

INTRODUCING CHILDREN TO STITCH

PROJECT 1: Embroider your drawing

This project suitable for children 6-9 with supervision.

This mini project gives new stitchers, young stitchers (and impatient ones!!) a chance to use embroidery to create something original without the usual hours and hours of work. They will probably not be able to complete it in a single one hour session, but significant progress can be made.

NEEDS:

- Calico or fine woven cotton fabric. [at a pinch, you can use old sheeting, as long as it is not too thin]
- A hoop or frame in which to work
- A small square artist's canvas or board [eg scrap of MDF] to stretch the fabric over for drawing on. Make sure the area of the board will fit within the frame you wish to stitch in.
- Watercolour pencils and paint brush.
- Needles. As I was teaching young children and using calico, I used tapestry needles size 24.
- Stranded cotton in a range of colours
- Embellishments eg sequins, buttons, beads suitable to be threaded with the needle provided.

PROCESS:

Step 1:

Stretch the fabric over the canvas square or board, and lace on to the board, just enough to secure the fabric in place.

Step 2:

Using the watercolour pencils, draw your design/picture, filling in with colour any large areas you wish to fill. Use water to intensify the colour of the pencil and the paintbrush to smooth areas of colour according to your preferences. Be careful not to over-applying water, or you can get some 'bleed' into surrounding areas.



Step 4a

Step 3:

Unlace the fabric from the board, and put it into your stitching frame. If the fabric is wet after the picture making has been completed, you might need to allow it to dry for a bit.

Step 4:

Using stranded cotton in a colour of your choice (I used three strands of cotton for the children) outline the outside of the shapes. Running stitch is the easiest taught, and most children are inclined to this naturally for outlining, but I did also have some students who used back stitch to outline their work – generally those who have stitched before. My stitched sample shown is using split stitch.



Step 4b 4c ... 5 Embellishing the drawing

Step 5:

Add embellishments and extra stitching as desired. This is a great chance to teach children the art of sewing on buttons, and for the keen embroiderers, a chance to learn some filling stitches eg seed stitch. In the stitched sample, I have used seed beads for the centre.

A finished example of a 6-year-old's picture. Keep the drawing simple or the younger child will get bored. He has left the work in the hoop for display



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