

# Cardiff Steiner School Stitch Stories project

I would like to launch a 'Stitch Story' handwork project for our whole school community.

Our school community has been dispersed for a while and I have been thinking of how everyone could participate in some kind of creative project during a time when it is so difficult to distribute or get hold of resources.

A textile artist that I admire very much called Cas Holmes wrote a book called 'Stitch Stories'. Although I have not read the book, I love the idea of stitch stories and thought that it would be a great way for us all to connect as a school community during this time.

My idea is that everyone in our school community makes a small post card sized stitched contribution to contribute towards a series of hangings or one larger installation for the school. The contributions will all be put together when we are able to return to school to provide a lasting record of this very strange time.

Contributions can be made by all ages and abilities from kindergarten age children to grandparents and **everyone in between, teachers, pupils, mums, dad's** trustees and friends of the school. The hope is that it might provide an opportunity for families to share some quality time together being creative and learning new skills.



Bee by Fiona Cullen

## Lets Bee Together



Leaf rubbings onto fabric using wax crayons and then stitched around with backstitch & embroidery threads

Leaves by Fiona Cullen



The aim is for each member of our school community to create at least one postcard size piece of stitched work. Those who are keen could challenge themselves to make one a week, exploring different themes and techniques until we are able to return to school.

I use the term stitched very loosely to include things like weaving and felting, knitting or crochet, collage, paint and print. Choose a technique you will enjoy. Objects we have collected often carry memories of friends and family or places we have visited. Photos, drawings, paintings and sayings can bring back memories. These can be used as inspiration.

This project asks you to explore cloth, paper and threads as a surface for creative collaging and stitching.

Starting your stitch story: You may like to begin with a drawing, but you could also look for some pieces of fabric that you like as your starting point. Your pieces could be recycled from old favourite piece of worn out clothing that have memories attached. You could also use old tea towels, curtains or snippets of your favourite colour combinations. Or you might even like to dye some fabric using tea, onion skins or other dyes.

Cut out a post card sized backing piece. **Now comes the fun part.**

You will need:

- A needle
- Some pins
- Some threads
- A pair of scissors.

By Seonaid  
Elliott



Be resourceful and use what you have.

You can start with using running stitch and create a texture or embroidery on a plain, or layered pieces of fabric. You could have fun collaging pieces of fabric together and stitching them down to tell a story. It can be fun to find a theme that means something to you. You can also include printed text or torn pieces of old paintings, wallpaper, printed paper or tea bag paper, whatever comes to hand and inspires you. Be playful and have fun and learn as you go. Try using different thicknesses and colours or thread or yarn and varying the spacing between the stitches. You can also stitch on buttons or found objects.



Be creative and have fun.





This is an ideal opportunity to practice a range of sewing stitches. Young children could start by taking a line for a walk on hessian or felt or calico using dolphin stitch.

There are many traditions that use repetitive running stitch to create complex patterns by varying the size and spacing of the stitch. Older children and adults may like to practice chain stitch, back stitch, whipping stitch, blanket stitch, couching or French knots or applique.

You may like to use an embroidery hoop to keep the work stretched, but it is fine to work without one. You may even like to explore machine embroidery if you have a sewing machine.

You could think of an image or theme, a word or phrase to embroider or something from nature, something to represent an experience from this time, or you could try embroidering a beautiful texture or form drawing.

When we are all back in school again we will bring all the squares together and sew them into a series of hangings for the school to serve a memory of this time.



Landscape by Cas Holmes



By Ali Lucia



By Caroline Harlow



Tulips by Vicky O'Leary

Some  
images to  
inspire you



Bird by Cas Holmes



Dog by Lucie Verheist



Cardiff Steiner School - Stitch Story Community Project 2020 - by Fiona Cullen



By Sue Pine