



FRANK
LLOYD
WRIGHT
TRUST

FINDING MEANING: WEAVING WITH FOUND MATERIALS

GRADE: 3-12

TIME: Three 60-minute sessions

How can common materials be used in creative ways? Frank Lloyd Wright explored this idea in his work as an architect, often using local, natural materials in creative ways to integrate buildings with their sites. In this lesson, students also explore how to create a harmonious work of art with unconventional materials. Through the art form of weaving, students will use local, natural materials, as well as found materials that hold personal significance, to create a textile-based original work of art.

INTEGRATED SUBJECTS: Visual Arts, Social-Emotional Learning

OBJECTIVES

MATERIALS | RESOURCES

Cardboard looms
Yarn and/or strips of fabric (various textures and colors)
Tapestry needles
Scissors
Masking tape
Found materials for weaving
Examples of Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture
Examples of work by textile artists

1. Understand the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, the concept of organic design, and how organic design is applied to Wright's choice in materials.
2. Develop skill of weaving and experiment weaving with found materials.
3. Create a harmonious textile-based piece that incorporates natural materials, found materials that are personally meaningful, and new materials.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. How can art and the process of creating art be personally meaningful or cathartic?
2. How can common materials be repurposed or used in creative ways?
3. What role do materials play in a work of art or design?

LESSON PROCEDURE

EXPLORE

Session One

- **Introduce the concept of organic design, which was an integral part of Frank Lloyd Wright's design philosophy. More information can be found at <https://www.teachingbydesign.org/about/organic-design/>. Emphasize Wright's use of local and natural materials. Have students consider:** How does Wright's use of local, natural materials impact his designs and how they are interpreted?
- **Introduce the art of weaving and explore weaving projects that use a wide range of materials and fabrics.** (Tip: Artists include Sheila Hicks, Anni Albers, Lenore Tawney, Kyle Meyer, and Suzanne Tick.) **Have students consider:** How are materials used? Are any found or unconventional materials used? What impact do the chosen materials have on the artwork?

ENGAGE

Session One

- **Challenge students to collect and find materials that can be used in a weaving project. If possible, explore the school grounds for natural materials.**
- **Ask students to brainstorm materials for weaving that can be found nearby and are personally significant to them, such as old clothing from a family member, a baby blanket, or mementos from the year. Instruct students to collect these materials and bring them to the next session.**

EXPLORE

Session Two

- **Review Wright's use of natural, local materials.**
- **Review the art medium of weaving.**

ENGAGE

Session Two

- **Ask students to share any found materials they plan to use in a weaving project.** (Tip: For greater success, cut materials into long strips.)
- **Have students select any new materials that they want to incorporate in their weaving project, such as yarn or fabric. Have students consider:** How can I select new materials that will complement or harmonize with the found materials I plan to use?
- **Guide students through the process of preparing a cardboard loom for weaving. Directions can be found in the appendix below.**
 - Differentiation: Prepare all looms for students in advance.
- **Demonstrate the process of weaving. Directions can be found in the appendix below.**

ENGAGE

Session Three

- **Review the process of weaving. Directions can be found in the appendix below.**

LESSON PROCEDURE (continued)

DESIGN

Session Three

- **Allow students a full session to weave and appreciate the process of creating and improvising.**
- **Encourage students to redo portions of their weaving and experiment if they feel that something didn't work well.**
- **Challenge students to use found natural materials as well as repurposed materials they found at home or nearby.** (Tip: Consider playing music to encourage a creative space where students can focus and learn by doing.)

CRITIQUE & INTERPRET

Session Three

- **OPTIONAL: If some students complete their weavings early, ask them to write a paragraph reflection or a poem about the meaning of their artwork. Have them consider:** How do the materials I found make this work meaningful? How do my other design choices impact the work's meaning?

ENGAGE

Session Four

- **Guide students through the process of finishing their weaving and taking it off the loom. Directions can be found in the appendix below.**

CRITIQUE & INTERPRET

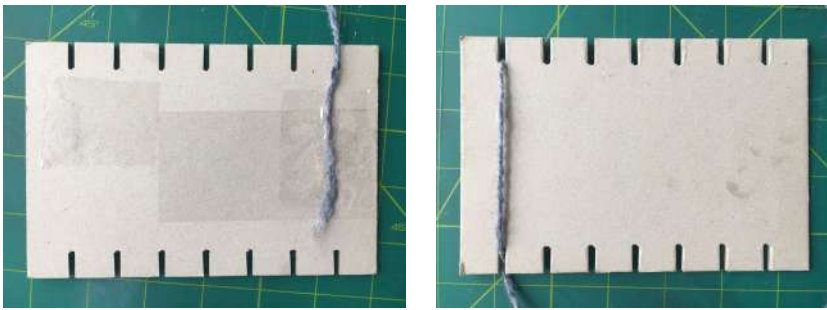
Session Four

- **Ask students to write a paragraph reflection or a poem on the meaning of their artwork. Have them consider:** How do the materials I found make this work meaningful? How do my other design choices impact the work's meaning?
- **Create a gallery walk in your classroom or in a hallway in the school to showcase the student work. Hang each student's reflection alongside their work.**

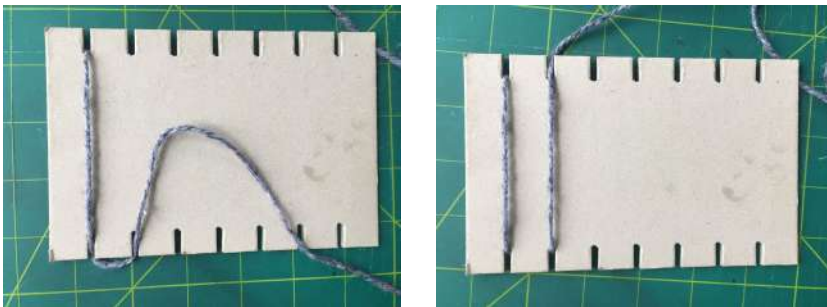
APPENDIX: HOW TO WEAVE

PREPARING THE LOOM

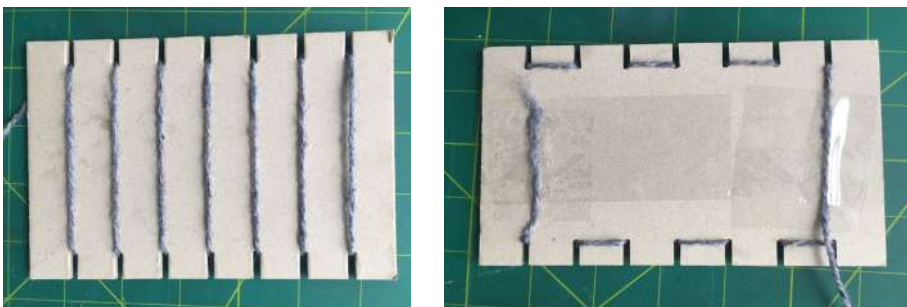
- Position the loom so that the notches are along the top and bottom edges of the loom.
- Tape one end of the yarn to the right edge of the loom and turn the loom over.



- Thread the yarn into the notch in the top left corner and carry the yarn down into the bottom left notch.
- Bring the yarn back to the front of the loom by threading it behind and up through the notch directly to the right of the leftmost bottom notch.



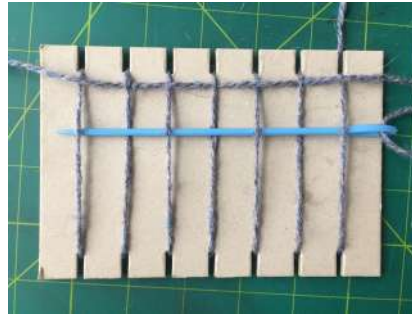
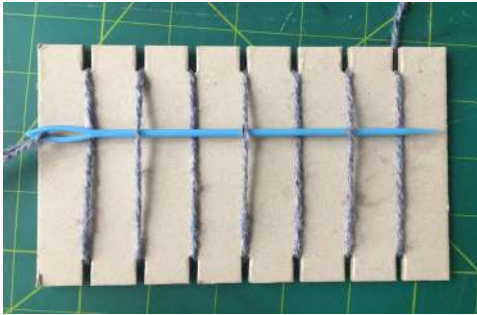
- Continue the threading motion until all notches are threaded and there are parallel lines of yarn along the entirety of the loom.
- Leave a tail of yarn and tape to the back of the loom.



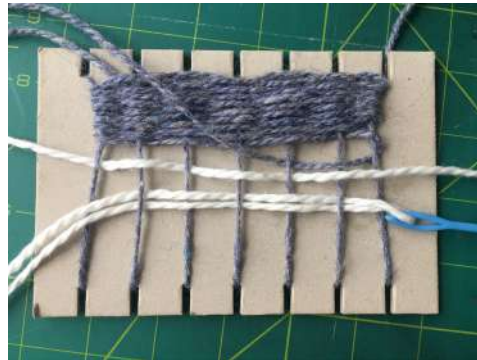
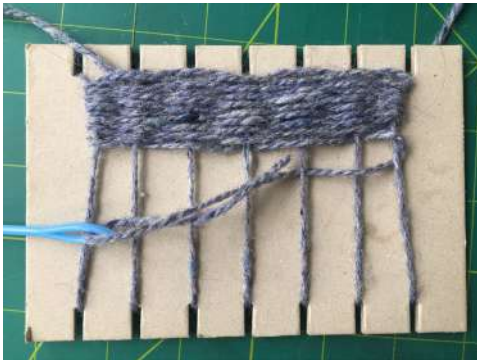
APPENDIX: HOW TO WEAVE

WEAVING

- Thread a length of yarn through the tapestry needle.
- Guide the needle and yarn left to right through the loom in an over-under pattern.



- Once you have worked your way across the loom, wrap the needle around the last thread and repeat the weaving process, using an under-over pattern and weaving in the opposite direction.
- After each row is completed, push the woven yarn to the top of your loom.



- When you are ready to incorporate a new color or when you run out of yarn, cut the yarn and leave a tail of a few inches. This will be tucked into the weaving later. With a new piece of yarn, tuck a tail of yarn into the same spot as your previous yarn's tail. Continue weaving where you left off.

APPENDIX: HOW TO WEAVE

TAKING A WEAVING OFF THE LOOM

- Tuck any loose ends of yarn into the weaving by threading the loose end through a needle, guiding the needle through the edge of the weaving, and pulling tightly.



- Remove the tape from your loom and remove the weaving from the loom by pulling each loop off of the loom's notches.



- Pull all of the top loops up so that the bottom loops are flush with your weaving. Then, cut the center of each top loop and tie knots to secure.

