts. Marge paused latch hooking for a time, but came back to it. She still makes latch hooked artworks today. Both women care deeply about passing on their arts knowledge and cultural knowledge to the next generation.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 1: Art and Craft: Is There a Difference?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Why do you think arts/crafts are important in communities?

Before reading this lesson, did you think of arts and crafts as separate? Why did you feel that way? Has your opinion changed?



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 1: Art and Craft: Is There a Difference?

ACTIVITY

Research someone you know in your community who makes textile art.

MATERIALS

Writing and drawing materials or a computer

Optional: recording device such as phone, camera, or voice recorder.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Choose someone you know well (like a member of your family, a family friend, a teacher, or an elder) who makes textile art. Some examples could be knitting, crocheting, weaving, cross-stitching, embroidering, beading, sewing clothes, leatherworking, or quilting. If you aren't close to anyone who does a textile art, you could focus on researching a community member online instead.
2. Talk with this person to learn more about their art practice. Some example questions you could ask are:
 - a) What type of artwork do you make?
 - b) How do you make your artwork?
 - c) Is your artwork functional? Does it get used in everyday life?
 - d) Do you consider yourself an artist or a craftsperson? Or both?
 - e) Who taught you how to do this art form?
 - f) Why do you keep making these artworks?
 - g) What projects are you working on now?(If you are researching someone online, try to find answers to some of those questions to the best of your ability.)



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 1: Art and Craft: Is There a Difference?

ACTIVITY

Research someone you know in your community who makes textile art.

MATERIALS

Writing and drawing materials or a computer

Optional: recording device such as phone, camera, or voice recorder.

3. Share what you learned with the class. This could be done by talking to each other, making posters with information on your family member's artwork, or even by making a presentation on your interview.
4. Reflect on this learning experience.
 - a) Are you interested in learning any textile art forms? Why or why not?
 - b) Has your understanding of the work behind textile arts changed?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 2: Textile Arts, Modernism, and Postmodernism

IMPORTANT WORDS

modern art or modernism: an art movement that began in the late 1800's. Modernism is about breaking away from the traditions of earlier European artmaking. Many modern artists experimented with using their mediums in new ways. In the mid-to-late 1900s, modernism focused on very abstract or even non-representational artworks. Many modernists also believed that there were certain things about the world that were always true, and that art could represent those truths.

postmodernism: an art movement that began in the late 1900s in response to modernism. Postmodern artists tend to challenge the idea that anything can be true at all times. They often make artwork that is more representational (work that is meant to represent specific things or ideas). Many postmodern artists make work that is about social issues and the changes they want to see in the world. Some make artworks that encourage us to re-think and connect to history.



Jane Kidd, Landslice #1, 1988. Slit woven tapestry with pulled warp; wool, cotton, rayon, linen, silk, 54 x 53 cm. Collection of the artist.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 2: Textile Arts, Modernism, and Postmodernism

IMPORTANT WORDS

abstract: artwork that doesn't look like a realistic picture of something. The extreme version of this is non-representational art, which doesn't look like or represent anything at all.

tapestry: a textile artwork displayed on walls or furniture.

warp: the threads that are held tightly on a loom when weaving fabric.

weft (or woof, or fill): the threads that are passed over and under the warp threads when weaving fabric.

loom: a tool or machine used for weaving. A loomText Box holds all the warp threads tight to make it easier to pass the weft threads over and under.

functional artwork: an artwork that is meant to be used. This could mean using it in everyday life or for special cultural practices.

non-functional: an artwork that is meant to be observed, not used



On this home-made loom, the black threads are the warp, and the red threads are the weft.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 2: Textile Arts, Modernism, and Postmodernism

ABOUT THE ARWORK

Jane Kidd, *Landslice #1* (pictured on page 19)

This artwork has traits of both the modern and postmodern art movements. The way Jane experiments with weaving techniques and abstraction in *Landslice #1* feels like part of the late modern art movement. Yet her interest in people's relationships with the earth feels very postmodern.

Landslice #1 represents the earth's crust, but it is very abstract. It isn't about showing us a realistic picture of the land. Instead, it is about the elements of art: the colours, textures, shapes, and forms this weaving has to offer. Vibrant, jewel-toned fabric strips pop out at us between muted greys and creams. Changes in texture are created by different thread materials. The hills and valleys of this artwork turn it into a sculpture instead of a flat tapestry.

Jane experiments with how far she can push her loom and weaving as a medium. This piece was made on a floor loom, with a technique called slit weaving. The brightly-coloured sections of this work aren't attached along their sides to the rest of the fabric, leaving open slits. She plays with her weaving further by pulling on its warp threads. This scrunches everything together, creating interesting textures and movement, especially in the parts with the slits. These techniques are quite different to how you might traditionally use a loom when making flat fabric.

Would you call this artwork modernist or postmodernist?

[You can read more about this artwork on the Prairie Interlace website](#) and listen to Jane talk about it in a video interview.

Landslice #1 is discussed from 2:27-5:53.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 2: Textile Arts, Modernism, and Postmodernism

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Jane Kidd was born in Victoria, British Columbia. Joanna Staniszki, a well-known Polish-Canadian weaving artist, played a big role in teaching Jane Kidd how to weave. She also taught Jane about how textiles fit into the current art world. Travelling and teaching have also greatly influenced Jane's art. Jane Kidd taught at the Alberta College of Art and Design.

Jane Kidd works mostly in non-functional weaving. Her early weavings were very abstract, but her later works are more figurative (meaning they more clearly represent real-world things and ideas). Jane's work is in an interesting place between modernism and post-modernism. Some of her early works are very abstract, and focus on experimenting with weaving. Her later works focus more on sharing ideas about environmentalism. Jane is very interested in the relationship between the natural environment and humans. She is also interested in how tapestries are connected to story-telling.

Today, Jane lives on Salt Spring Island, British Columbia. You can [visit her website](#) to see many more of her artworks.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Abstract art (art that doesn't look like a realistic picture of something) existed long before the modern art movement. Yet today many people think of modernism when they think of abstraction. Can you think of any other art traditions from around the world that use abstraction?

In this work, it feels like Jane was playing and experimenting with how to weave. How could you play with your favourite medium in new ways?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 2: Textile Arts, Modernism, and Postmodernism

ACTIVITY

Try making a small weaving with a paper loom. Experiment with changing your weaving techniques.

MATERIALS

A variety of yarn, strings, strips of fabric, pipe cleaners or even strips of paper for your weft.

Printed paper template

Tape

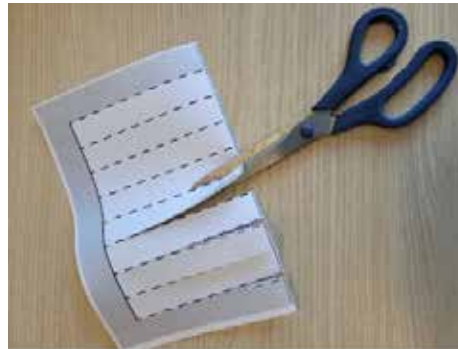
Your choice of either a yarn needle, a popsicle stick, or a long and narrow piece of cardboard

Scissors

INSTRUCTIONS

Setting up your paper loom:

1. Fold your template in half along the dotted line.
2. Cut along the dashed lines. Do not cut through the solid line.
3. Unfold your paper. This paper will act as your loom (the tool you weave on) and the strips in the paper will act as your warp threads.



Fold your template in half and cut on the dashed lines.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 2: Textile Arts, Modernism, and Postmodernism

ACTIVITY

Try making a small weaving with a paper loom. Experiment with changing your weaving techniques.

MATERIALS

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Printed paper template

Tape

Your choice of either a yarn needle, a popsicle stick, or a long and narrow piece of cardboard

Scissors

Weaving with your paper loom:

1. Begin with a long piece of yarn or other material. You could thread it through a blunt needle, or wrap it around a popsicle stick so that it isn't so long. (A long tool you can wind your warp thread onto is called a "shuttle".)
2. Tape the end of your yarn down to left the edge of your paper.
3. Move your needle or shuttle over one warp thread, and under the next, moving to the right. Repeat until you have gone over and under all the warp threads, and your needle/shuttle is on the left side.
4. Pull the weft thread all the way through. There shouldn't be a big loop of thread on the right-hand side of your artwork.
5. Repeat this going left to right, but using the opposite pattern. For example, if you went over the last warp on your first pass, you will go back under it instead.
6. Gently push each row of woven weft threads up towards the top of your paper. This will make your weaving tighter, and let you make more passes with your warp thread.
7. When you want to switch colours/materials, or if you are running out of thread, tape the thread down to the side of your artwork (in the grey space). Tape down a new thread on that same side, and begin weaving again.



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 2: Textile Arts, Modernism, and Postmodernism

ACTIVITY

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Printed paper template

Tape

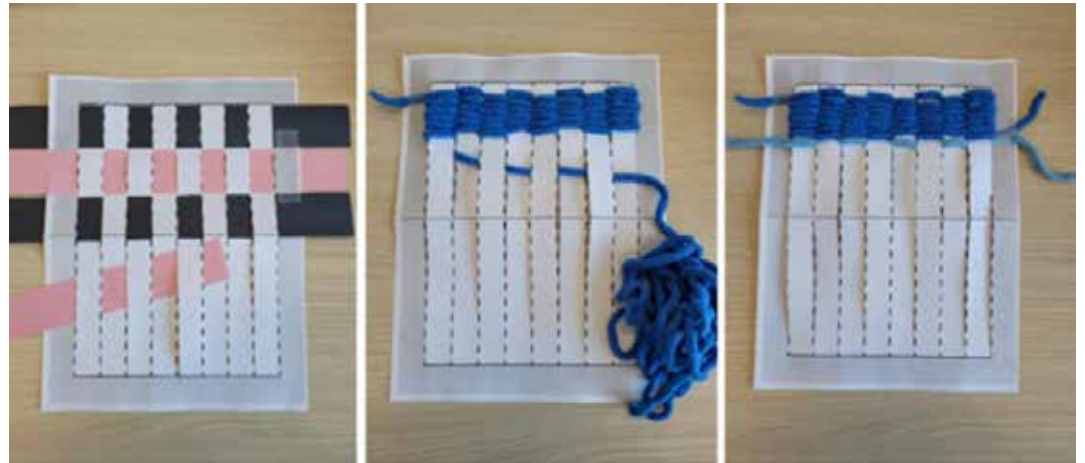
Your choice of either a yarn needle, a popsicle stick, or a long and narrow piece of cardboard

Scissors

Weaving with your paper loom (continued)

Find ways to experiment with your weaving. Some examples include:

- Changing thread textures.
- Changing the number of times you go over or under.
- Changing directions at different points instead of weaving a whole row.
- Changing how tightly you weave.



Some weaving examples. The left one is woven with strips of paper. The centre one is woven with thick yarn. The right one shows switching colours when using long strips of yarn.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 2: Textile Arts, Modernism, and Postmodernism

ACTIVITY

Try making a small weaving with a paper loom. Experiment with changing your weaving techniques.

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Printed paper template

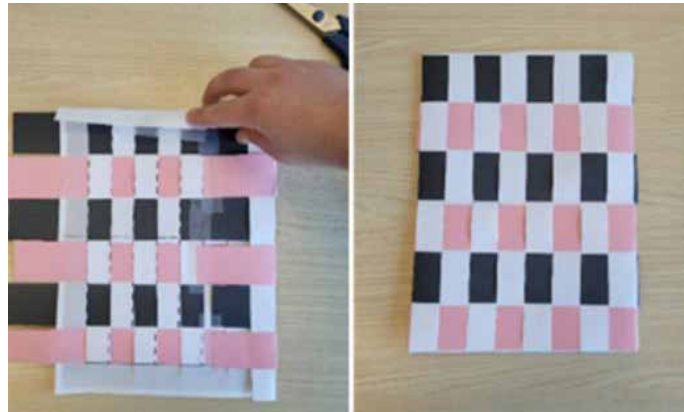
Tape

Your choice of either a yarn needle, a popsicle stick, or a long and narrow piece of cardboard

Scissors

Finishing your weaving:

1. When you are out of room to add any more passes through the warp threads, tape down your weft thread on the side of your work, and cut off any extra thread.
2. Fold the grey edges of your artwork inward. Tape them down. This will hide your taped-down ends of your threads at the back of your work.
3. Flip your artwork over to see the finished weaving on the other side.



The left picture shows folding the grey sides to the back and taping them down. The right picture shows the final artwork after flipping it to the other side.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 2: Textile Arts, Modernism, and Postmodernism

ACTIVITY

Try making a small weaving with a paper loom. Experiment with changing your weaving techniques.

MATERIALS

A variety of yarn, strings, strips of fabric, pipe cleaners or even strips of paper for your weft.

Printed paper template

Tape

Your choice of either a yarn needle, a popsicle stick, or a long and narrow piece of cardboard

Scissors

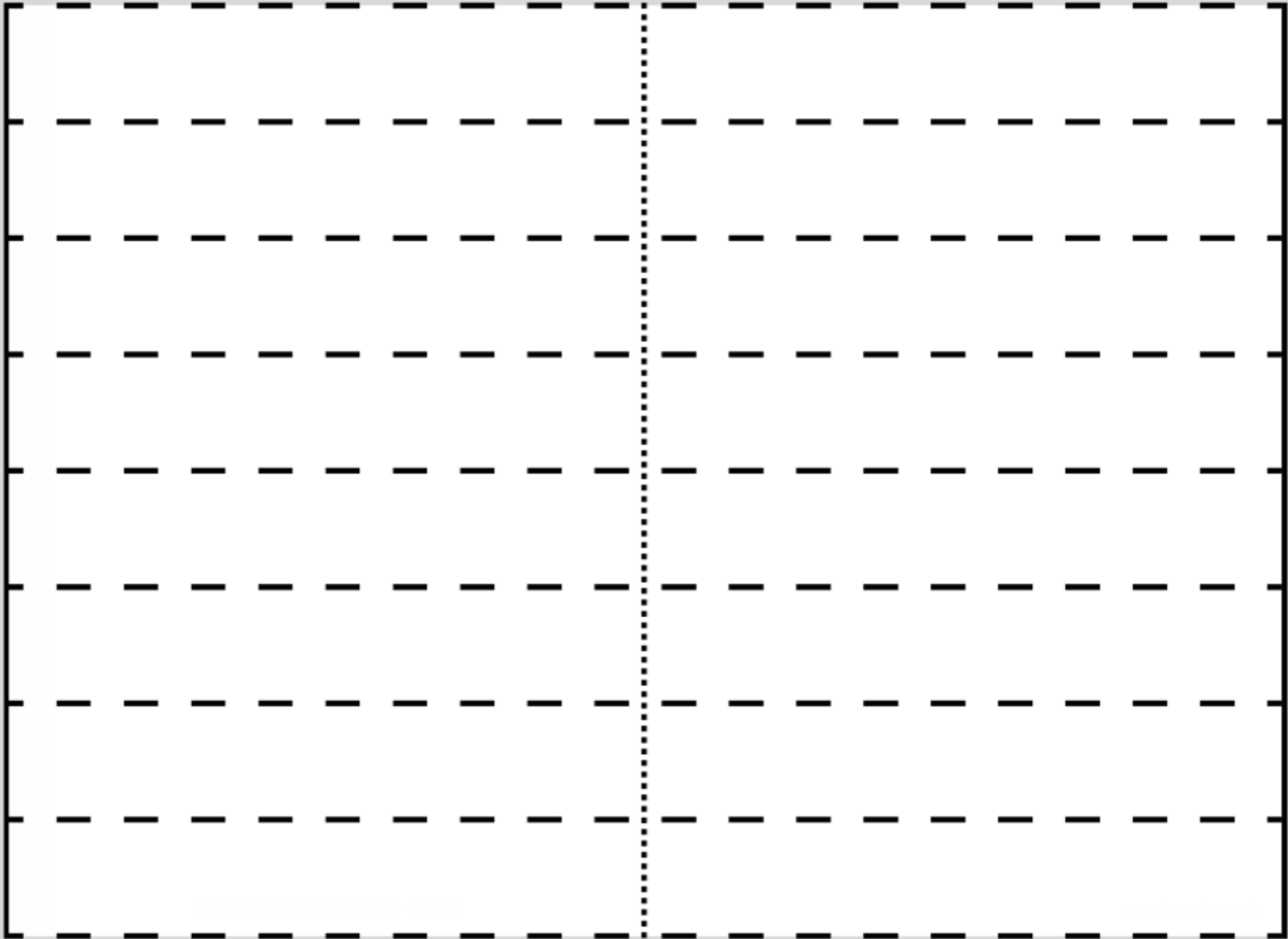
Adaptations

Younger students may find it easier to use strips of paper than yarn, string, or fabric.

Older students might want to make a loom out of cardboard or wood. You can cut notches along two sides of your cardboard or wood every centimeter or so. We recommend taping down two pencils or chop sticks under these notches to lift your weaving off of the board a bit. Use the notches to thread your warp threads across the front of your loom.



An example of a home-made wooden loom.



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 3: Textile Arts and Women's Work

IMPORTANT WORDS

feminism: standing up for the rights of women and the equality of all genders. Today, feminism also includes thinking about how other social issues connect to women's rights.

collaboration: working together with someone else to create or do something.

felting: making wool fibres lock together to form a fabric. This can be done with hot water, felting needles, or by moving and rubbing the fibres against each other.

community: a group of people who interact with each other and have something in common connecting them. This common thing could be where they live, their culture and beliefs, the work they do, their interests, or many other things. Often people in communities support each other.

domestic: something that is part of everyday home life.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 3: Textile Arts and Women's Work

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

Aganetha Dyck, *Close Knit*

Close Knit is made up of sixty-five shrunken wool sweaters. All the sweaters in this work are shades of off-white. Aganetha Dyck shrank and felted these sweaters by putting them through hot washing machine cycles and wringer washers. She then lined them up and leaned them against each other on her studio floor. It took many years of collecting used sweaters to create this artwork. This sculpture is part of a series called Sizes 8 to 46.

It is hard to see these sweaters and not think about people: the people who wore them, the people who made them, and even the people who washed them. This artwork makes us think about jobs that are sometimes labelled as “women’s work.” In many communities, washing clothes and making textiles are often (but not always) thought of as things women do. As mentioned in Lesson 1, the work of marginalized people such as women is often treated as less important.



Aganetha Dyck, *Close Knit*, 1976. felting via wringer washing machine; wool, 35 x 89 x 391 cm. SK Arts Permanent Collection.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 3: Textile Arts and Women's Work

ABOUT THE ARTWORK (continued)

Because of this connection to women's work, textile arts are often used by artists to talk about feminism. Across the world in the 1960s and 1970s, we saw the rise of second-wave feminism. Textile artworks often share ideas about women's rights, equality, and the right to make decisions about women's bodies. Aganetha's artwork shows us how important women's work is because of how much it connects to our everyday lives. Another word for the work of everyday life is domestic work. When we talk about something as artwork, we are lifting it up as important.

The way these sweaters are leaning on each other can make us think about a community. Aganetha connects this artwork to a story told by her grandmother. Her grandmother spoke about fleeing a war in Europe. She said that everyone wore as many of their clothes as possible in layers. This helped them keep warm while walking long distances. The layered clothes became a way to recognize who was fleeing from the war. Even during this terrible time, the people walking away from their homes became a community.

You can [read more about this artwork](#) and hear Aganetha speak about it in a video on the Prairie Interlace website.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 3: Textile Arts and Women's Work

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Aganetha Dyck was born in 1937 near Winnipeg, Manitoba. She was raised in a Mennonite community. She briefly lived in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan from 1972 to 1976, and then moved back to Winnipeg. She began studying art in Saskatchewan, and continued studying in Winnipeg afterwards.

Aganetha's early artwork focuses on household jobs that are often considered women's work. The first time she shrunk a large piece of wool she was working with was an accident! However, the changed material made her realize that doing laundry could become a way of making art. She started collecting second-hand wool clothing that was going to be thrown out. She enjoyed the natural and random sculpting process of putting wool items in the washing machine and seeing what they turned into. The washing machine became one of her first collaborators.

Collaborating is also an important part of Aganetha's work. She even collaborates with non-human artists, such as bees!

Her later artworks make us think about environmental issues, and how animals and humans work together on this planet.

Aganetha and her collaborators ask us to look closer at the things we tend to overlook. To read more about her and see some of her artwork, go to her website: <http://www.aganethadyck.ca/index.html>

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

What everyday processes could you turn into intentional art?

Imagine someone found this artwork 1000 years from now. What might they learn about people from Aganetha's lifetime by studying Close Knit?

Can only women do domestic (household) work? Can women only do domestic work? Can only women make textile arts?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 3: Textile Arts and Women's Work

ACTIVITY

Turn a process that is part of your everyday life into artwork. Share this part of your life with others who might overlook it.

MATERIALS

Materials will vary for each student.

INSTRUCTIONS

Setting up your paper loom:

1. Think about a task that you do often. Brainstorm its role in your life. What's difficult about it? What's easy about it? What do you enjoy about it? What does it help you with? How does it connect you with others? What would your life be like if you didn't do that task?
2. Working by yourself or in a group with others who chose a similar task, turn this task into an artwork. This could mean:

A visual artwork that uses the materials from the task to create interesting to look at.

A dance that uses the movements and patterns from the task.

A piece of music that uses the sounds and rhythms of the task.

A drama scene that shows part of doing the task.

A multidisciplinary artwork that combines any of these art forms.

Whichever art form you choose, think about how to tell your audience some of the things you brainstormed in the first step. You are sharing your thoughts and feelings about this part of your everyday life.



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 3: Textile Arts and Women's Work

ACTIVITY

Turn a process that is part of your everyday life into artwork. Share this part of your life with others who might overlook it.

MATERIALS

Materials will vary for each student.

3. Share your artworks with the class.
4. Reflect as a class on your experiences. Did anyone choose a task that you tend to forget or not think about? Did any of the artworks change how you think about a chore or job?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 4: Textile Arts and Their Connections to Places

IMPORTANT WORDS

environment: a place, either natural or built. Environments are made up of many parts, such as plants, animals, people, buildings, furniture, temperature, air movement, scents, water, and even more.

regionalism: Artwork (and other things) connecting to the environment, people, and lifestyles of a specific place.

twining: a weaving technique where two weft yarns are used. One is passed in front of the warp threads, and the other behind. This creates a tight weave and interesting patterns.

Coast Salish: Several Indigenous nations that live on the Pacific Northwest coast. These nations have similar languages and cultural practices.

architecture: designing and making buildings and structures.

interior design: designing the spaces inside buildings, often to make them nicer to live in.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 4: Textile Arts and Their Connections to Places

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

Katharine Dickerson, *West Coast Tree Stump*

West Coast Tree Stump is inspired by the environment Katharine Dickerson lived and worked in during 1972. She moved to a farm on Vancouver Island to learn about the weaving techniques of the Coast Salish. On this farm were several large stumps from trees that had been cut down in the late 1800s. These stumps inspired the work you see here.

In this artwork, Katharine uses Coast Salish weaving techniques. Sadly, the community she studied with no longer had any living weavers. Katharine studied historical pieces of weaving to re-create traditional techniques. She was inspired by techniques for both cloak weaving and basket weaving. This artwork is made with a twining technique- using two weft yarns instead of one to create a tightly woven pattern.

This large piece was a challenge to create. It was woven from the top downwards while hanging off a loop. Katharine created this artwork in her outdoor studio space, surrounded by nature.



Katharine Dickerson, *West Coast Tree Stump*, 1972, twined, supplemental weft; jute, spindle-spun wool, burlap. 226 x 297 x 267 cm. Collection of the Canada Council Art Bank.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 4: Textile Arts and Their Connections to Places

ABOUT THE ARTWORK (continued)

Katharine likes to imagine how the T'Sou-ke Nation people once used the original tree by the farmyard. She wonders if they used it for shelter and protection. Sometimes while weaving outdoors, this sculpture also became a safe space for Katharine to hide from the weather.

The natural materials in this artwork also connect it to the environment. It is made of wool, jute, and burlap, all of which are natural plant and animal fibres. Some of this material was recycled hopsacking from a brewery.

This artwork could be described as regionalism. It represents a specific place: the rainforests of Vancouver Island and unceded Coast Salish territory. It does this by re-creating a part of that environment (a tree stump) and by using an artmaking technique that belongs to the people of the area (the Coast Salish).

While this artwork wasn't made on the prairies, it helps us think about how prairie artists are connected to the world at large. They often move across the country, or even to different countries to create, research, teach, find inspiration, and collaborate with others.

[You can read more information about this artwork and watch a video](#) of Katharine Dickerson speaking about her work on the Prairie Interlace website. The video discusses *West Coast Tree Stump* from 1:49 - 7:16.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 4: Textile Arts and Their Connections to Places

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Katharine Dickerson was born in Duluth, Minnesota. Her mother's family is Norwegian. She studied art at the Craft Students League in New York, the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts in Maine, and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She later moved to Canada to study weaving with Coast Salish artists. Katharine became the Head of the Textiles Department at the Alberta College of Art and Design, and was also a director for the Alberta Crafts Council and the Canadian Crafts Council.

Katharine has been weaving for over 40 years. While many weavers start their artwork by thinking about what their loom will let them make, Katharine's artworks start with the image she wants to create. She plans her weaving techniques and builds her loom around that image.

Many of Katharine's artworks are made to be shown in or as a part of specific spaces. These are called installation artworks. Her artwork often responds to both architecture and to the natural environment. For example, she created West Coast

Forest for a stairway in the Douglas Building in Victoria, British Columbia. It brings the rainforest trees and plants indoors, and the people flowing up and down the stairs are like a river. Textile arts are often used to soften and bring to life architectural spaces.

Want to learn more about Katharine Dickerson? You can find out more on her [personal website](#).

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Katharine says that she moved to Vancouver Island to study the weaving techniques of the Coast Salish people. But after living there for awhile, she says she stopped studying the Coast Salish, and started seeing them as friends. Why do you think relationships are important when sharing cultural art techniques?

Think of an artwork that you've seen in a public space such as a school or library. How does that artwork connect to the space it's in? How does it change the space it's in?



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 4: Textile Arts and Their Connections to Places

ACTIVITY

Take a photo of a public space.
Use fibre materials to alter it and
connect the space to nature.

MATERIALS

Camera

Computer and printer

Pencil and eraser

Fibre materials of your choice: yarn,
recycled fabric, string made of cotton,
jute or hemp, wool, felt, etc.

Your choice of tools for working with
the fibre materials: sewing needles,
knitting needles, crochet hooks, rug
hook, latch hook, glue, looms, etc.

INSTRUCTIONS

Setting up your paper loom:

1. Take a photo of a public space. You could do this at your school, in a public library, in a park, in a community centre, or any other space that plays a role in your life.
2. Print out your photo. Try to make it as large as you can with your printer.
3. Think about the natural environment outside or around your public space. What parts of nature surround it?
4. You are going to use threads or fabric materials to change this image, bringing more elements of nature into it. Similar to how Katharine Dickerson works, plan what you want the space to look like first. Draw with pencil over your printed photo to plan out your image.
5. Once you have a plan, pick out some fibre materials that make you think about those elements of nature. Decide how you are going to add them to your image. You could stitch them onto the paper, glue them down like a collage, knit or weave shapes that you attach to your paper- anything that you see fit!

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Lesson 4: Textile Arts and Their Connections to Places

ACTIVITY

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MATERIALS

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Your choice of tools for working with
the fibre materials: sewing needles,
knitting needles, crochet hooks, rug
hook, latch hook, glue, looms, etc.

6. Show your artwork to a friend, classmate, or family member. Ask them how they would feel in the changed space you created.

ADAPTATIONS

If taking photos before this activity isn't an option, you could find some pictures of local public buildings or spaces online and print them out.



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Prairie Interlace: Weaving, Modernisms and the Expanded Frame

UNIT WRAP-UP

Here are some follow-up questions to think about, discuss, or write responses to.

There were four themes for these lessons: crafts as art, modernism, under-represented voices, and place. Did you notice these themes crossing over between lessons? Describe an example of where this happened.

After going through this unit, why do you think textile arts are important?

How are textile arts connected to your everyday life?

Having learned about these four artists and textile arts, you could make a final project for this unit. On your own or as a group, you could learn how to do a specific type of textile art. Here are a few resources that could help start your research:

- The Textile Museum of Canada's website has many demos and teaching videos: <https://textilemuseum.ca/learning/>
- The National Centre for Collaboration in Indigenous Education has resources on Salish Weaving and Cedar Weaving. These resources are meant to be used with some prior background in Salish weaving, and with the support of someone who understands Salish cultural practices, such as a Salish Elder. <https://www.nccie.ca/lessonplan/salish-weaving/>, <https://www.nccie.ca/lessonplan/cedar-weaving/>
- The Gabriel Dumont Institute's Virtual Museum has a series of videos on Métis finger weaving (<https://www.metismuseum.ca/fingerweaving/>). Their store also sells videos and books on many different Métis textile arts such as hooked rugs, silk embroidery, and beadwork (<https://gdins.org/shop-gdi/>).

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