



Understanding Quilting and Patchwork

Rags to Riches

Lesson Plan

Total Time: 1.5 hours

Aimed at: KS1

For this lesson, you will need:

Rags to Riches worksheets: Recycled Object Investigator Question Cards (download in the 'Library' section), Rags to Riches artwork label

Textile Treasures Loans Box (containing patchwork quilts and handling samples)

Fabric scraps, old clothes or pieces of coloured paper that can be cut up

Recycled art and craft materials including string, wool, beads, buttons etc.

Colouring pens and fabric pastels/pens if you have some

Pencils, scissors and glue (fabric glue is better if using fabric scraps)

Old sheets cut into square pieces for each student (no bigger than 30cm x 30 cm)

Learning Objectives

To learn how what we do impacts on the environment and how we can help

To investigate and speak about textile-based objects

To make observations and simple comparisons with modern textiles

To develop understanding of materials and their environmental implications

To learn new techniques for creating artwork with different materials

To listen and respond to others

To develop skills of discussion, negotiation and cooperation in a group

Before you start...

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

You might like to use trays to keep art materials and pencils, etc. close to hand

Collect some textile objects (clothes, shoes, umbrella, tea towel etc.) and some normal domestic objects like newspaper, card, tin cans, a jam jar. Put them all in plastic bag.

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

You might like to prepare a sample recycled artwork to inspire students.

Introduction (10 minutes)

Begin the session by explaining how you can use old things that most people throw away to make something new and beautiful.

Using your plastic bag of recyclable objects and textiles, ask the class if they think each object can be recycled one at a time. Explain that all these objects can be used to make new things. Ask the class what they think would happen to these things if they weren't recycled - where would they go? What might happen to our world if we don't recycle?

Now explain what a textile is and that one way to recycled worn-out, old textiles is to make a quilt.

Show the class a patchwork quilt from your loans box and ask them what they think it's made from, what it was made for and if it looks old or new? Where could they find old fabric to turn into a quilt?

Activity (10 minutes)

Play the 'Quilt Quiz' PowerPoint presentation and encourage students to guess if the quilts they see are made from old or new fabrics.

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

At the end of the quiz ask if anyone noticed that all these quilts contain recycled fabrics? Explain that it means people have been recycling their fabrics for a long time - not just to help the planet but to save money, keep warm and give them a fun hobby to do at home.

When you've finished the quilt quiz, organise everyone into groups, hand out pencils, a question card and a patchwork quilt/object to each table.

Recycled Object Investigator Activity (15 minutes)

One student on each table should read the questions to their group. The group have five minutes to look at their object and see if they can answer the questions.

At the end, ask one or two students in each group to hold up their object and explain what they discovered. Ask if they like the quilt/object and why?

Rags to Riches Artwork Activity (40 minutes)

Bring the class together to look at another quilt from the box. Talk about shapes, colours, size of fabric pieces and how it has been put together (sewn, stuck, woven?).

Explain that now they will create their own recycled artworks, inspired by all the quilts and objects they've seen.

Pass out the squares of sheet fabric to each student and explain that they will design their own patchwork square to try to encourage people to recycle their textiles at home. They can use words, pictures, recycled materials but they do need to think about how to make their work secure, i.e.. no heavy/large items.

After 30 minutes give everyone a 10 minute time-check and ask them to initial their work on the back of the square and write a label for their artwork (download the label template in our Library).

At the end of 40 minutes, bring everyone together with their pieces and lay them all out on a table. See what the pieces look like together.

As an extension project, you might like to try sewing the patchwork together to make your own 'recycled quilt'. See the Library section for information about making a group quilt. If this isn't possible, why not clip the pieces together in a book or pin them on a display board with other textile or environment-focused work?