

Orangutan Sewing Year 3 Gold St Brigid's College Lesmurdie W.A

Procedure:

Goal: To Produce a stitching of an Orangutan

(We used the materials and a technique similar to that used by people in the 'olden days', to make rag mats.) In the past, large rag mats were used as door mats and floor rugs, in people's homes. They were made from hessian (maybe even old sacks or bags) and scraps of old fabric, from worn out clothes such as dresses, trousers etc. These scraps of fabric were cut into strips about 10cm long by 2cm wide. A stick with a sharpened point was used as a needle, to push each end of the fabric strip through the hessian, a few strands /threads at a time and tying the fabric strip once. Work continued in this way, until all the hessian was filled in with fabric, the result being a thick, sturdy floor or door mat.

Our teacher thought we could use this idea and apply it to stitching our orangutans.

The Materials We Used

Pieces of hessian, approximately 20cmx23cm. (a nanna overlocked these for us, to prevent fraying)

Varying shades, thicknesses and textures of red, orange and brown wool. Also a skin tone shade.

Goggle eyes

Craft glue

Wool needles with large eye (we managed to purchase packets of plastic needles from RIOT) Fantastic! Also, cheaper than metal.

Steps

Once overlapped, a mum traced various orangutan outlines onto the hessian pieces, using carbon paper. She then made an outline for us using black wool.

We worked in small groups and several mums came in to help us get started.

1. Threaded our needles with lengths of wool (about a metre, doubled in half) although can be any length really. Remember though, that the shorter the pieces of wool, the more needle threading required. Hint for teachers, have lots of spare needles already threaded. Parent helpers are great.

2. We drew the wool through, picking up a couple of hessian threads.

3. We tied the wool once, although some of us tied twice, resulting in a knot, which worked OK with the wool.

4. We then measured a small finger length and cut. (This helped to give the 'shaggy, hairy' look.)

This process was repeated until our length of wool needed replacing, when we chose the same or another shade. (Hint teachers! Remember the already threaded spare needles.)

Once we were underway, we were able to go ahead independently and even help each other.

Teachers, if the wool is getting cut a bit too long, and the orangutan is looking a bit too shaggy, the finished product can always be trimmed at the end. In other words, it can have a bit of a haircut. Supervised of course.

5. Glue on the goggle eyes. (A parent glued the goggle eyes on for us, using a hot glue gun. However, any good craft glue would do the trick.)

6. For the nose, mouth and foot pad features, we used the skin tone wool and a simple straight stitch.

This was a bit of an experimental activity on the part of our teacher, Mrs White, who just had it in her head that she would like to do some stitching, integrated with our Orangutan Language Programme. It was quite a time consuming exercise, but lots of fun and we are very proud of our work and the finished result.