

Links and Information for Knitters

Aims

To teach the class or a group of children to knit, and to knit coloured squares to contribute to Oxfam's blanket knitting campaign.

Note: Teaching younger children to knit is perfectly possible but demands patience. This is not so much a lesson plan as a series of links and information about working with children to make coloured knitted squares. There is advice for teachers who are keen to set up a knitting club or group as well as teaching knitting during a lesson.

Use the Blanket Knitting Campaign: Class or Assembly Script, the Better Healthcare for Mothers and Babies: Understanding the Problem, and/or the Beliefs and Changing the World lesson ideas to set the scene for your knitting.

Curriculum Links

England	Scotland	Wales
Literacy – Listening.	English Language – Listening (listening for instructions).	English – Oracy.
Art and Design – Investigating pattern and textiles.	Art & Design – Using materials.	Art – Making and Investigating (pattern and shape).

What you will need

Knowledge of knitting or how to use a loom – or time to learn.

Wool – You will need around 50 metres of chunky wool for each knitted square. This could be reclaimed from old jumpers – see the **Recycling, 'Frogging', and the Role of Charity Shops** lesson plan. However most shop-bought jumpers are made using a 'cut and sew' technique, rather than from one continuous length of yarn, so 'frogging' rarely lends itself to providing long continuous pieces of wool.

Knitting needles or looms and loom needles, enough for the number of pupils you are working with (or enough for them to share as homework or during lunchtimes).

You may wish to ask willing parents or grandparents to come into school to help you supervise and help the children, if you are going to try teaching a lot of children to knit or use a loom at once!

What to do

The instructions for the size of square that is needed for the Oxfam blanket are in the **Sample Letter for Parents** (as well as the **Introduction for Teachers**), in case you wish pupils to take them home and work with their parents or grandparents to make squares. This includes the size of squares needed (9 inches), suggestions for the best types of yarn, and information about where to send completed squares.

Depending on the equipment you have available or wish to buy, you can choose whether to use knitting needles or looms. Looms work particularly well with younger children and take chunky wool, allowing them to knit more quickly (around 45 minutes–1 hour for a square).

These looms are perfect: <http://www.craftathome.co.uk/knifty-knitter-55inch-blue-round-loom-p-1845.html?cPath=185&osCsid=ea4f8ab682b2a6a37ab5fdda09bf216a>

Use 21 pegs on this loom to produce a 9-inch square. This video has instructions for using the looms (http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=oDJIK-qJ_48), and at around four minutes into the video there is an explanation of how to make squares and other flat pieces rather than tubes using the loom. The looms can also be used to make hats, leg-warmers, scarves, socks or wrist-warmers.

If you wish to start a knitting club or do more than one lesson, there is another type of loom that you may find more useful. The Knifty knitter oval looms comes in sets of different sizes and are much more versatile. You can buy them here: <http://www.craftathome.co.uk/knifty-knitter-long-looms-p-3873.html?cPath=185&osCsid=ea4f8ab682b2a6a37ab5fdda09bf216a>

They allow you to make bigger things like bags, jumpers or baby blankets, but can also be used to make smaller items too. They take less chunky wool so knitting takes a little longer but the finished items are less bulky. This video shows how to use these looms:

http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=3MpqRz78q_k

If you are using knitting needles, this website has great videos about how to knit: www.knittinghelp.com.

Extension

One lovely feature of the looms (especially the oval ones) is that you can move stitches around to make all kinds of lacy patterns, and wrap them in different ways to make ribbing and different stitch patterns – these are very mathematical.

There are many free patterns and ideas available online. This site is particularly good: www.loomknittingdesigns.com/index.html and offers some free patterns for not-for-profit use.

This site also has ideas for using looms: www.knittingboard.com/category_s/98.htm

This book is recommended by keen knitters, *Loom Knitting Primer: A beginner's guide to knitting on a loom, with over 30 fun projects*, by Isela Phelps.

It is available to buy here: http://www.amazon.co.uk/Loom-Knitting-Primer-Beginners-Projects/dp/0312366612/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1208341495&sr=1-1