

Sustainable Craft Team Building

This chapter will showcase eight different sustainable craft team-building practices aimed at enhancing team collaboration. It offers eight possibilities of exercises and practices crafted to promote teamwork using sustainable and ecologically ethical materials.

The future initiatives in collaborative crafting aim to support empowerment, equality, agency, and participatory society for citizens. Artistic and creative interventions call for the generation of strategies and methods that make it possible to live in more humble ways, move towards carbon-neutral lifestyles, and better balance with nature. Making beautiful crafts by hand gives meaningful experiences for participants thus enabling sustainability transformation that includes creative activities instead of over-consumerism. Crafting can also support sense of connectedness to ancestral roots, and cultural heritage. Respect for nature and rich culture can increase via transformative experiences that have a positive impact on healing and promote personal and societal balance between nature and heritage.

Photo: Maria Huhmarniemi, 2021





Photo: Maria Huhmarniemi, 2023

Collaborative crafting can have the following impacts on sustainability transformations:

- Creative activities could enhance nature connectedness and allow participants to immerse in creative activity through walking, sensing the materials and silence, and experiencing colours and form in sustainable materials and in nature
- Locality and/or regionality is an important element of sustainability and can be studied and expressed through craft.
- Crafted objects can reflect for example cultural, ethnic, regional and queer identities. Cultural identities expressed by craft have many layers: collaborative crafting includes dialogues on identities
- Participants make their own narrative via crafts
- Crafting deepens the experience of cultural richness and diversity
- Think new ways of making art in sustainable ways. For example, making art in nature and not leaving permanent signs to nature
- Participants engage into collaborative making and dialogues thus enhancing team skills and communication skills

In an effort to maintain sustainable craft practices, the following exercises will engage in activities that include key aspects of localism featured by small-scale activities shaped by the traditions and natural factors of a place. Sustainable crafts encompass the entire process from sourcing the materials to crafting a piece, focused on reducing environmental impact. In addition, sustainable crafts are constantly nurtured by the intersection of traditional techniques with new concepts, thus reinforcing the identity of a place, a sense of belonging, unity, and ecological values.

As an example, the use of wool is an aspect that relates to all cultures around the world, particularly in Europe. By using local wool in the following exercises, we can create a wide range of wool crafts. In addition, we will integrate team-building activities in which participants will learn about sustainable and ethical choices while developing interpersonal skills using team-based crafting exercises.

Each team will consist of 3 to 4 participants who will have the opportunity to earn points for demonstrating teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills. The participants will also receive points for developing their creativity in their crafting process. The teams will try to accumulate the highest number of points with the different exercises. This competitive aspect will encourage teams to support each other and collaborate efficiently.



Photos: Maria Huhmarniemi, 2023

Sustainable Craft Practices

Acquisition of new handcraft skills:

Participants will engage in activities that require concentration. Fine motor skills are the ability to make movements using the small muscles in our hands and wrists. We rely on these skills to do key tasks in school, at work, and in everyday life.

Creativity and development of aesthetic skills:

The participants will engage in activities that promote and involve creativity and aesthetic skills, the ability to think about a task in a new way and use imagination to come up with new ideas. These skills will be enhanced through material practice, application on a self-crafted piece, and subsequently group feedback and conversation.

Develop Design Thinking Skills:

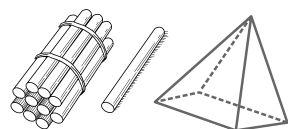
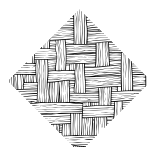
The team will engage in activities that involve empathizing through observation, material challenge, ideation process, prototyping solutions, and testing techniques.

Collaboration:

Through the 8 craft activities, the participants will have the opportunity to develop a critical teamwork skill: collaboration. To achieve a common goal, teammates need to partner with each other, engage in conversations, and mutually support each other during the learning process.

Positive Mood Enhancement:

Craft activities support and promote a positive mood environment, crafting, regardless of the medium you use, can bolster mood, improve self-confidence, and reduce stress overall. In addition, crafting has also been shown to improve mental agility, improves both gross and fine motor movements.

List of Activities - Sustainable Craft Team Building**HIMMELI WIND CATCHER****MUSHROOM FELT****VIKING WHIPCORD****FOREST PALETTE****EMBROIDERED WOOL****ENVIRONMENTAL ART PRACTICE****WOVEN MANDALA****HORSE FELTING**

HIMMELI WIND CATCHER

Description:

The so-called Himmeli is a traditional Finnish decorative mobile made from short strips of rye straw tied together with strings to form a complex yet symmetrical three-dimensional decoration. Traditionally, a himmeli has a symmetric geometric shape and is used as a Christmas decoration. Making himmelis used to be a social event where groups, especially young people, gathered together to make himmeli. Similar crafts are found in many countries in Europe, such as Estonia, Belarus, Sweden, Lithuania, Poland, Norway, Denmark, and Russia. The name “himmeli” comes from himmel, the Swedish word for sky or heaven.

Himmeli is usually made out of straw or reeds. This craft activity is designed for individual and group teams, the participants can craft as many possible pieces and assemble them together to achieve a bigger piece, or they can create their own piece.

Why:

- This exercise strengthens aesthetic eye skills among team members as they work together to design a three-dimensional straw piece, using natural materials.
- It encourages teams to innovate, develop design thinking methods and abilities and promote eco-friendly crafting practices.
- Crafting with straw is a good opportunity for participants to learn a traditional type of craft that has been popular around Europe for centuries and this craft is suitable for all ages and abilities, from beginners to advanced straw workers. it uses materials found in nature'

Instructions:

1. Cut equal lengths of straw
2. Take three pieces of straw and thread them onto your string.
3. Shape them into a triangle and tie a knot
4. Add two more pieces of straw to create a second triangle and tie.
5. Repeat Step 3 until you have five triangles in a row.
6. Add on one final piece of straw and tie it to the short end of the string
7. Take a piece of string and tie it through the top. Tie the string together so you can hang your himmeli
8. Tie larger and smaller himmeli together to make a bigger decoration

*see steps/graphics

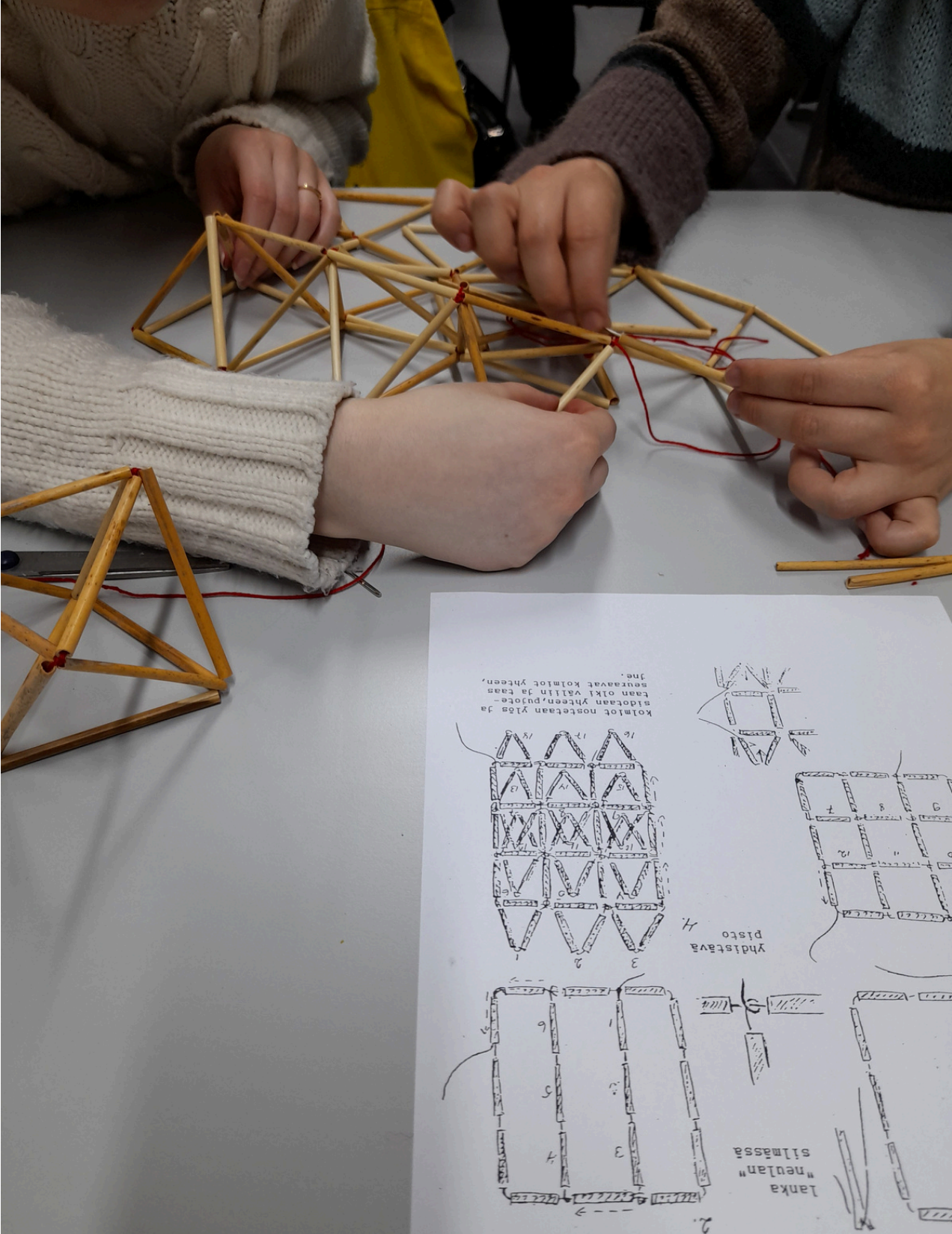


Photo: Maria Huhmarniemi, 2024

Materials:

- Drawing materials, paper, pencils
- Equal lengths of straw (different sizes of himmeli with different lengths of straw)
- Cotton or natural material string, cotton yarn and scissors
- Optional: wool felted balls, pompoms, wood beads and pine cones to decorate himmeli

Timing: approximately 3 hours

Visuals: visual representations of different possibilities of Himmeli crafts, including photos or illustrations.

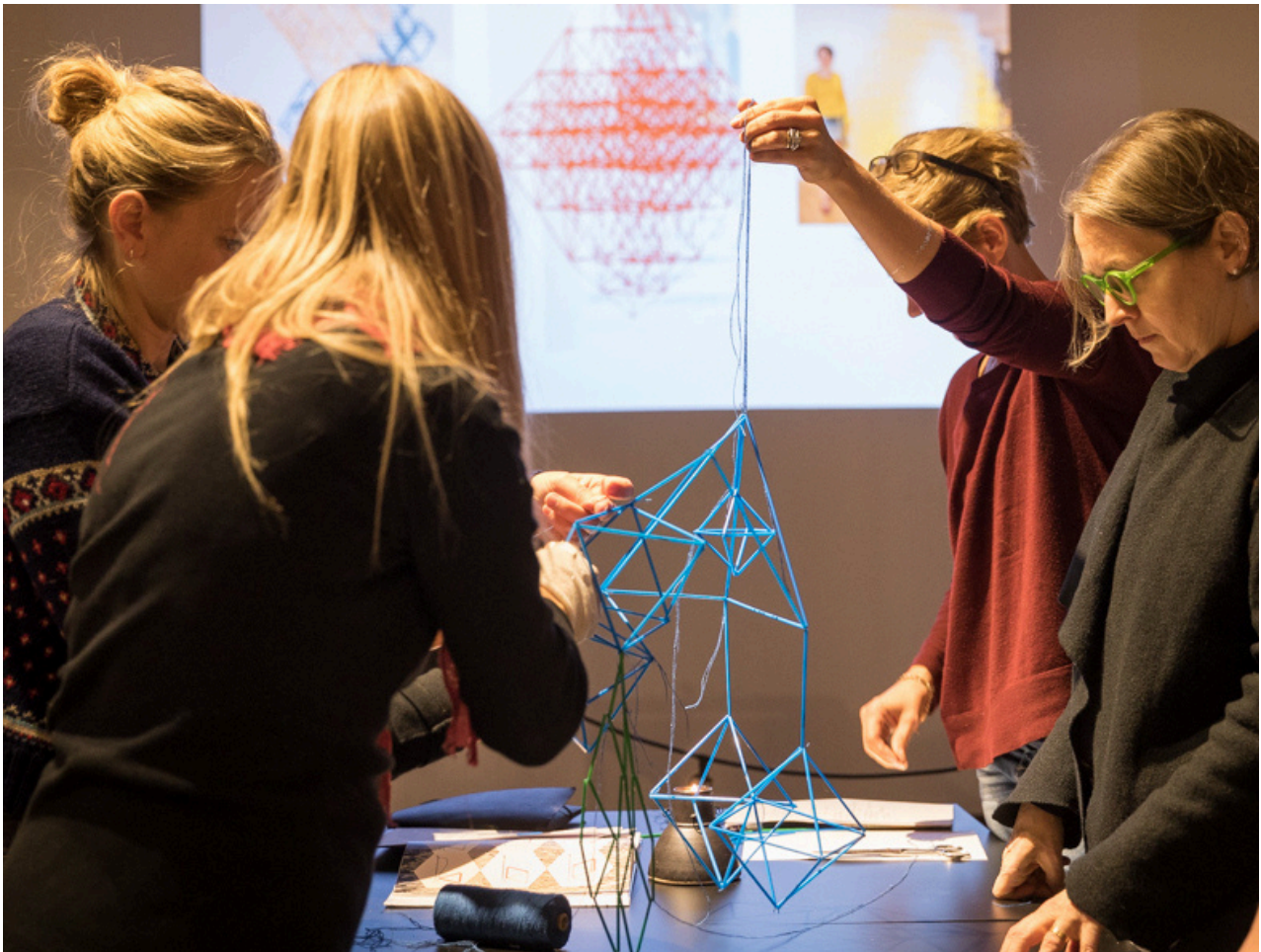


Photo: Maria Huhmarniemi, 2017

Obstacles:

- Time Management: monitor teams' progress to ensure tasks are completed within the allocated time frame
- Supervised Technology Use: Participants may use phones to take pictures of the process. However, VET trainers must supervise participants to prevent them from searching for ideas and solutions online. This supervision ensures that participants rely on their creativity, fostering a fair and authentic craft-thinking activity.
- Fine Motor Skills take time to acquire. Some people may not be familiar with the fragility of straw, leading to the pieces being broken easily. This activity requires the participants to treat the material carefully.

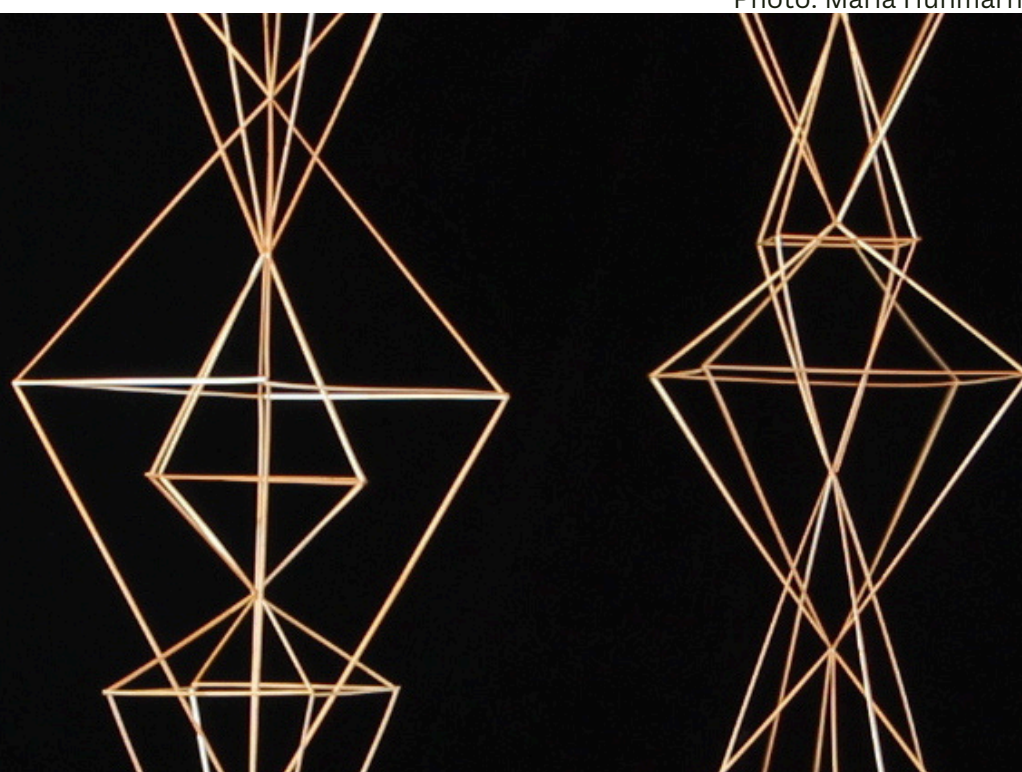
Evaluation Rules:

Creativity, Originality, and Innovation will be evaluated, as will interpretation of the Himmeli theme, helping other participants, feedback, and presentation about their piece to the group.

Transferability Strategies:

- Discuss the importance of effective communication and teamwork when developing tangible pieces, objects, and materials.
- Discuss the importance of promoting sustainability craft and design and encouraging new consumer behaviour.
- Empowering participants with a new skill to teach craft in their workplaces while advocating for eco-friendly and sustainable craft practices in their communities.

Photo: Maria Huhmarniemi, 2017



Strategy for managing the classroom for Himmeli Wind Catcher

Steps:

1. Intro & Prep:

- Brief the group on Himmeli's cool history and how it's made from natural stuff like straw.
- Hand out straw pieces and explain the basic steps.

2. Crafting:

- Show how to thread and tie the straw to make triangles and build up to the final Himmeli.
- Let everyone craft their own or team up to make a big piece.

3. Assembly:

- Put individual pieces together into a larger decoration. Focus on making it look good and balanced.

4. Wrap-Up:

- Chat about what everyone made and how working with natural materials is eco-friendly.
- Reflect on teamwork and design skills gained during the activity.

Photo: Maria Huhmarniemi, 2024



MUSHROOM FELT

80

Description:

Felting is a craft method that dates back to ancient civilisations, where it played a crucial role in the development of early materials and fabrics. To felt wool fibres, the crafter needs to press them together to add layers and build thickness. Felting can be possible through two methods: wet and dry. The dry method uses sharp needles, and you need to poke in the direction that you want to shape and compress the fibres, It is a wonderfully therapeutic and versatile craft that allows you to create any number of shapes and designs using just felting needles, a felting mat, and wool

Why:

- This exercise strengthens aesthetic eye skills among team members as they work together to design a three-dimensional mushroom piece, using wool fibres.
- It encourages teams to practice and develop fine motor skills and abilities and promotes eco-friendly crafting practices.
- Crafting with wool is a good opportunity for participants to learn a traditional type of craft that has been popular worldwide and is suitable for all ages and abilities from beginners to advanced felting crafters. It uses materials that are 100%biodegradable and compostable.

Photo: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024



Timing: approximately 3 hours

Instructions:

1. Roll white carded wool for the mushroom stem.
2. Felt the roll together with a felting needle on a needle felting pad
3. The stem needs to be felted tightly. If you want a thicker stem you may add more wool. Continue felting with the felting needle by pushing it up and down
4. Make a circle with another coloured carded wool and felt it with a felting needle on a needle felting pad. You can make a thicker cap by adding more wool and felting it into the desired shape
5. Make details for the mushroom hat with other coloured carded wool and felt them onto the mushroom hat
6. Felt the hat and the stem together by pushing the felting needle up and down firmly from the hat down into the stem.

*see attachment with steps/graphics

Materials:

Carded wool in different colours, felting needle, scissors. string

Photo: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024





Photo: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024

Strategy for managing the classroom for Mushroom Felt

Steps:

1. Start with the Stem:

- Roll white wool for the mushroom stem.
- Use a felting needle on a mat to shape and compress the wool. Add more wool if needed to thicken.

2. Make the Cap:

- Form a circle with colored wool for the mushroom cap.
- Felt it to your desired shape and thickness. Add details with other colored wool.

3. Assemble:

- Attach the cap to the stem by felting them together with the needle.

4. Wrap-Up:

- Discuss how felting uses biodegradable materials and reflect on the skills learned and teamwork involved.

Photo: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024



Obstacles:

Time Management: monitor teams' progress to ensure tasks are completed within the allocated time frame

Supervised Technology Use: participants may use phones to photograph the process.

Fine Motor Skills: They take time to acquire, some people may not be familiar with the carded wool and felting needles, leading to the needles being broken easily, and accidentally hurting one's fingers with the pointy needle. This activity requires the participants to treat the material carefully and carefully felt their piece.

Evaluation Rules:

Creativity, originality and innovation will be evaluated, as well as interpretation of the mushroom-forest species thematic, helping other participants is an added value, presentation about their piece and its mushroom species characteristics to the group.

Transferability Strategies:

Discuss the importance of effective communication and teamwork when developing tangible pieces, objects, and materials.

Discuss the importance of promoting sustainable crafts and design and encouraging new consumer behaviour.

Discussing the benefits of learning about mushroom species and environmental craft practices

Empowering participants with a new craft skill to teach felting with wool in their workplaces while advocating for eco-friendly materials and sustainable craft practices in their communities.



VIKING WHIPCORD

85

Description:

Viking whipcord or Viking braiding is a technique for making cords quickly using bobbins. It dates back to ancient Nordic civilisations, the two-person method of whip cording is a traditional Scandinavian craft and children's activity. The strings are suspended from a hook or other convenient point above the workers' heads, and the bobbins are interchanged in patterns to braid the cord. The process goes faster if two people work together, swapping the bobbins back and forth between themselves.

This exercise strengthens teamwork skills among the members as they work together to swap and coordinate the braiding. It encourages teams to innovate, develop design thinking methods and abilities and promote eco-friendly crafting practices.

Instructions:

1. Make your four threads the same length, 3 meters is enough
 2. Loop the strings up in the branch/ceiling so that you have 4 loops of 1.5 meters
 3. Tie a knot in the top at the loose ends and secure the knotted end overhead
 4. The easiest method to put the threads on the bobbins is to make a half hitch with the loop and tighten it around the neck of your weight.
 5. Once all four bobbins are attached to the four loops, you are ready to start weaving. Each worker holds a bobbin in each hand. Then they diagonally swap the bobbins to create the cord.
 6. Right hands switch, and then the left hands switch, swap bobbins as if you were shaking hands, palm to palm.
 7. It can be challenging to coordinate the swap, but once you find a rhythm, the braiding starts to take shape
- *see attachment with steps/video

Materials:

Bobbins made of wood

Wool thread

Place to install higher than the participant's height.

Timing: approximately 2 hours

Obstacles: coordinating and following a rhythm requires practice

Time Management: monitor teams' progress to ensure tasks are completed within the allocated time frame

Supervised Technology Use: participants may use phones for taking pictures of the process.

Coordination Skills: They take time to acquire; some people may not be familiarized with the braiding activity, and the swap can take time to dis-entangle and start over again the braiding.

Effective communication: During the braiding, is possible that the participants have different braiding rhythms. The participants must rely on good communication skills to maintain patience and start the exercise as many times as needed. The successful participants will be able to show a full braid at the end of the activity.

Evaluation Rules:

Coordination, effective communication between teams will be evaluated, helping other participants is an added value, presentation of their braid to the team.

Transferability Strategies:

- Discuss the importance of effective communication and teamwork when swapping the bobbins, as well as the importance of keeping patience and a good mood.
- Discussing the benefits of practising the Viking whipcord.
- Empowering participants with a new craft skill to teach at their workplaces.



Photo: Laura Haapasalo, 2024

Strategy for managing the classroom for Vikings Whipcord

Steps:

1. Setup:

- Prepare Threads: Cut four threads, each about 3 meters long.
- Create Loops: Loop the threads over a branch or hook, forming four 1.5-meter loops. Tie a knot at the top and secure it overhead for easy access.

2. Prepare Bobbins:

- Attach Threads: Use a half hitch knot to attach each thread to a bobbin. Tighten the knot around the bobbin neck to secure the threads.

3. Braiding Process:

- Coordinate with a Partner: Each participant holds two bobbins, one in each hand. They swap the bobbins diagonally—right hands first, then left hands, as if shaking hands palm to palm.
- Find the Rhythm: It might be tricky at first, but once you get into a rhythm, the braid will start to form.

4. Reflection:

- Discuss Coordination: Talk about the challenges of syncing movements and how teamwork played a role in braiding.
- Highlight Craft's History: Reflect on the historical significance of Viking braiding and its eco-friendly aspects, emphasizing the tradition of using natural materials.



Photo: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024

Description:

The activity consists of two parts: A walk in the forest and a pigment and painting activity. The team will take a walk to the nearest natural area or forest to collect local berries, plants and flowers that can be used as pigments for a watercolor-based artistic activity. The walk will consist in experimenting and sensing the colors of the nature to develop a natural palette to create an artistic piece. Once the team collected berries and plants, they can be pressed through a sieve to create our pigment. This technique is called tempera and it predates oil painting as a professional painting medium. It has unique characteristics, it produces a nice and luminous effect. Egg yolk is used as the binder. This ancient technique makes a water-soluble paint that dries quickly.

Why:

- This exercise strengthens aesthetic eye skills among team members as they work to experience and create a two-dimensional drawing piece using the local pigments and nature colors.
- It encourages teams to develop fine motor skills and abilities and promote eco-friendly materials and crafting practices.
- Drawing with nature's pigments is the most sustainable way to experience art.
- This activity will foster nature awareness, respect for the forest and environment and enhance artistic eye in the participants

Instructions:

- Go together to the nearest natural area, forest, field, countryside; If you can not visit a forest, this activity can also be done using vegetables, peels and fruits, materials that are available in your area.
- Grab a bucket and split in teams of 3-4 people to seek for the natural materials
- experience and sense the nature around you, what colors do you see? what smells can you experience?
- Gather plants, flowers and berries carefully and get back to your team
- Around the table you can discuss the natural materials and open the conversation about plants and natural colors
- Classify the materials by color, and start grounding and pressing them against a sieve.
- add egg yolk to the liquid pigment
- add the pigments to different containers
- Paint and draw the color palette, or if you wish, paint a landscape, an experience or an abstract shape. You can also paint together a collaborative piece.

Materials:

- A few small buckets
- 2 or 3 eggs
- Examples of natural pigments that have good coloring properties: Berries (Blue berries, Raspberries, Black Berries); Fruits and Vegetables (Pomegranate, Onion peels, Beetroot, Red Cabbage, Olives); Leaves and Flowers (Mint, Indigo, Marigold, Camomille, Lichens, Rosemary, Nettle)
- Condiments and spices (Turmeric, Saffron, Coffee, Paprika powder)

Timing: approximately 3 hours

Visuals: photos of the forest walk, illustrations, drawings, artistic practice.

Obstacles:

- Time Management: monitor teams' progress to ensure tasks are completed within the allocated time frame
- Supervised Technology Use: participants may use phones to take pictures of the process and check and identify what plants give natural pigments
- Ecological Skills: This activity requires the participants to treat nature carefully and respect the environment.
- Allergy to plants: Some participants might experience allergic reactions to plants or flowers; it is advisable to ask the participants about any known allergy and to use gloves to source the plants from the forest and in the pigment process.

Evaluation Rules:

Creativity, interpretation of the forest theme, and presentation of their artistic piece to the group will be evaluated.

Transferability Strategies:

- Discuss the importance of artistic eye and skills when developing tangible pieces, objects, and materials.
- Discuss the importance of promoting sustainable crafts and design and encouraging new consumer behaviour.
- Discussing the benefits of learning about plant species and environmental craft practices
- Empowering participants with a new craft skill to teach in their workplace
- Advocating for eco-friendly materials and sustainable craft practices in their communities.

Strategy for managing the classroom for Forest Palette

Steps:

1. Nature Walk and Collection:

- Visit Natural Area: Head to a nearby forest, field, or natural area. If not possible, use available fruits, vegetables, and peels.
- Team Up: Split into groups of 3-4 and collect berries, plants, and flowers. Pay attention to the colors and scents of nature.

2. Preparation and Processing:

- Material Discussion: Back at the table, talk about the collected materials and their colors.
- Create Pigments: Grind and press the collected materials through a sieve to extract pigments. Mix the liquid with egg yolk to create tempera paint.

3. Art Creation:

- Palette Development: Pour the pigments into containers and discuss your color palette.
- Painting: Use the natural pigments to paint. You can create individual pieces or collaborate on a group artwork, such as a landscape or abstract design.

4. Reflection:

- Discuss Experience: Share thoughts on using natural pigments, the artistic process, and the connection with nature.
- Reflect on Sustainability: Highlight the eco-friendly aspects of using natural materials and the importance of respecting the environment.

Photo: Retrieved from Canva, 2024



Description:

Wool embroidery merges the qualities of wool with the intricate craftsmanship of embroidery thread. The participants will engage in activities that include designing and drawing an embroidery piece as a hanging decoration inspired by nature and the seasons. The activity will continue with embroidering the design on wool, using naturally dyed wool yarn.

Traditionally, black wool fabric and yarn were employed in blanket embroidery, with various stitches defining and filling intricate patterns. The yarn's hues were derived from plant and mushroom dyes.

Nowadays, crafters embroider decorative symbols as well as personal and political statements. Symbols may communicate belonging to a group, indicate cultural identity, and foster a sense of sharing values with others like-minded.

Why:

This exercise strengthens sensitivity to wool as material and aesthetic eye skills among team members as they work to design a two-dimensional wool-embroidery piece using wool fibres and a piece of wool, all-natural materials. Embroidery encourages teams to practice and develop fine motor skills and abilities and promotes eco-friendly crafting practices. Crafting with wool is a good opportunity for participants to learn a traditional type of craft that has been popular around the world. It is suitable for all ages and abilities, from beginners to advanced embroidery crafters. It uses materials that are 100% biodegradable and compostable.

Instructions:

1. Sketch out your design on paper using a grid or patterned paper
2. Trace the location of the holes on the wool fabric and start drawing geometric shapes that represent the stitches. The shapes can be inspired by nature's geometry, symmetric mandalas, snowflakes, leaf patterns, and animals.
3. Start from the back and push your needle through the wool fabric
4. Continue to stitch around the outline of your design using backstitch
5. Once you've come to the end of the outline, secure the thread by knotting it at the back of your stitches.
6. Here are some types of stitches: cross stitch, backstitch, blanket stitch.

*see attachment with steps/graphics

Materials:

- Wool fabric
- Wool yarn
- Darning Needle (larger eye for yarn)
- Pencil, Paper, Scissors



Photos: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024

Wool embroidery facilitated by the Villalno Wool Innovation project team. Photographs by Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024.

Timing: approximately 1 hour

Obstacles:

- Time Management: monitor teams' progress to ensure tasks are completed within the allocated time frame
- Supervised Technology Use: participants may use phones to photograph the process.
- Material Fragility: Because the surface of the wool is soft, a particularly intricate design will place too much thread into the wool fabric, causing many knots
- Use of needle: The participants may be unfamiliar with the use of a needle, and it may take time to practice and understand the stitches.

Evaluation Rules:

Creativity, originality and innovation will be evaluated, as well as interpretation of the nature, and winter thematic, helping other participants is an added value, presentation about their piece and its characteristics to the group.

Transferability Strategies:

- Discuss the importance of promoting sustainable crafts using natural materials and encouraging new consumer/creator behaviour.
- Discussing the benefits of learning about embroidery craft practices
- Empowering participants with a new craft skill to teach embroidery of wool on wood in their workplaces while advocating for eco-friendly materials and sustainable craft practices in their communities.

Strategy for managing the classroom for Embroidered wool

Steps:

1.Design Planning:

- Sketch Design: On paper, draw your embroidery design using a grid or patterned paper. Draw geometric shapes inspired by nature, like snowflakes or leaf patterns.

2.Preparation:

- Trace Design: Transfer your design onto the wool fabric by marking where the holes will be and outlining the shapes.
- Prepare Wool: Use naturally dyed wool yarn for an authentic touch.

3.Embroidery Process:

- Start Stitching: Begin from the back of the wool fabric, pushing the needle through to the front.
- Outline Design: Use backstitch to follow the outline of your design. Secure your thread by knotting it at the back once you finish.

4.Explore Stitches:

- Try Different Stitches: Experiment with various stitches like cross stitch, backstitch, and blanket stitch to add texture and detail to your piece.

5.Reflection:

- Discuss Craftsmanship: Talk about the traditional aspects of wool embroidery and the significance of using natural materials.
- Share Designs: Present and discuss your designs, focusing on the artistic choices and techniques used.

Photo: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024



Description:

The activity consists of a site-specific installation and collaborative artwork using leaves, stones, branches and bark. The activity starts with a walk in the forest to locate the place for the site installation. The team will take a walk to the nearest natural area or forest to collect stones, leaves, branches and bark that can be used as elements to construct a forest mandala; the circular pattern of a forest mandala design symbolises the interconnectedness of all things. During the walk, the activity will focus on experimenting and sensing the colours of nature. Once the team located a perfect spot for the mandala, and collected the elements, the team can start to design the installation.

Why:

- The ability to sense and observe the environment increases by making environmental art.
- This exercise strengthens the ability to focus and to collaborate without verbal interaction. Team members work together to experience and create a two-dimensional natural mandala piece using the place's local stones, branches, and leaves.
- The practice encourages teams to enhance sense of beauty found in nature and promotes appreciation for eco-friendly materials and crafting practices.
- Creating pieces in nature with nature's elements is the most sustainable way to experience and make art.
- This activity will foster nature connectedness and respect for the forest and environment and enhance the joy of seeing beauty.

Instructions:

1. Go together to the nearest natural area, forest, field, or another site in countryside
2. Grab a bucket and collect stones, leaves, bark, and other natural materials such as feathers, flowers, pinecones, etc. Do not harm nature.
3. Experience and sense the nature around you: What colours do you see? What smells can you experience? What sensations and thoughts cross your mind when you experience nature?
4. Locate with your team a good spot for the mandala. Which place is calling to you?
5. Carefully gather plants, flowers, and berries. Classify the materials by colour, shape, and size. An environmental work of art often begins by examining, classifying, and organizing the different discovered materials.
6. Start building the mandala from the centre by placing the most interesting objects found, which will serve as the innermost ring of the mandala.
7. Use your collection of found objects to create a circle around that object
8. Repeat to create more and more rings in whatever pattern you like.



Photo: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024

forest Mandala Workshop, facilitated by the TB-GOBRA project team.

Materials:

Leaves, Branches, Stones, Feathers, Pinecones, Flowers

Timing: approximately 2 hours

Visuals: photos of the forest walk, illustrations, drawings, pictures of the mandala process and the artistic practice.

Obstacles:

- Time Management: monitor teams' progress to ensure tasks are completed within the allocated time frame
- Supervised Technology Use: participants may use phones to take pictures of the process and check and identify what plants give natural pigments
- Ecological Skills: This activity requires the participants to treat the nature carefully and respect the environment.
- Allergy to plants: Some participants might experience allergic reactions to plants or flowers, it is advisable to ask the participants about any known allergy and to use gloves to source the plants from the forest and in the pigment process.

Evaluation Rules:

Creativity will be evaluated, as well as interpretation of the forest thematic, presentation about their artistic piece to the group.

Transferability Strategies:

- Discuss the importance of promoting sustainable crafts with practices favouring connection with nature.
- Discussing the benefits of learning about the forest through art practices that favour exploring natural areas
- Discussion of the concept of mandala and interconnectedness of all things

Photo: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024



Steps:

1. Nature Walk:

- Explore: Visit a nearby natural area, forest, or field.
- Collect Materials: Gather stones, leaves, bark, and other natural items like feathers or pinecones. Avoid harming the environment.

2. Sensory Experience:

- Observe: Notice the colors, smells, and sensations of nature around you. Discuss these observations with your team.

3. Site Selection:

- Find the Spot: Choose a location that feels right for your mandala installation. Consider how the spot complements the natural surroundings.

4. Material Sorting:

- Organize: Classify the collected materials by color, shape, and size. This helps in planning the mandala's design.

5. Mandala Creation:

- Build the Center: Start with the most interesting items in the middle of the mandala.
- Expand: Create concentric circles around the center, using your materials to form the pattern. Continue to add rings in your desired design.

6. Reflection:

- Discuss: Share thoughts on the creative process, how the mandala connects with nature, and the experience of working together without words.
- Appreciate: Reflect on the beauty of the completed mandala and the joy of using natural materials.

Photo: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024



WOVEN MANDALA

98

Description:

The activity consists of a site-specific installation, in which the participants will weave with natural wool yarn, a mandala and place it on a site-specific installation in the forest.

Why:

This exercise strengthens aesthetic eye skills among team members as they work to design a two-dimensional wool-embroidery piece using wool fibres. It encourages teams to practice and develop fine motor skills and abilities and promotes eco-friendly crafting practices.

Crafting with wool is a good opportunity for participants to learn a traditional type of craft that has been popular around the world and is suitable for all ages and abilities, from beginners to advanced embroidery crafters. It uses materials that are 100% biodegradable and compostable.

Instructions:

1. Make a knot wrapping around the two sticks. Begins to twirl the thread around the center. You can also glue the sticks before starting with the thread.
2. Start with the thread on the left, pass it over the stick to the right, pass it underneath, tighten it, pass it to the next stick, and do the same in every stick.
3. To finish with a colour, make a normal knot around the stick
4. Continue with another color.
5. Start with a knot wrapping around the stick
6. Repeat the previous steps
7. make a normal knot around the stick to finish that colour.
8. Repeat steps
9. Design together an installation of your mandalas in a tree as a hanging ornament installation
10. Go to the forest to place your pieces in a special place, document the process and the site-specific collaborative installation

*see attachment with steps/graphics

Materials:

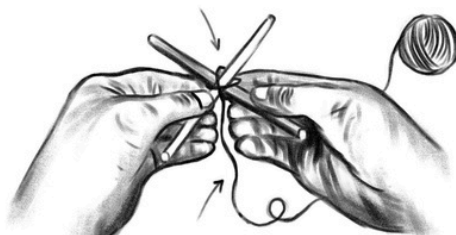
Wool yarn in many colours
Wooden sticks
Scissors

Timing:

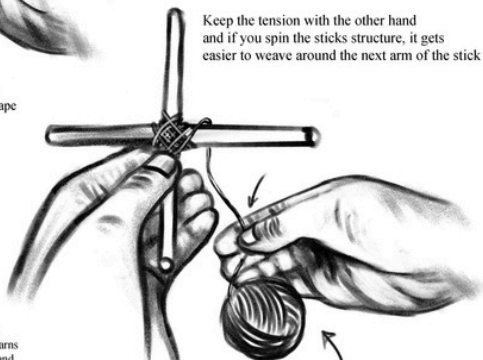
approximately 2 hours

Visuals: More visual representations of different possibilities of weaving mandalas with colored wool, process pictures, and video of participants at the weaving workshop can be added after the piloting

Place 2 sticks to form an x structure, to create the basic form, make sure there is a 90 degree angle

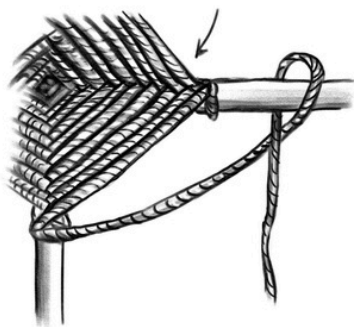


Wrap diagonally the sticks together and make 4 turns on both directions Hold the sticks keeping them in x shape

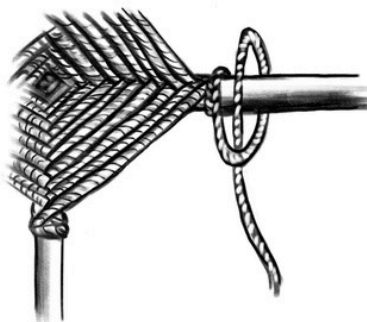


Wool yarn creates good friction when weaving. You can use a wool blended yarn as well, but yarns containing plastic derived threads are slippery and don't give enough friction to the weave.

With one hand, you take the yarn and wrap it around the stick over and around, while keeping the tension with the other hand. Continue wrapping over and around the next arm, and so on.



When you need to change the color make a simple double knot around one of the arms and cut the yarn



Figures and Photos: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024



Time Management: monitor teams' progress to ensure tasks are completed within the allocated time frame

Supervised Technology Use: participants may use phones to take pictures and videos of the process.

Use of needle: The mandala weaving technique can be unfamiliar to the participants, and it can take time to practice and understand the loops.

Evaluation Rules:

Creativity, originality and innovation will be evaluated, as well as interpretation of the winter thematic, helping other participants is an added value, presentation about their piece and its characteristics to the group.

Transferability Strategies:

Discuss the importance of promoting sustainable crafts using natural materials and encouraging new consumer/creator behaviour.

Discuss the importance of learning about traditional Indigenous crafts and knowledge. Discussing the benefits of learning about traditional craft practices and heritage elements in different cultures.

Empowering participants with a new craft skill to teach embroidery of wool to craft winter ornaments in their workplaces while advocating for eco-friendly materials and sustainable craft practices in their communities.

Photo: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024



Steps:

1. Setup:

- Prepare Materials: Tie a knot around two sticks to create a frame. Optionally, glue the sticks for added stability.
- Start Weaving: Begin by wrapping the wool yarn around the frame, creating the base for your mandala.

2. Weaving Process:

- Basic Weaving: Starting from the left, pass the yarn over a stick, then underneath, and continue to the next stick. Tighten the yarn as you go.
- Change Colors: When finishing a color, tie a knot around a stick. Start with a new color by wrapping the yarn around the stick and repeat the weaving steps.

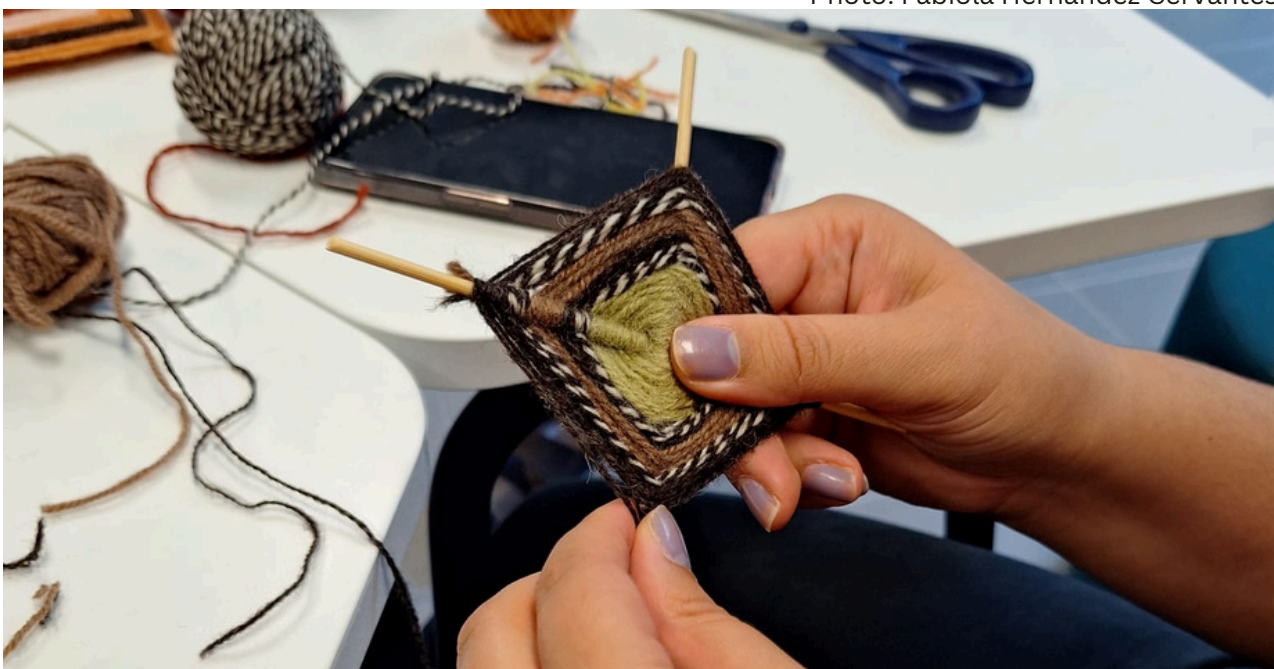
3. Complete Mandala:

- Finish Weaving: End each color with a knot and start with a new one as needed. Continue weaving until your mandala is complete.

4. Installation:

- Design Placement: Collaborate on where to hang your mandalas on a tree or another natural feature. Use the environment creatively to display your artwork.
- Document: Take photos or videos of the installation and the process to capture the collaborative effort and the site-specific aspect of your work.

Photo: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024



Why:

This exercise encourages teams to divide and collaborate in manual tasks develop motor skills and abilities and promotes eco-friendly crafting practices. Crafting with wool is a good opportunity for participants to learn a traditional type of craft that has been popular around the world and is suitable for all ages and abilities, from beginners to advanced embroidery crafters. It uses materials that are 100% biodegradable and compostable.

Materials:

Wool fleece
Pipes
Ropes
Sailcloth canvas
water shower
natural soap
bubble wrap or mesh layer
gloves
water
carding drum

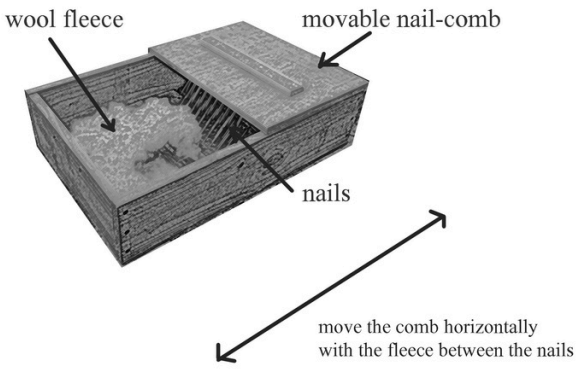
Timing:

approximately 3 hours

Instructions:

- a. Wet the wool with warm soapy water. Use a spray bottle or sponge to distribute the water evenly.
- b. Cover the wool with netting or tulle to hold it in place.
- c. Press down gently to ensure the wool is soaked but not flooded.
- d. Start rolling the wool in bubble wrap or bamboo mats, applying pressure as you roll.
- e. Unroll, turn the felt 90 degrees, and roll again. Repeat this process, changing directions, to ensure even felting.
- f. Continue felting until the wool fibers interlock and form a solid piece of felt. This can take a few hours of rolling and pressing.
- g. Rinse and Dry the felt thoroughly to remove any soap, squeeze out excess water and lay the felt flat to dry completely.

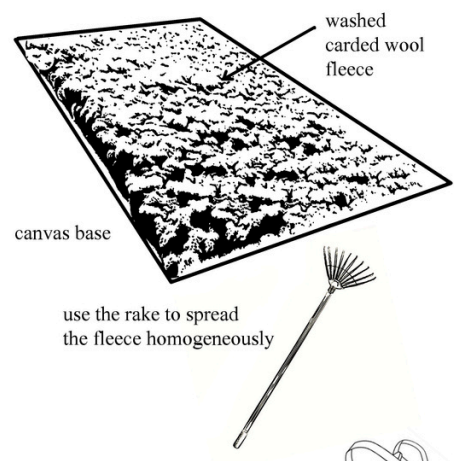
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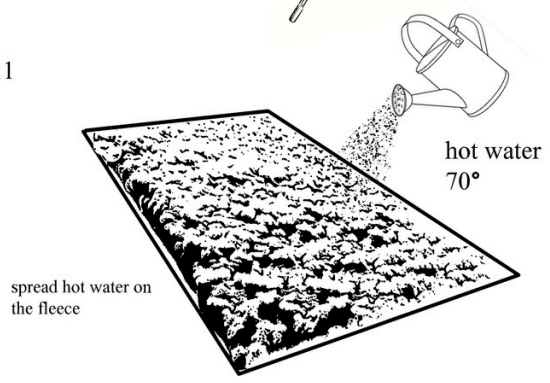
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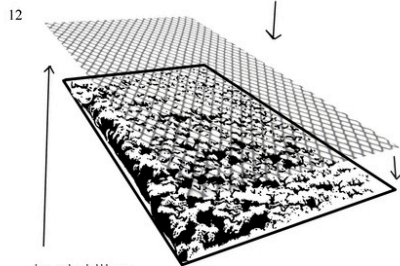
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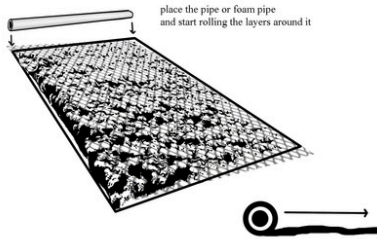
11



Figures Fabiola Cervantes, 2024; Photos Dorsa Abolfazli, 2024



place mesh or bubble wrap on top of the fleece. Gentle rub the mesh or bubble wrap on the wet fleece. We can do this by hand or felt it with our feet, stepping on the canvas as it is a large surface.



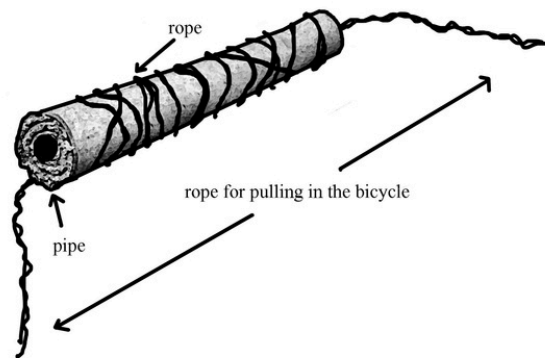
place the pipe or foam pipe and start rolling the layers around it



13

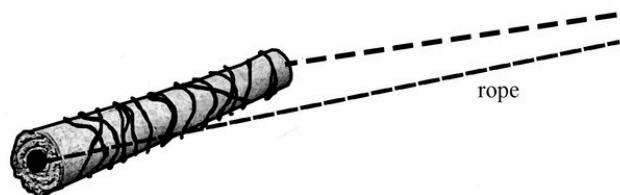


pipe



rope for pulling in the bicycle

pipe



rope



Figures Fabiola Cervantes, 2024; Photos Dorsa Abolfazli, 2024

Strategy for managing the classroom for CONTEMPORARY HORSE-FELTING

Steps:

Pre-work:

1. Prepare Wool:

- Wash Wool: Clean with hot water (60-65°C) and natural detergent.
- Dry Wool: Let it air dry.
- Separate Locks: Use a wool picker to separate locks.
- Card Wool: Use a carding drum or card the wool by hand to prepare it for felting.

Felting Process:

1. Set Up:

- Wet Wool: Spray or sponge warm soapy water evenly over the wool.
- Cover Wool: Place netting or tulle over the wool to keep it in place.

2. Felting:

- Roll Wool: Roll the wool in bubble wrap or bamboo mats, applying firm pressure. Unroll, turn the wool 90 degrees, and roll again. Repeat to ensure even felting.
- Continue Rolling: Keep rolling and pressing until the wool fibers interlock into a solid felt piece. This can take a few hours.

3. Finish:

- Rinse Felt: Rinse thoroughly to remove soap. Squeeze out excess water.
- Dry Felt: Lay the felt flat to dry completely.

Photo: Fabiola Hernandez Cervantes, 2024

