



LESSON PLAN:

DRAWSTRING BAGS

GRADE LEVEL(S): 1-5

LENGTH OF TIME: 50 MINUTES

MAKER SKILL(S): HAND SEWING

TOPIC(S): ARTS & CULTURE; BLACK INNOVATORS, NATIVE AMERICAN INNOVATORS

OVERVIEW

Learn how to work with fabric and how to sew by hand while creating a drawstring bag. This lesson introduces students to following a basic sewing pattern as well as practicing measuring with a ruler.

MATERIALS, TOOLS, AND RESOURCES

Students

each student

- 12" x 12" felt square
- shoelace

(to share in small groups)

- cardboard circle template
- fabric scissors
- rulers
- fabric markers (optional)

Teachers

- **Skill Building Resources**
[#HistoryMakers](#)
- *Where Did My Clothes Come From?* by Chris Butterworth
- **Watch a read-along!**

VOCABULARY

- **Unit of Measurement:** a system used to describe how big or small something is.
- **Running Stitch:** a basic sewing stitch created by passing thread up and down through fabric.

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PREPARATION

- Gather student materials, and determine how students will access them during the lesson.
- Cut out cardboard templates - a large circle that takes up the majority of a 12x12 square of cardboard. Students can share these in partners or groups of 3-4.
- Create a prototype drawstring bag to share with students.
- Prepare an unfinished prototype, to show the process to students.

LESSON OUTLINE

PROJECT FRAMING	5 minutes	Students think about how fabric items are created.
EXPLORATION	10 minutes	Students explore textiles and the creation of clothing.
MAKER PROJECT	30 minutes	Students make their drawstring bag.
CLEANUP, SHARING & REFLECTION	5 minutes	Students clean up and participate in a group reflection.

REAL WORLD INSPIRATION

How can a bag represent you? Jessica Hebron, better known as Culture Queen, produces innovative Black History-themed performances that inspire cultural confidence in children everywhere. Jess McPherson, a Native of the Lower Susquehanna recognized as Ongwehonwe by the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, believes that art connects people to themselves, each other, and their world.

What do you want to carry with you?

Explore our #HistoryMakers:

[Jessica Hebron AKA Culture Queen](#)



[Jess McPherson](#)



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PROJECT FRAMING

Introduction (5 minutes)

Today we are going to practice more hand sewing in order to create a bag. Ask students how they think clothes or other textiles are made.

Explain that in today's projects, students will use a pattern to prepare fabric before cutting and sewing it together. Emphasize that textiles projects have many steps before the finished product is complete.

Relate the project today to one or more of the Real World Inspiration #historymakers mentioned above. Ask students how their clothing and items help to represent them.

EXPLORATION

Exploration (10 minutes)

Read or watch the read-along for the section about blue jeans from *Where Did My Clothes Come From* by Chris Butterworth. *Note: start the read-along at the 0:30 mark and end at 4:30, which is pages 1-8.*

Ask students what they remember about the steps that go into making blue jeans. Be sure to emphasize how cotton is processed and turned into fiber. The fibers are woven into fabric. Then that fabric is cut into pieces using a pattern.

Ask students what pieces they think the pattern for jeans includes. Answers might include legs, pockets, belt loops, and waist bands.

Share the template from today's project and the prototype to explain how students will get to experience this process firsthand.

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MAKER PROJECT

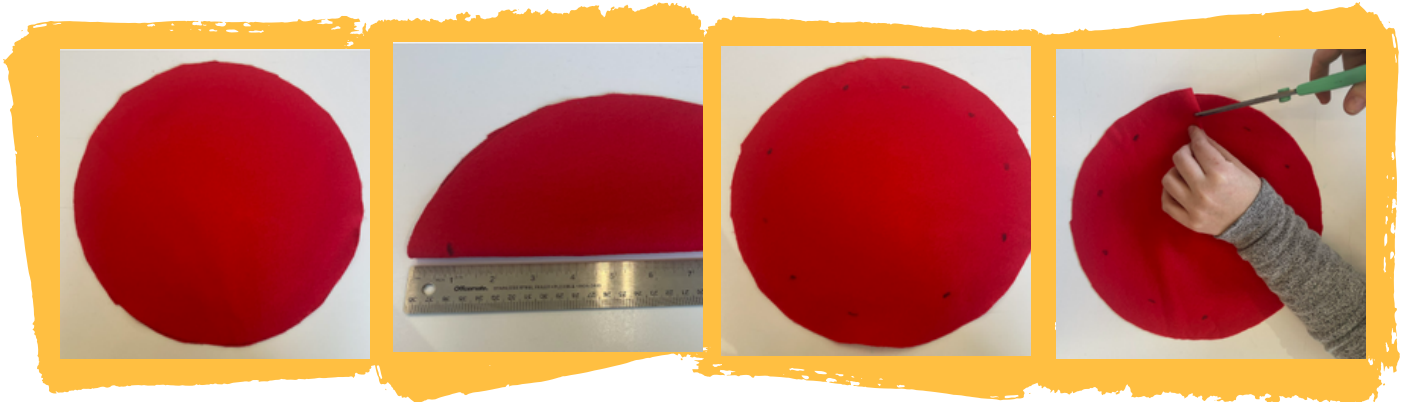
Project Prompt

Create your own drawstring bag using felt and a shoelace.

Procedure (30 minutes)

Measuring And Cutting Your Fabric

1. Students select a felt square to use for their bags and a shoelace. Place the circle template on the fabric square. Use a fabric marker to trace the circle and then cut it out using fabric scissors. *Note: if students are concerned about seeing the marker line, let them know that they can make this the inside of the bag.*
2. Review how to use a ruler. What do they know about using a ruler? Make sure to point out how to count the lines on the ruler, identify if they are using inches or centimeters, and lining up with the 0 (especially if it isn't at the end of the ruler).
3. Using a fabric marker, draw lines around the circle using the fold and mark method. See Maker Skill Section for instructions on how to do the fold and mark method.
4. Cut slits by pinching the fabric and making a small cut.



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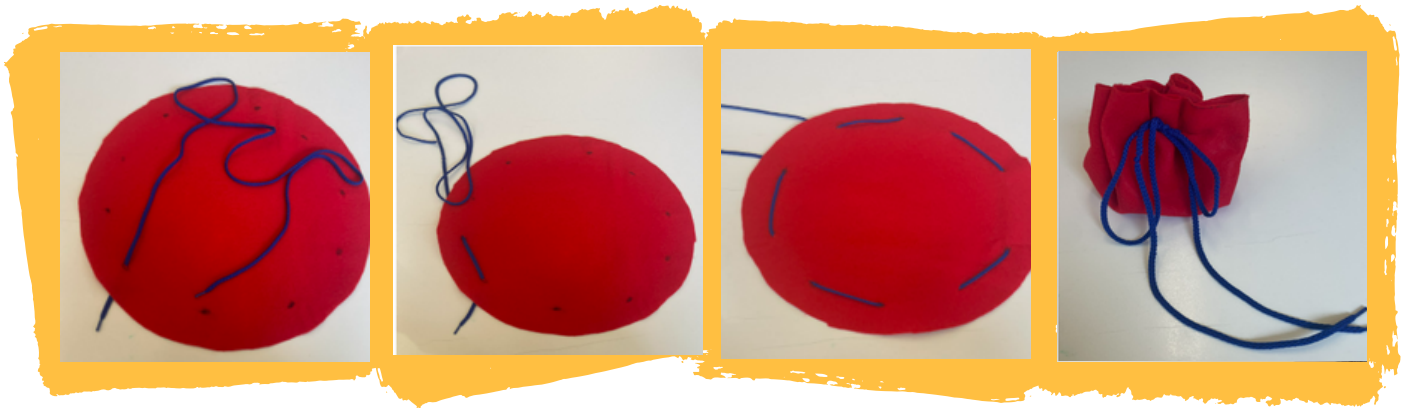
LESSON PLAN: DRAWSTRING BAGS CONT.



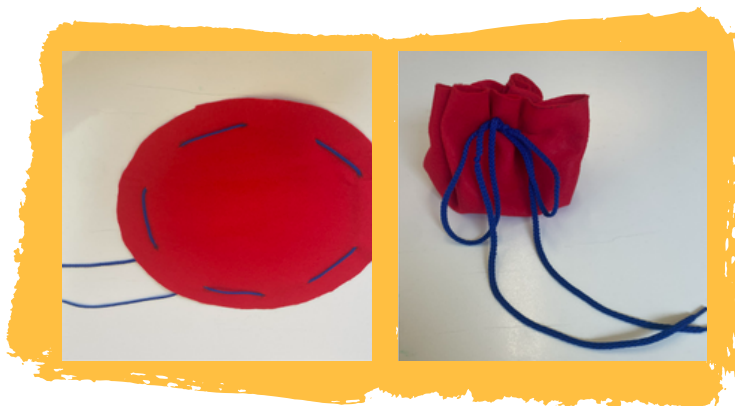
MAKER PROJECT CONT.

Sewing Your Bag

1. Using a running stitch, sew around the circumference of the circle. See Maker Skill Section for instructions on how to do the running stitch.
 - *Note: if needed, students can tape one end of the shoelace to the fabric to prevent pulling it all the way through.*
2. Tighten the pouch once the cord has gone completely around.
3. If students finish early, they can use fabric markers to decorate their bag.



EXAMPLE PROJECT :



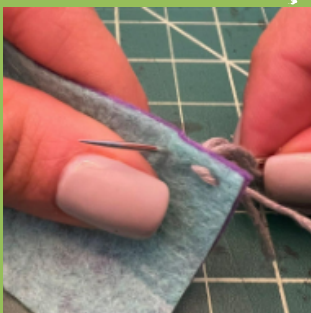
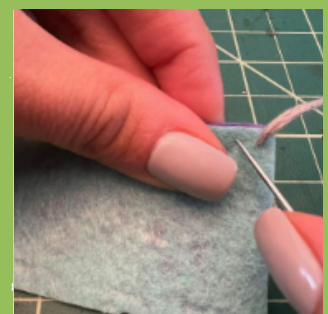
LESSON PLAN: DRAWSTRING BAGS CONT.

MAKER SKILL

Running Stitch - [Video Resource](#)

A running stitch is a simple hand sewing stitch that can be used in embroidery or to attach together two pieces of fabric with a strong seam.

1. Begin by cutting out and aligning the two pieces of fabric you want to sew together. If necessary, insert one or more pins to hold the pieces together. Cut a piece of thread about as long as your arm.
2. Thread your needle, pulling the thread through the needle eye about halfway. Then gather the two ends of thread and tie them together in a knot. Pull the knot and the needle in opposite directions so the needle is in the middle of the thread.
3. Begin by poking the needle through both pieces of fabric and pulling the thread through until the knot reaches the fabric. Keeping the needle on the same side of the fabric, create the first stitch by pushing the needle back through to the other side.
4. Create your next stitch on the back side of the fabric by pushing the needle through the back side to the front side and pulling the thread through. Try to keep your stitches the same length.
5. Continue making stitches, alternating pushing the needle through the back side and the front side of the fabric. As you stitch, the thread will create a dotted line pattern on each side of the fabric.
6. When you are near the end of your thread or reach the end of your seam, create a knot. Cut the thread.



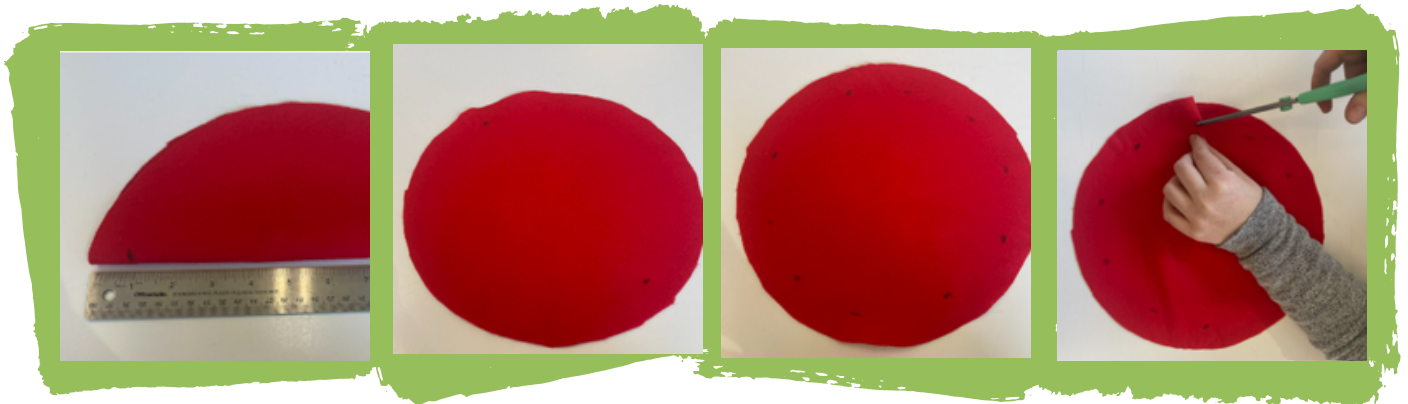
LESSON PLAN: DRAWSTRING BAGS CONT.

MAKER SKILL

Fold and Mark Method for Measuring and Cutting Fabric

This technique can be used to measure uniform distances around a circle or other shape.

1. Fold the circle in half and measure 1 inch from the edge of the circle (towards the center) and draw a small line or dot to mark this placement.
2. Repeat on the other side of the circle.
3. Unfold the circle, rotate it about 45 degrees and repeat steps 1-2.
4. Repeat steps 1-3 until there are dots going all the way around the circle. You will need at least 6-8 marks going around the circle. The more marks, the more sewing students will practice.
5. Show students how to pinch the fabric and cut a small slit. *Note: explain that fabric scissors are only used to cut fabric in order to keep them sharp. If they need to cut anything other than fabric or string they should use regular scissors.*



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CLEANUP, SHARING, AND REFLECTION

Cleanup (2 minutes)

Students should keep their projects. They should return materials that can be reused and throw away trash materials.

Reflection (3 minutes)

Have students gather together with their bags. Ask students to reflect on the process. Prompt discussion with questions such as

- What shape did our bag start out as? What shape did it become when it was done?
- Where or when else have they used a pattern or template to make something?

EXTENSIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

- Students can add a handle with yarn
- Decorate the bag with fabric markers
- Cut more slits and see how that changes the shape of the bag when you close it
- If students struggle to use a ruler, put a piece of tape where they are supposed to mark.

