

High Peak Community Arts, Project eARTh at home:

'Blue John' Weaving

This project is split into four weeks, two weeks creating a sampler to learn some different weaving techniques and two weeks to make your own design, using Blue John as a colour theme. (The two-week Easter break is 'extra' to this, so in reality you have more time). The aim is for the weaving to look like the cross-section of a Blue John mine.



We are weaving on cards for this project, as they are easier to post than looms! The vertical threads on a loom are called the warp and the horizontal threads are called the weft. The warp is wrapped around the cards and secured at the back with two pieces of tape.

We are making a sampler to practise techniques, then designing and making a final piece inspired by Blue John. Try to use roughly half of your wool yarn for each project. You can always use more of a colour in your sampler if you are not planning to use very much of it in your final piece (e.g. maybe you will use less yellow in your final piece, so can use more of it in the sampler.) Feel free to use some of your own yarn for your practise sampler. If you do not have any at home, it is available cheaply online or from Aldi. **Please be sure to only use the yarns supplied in your High Peak Community Arts kit for the final woven Blue John piece**, as everyone's work must be made from the same wool and colour palette.

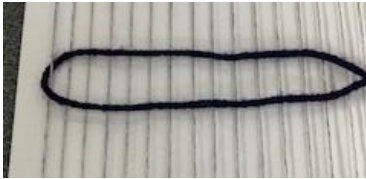
For the sampler, we are trying two new techniques each week, to be interspersed with plain weave, so you can practice your plain weave each week, too.

Please fill in the weekly evaluation forms as you go – it helps us with our monitoring and our planning – and do give us a call if you need any help.

If you run out of yarn, we have some spare , just call me on 0752 815 9283.

Week One: Starting the sampler - Warp, Twinning ,Plain/Tabby weave and Turkish /Rya knots

Twinning



Fold a length of yarn in half. Place the fold around the end warp thread, one thread under and the other over.



Create a twist by picking up the over thread and taking it under the next warp thread. Take the other thread and put it under the next warp thread along and so on. Switch between the two threads all the way across the card.



When you have reached the end, tuck the end in the same way using the same technique.

Plain weave



Plain weave also known as tabby weave, takes the weft over, under, over, under the warp. For a neat finish weave the end in above as shown.



Take each row across on a diagonal before 'beating' it down to meet the other rows. This prevents the weaving pulling in widthways. You need the extra yarn to allow for it going over and under the warp.

Joining



When joining on more yarn, overlap it with the end of the last piece.

Turkish/Rya Knots, then Plain weave.



Cut pieces of yarn that are an equal length. This can be done by wrapping yarn around a piece of card, then cutting along one edge.



Loop the middle of the yarn in front of two warp threads, then bring the end round the back and through the middle. Pull down to meet your weaving and a knot will form. They can be long tassels that drape or short tufts which stick up and create texture.



A few rows are needed to get the full effect. On the next row, stagger it so you are using the right warp of the first knot and left of the second. When you have finished your knots, create another section of plain, tabby weave.

Week Two: Continuing the sampler with Soumak technique, then Plain weave; Diagonal weave.

Soumak:



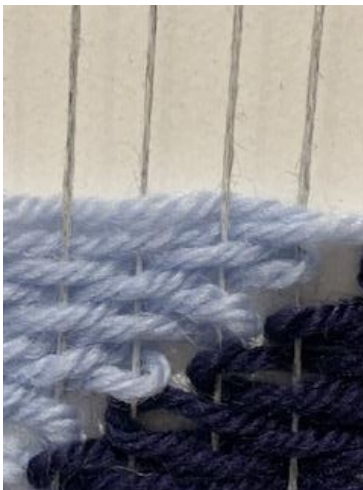
Take a length of yarn, two or three times the width of the card. Wrap the yarn around each warp thread, then beat down.



Now try a double soumak. Take a piece of yarn twice the length and fold it in half. Loop the fold around the far warp. Loop both threads around each warp thread.



Diagonal sections of weaving.



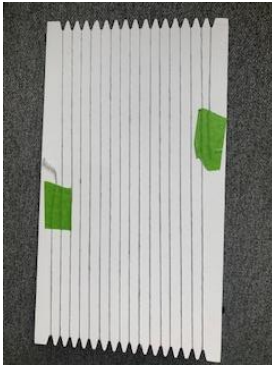
Take one colour forward by one warp each row and reduce the other by one warp each row. Overlap on the warp at the meeting point.

Finishing and taking the weaving off the card

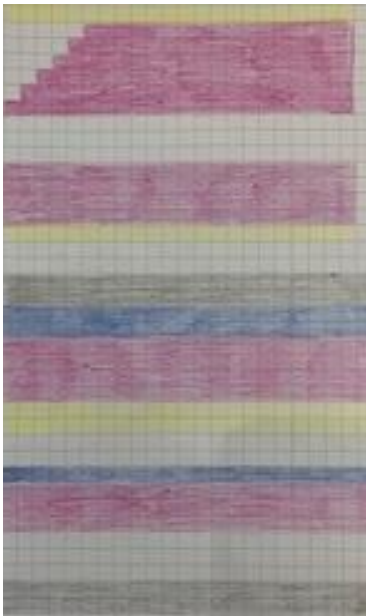
Cut the warp across the back of the weaving card. Knot the ends to hold your weaving in place. Knot pairs of warp thread. Take two strands of warp. Make an overhand knot and pull it gently up to the edge of the weaving. Repeat across the width of the weaving.

If you have any weft ends, use a bodkin to weave them into the back of your weaving to tidy up the edges.

Week Three : Design Blue John inspired weaving, warp up card and start weaving.



Using the linen thread provided, warp up your card. On the back of the card tape one end of the warp, then wrap the warp around the weaving card on the grooves. Tape the end.



Design a weaving pattern on the squared paper. One line on the paper can represent two lines of weaving. You can use your felt tip pens from previous projects. If you prefer to be organic, and 'go with the flow' you don't have to design in advance, and can just start weaving.

You can now make a start on your final piece of weaving, using the yarns we have supplied. Using dark blue, purple, yellow, grey and white and your chosen techniques, weave your own design.

Week Four: Weaving a Blue John piece.

Continue weaving, following your own design and using your chosen techniques.



Finish as before with overhand knots.

Please post back your finished 'Blue John' piece in the stamped addressed envelope provided (keep your own sample piece, and the card loom which you might want to use for future weaving at home). We will sew them together into a wall hanging – maybe for a local youth hostel.

Please also post back your completed weekly evaluation forms with the weaving.

Thank you.