

The title "Simple Gifts" is rendered in a large, stylized, blue font with a white outline and a drop shadow. The letters are decorated with various patterns: 'S' has a dashed outline; 'i' has a white background with a blue grid; 'm' has a white background with a blue dot pattern; 'p' has a dashed outline; 'l' has a white background with a blue grid; 'e' has a blue dashed outline and a blue floral pattern. The word "Gifts" is below "Simple". 'G' has a white background with a blue scale pattern; 'i' has a white background with a blue grid; 'f' has a blue background with a white dot pattern; 't' has a white background with a blue grid; 's' has a blue dashed outline. A black line starts at the top left, loops around the letters, and ends at a blue needle with a white thread at the bottom center.

Simple Gifts

Doreen Greenstein, Linda Buettner, and Charlotte Coffman



Cornell Cooperative Extension

Simple Gifts produces age-appropriate recreational items for persons with Alzheimer's disease. These specially designed items are made by youth and are donated to individuals or residential nursing facilities. The program encourages youth and adults to learn about the disease and to become more involved in intergenerational opportunities within their communities.

Simple Gifts is derived from *Simple Pleasures*, a research project funded by the New York State Department of Health and conducted by Doreen Greenstein, Cornell University, and Linda Buettner, Decker School of Nursing, Binghamton University.

Simple Gifts was introduced to 4-H members in New York State at regional workshops in Saratoga, Ontario, and Jefferson Counties. A special thanks is offered to the Cornell Cooperative Extension staff in those counties and to Sally Crosiar, who assisted with those trainings. For several years, young people and 4-H leaders have staffed a *Simple Gifts* booth at the New York State Fair, producing thousands of items for distribution to nursing homes.

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Helping You Put Knowledge to Work

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Funded by New York State 4-H Foundation, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and the College of Human Ecology at Cornell University.

This publication is issued to further Cooperative Extension work mandated by acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. It was produced with the cooperation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture; Cornell Cooperative Extension; and College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, College of Human Ecology, and College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University. Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities. D. Merrill Ewert, Director.

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Produced by Media and Technology Services at Cornell University
www.mediasrv.cornell.edu

Printed on recycled paper

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ISBN 1-57753-270-8

329LM2 780/1300 5/00 2.5M CR MTS90383

Contents

<i>Simple Gifts</i> Takes Shape	3
About Alzheimer's Disease	5
Things to Remember When Making <i>Simple Gifts</i> Items	6
Note to Leader or Helper	7
Note to Youth Participants	9
<i>Simple Gifts</i> Three-Step Achievement Program	10
Projects	
Fleecy Muff (F, B, E, In)	15
Hot Water Bottle Cover (F, B, G, In)	17
Simple Apron (F, B, G, In)	19
Activity Tablecloth (F, B, G, In/Gr)	21
Balloon Ball (F, B/I, E, In)	25
Garden or Shop Apron (F, I, G, In)	31
Sensory Vest (F, I, E, In)	33
Stuffed Fish (F, I, E, In)	35
Stuffed Butterfly (F, I, E, In)	41
Sewing Cards (M, B, E, In)	49
Look-Inside (M, B, E, In/Gr)	53
Squeezies (M, B, E, In/Gr)	55
Wave Machine (M, B, E, In/Gr)	57
Picture Dominoes (M, B, G, In)	59
Message Magnets (M, B/I, E, In)	67
Home Decorator Folder (M, B/I, E, In)	75
<i>Simple Gifts</i> Evaluation Form	79
References	81

Key

Materials needed for items: F (Fabric), M (Mixed)
Skill level required to make items: B (Beginner), I (Intermediate)
Usefulness with persons who have Alzheimer's: E (Excellent), G (Good)
Recommended production system: In (Individual), Gr (group project)

Clover Patch Club



will be visiting us
4:00 in the lounge

come join us for
SIMPLE GIFTS



Simple Gifts Takes Shape

The woman shown at left is my mother, Paula Brenner, who died of Alzheimer's disease a few years ago. *Simple Gifts* is a project that began one day, not many months before her death, while I was sitting next to her bed. A volunteer brought in a small, carefully made needle-point cross (it was Easter time). She had obviously taken care in making the cross: it was outlined in gold thread and included a small stand so that it could be put on a bedside table.

I spent many hours in those months sitting next to my mother, holding her hand or talking to her, although she no longer recognized me. As I sat that day, I looked at the small cross and thought to myself that the woman who had crafted it didn't know the kinds of things that are attractive to people with dementia. After all, how could the volunteer know to make an item that felt nice, had bright colors and soft textures, and that "did" something when it was manipulated? I started to wonder what sorts of things my mother might appreciate, might enjoy—what sorts of things could be made by volunteers for people like my mother.

My thoughts took me to a conference workshop led by a recreation therapist whose specialty is people with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Linda Buettner is a professor at Binghamton University's Decker School of Nursing in Binghamton, N.Y. It is through her talents and organization that the *Simple Gifts* project now exists. Linda told me about some of her experiences and ideas; I told her about my involvement with 4-H and my experience in creating items for people with disabilities and in writing instructions to make them.

Together we wrote a grant proposal, an ambitious project in which we would create and test a variety of sensorimotor items with nursing home residents. The proposal was funded by the New York State Department of Health. It was called "The Simple Pleasures Project," and we created and tested more than 30 items. We called them "sensorimotor" items to differentiate them from "toys." Our goal was to develop items that would be

- age-appropriate.
- inexpensive to make.
- engaging for people with dementia.
- attractive to both men and women.
- easy enough for youth to make.

Our research hypothesis was that many behavior problems seen in special units of nursing homes (units designed for people with dementia) are the result of boredom and lack of opportunity to engage in self-initiated activities. We wanted to see whether agitation and acting-out behaviors would decrease if residents' environments included plentiful and attractive sensorimotor items. Our idea was to enrich a unit's environment so that aides would have items within easy reach to use in distracting residents who were becoming agitated and for residents to find by themselves.

We were also sensitive to the nursing homes' dilemma of difficult residents and diminishing resources. By creating several sensorimotor items that were inexpensive to make and "guaranteed" to be attractive to residents with dementia, we were supporting the nursing homes and the staff as well as the residents. Nursing homes would have an alternative to expensive items purchased from "therapy" and recreation catalogs. Volunteers would know what they could do to help residents and nursing homes. Residents with dementia would have an enriched environment and items they would enjoy.

Linda spent time at nursing homes and conducted the rigorous data collection. I designed the items, decided on materials, made patterns, tried the construction with 4-H clubs and scout troops, and wrote the final instructions. As I worked, it was natural for me to turn to sewing and fabrics as the principal material to use.

People with Alzheimer's disease love bright, rich colors. They love stroking and feeling fabrics, especially some of the newer "fleecy" and "silky/satiny" fabrics that are not only colorful but washable.

I asked Charlotte Coffman of the Cornell University Textiles and Apparel Department to help engage New York's 4-H members in making and distributing these items. Regional trainings were conducted and a *Simple Gifts* booth was established at the New York State Fair. 4-H members and leaders requested that the instructions for making and using these items be compiled and published.

My mother never had a chance to enjoy *Simple Gifts*, but I know that she would have liked many of the items we created. That's the special part of making things for people with Alzheimer's disease. These folks are our parents and grandparents. They are people who were our teachers, doctors, and auto mechanics. We want to be with them in a respectful way, yet it is so hard to relate to people with dementia. It can be hard for family members to spend time with nursing home residents who have dementia and even harder for volunteers who do not know the people they are visiting.

Simple Gifts allows volunteers to reach out and help people with dementia at whatever level is comfortable. If a volunteer wants to help but is uncomfortable visiting in person, she or he can make items and deliver them to the nursing home recreation director. If a volunteer wants to bring a Simple Gift item to a nursing home resident, she or he can use the item as a way to start a conversation or at least a way to interact nonverbally with the resident. It is a "win-win-win" situation for everyone—the nursing home, the resident, and the volunteer.

It is often confusing, and sometimes depressing, for an elderly person with dementia to live in a nursing home, away from family and with strangers. Volunteers can make a big difference, and *Simple Gifts* is a way for youth to connect with people with whom they might otherwise be uncomfortable.

Doreen Greenstein

About Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive, irreversible brain disorder. Its symptoms include memory loss, confusion, impaired judgment, personality changes, and loss of language skills. As the disease progresses, the person becomes more dependent on others to perform even the most routine tasks such as bathing and dressing. The average length of the illness is 7 years, but it can last 15 years or more.

Research indicates that the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease are caused by the death of nerve cells in distinct areas of the brain, but scientists do not know what causes the loss of those cells. Genetic factors, environmental factors, virus-like agents, and infectious proteins are all being investigated as possible causes.

Alzheimer's is the fourth leading cause of death among the elderly in the United States, claiming more than 100,000 lives annually. The disease affects an estimated four million individuals in all segments of the population. It is not restricted to any one race, gender, or socioeconomic class. Most cases occur after age 60, but younger individuals are also affected. About 10 percent of people who are age 65 and over suffer from Alzheimer's. The incidence increases greatly with advancing age. Nearly 50 percent of those 85 and older have the disease.

Things to Remember

When Making Simple Gifts Items

Note the Order of the Items

The first nine items are made of fabric and require sewing. They range from the Fleecy Muff for beginners to the more difficult Sensory Vest and stuffed animals. The last eight items are made of a variety of materials and most do not require sewing. They also move from the simple to the more complex.

Please Follow the Directions Exactly

Many features were designed into the items for safety. For example, the yarn on the sewing cards is in short lengths because when we were trying out the item one woman tried to put the yarn around her neck. Millet was used in the squeezies because very rarely a resident might bite through the balloons and millet is safe to ingest. Safety eyes are used for the fish and butterfly. No buttons are included in any items, even though there are times when using buttons might seem logical to you. *Never use buttons—they can be dangerous.* Use the same safety precautions you might use if you were making items for a toddler, but remember that a person with Alzheimer's has the strength of an adult. *Watch out for straight pins. Make sure that they are all removed from the item before it is handed over. Pins with large, colored plastic heads are easier to see and remove.*

Please Do Not Improvise—Don't Change the Items or the Materials

Keep in mind that these items were proven through testing with many nursing home residents. We had many ideas that did not work out, that we thought would be attractive but weren't. An item is not likely to be successful if you change it drastically.

Please Use Materials That Are Attractive

People with dementia tend to enjoy bright colors. You probably know that as a person ages, colors become less vivid. If you add dementia to age, bright colors are really necessary. Patterned fabrics, however, can be visually confusing to a person with dementia. Thus, for example, it is not a good idea to use a black and white striped fabric for an apron or activity tablecloth. Washable fabrics are always best.

Finally, Please Make These Items as Though You Were Making Them for a Relative—Make Them Carefully and with Love

Youngsters are sometimes hasty in their workmanship, wanting to get the item done quickly. Perhaps thinking about people with Alzheimer's being grandparents will help as your club members make the items.

Note to Leader or Helper

You have a wonderful opportunity to work with a young person or a group of young people. Together you will tackle sewing and construction projects, learn about Alzheimer's disease, make connections with nursing homes in your area, and possibly get to know some nursing home residents or work with a family member who has dementia.

Your Responsibilities

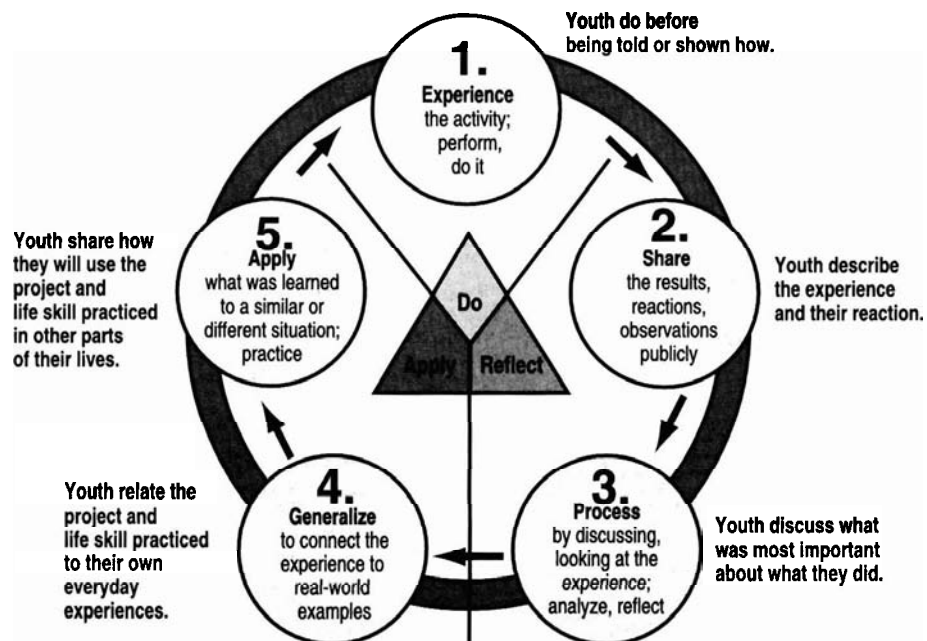
- Become familiar with this manual.
- Help youth decide which level of involvement is comfortable for them.
- Understand and use the experiential learning cycle.
- Reinforce the project and life skills.
- Assist the youths' efforts to set goals and complete the achievement program.
- Serve as a resource person who connects youth to related materials and to nursing home staff.
- Provide a safe, supportive, and nonjudgmental environment.

Project and Life Skills

Youth develop and practice the life skills of accepting differences and community service volunteering as they make, distribute, and use these items. They gain project skills in the areas of materials selection, sewing and construction techniques, recycling, presentation, and communication.

Experiential Learning Cycle

You can help youth develop skills for lifelong learning and self-responsibility by incorporating the five steps of the experiential model into each activity.



After the youth experience (do) the activity, help them explore issues and questions appropriate to the level of involvement they have chosen. The youth who only make the items will not have the same depth of experience as those who make, donate, and use the items to interact with a nursing home resident. Some sample questions are given below; you and the youth will doubtless think of others.

Level 1: Make Items

Experiential Learning Cycle Step	Sample Questions
Share	What did you make? Describe the fabrics you used.
Process	Why do you think people with Alzheimer's disease like these fabrics?
Generalize	List two items made from these fabrics that you or a family member own.
Apply	Describe an item you might make using these same fabrics for an older person who does not have Alzheimer's disease.

Level 2: Distribute Items

Experiential Learning Cycle Step	Sample Questions
Share	To what agency or to whom did you give the items you made?
Process	How did you feel when you made this donation?
Generalize	How did donating these items differ from earlier giving experiences?
Apply	What other groups might enjoy using these items?

Level 3: Use Items to Interact with a Person Who Has Alzheimer's Disease

Experiential Learning Cycle Step	Sample Questions
Share	With whom did you interact? What sensorimotor item did you use?
Process	Describe the reaction of the person you visited. What did you do to put him/her at ease?
Generalize	What advice would you give a friend whose grandparent has Alzheimer's disease?
Apply	List one similarity and one difference between the way you acted during this experience and the way you act when you are meeting a new student at school.

Note to Youth Participants

Have you ever visited a relative or older friend in a nursing home? Did you take along something to share? Have you heard of Alzheimer's disease? Do you know someone who has Alzheimer's? *Simple Gifts* has lots of interesting items to make, but the best part is that you can share them with someone who will enjoy using them—and spending time with you.

What's in Simple Gifts

Simple Gifts has instructions to make and use 16 items, an achievement program, an evaluation form, and suggested resources. You will have fun and serve your community by making just one item, but you and your community will benefit more if you take the time to learn about the nursing homes in your area and become acquainted with a person who has Alzheimer's disease. You may also choose to keep a record of your activities, enter some part of this project in a fair, or complete the achievement program.

What You Will Do in the Simple Gifts Achievement Program

- Ask someone to be your leader/helper.
- Work with that person to plan and complete the year's activities.
- Try some extra activities if you have time.
- Keep track of your progress.

Your Helper

Your project helper is an important part of this project. Choose a leader, parent, neighbor, or older friend who is interested in the topic and in working with you. Involve your helper as you set your goals and discuss the questions related to each activity. Sometimes you may work together on an activity.

Write your helper's name and contact information below.

Helper's Name _____

Telephone _____

E-mail address _____

Simple Gifts Three-Step Achievement Program

To make, distribute, and use all 16 items is a big commitment. Most youth work on the project for several years. You are eligible for a completion certificate each year that you meet these achievement requirements:

- Make and donate three different items.
- Complete two leadership/community service experiences.
- Review accomplishments with your helper.

Place a check beside the activities that you plan to do this year. Have your helper date and initial the activities upon completion.

1. Items (Requirement: make and donate three different items each year)

Simple Gifts Items	Plan to Do	Date Completed	Helper's Initials
Fleecy Muff			
Hot Water Bottle Cover			
Simple Apron			
Activity Tablecloth			
Balloon Ball			
Garden or Shop Apron			
Sensory Vest			
Stuffed Fish			
Stuffed Butterfly			
Sewing Cards			
Look-Inside			
Squeezies			
Wave Machine			
Picture Dominoes			
Message Magnets			
Home Decorator Folder			

2. Leadership/Community Service Experiences (Requirement: complete two each year)

Experiences	Plan to Do	Date Completed	Helper's Initials
Use the items to interact with a nursing home resident.			
Use the items to interact with a relative or neighbor.			
Give a demonstration related to Simple Gifts.			
Prepare an exhibit about Alzheimer's disease.			
Invite someone to talk to your group about Alzheimer's.			
Help a younger person make these items.			
Collect donated materials to make Simple Gifts items.			
(Your idea)			

3. Review of Accomplishments (Requirement: discuss accomplishments with helper and obtain signature)

Simple Gifts Completion Certificate

I certify that _____ has completed all requirements in the Simple Gifts Achievement Program.

Simple Gifts Helper's Signature _____

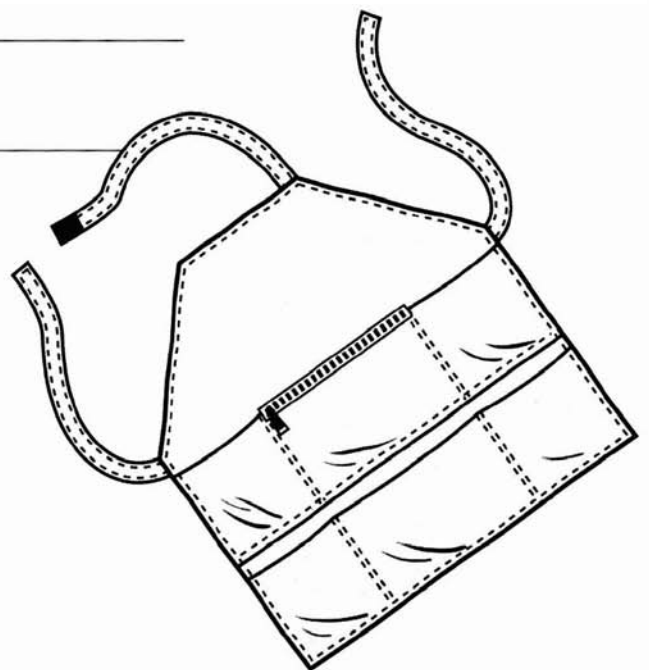
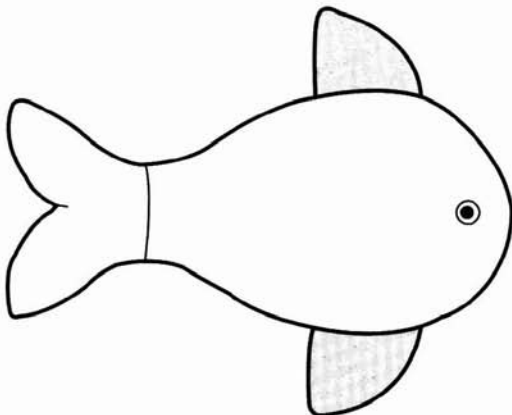
Date (Year 1) _____

Simple Gifts Helper's Signature _____

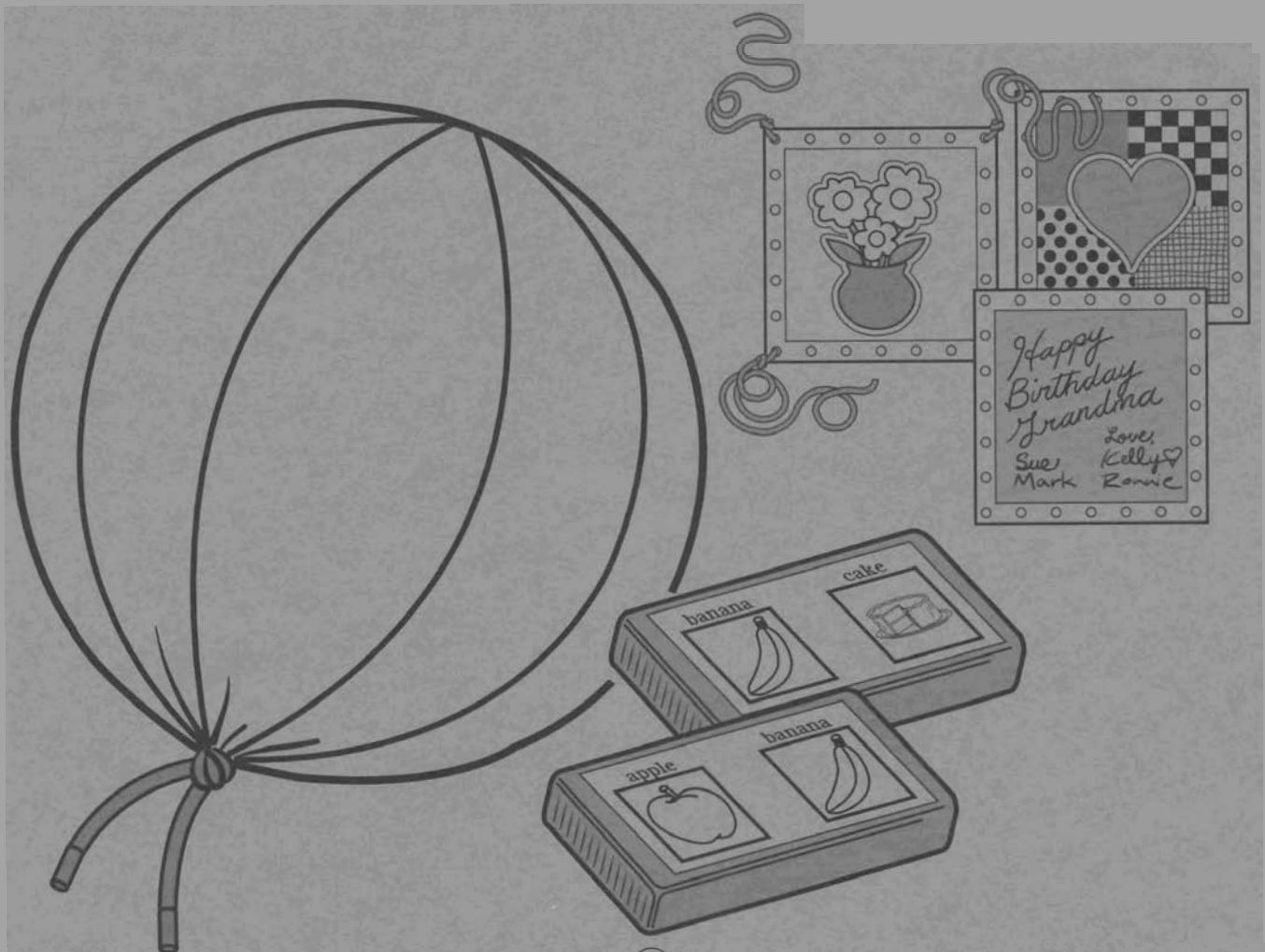
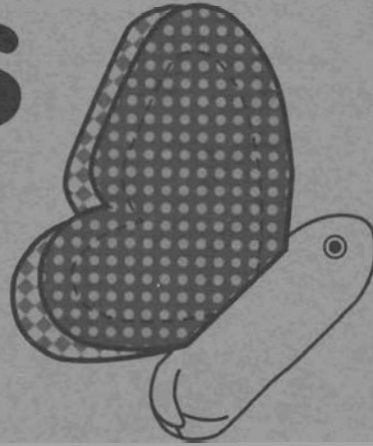
Date (Year 2) _____

Simple Gifts Helper's Signature _____

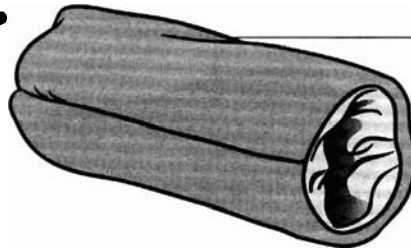
Date (Year 3) _____



Simple Gifts Projects



Fleecy Muff



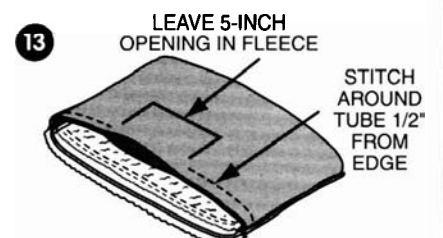
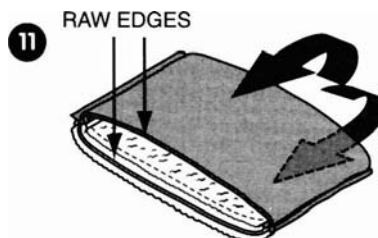
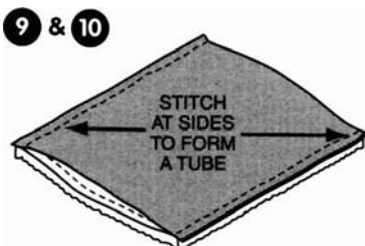
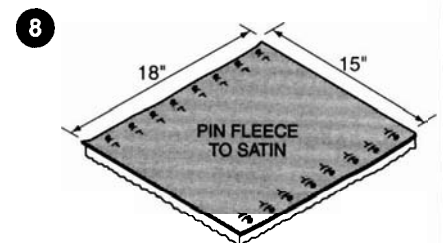
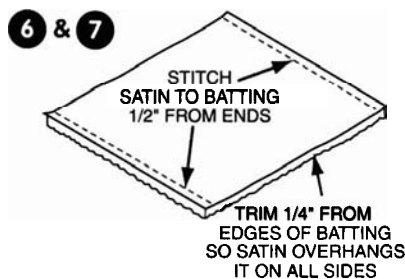
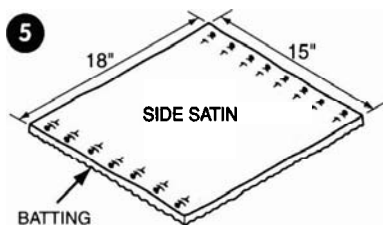
Medium: Fabric
Sewing Level: Beginner
Usefulness: Excellent
Production: Individual

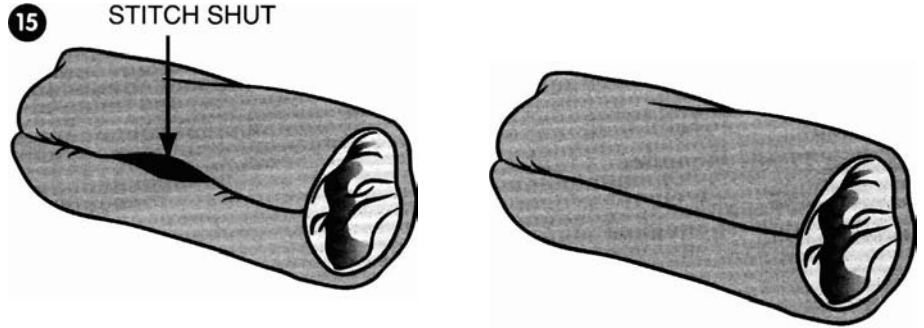
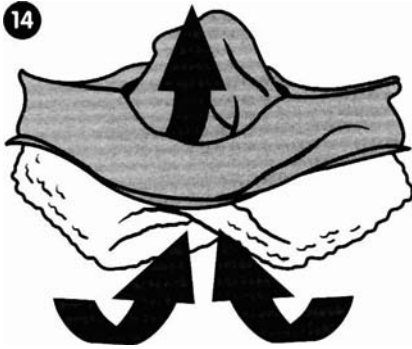
How to Make

1. Cut piece of cardboard 15 in. x 18 in. to use as a pattern.
2. Pin or tape pattern to polar fleece and cut one side of muff.
3. Pin pattern to satin and cut other side of muff.
4. Pin pattern to batting and cut.
5. Carefully pin wrong side of satin to batting along 15-in. edge.
6. Stitch $\frac{1}{2}$ in. from edge, removing pins as you sew. Leave sides open.
7. Trim batting $\frac{1}{4}$ in.
8. Pin right side of fleece to right side of satin along 18-in. sides.
9. Stitch $\frac{1}{2}$ in. from edge, forming a tube. Remove pins as you sew.
10. Open tube.
11. Fold bottom half of tube inside (right sides to right sides) until raw edges meet.
12. Pin together raw edges, maintaining tubular shape.
13. Stitch around tube $\frac{1}{2}$ in. from edge, removing pins as you sew. Leave a 5-in. opening.
14. Turn muff right side out by pulling fabric through opening.
15. Bring fleece edges together and overcast to close opening.

Materials

Cardboard (such as from a cereal box)
 Scissors
 Pencil
 Measuring tape or yardstick
 Pins
 Tape
 Polar fleece, 15 in. x 18 in.
 Washable satin lining, 15 in. x 18 in.
 4 oz. batting, 15 in. x 18 in.
 Sewing machine
 Thread
 Sewing needle
 Thimble





How to Use

Resident Level: All functioning levels

Promotes: Calming effect
Warmth and comfort
Keeping hands occupied
Feeling of security

Sometimes elderly people who live in nursing homes feel chilly, and they can't tell you that they are cold. Fleecy muffs are like old-fashioned hand warmers. They help people keep their hands warm and they also are very comforting to touch and hold. Many people will carry a muff around the whole day.

Show the muff to the person you are visiting. Say, "This is a muff to warm your hands. Put your hands inside. Let your hands rest inside the muff for a few minutes." Demonstrate how you put your hands in the muff and hug it close to your body. Then give a muff to the person you're visiting and say, "Try this on your hands."

Talk about how you made the muff and ask which side the person likes better—the fuzzy side or the smooth side. Other discussion questions:

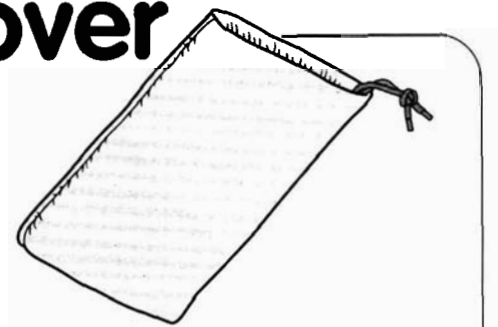
Did you ever have a muff when you were young?

Did you carry it to school?

Did your mother make it for you?

Hot Water Bottle Cover

Medium: Fabric
Sewing Level: Beginner
Usefulness: Good
Production: Individual

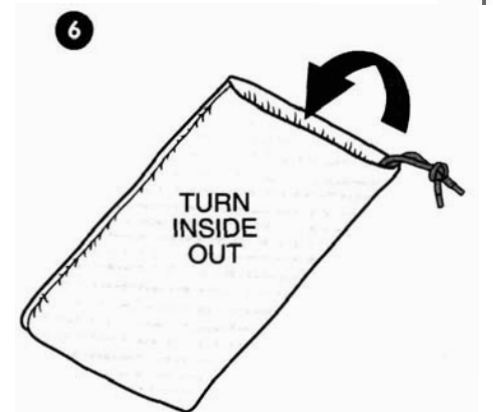
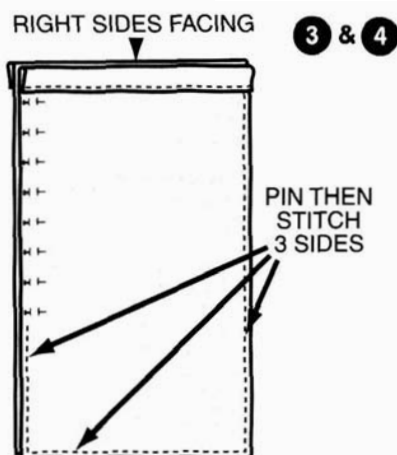
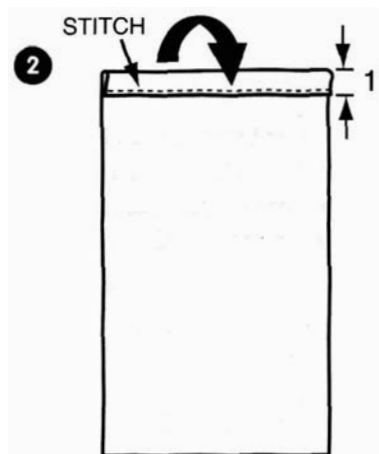
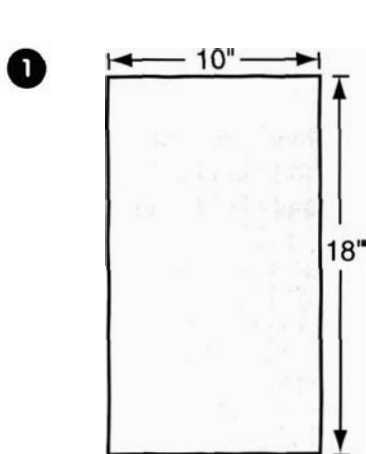


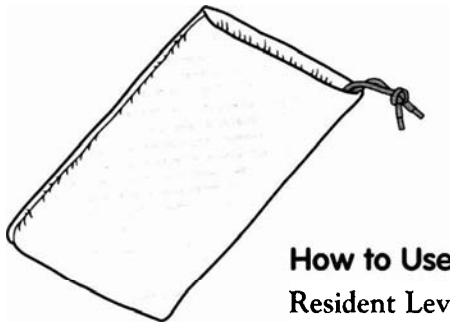
How to Make

1. Cut two pieces of polar fleece, 10 in. x 18 in. Make certain the 10-in. side stretches.
2. On each piece of fleece, fold under 1 in. to form a casing. Pin and stitch, removing pins as you sew. Reinforce ends of seam.
3. Pin together right sides of the two fleece pieces.
4. Stitch around two sides and one end, leaving end with casing open. Reinforce ends of seams.
5. Thread laces through casing. Remove stiff ends of laces and knot.
6. Turn bag right side out.

Materials

Measuring tape
Polar fleece, $\frac{1}{3}$ yd.
Scissors
Pins
Sewing machine
Thread
Shoelaces, one pair, 24 in. long





How to Use

Resident Level: Lower functioning

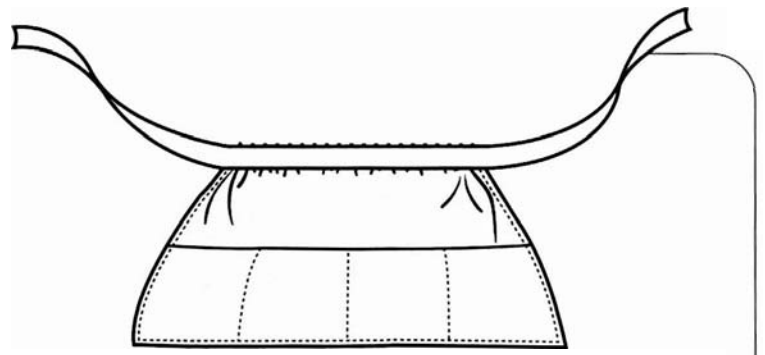
Promotes: Calming effect
Warmth
Deep pressure stimulation

Please note: A doctor's order is needed for use of this item in a nursing home.

Research has shown that a hot water bottle filled with very warm tap water is very calming for people with Alzheimer's disease. The warmth and weight of the item help the user feel comfortable. This item is especially useful for residents in the later stages of Alzheimer's who are vocally disruptive for long periods of time and for residents who have difficulty quieting down at bedtime. It works best if the hot water bottle is used when the resident is first getting upset. It seems to have an immediate calming effect if given as an early intervention for screaming.

The hot water bottle should be placed on the resident's chest or midsection. Encourage the resident to hold onto it with both hands. This item is not appropriate to discuss with the resident. Simply let the resident relax without additional stimulation.

Simple Apron



Medium: Fabric
Sewing Level: Beginner
Usefulness: Good
Production: Individual

How to Make

1. Cut apron piece 18 in. x 45 in.
2. Cut pocket piece 9 in. x 45 in.
3. Fold under $\frac{1}{4}$ in. along one side of pocket fabric. Press.
4. Fold under again, pin, and stitch.
5. Pin right side of pocket to wrong side of apron, matching raw edges.
6. Stitch using $\frac{5}{8}$ in. seam allowance.
7. Open pieces flat and press.
8. Understitch pocket by sewing through seam allowance and apron close to seam.
9. Turn pocket to right side and press.
10. Pin pocket sides to apron sides matching raw edges. Baste.
11. Divide large pocket into four to six smaller ones by stitching from bottom of pocket to top, sewing through both pocket and apron fabric. Reinforce seam ends.

Materials

Apron fabric (cotton or cotton/polyester), $\frac{1}{2}$ yd. 45-in.-wide solid color

Pocket fabric (cotton or cotton/polyester), $\frac{1}{4}$ yd. 45-in.-wide patterned fabric in color that coordinates with apron fabric

Measuring tape

Scissors

Iron

Pins

Sewing machine

Thread

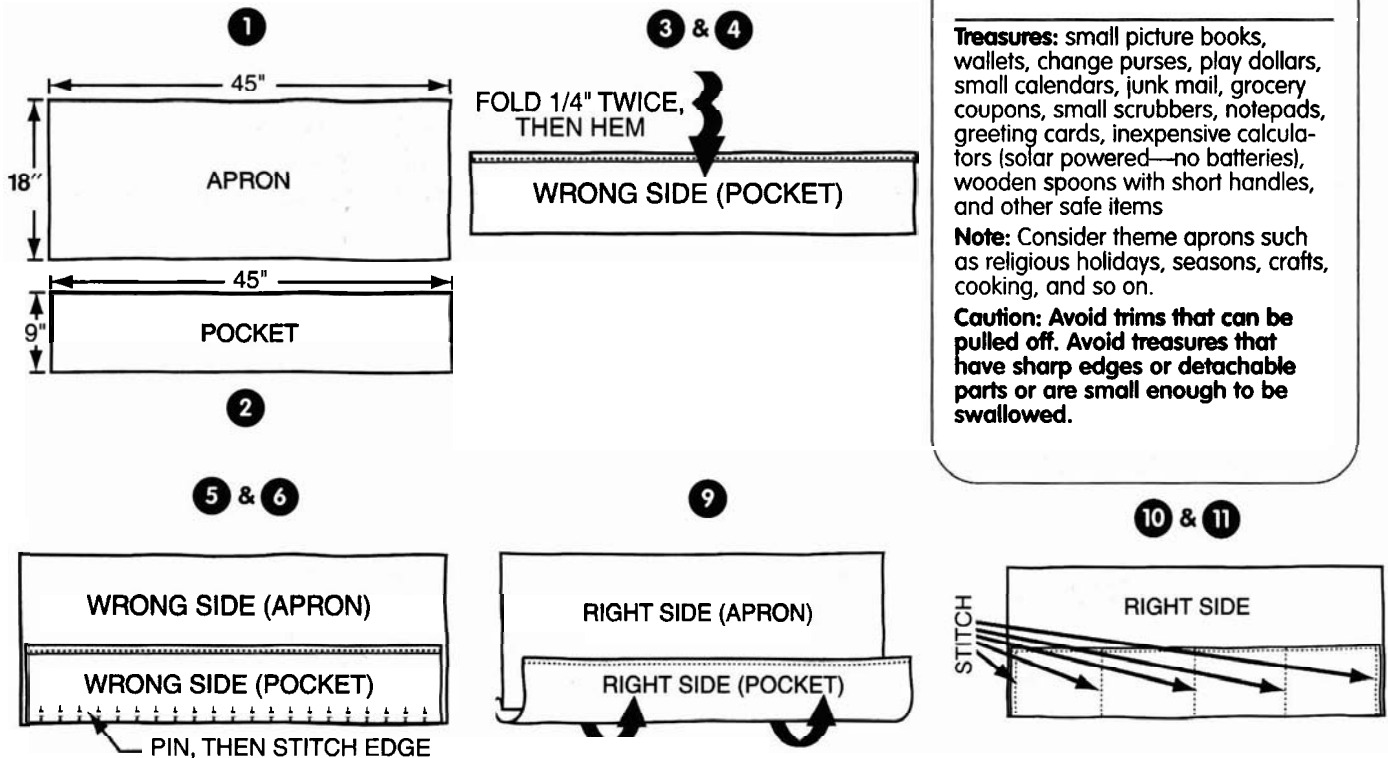
Apron tie, 2 yd. 1-in. grosgrain or printed cotton ribbon

Chalk or marker

Treasures: small picture books, wallets, change purses, play dollars, small calendars, junk mail, grocery coupons, small scrubbers, notepads, greeting cards, inexpensive calculators (solar powered—no batteries), wooden spoons with short handles, and other safe items

Note: Consider theme aprons such as religious holidays, seasons, crafts, cooking, and so on.

Caution: Avoid trims that can be pulled off. Avoid treasures that have sharp edges or detachable parts or are small enough to be swallowed.



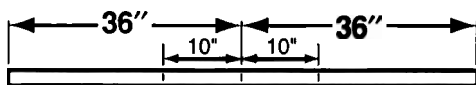
12 & 13

TURN AND HEM TOP & SIDES



12. Fold under $\frac{1}{4}$ in. along top and each side of apron. Press.
13. Fold under again, pin, and stitch hem along top and sides.
14. Place three marks on ribbon: one at center and one 10 in. either side of center.
15. Mark center of apron and gather to a 20-in. width.
16. Pin wrong side of ribbon to right side of apron, matching marks.
17. Stitch through ribbon and apron.
18. Fill pockets with treasures.

14

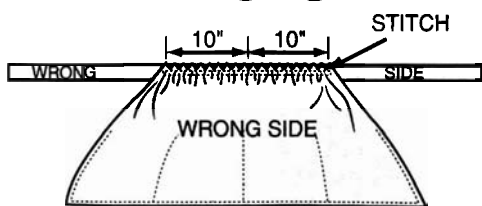


How to Use

Resident Level: Mid-range and higher functioning

Promotes: Use of hands and arms
 Normalizing ways to provide recreational items
 Opportunity to keep important belongings nearby
 Sense of security

15 & 16 & 17



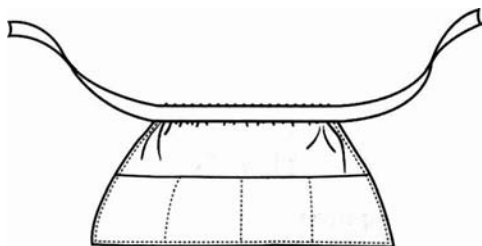
Encourage the person you're visiting to put on the apron and to look in the different pockets to see what items are inside. These aprons are especially appreciated by women who are restless and like to walk around a lot. Say, "This is an apron you can wear. It has lots of pockets with special things in the pockets for you." Then you put on the apron and take one or two of the items out of the pockets to show the person you are visiting. Give the apron to the person and say, "Now you try it." You will probably have to help the person put on the apron.

Talk about how you made the apron and ask the person you are visiting if she ever liked to sew aprons. You might also ask:

Did you wear an apron when you cooked?

What did you cook?

What is your favorite thing about this apron?



Activity Tablecloth

Medium: Fabric
Sewing Level: Beginner
Usefulness: Good
Production: Individual or Group

How to Make

1. Wash all fabrics.
2. Fold tablecloth fabric into quarters.
3. Measure and mark three points $22\frac{1}{2}$ in. from center.
4. Use chalk or marker to connect points into a quarter circle.
5. Cut along line to make a circular tablecloth.

Note: Tablecloth fabric can be cut into quarters so that four people can work simultaneously or independently. They can then sew the four pieces together into a circular tablecloth. This also allows different-colored fabric for each quadrant and helps beginning sewers who find the smaller fabric pieces more manageable.

6. Photocopy or trace mitten pattern (p. 23) and cut out.
7. Pin mitten pattern to fleece fabric and cut two mittens.

Note: Mittens can be of different colors.

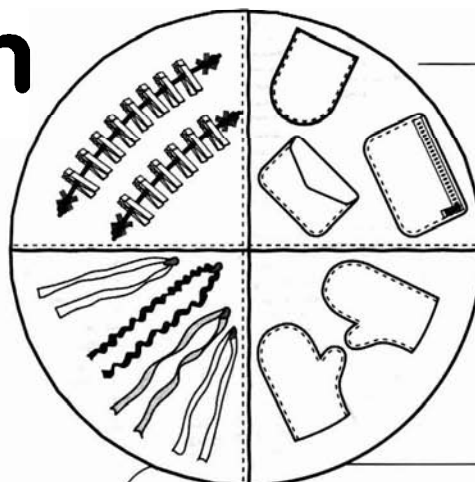
8. Pin fleece mittens in one quadrant of tablecloth. Face mitten openings toward user.

Note: Place mittens and other items in center three-fourths of tablecloth so that they do not hang over the edge of small tables. They should be easily accessible to users seated around the table.

9. Stitch mittens to tablecloth, leaving bottoms open and reinforcing seam ends.
10. Cut two or three pockets. Add flaps, zippers, or trims if you wish.
Note: If pocket fabrics ravel, turn under edges and hem.
11. Pin pockets in second quadrant of tablecloth. Face openings toward user.
12. Stitch three sides of pockets to tablecloth, reinforcing seam ends.
13. Fold lengths of ribbons and trims in half and pin to third quadrant of tablecloth.
14. Stitch in place and reinforce stitching.
15. Thread shoelaces through centers of clothespin springs and pin to fourth quadrant of tablecloth.

16. Stitch in place and reinforce stitching.

17. Hang small clothing items on “clothesline” and put in pockets.



Materials

Tablecloth fabric (rubber-backed upholstery fabric), 45-in. square¹

Measuring tape

Chalk or marker

Scissors

Mitten pattern (p. 23)

Tracing paper (optional)

Pencil (optional)

2 pieces polar fleece fabric, 9 in. x 11 in., for mitten

Sewing machine

Thread

Pins

2 or 3 pieces textured fabrics such as velvet, satin, terrycloth, or flannel, approximately 4 in. x 6 in. each, for pocket

Zipper (optional)

4 pieces ribbons and trims, 30–36 in. long

12 plastic spring-type clothespins

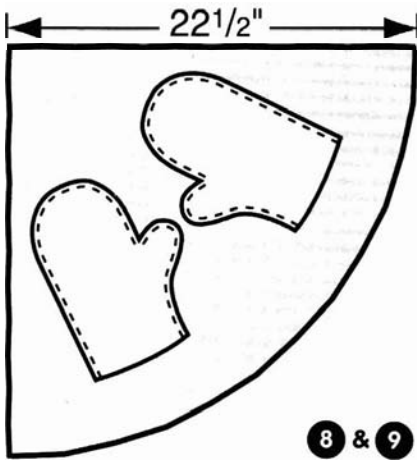
Assorted small items for pockets and clothesline such as infant's socks and mittens, doll clothes, handkerchiefs, or scarves²

¹For larger tablecloths, use 54- or 60-in.-square fabric.

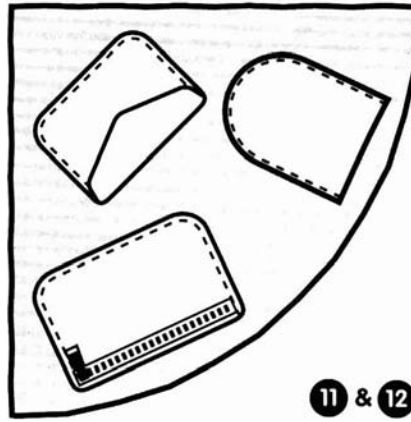
²See Simple Apron (p. 19), Garden or Shop Apron (p. 31), or Look-Inside (p. 53) for ideas for things to put in pockets.

Note: All materials must be washable. If in doubt about upholstery fabric, purchase a small amount and test. Many fabrics that would not be considered washable as upholstery can be laundered.

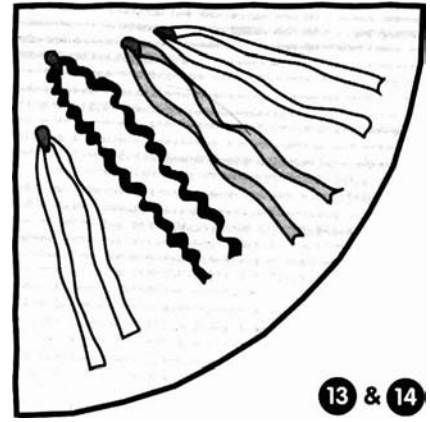
Caution: Avoid trims that can be pulled off. Avoid treasures that have sharp edges or detachable parts or are small enough to be swallowed.



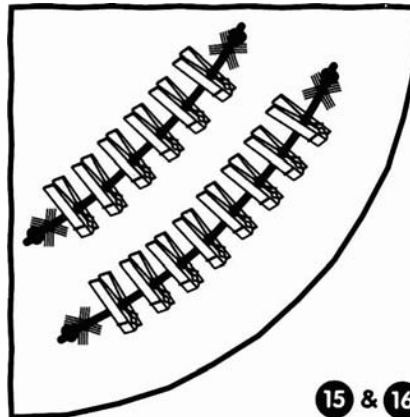
8 & 9



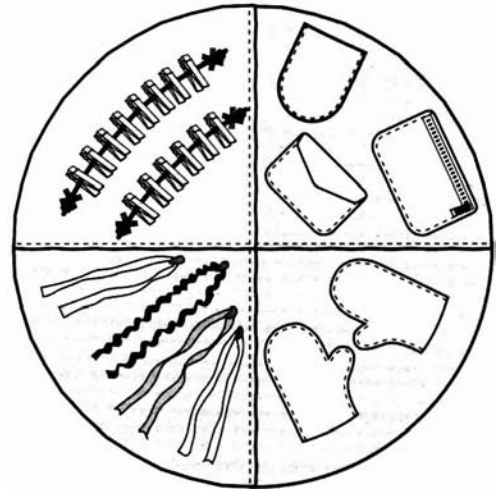
11 & 12



13 & 14



15 & 16



How to Use

Resident Level: All functioning levels

Promotes: Use of hands and eyes
Focus and concentration
Maintenance of reach, grasp, and release skills
Diversional activity when resident needs a distraction

Encourage the person you are visiting to open and look in some of the pockets in the tablecloth while sitting at a table. Say, "This is a tablecloth that has things to do and pockets with special things inside." Sit at the table and demonstrate the tablecloth's features. Take one or two things out of the pockets; put your hands in the mittens and talk about how warm they are. Tie bows in some of the ribbons. Then say, "Now you try it."

Talk about how you made the tablecloth and ask:

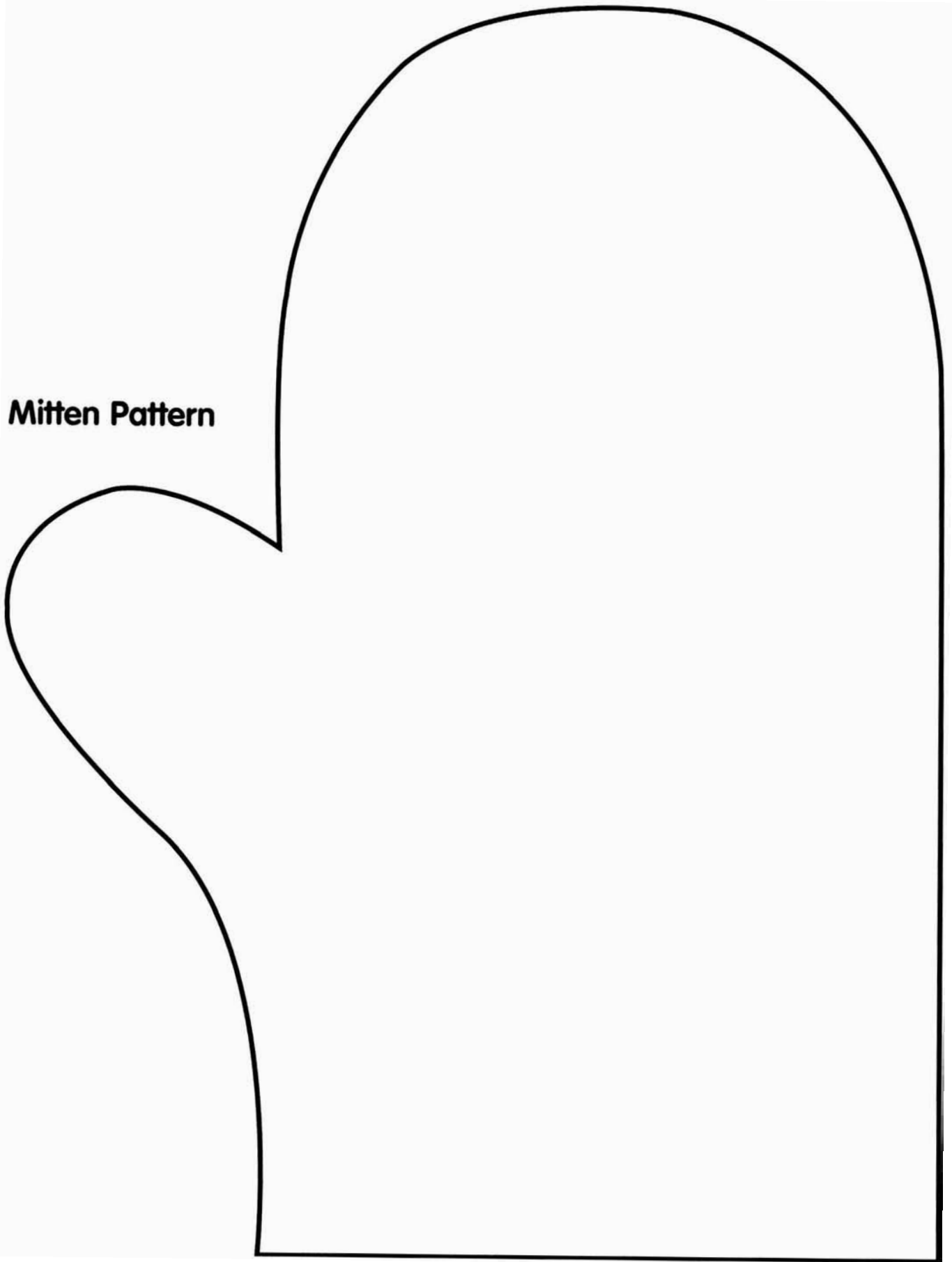
Did you have a tablecloth on your kitchen table?

What color was it?

Which part of this tablecloth do you like best?

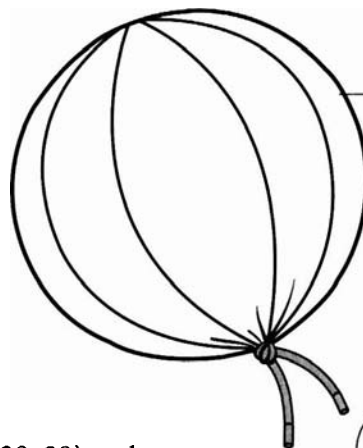
This is a good activity for people to use while they are sitting and waiting for meals. It can be used with one person or with a small group. The tablecloth is especially enjoyed by people who are agitated or bored.

Mitten Pattern



Balloon Ball

Medium: Fabric
Sewing Level: Beginner/Intermediate
Usefulness: Excellent
Production: Individual

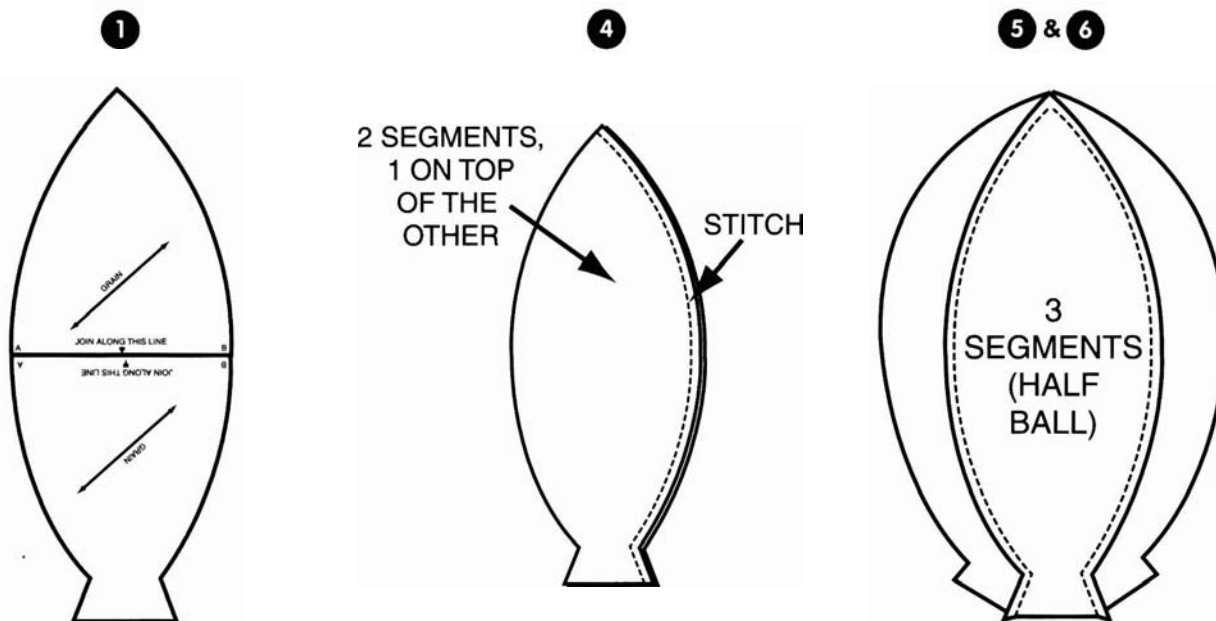


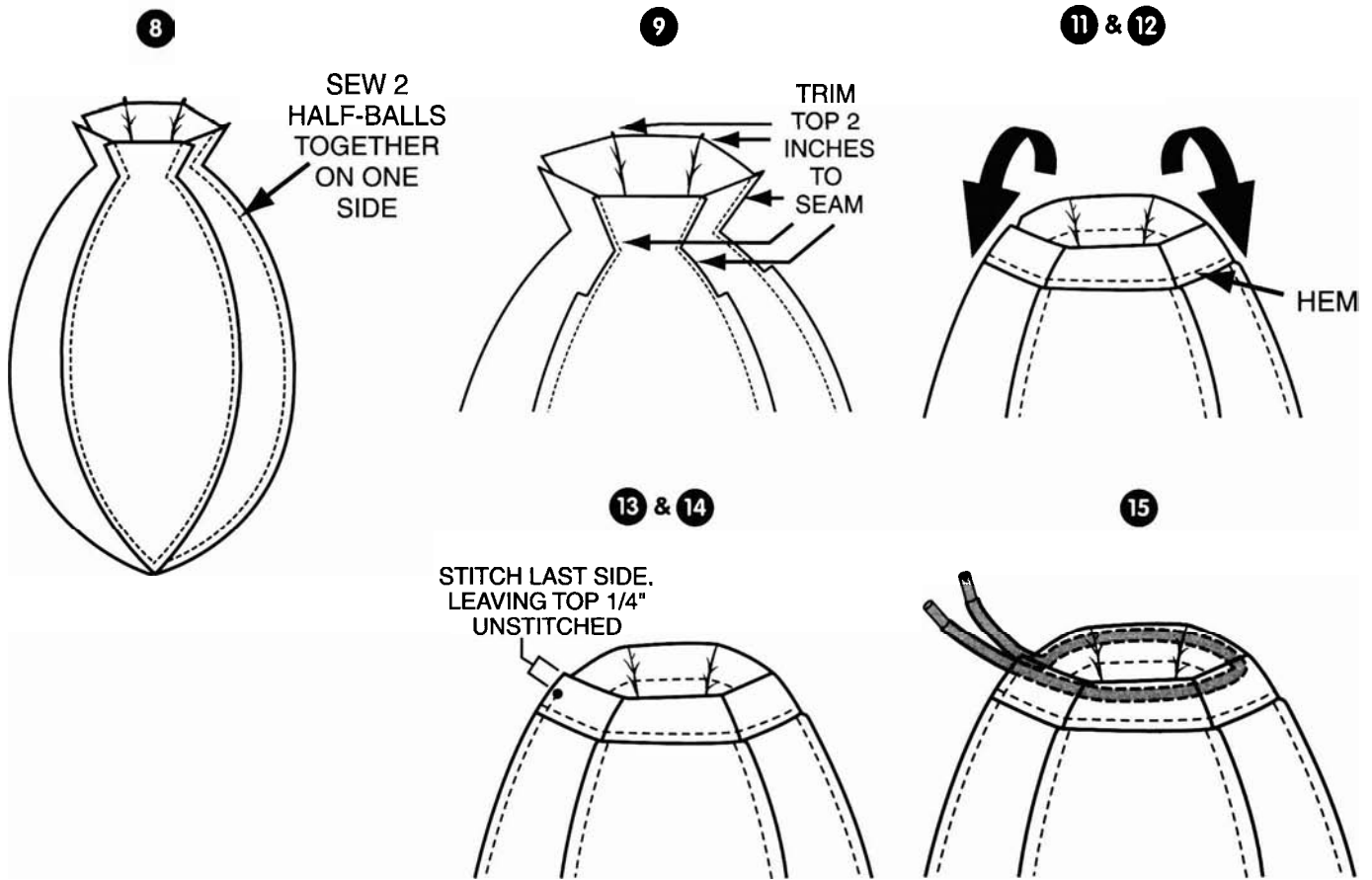
How to Make

1. Photocopy or trace balloon segment (pp. 28–29) and cut pattern pieces. Tape the two pattern parts together, matching As and Bs.
Note: If you plan to reuse the pattern, make it from posterboard or cardboard recycled from cereal boxes.
2. Plan sequence of the six ball segments according to your color, pattern, and texture preferences.
3. Pin pattern on fabrics (note grain line) and cut six ball segments.
4. Pin together right sides of two segments and stitch using $\frac{5}{8}$ in. seam allowance.
5. Pin together right sides of the two sewn segments and a third segment.
6. Stitch to form a half-ball.
7. Repeat steps 4–6 with remaining three segments to create a second half-ball.

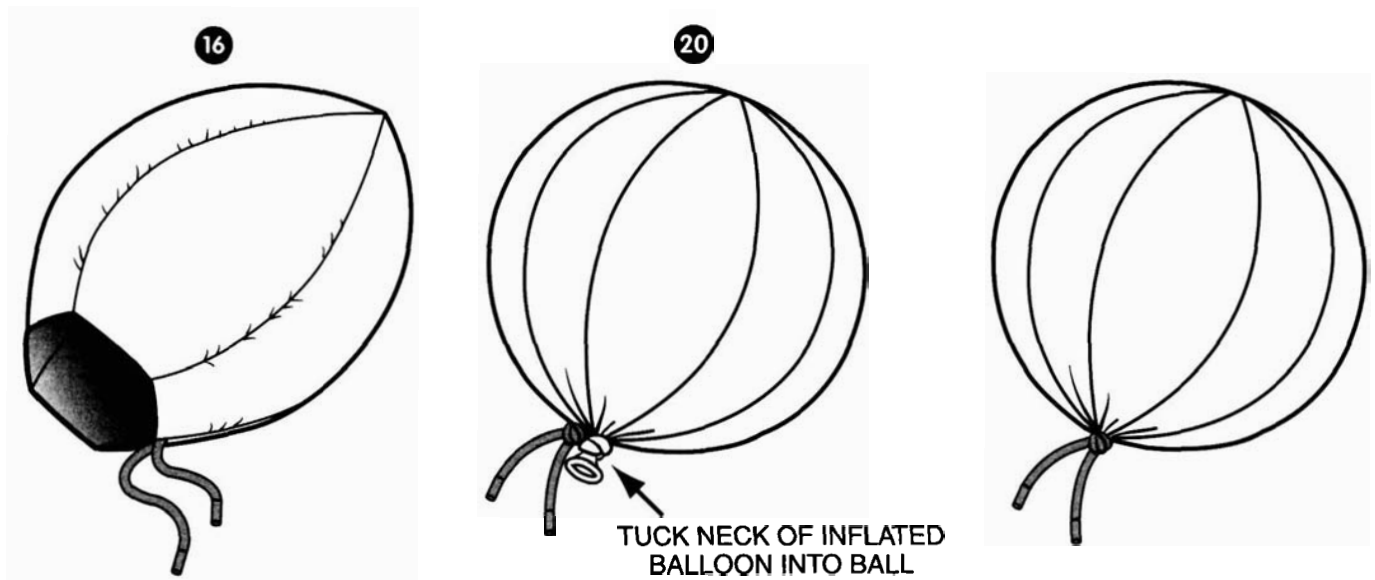
Materials

Pattern (pp. 28–29)
Tracing paper (optional)
Pencil (optional)
Scissors
Cellophane tape
6 pieces fabric scraps, brightly colored, textured fabrics such as velour, fleece, satin, or knits, 13 in. x 13 in. each
Pins
Sewing machine
Thread
Shoelace or narrow ribbon, 12 in.
Balloon, round, 12- to 16-in. diameter





8. Pin together right sides of the two half-balls and stitch along *one* edge.
9. Trim top 2 in. of seams close to stitching.
10. Fold under $\frac{1}{4}$ in. of fabric at top of ball and press.
11. Fold top edge of fabric again to make a 1-in. casing for drawstring.
12. Pin and stitch in place.
13. Pin together right sides of segments to form a complete ball.
14. Stitch from bottom to top, leaving top $\frac{1}{2}$ in. open. Reinforce seam ends.
15. Thread a shoelace or ribbon through casing. If using a shoelace, remove the stiff end. Tie a knot in shoelace or ribbon.
16. Turn ball right side out.



17. Pull shoelace until ball opening is about $\frac{3}{4}$ in. wide. Tie lace.
18. Insert balloon into fabric ball.
19. Inflate balloon, gently distributing fabric uniformly.
20. When fabric is taut, tie a knot in neck of balloon and tuck knot inside ball opening.

How to Use

Resident Level: All functioning levels

Promotes: Visual tracking
 Reaching and range of motion of the upper extremities
 Opportunity to play with another person in a repetitive activity
 Self-directed activity in a small group

Encourage the person you are visiting to toss the ball back and forth with you. Say, "Here is a ball that is soft and fun to play with." Demonstrate by hitting the ball in the air and catching it. Hang the ball from the ceiling and hit it from side to side and up in the air. Say, "Now you try to hit the ball." Include other people in the game. People of all abilities and ages seem to enjoy playing with these colorful balls.

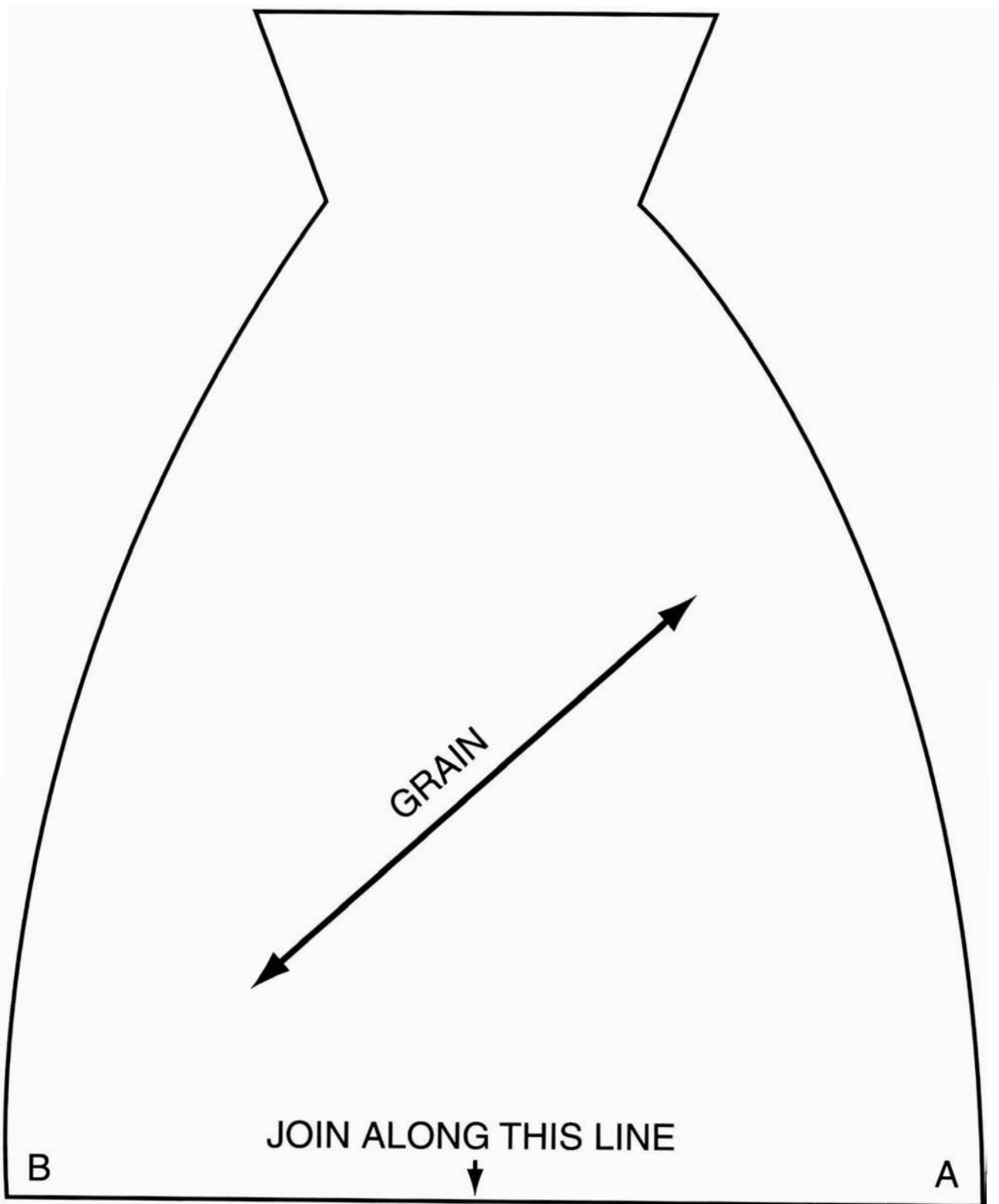
Talk about how you made the balloon ball. Ask:

What kinds of ball games did you play when you were a child?

Did you enjoy sports?

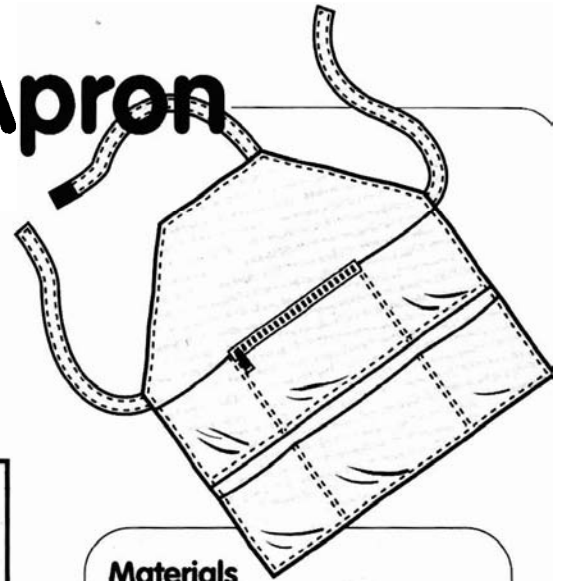
Did you ever play volleyball?

Balloon Pattern #2



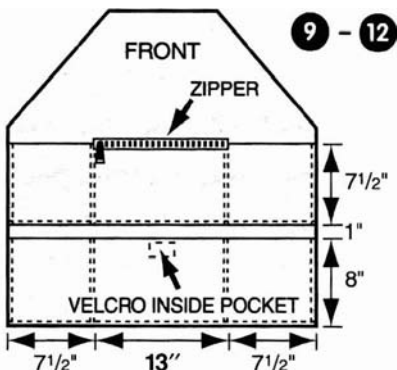
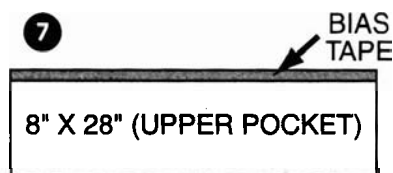
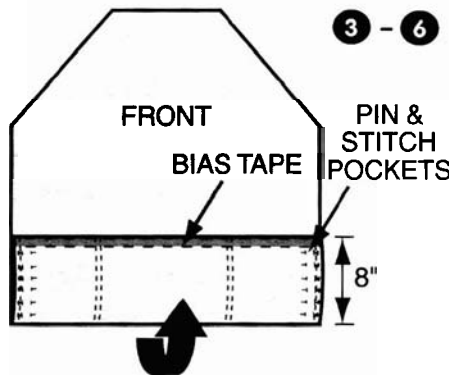
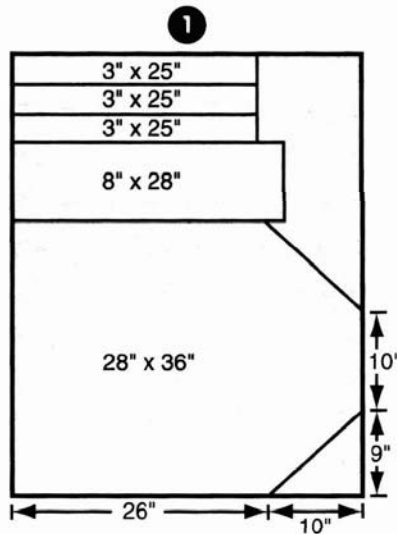
Garden or Shop Apron

Medium: Fabric
 Sewing Level: Intermediate
 Usefulness: Good
 Production: Individual



How to Make

- Lay fabric flat. Measure, mark, and cut apron pieces as shown.
 - Cut bias tape in half, forming two 28-in. lengths.
 - Pin and stitch one length of bias tape to bottom of apron.
 - Fold up apron bottom 8 in. to form lower pocket.
 - Pin and stitch in place along sides.
 - Double stitch from bottom to top of lower pocket 7½ in. from each edge to create three pockets as shown.
 - Pin and stitch remaining bias tape to top of upper pocket.
 - Fold under ½ in. along bottom of upper pocket and press.
 - Pin upper pocket to apron, approximately 1 in. above lower pocket.
 - Stitch upper pocket to apron along sides and bottom.
- Note:** More advanced sewers may wish to add zippers to pockets.
- Repeat step 6 on upper pocket.
 - Pin and stitch 1 in. square of Velcro to inside of large pockets. Attach loop side to apron and hook side to pocket.



Materials

1 yd. apron fabric (sturdy fabric such as denim or cotton twill), 45 in. wide

Measuring tape or yardstick

Chalk or marker

Scissors

56 in. bias tape, extra wide, double-fold

Pins

Sewing machine

Thread

Iron

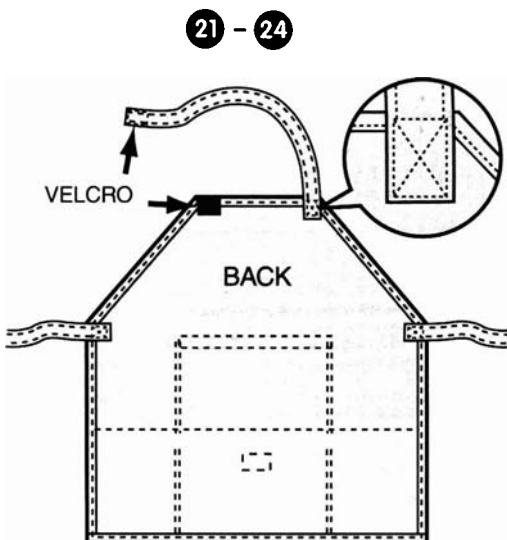
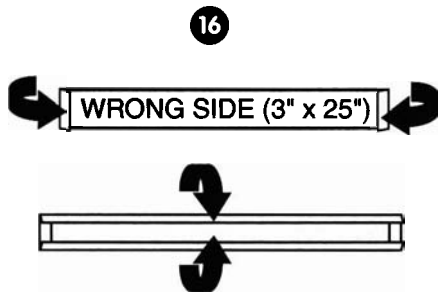
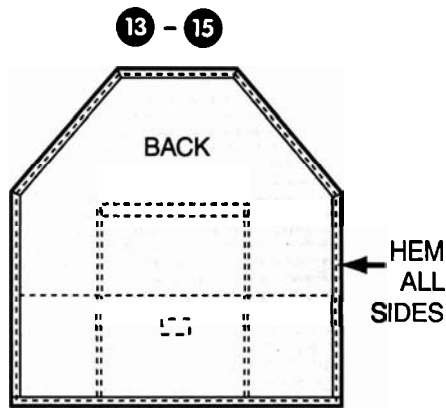
Hook-and-loop closure such as Velcro, 1 in. x 6 in.

Small items for pockets—select a variety:

Gardening items: small seed catalogs, empty seed packets, flower and seed brochures, notepad and pencil, sunglasses, gardening gloves

Shop items: small pieces of smooth wood, small paintbrushes (not foam), half-sheet of fine sandpaper, tool brochures, carpentry/woodworking catalogs or magazines, work gloves, safety glasses

Caution: Avoid pocket items that are small enough to be eaten, have sharp edges, or have small detachable parts.



13. Fold under $\frac{1}{4}$ in. on sides and top of apron and press.
14. Fold under again to form hem and pin.
15. Stitch around the entire apron, including along bottom edge.
Note: Instead of hemming, you may prefer to use bias tape around the entire apron.
16. Turn under $\frac{1}{4}$ in. all edges of apron ties and press.
17. Fold ties in half lengthwise, matching folded edges.
19. Stitch around all four sides, close to edge.
20. Repeat steps 16–19 with neck strap.
21. Pin and stitch apron ties in place, reinforcing stitching as shown.
22. Pin and stitch one end of neck strap to apron top. Reinforce as shown.
23. Pin and stitch a 3-in. strip of Velcro (loop side) to upper side of unattached end of neck strap.
24. Pin and sew a 1-in. square of Velcro (hook side) to underside of apron top.
Note: Whether the neck strap fastens on the left or right can be coordinated with the handedness of the wearer or the caregiver.
25. Fill pockets with gardening or shop items.

How to Use

Resident Level: Mid-range and higher functioning

Promotes: Use of hands and arms
Normalizing ways to provide items
Opportunity to keep important belongings nearby
Sense of security

Encourage the person you're visiting to put on the apron and to look in the different pockets to see what items are inside. Say, "This is an apron you can wear. It has lots of pockets with special things in the pockets for you." Demonstrate by putting on the apron and taking one or two items from the pockets to show the person you are visiting. Give the apron to the person and say, "Now you try it." You will probably have to help the person put on the apron.

Talk about how you made the apron and ask the persons you visit if they ever wore aprons. You might also ask:

- Did you wear an apron when you gardened?
- What things did you grow in your garden?
- Did you ever build things? Or work in a shop?
- Did you wear a carpenter's or shop apron?
- What is your favorite thing about this apron?

Sensory Vest

Medium: Fabric
 Sewing Level: Intermediate
 Usefulness: Excellent
 Production: Individual



How to Make

1. Purchase a pattern for a simple lined vest of appropriate size. Note fabric requirements given on pattern envelope (see estimate at right).
2. Gather fabrics and plan your design. It should have an interesting mixture of textures, coordinated colors, and an attractive appearance. Include pockets on both sides of vest front and inside vest. Use a diagonal piece of "silky" smooth fabric just above pocket to guide hand into pocket.
Note: You may cut the vest from one fabric, then overlay this foundation with remnant pieces for decoration or pockets. You might piece together several coordinating fabrics and then cut the vest from your "new" fabric.
3. Pin pattern on fabric and cut vest and lining pieces.
4. Pin and stitch in place any fabric overlays, appliques, or pockets on vest front.
5. Assemble vest according to pattern guide sheet. Press seams.
6. Stitch patch pockets to right side of vest front lining.
7. Assemble vest lining according to guide sheet.
 Press seams.
8. Join lining and vest according to guide sheet. Press.
9. Place small items in pockets.

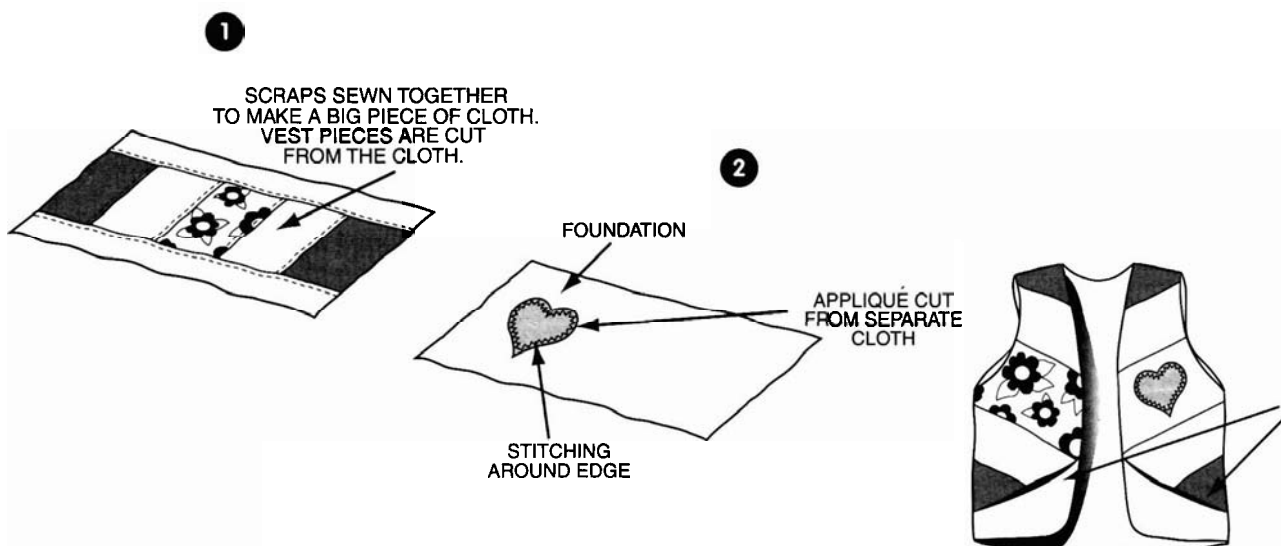
Materials

- Vest pattern with lining
- 1½ yd. vest fabric, washable¹
- 1½ yd. lining fabric, washable¹
- Fabric swatches, ribbons, or appliques (optional)
- Pins
- Scissors
- Sewing machine
- Thread
- Iron
- Small items for pockets²

¹Fabrics of different colors and textures are ideal. Remnants of washable fleece, satin, panne, terrycloth, or velour work well. Select the vest or lining fabric for warmth.

²Simple Apron (p. 19), Garden or Shop Apron (p. 31), or Look-Inside (p. 53) for ideas for things to put in pockets.

Caution: Do not use snaps, buttons, or any other closures that can be twisted off.





How to Use

Resident Level: Mid-range and higher functioning

Promotes: Tactile stimulation
Use of arms and hands
Security and comfort

Many older people you visit in a nursing home will enjoy the warmth and coziness of a sensory vest. Be sure to tell them that you sewed the vest for them. Encourage people you are visiting to try on the vest. Ask them to feel the different textures of the vest and to look inside the pockets for items you have put there for them. Say, "Here is a colorful vest for you to wear. It has lots of pockets with special things inside." Put on the vest and encourage the older person to touch it as you wear it. Take one or two items out of the pockets to show the person. Take off the vest and say, "Now you try it." You will probably have to help the person put on the vest.

Talk about how you made the vest, tell about your favorite colors, tell about your sewing experience. You might also ask these questions:

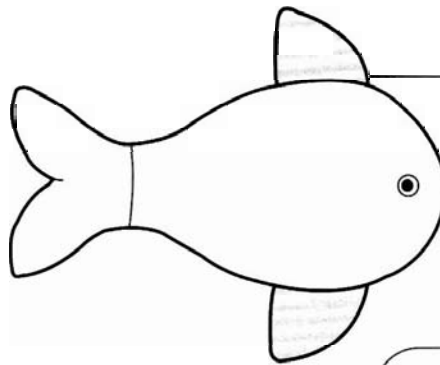
What do you like best about this vest?

How does this vest feel?

Have you ever sewn your own clothes?

What are your favorite colors?

Stuffed Fish



Medium: Fabric
Sewing Level: Intermediate
Usefulness: Excellent
Production: Individual

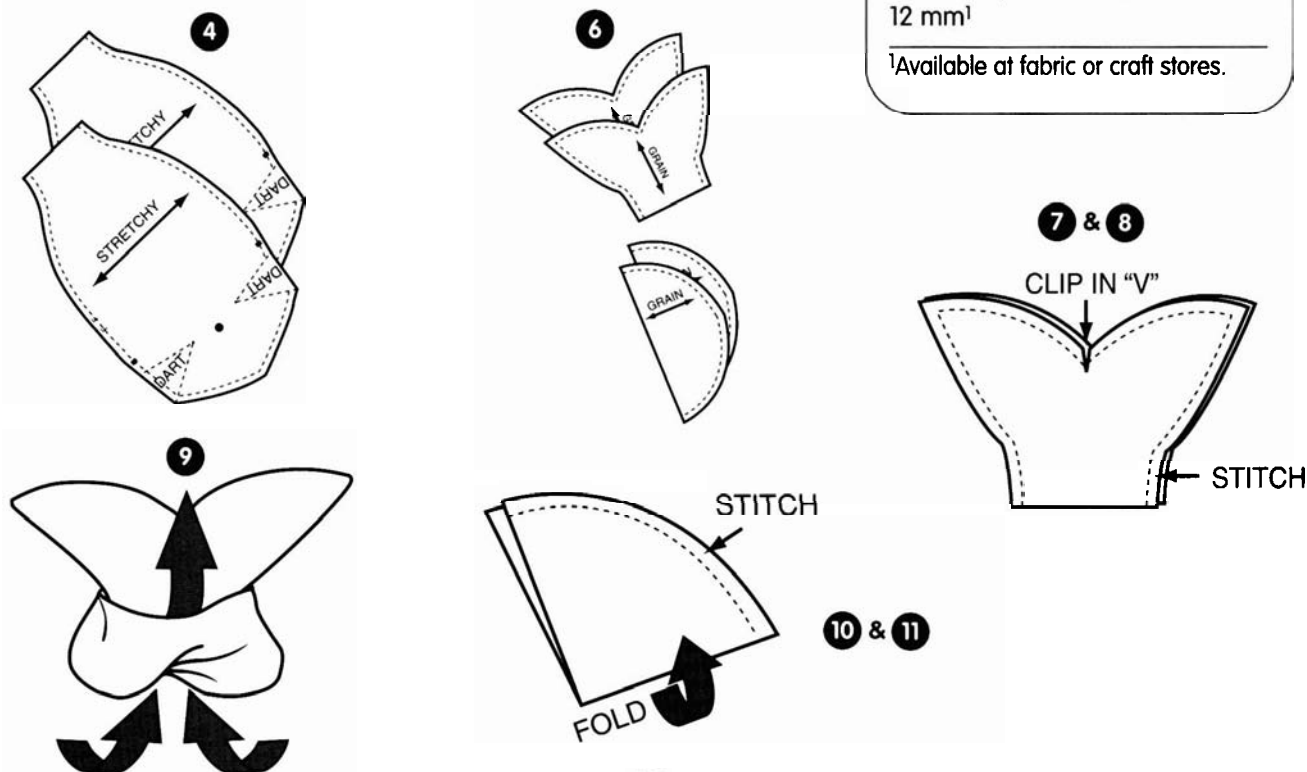
How to Make

1. Photocopy or trace all drawings (pp. 38–40) onto paper. Cut out fish patterns.
2. Tape together fish head and fish body along line F to make one pattern.
3. Pin or tape fish pattern to fuzzy fabric, noting direction of stretch.
4. Cut two body pieces and mark darts, eyes, and fin location (black squares).
5. Pin fin and tail patterns to smooth fabric, noting grain lines and fold markings.
6. Cut two pieces for fins and two pieces for tail.
7. Pin together right sides of tail and stitch along sides and flared end, $\frac{1}{4}$ in. from edge. Leave narrow end open.
8. Clip seam allowance at “V” of tail as shown.
9. Turn right side out and stuff lightly with batting. Set aside.
10. Fold each fin in half along fold line with right sides together.
11. Pin and stitch along curved edge, $\frac{1}{4}$ in. from edge.

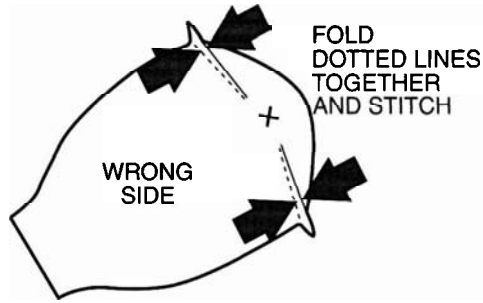
Materials

Patterns (pp. 38–40)
 Tracing paper (optional)
 Pencil (optional)
 Scissors
 Cellophane tape
 Pins
 Fabric for fish body (washable velvet/velour, fleece, or fine-wale corduroy), $\frac{1}{4}$ yd.
 Chalk or markers
 Fabric for fins and tail (washable acetate satin or other smooth, shiny fabric), $\frac{1}{4}$ yd.
 Sewing machine
 Thread
 Polyester batting such as Ultra-Soft Fiberfil
 2 safety eyes—black, round, 12 mm¹

¹Available at fabric or craft stores.



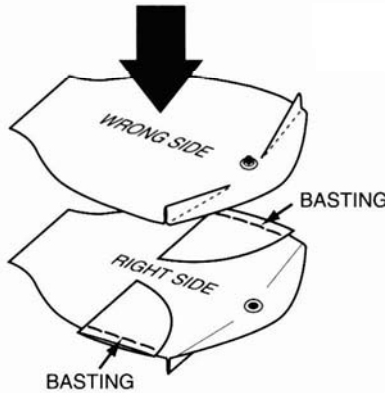
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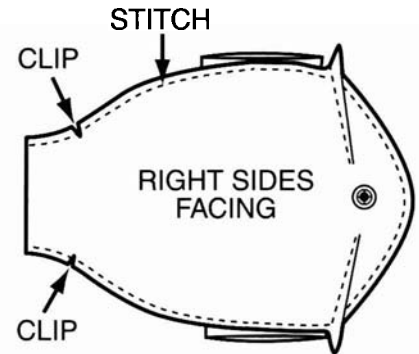
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16 & 17

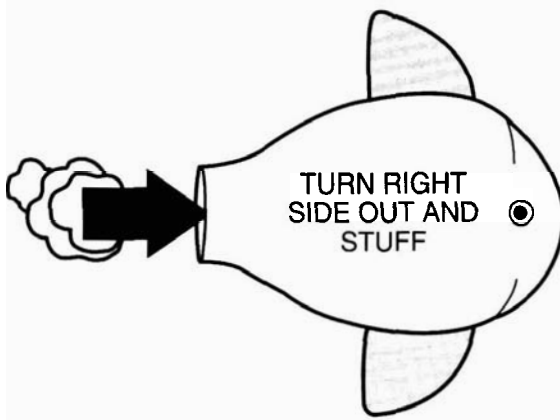


18 & 19

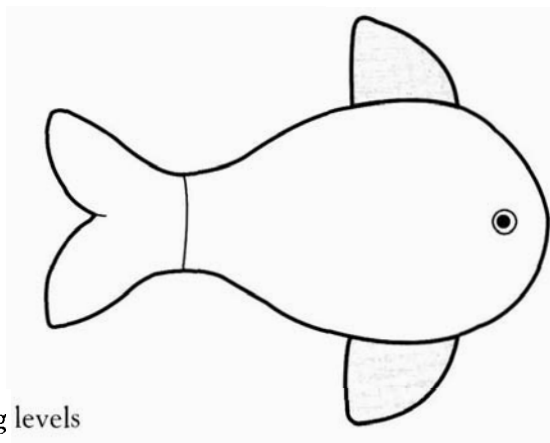
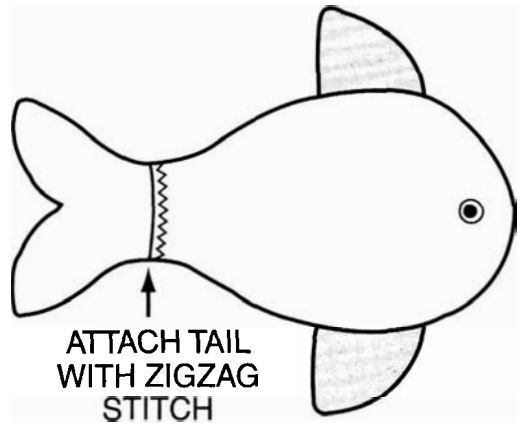


12. Turn right side out and stuff lightly with batting. Set aside.
13. To make darts on fish body, fold right sides of fabric together through center of dart, matching markings and stitching lines. Pin.
14. Stitch from wide end of dart toward point, placing last few stitches right on fold and leaving thread ends long enough to tie.
15. Attach safety eyes following manufacturer's instructions.
Caution: Be careful to attach so that eyes will face outward when body is turned right side out.
16. Pin and baste fins to right side of one fish piece, matching front edge of fin to marking on fish.
17. Pin together right sides of two fish pieces, sandwiching fins between.
18. Stitch around fish, leaving an opening for tail.
19. Clip curve in front of tail opening.
20. Turn fish right side out.
21. Lightly stuff fish with batting.
22. Insert tail into opening of fish and pin in place.
23. Use a zigzag stitch to sew through all layers.

20 & 21



23



How to Use

Resident Level: All functioning levels

Promotes: Calming effect
 Sense of warmth and comfort
 Tactile sensory stimulation

The fish is designed to be an age-appropriate stuffed animal. The fabric is soft and interesting to touch, and the shape differs from those of traditional stuffed animals and dolls. It is cherished by people who like to walk around carrying things.

Encourage the person you visit to hold, touch, and stroke the fish. Say, "Here is a fish that I made for you." Then simply hand the stuffed fish to him or her.

Talk about how you made the fish and describe how it feels when you touch it. Ask:

Did you ever see a fish like this one?

Does this look like a real fish?

Do you like the colors?

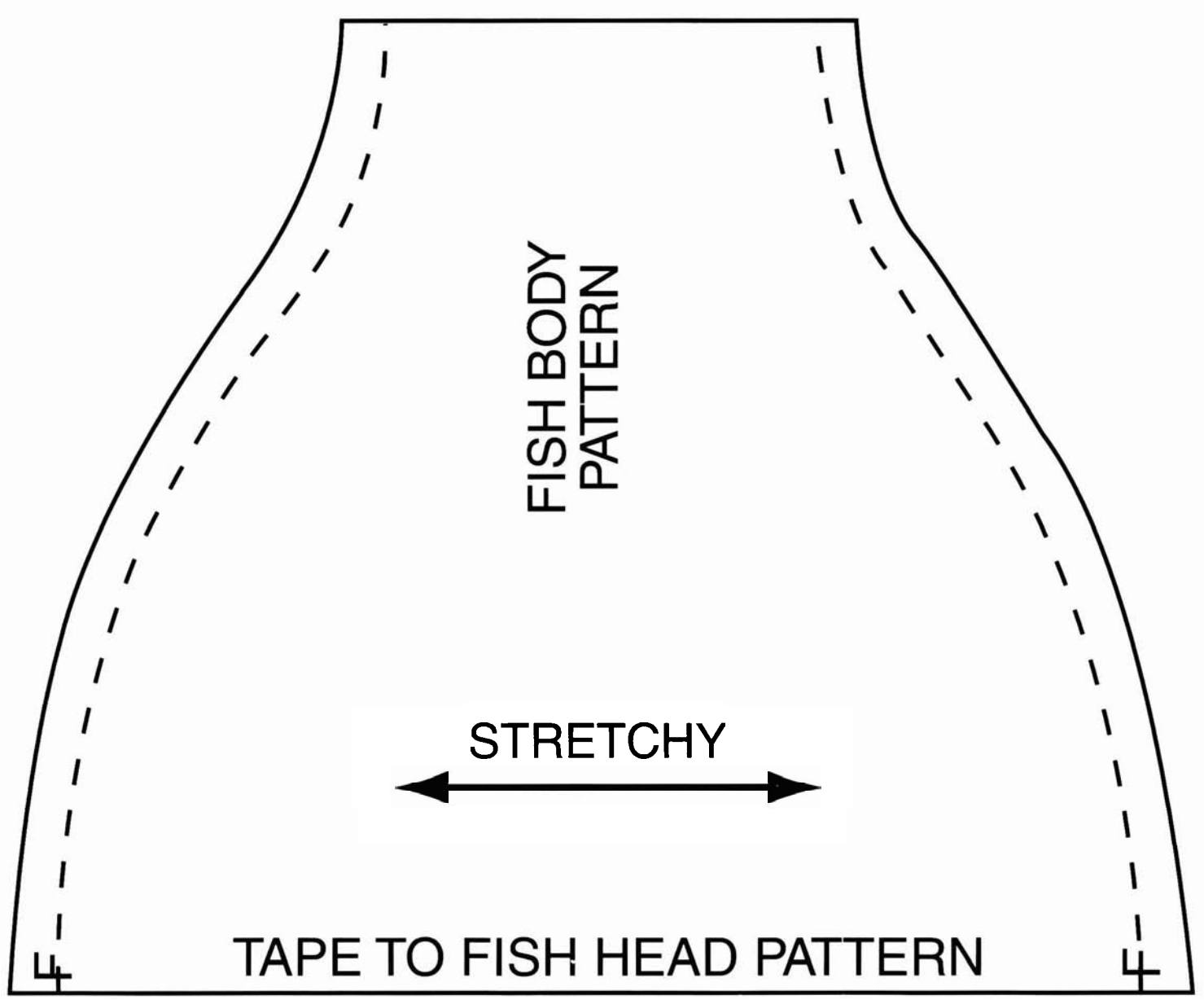
Did you ever go fishing when you were a child?

What kinds of fish did you catch?

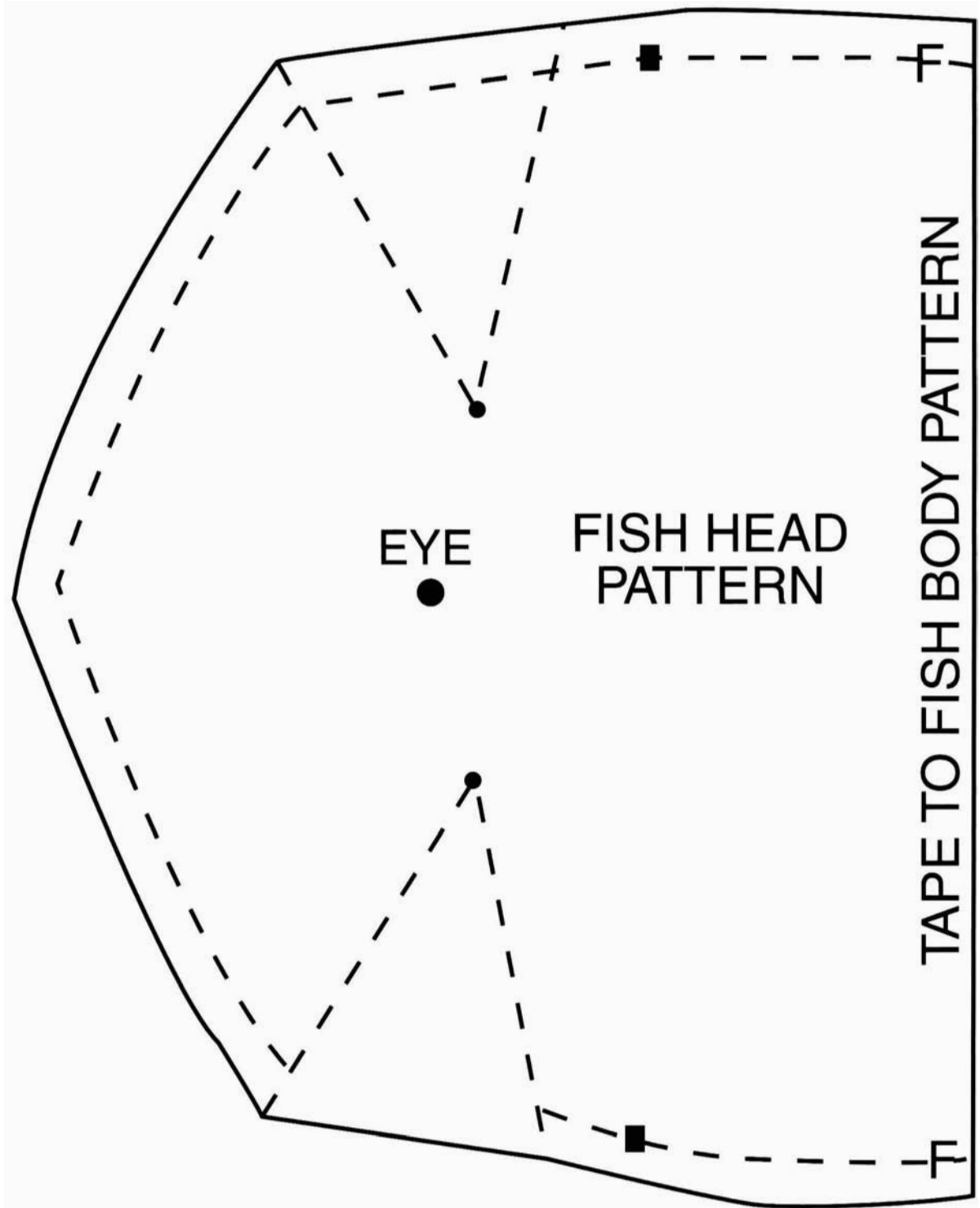
What was your favorite part of fishing?

Did you mind baiting the hook?

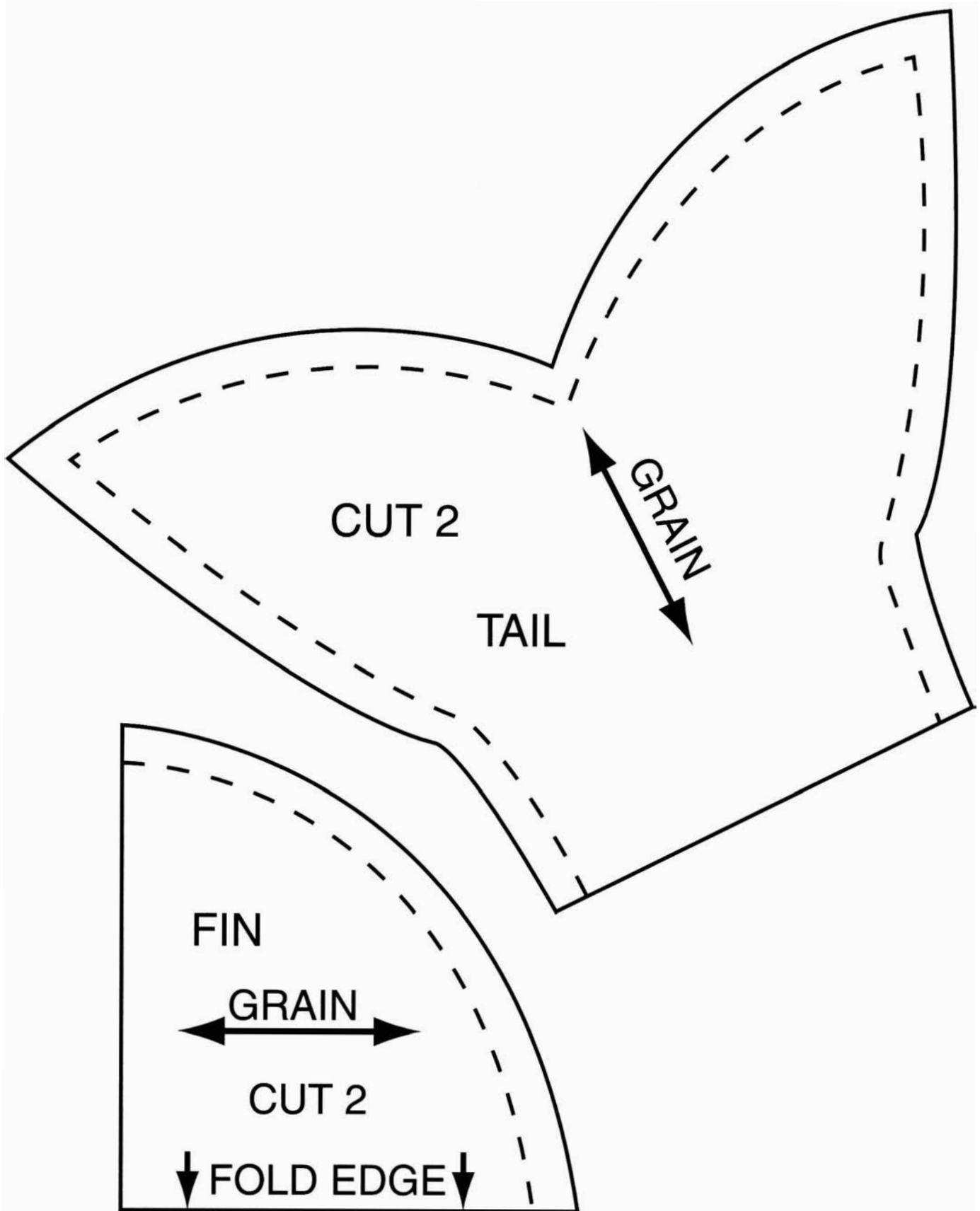
Fish Body Pattern



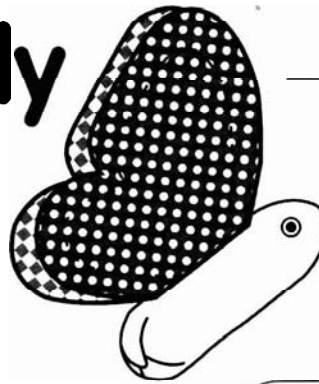
Fish Head Pattern



Fish Tail and Fin Patterns



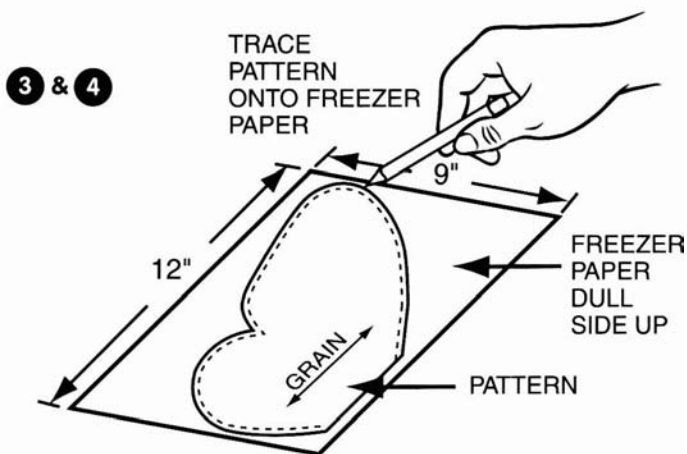
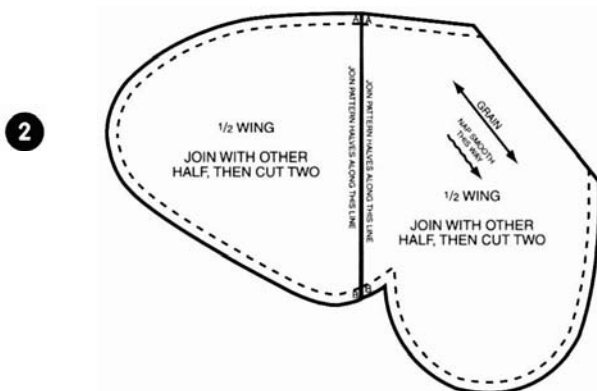
Stuffed Butterfly



Medium: Fabric
 Sewing Level: Intermediate
 Usefulness: Excellent
 Production: Individual

How to Make

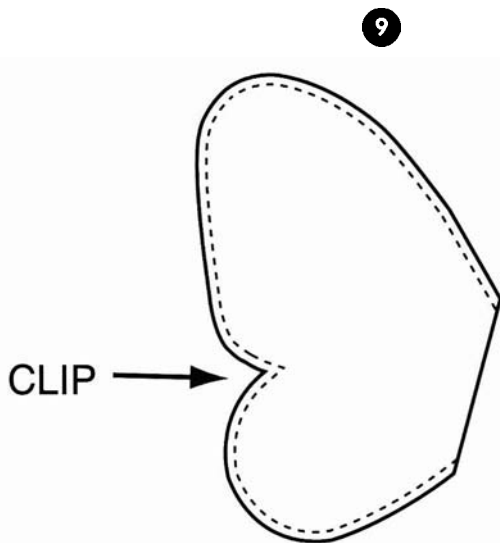
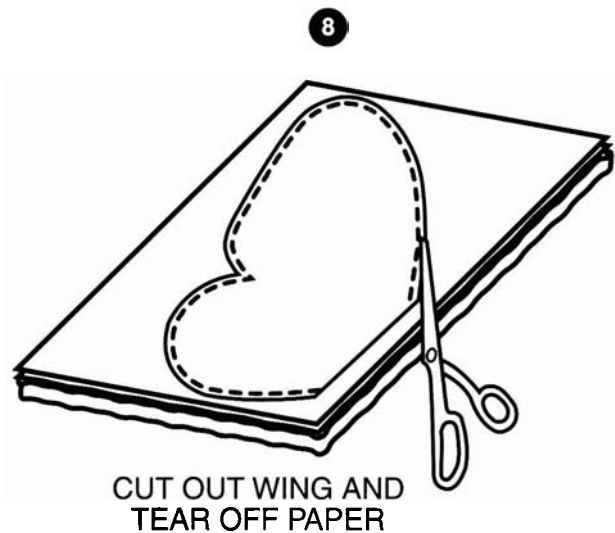
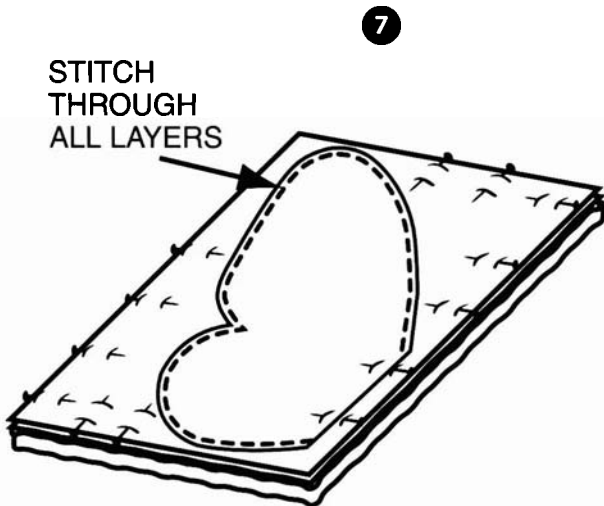
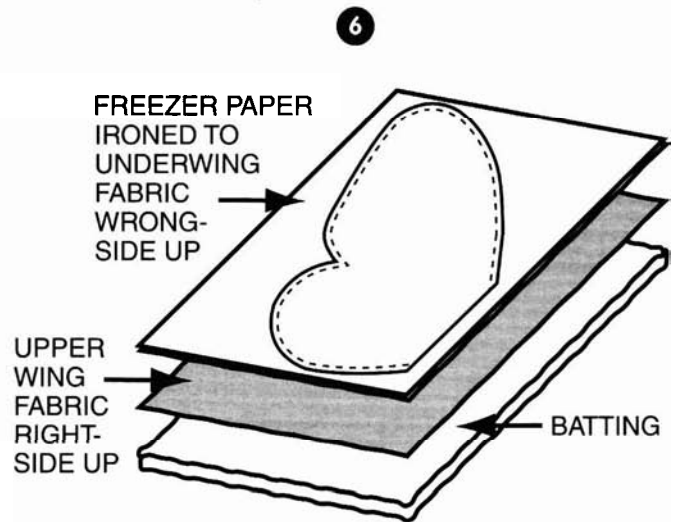
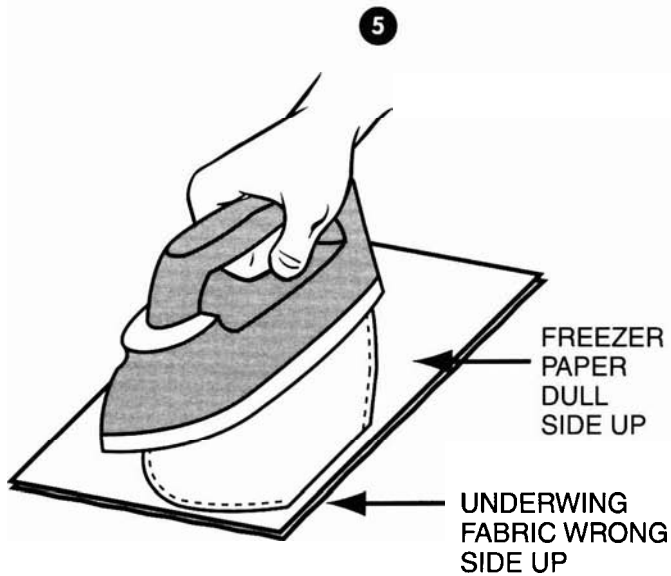
1. Photocopy or trace all butterfly pattern pieces (pp. 46–48) onto paper and cut out.
2. Tape together the two pattern pieces of wing, matching As and Bs to make a full wing pattern.
3. Fold shiny sides of freezer paper together to measure 9 in. by 12 in.
4. Trace full wing pattern onto dull side of freezer paper and cut two wings.



Materials

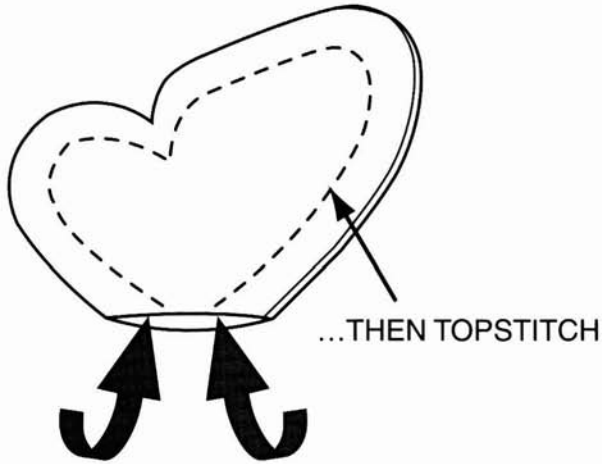
Patterns (pp. 46–48)
 Tracing paper (optional)
 Pencil
 Scissors
 Cellophane tape
 Freezer paper, 18 in. x 12 in.
 2 pieces fabric for upper wing (washable brightly colored fleece or velour), 9 in. x 12 in. each
 2 pieces fabric for under wing (washable, smooth fabric such as satin, to coordinate in color with upper wing), 9 in. x 12 in. each
 Iron
 Pins
 Sewing machine
 Thread
 Fabric for butterfly body (washable fabric that does not ravel such as fleece), 7 in. x 9 in.
 2 safety eyes: black, round, 12 mm¹
 Polyester batting such as Ultra-Soft Fiberfil
 Sewing needle
 Thimble
Caution: Do not use buttons or glue-on eyes.

¹Available at fabric or craft stores.



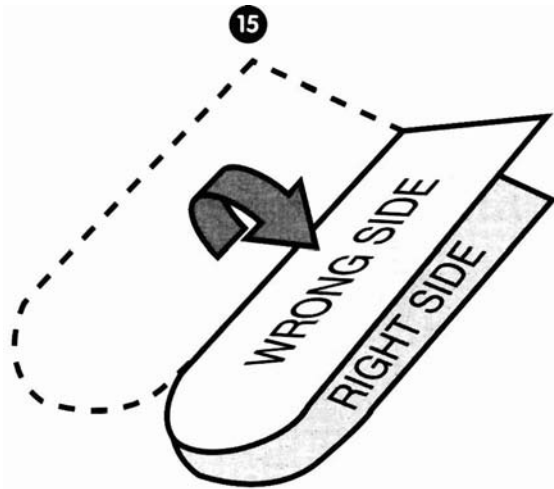
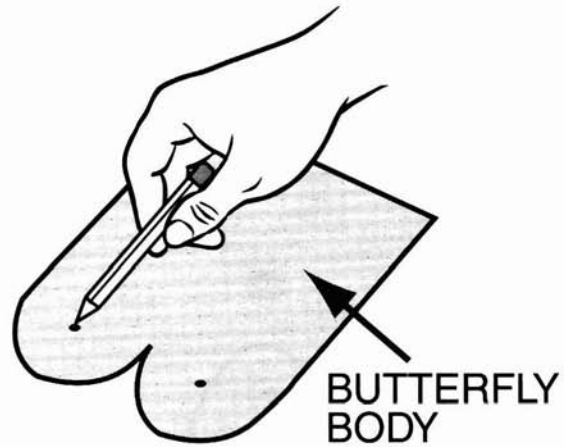
5. Using iron set on moderate heat, iron waxy side of freezer paper to wrong side of under-wing fabric.
6. Stack under-wing fabric (with attached freezer paper), upper-wing fabric, and batting in order shown. Pin together all layers.
7. Stitch around curved parts of wing $\frac{1}{4}$ in. from edge, leaving open straight side. Reinforce seam ends.
8. Cut through all layers along wing cutting line.
9. Clip seam at "V" of wing as shown and remove freezer paper.

10 & 11

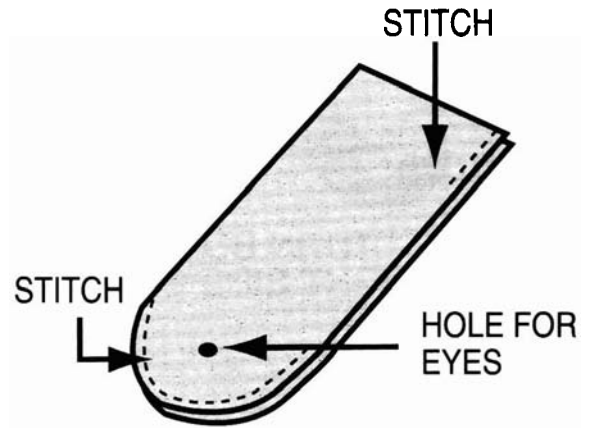


TURN WING RIGHT SIDE OUT...

13 & 14



16

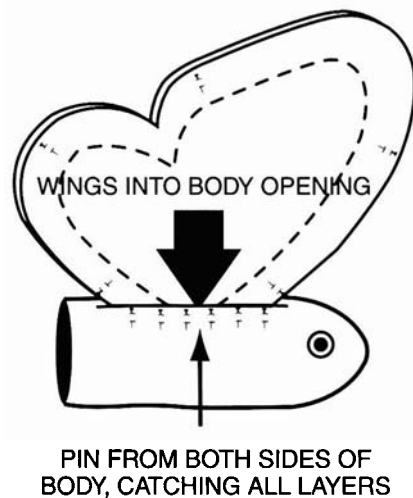
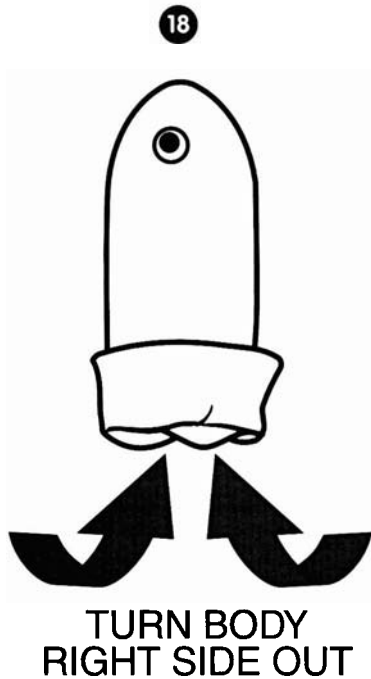


17



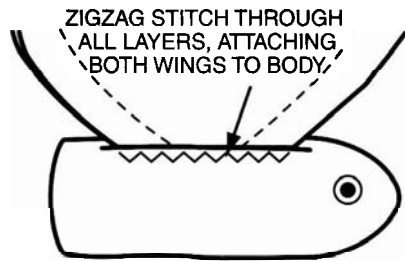
10. Turn wing right side out.
11. Topstitch around wing 1 in. from edge, still leaving straight side open.
12. Repeat steps 5–11 for other wing.
13. Pin pattern for butterfly body to body fabric, noting direction of fabric stretch and fold markings.
14. Cut butterfly body and mark stitching lines and eye location.
15. Fold body in half with right sides together and pin.
16. Stitch along stitching lines $\frac{1}{4}$ in. from edge. Leave seam open between dots. Reinforce ends of seams.
17. Attach safety eyes according to manufacturer's instructions.

Caution: Be careful to attach so eyes will face outward when body is turned right side out.

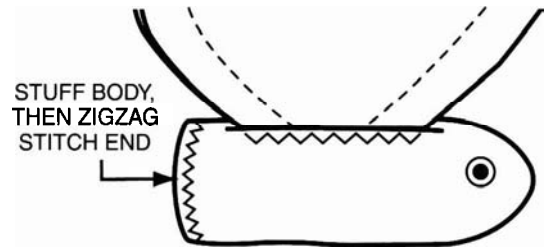


18. Turn butterfly body right side out.
19. With upper surfaces facing, pin and baste together straight sides of wings.
20. Insert wings into body as shown. Pin carefully through all layers of body and wings.
21. Using a zigzag stitch, sew through all layers. Reinforce seam ends.
22. Firmly stuff body with batting. Overcast to close opening.
23. Handstitch together top and bottom corners of butterfly tail to create a tapered shape.

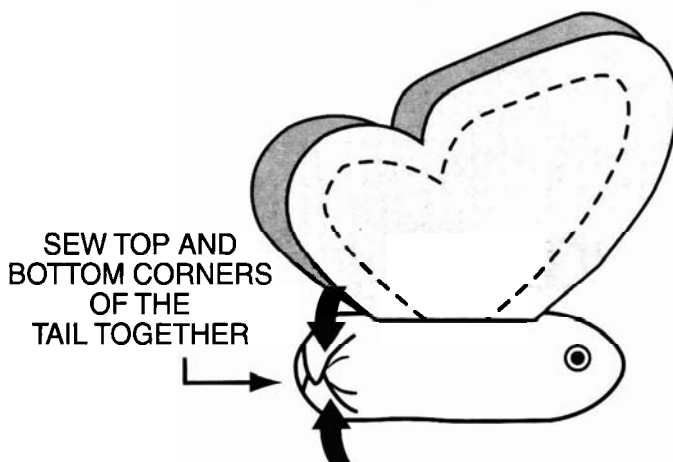
21



22



23



How to Use

Resident Level: All functioning levels

Promotes: Calming effect
Sense of warmth and comfort
Tactile sensory stimulation

The butterfly is designed to be an age-appropriate stuffed animal. The fabric is soft and interesting to touch, and the shape differs from that of traditional stuffed animals and dolls. The butterfly “sits well” on a wheelchair tray or table.

Encourage the person you visit to touch, hold, and stroke the butterfly. Say, “Here is a butterfly that I made for you.” Then simply hand the stuffed butterfly to the person.

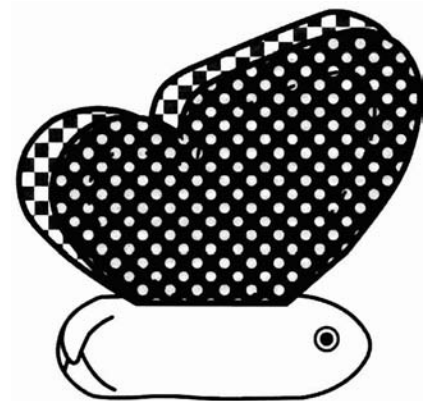
Talk about how you made the butterfly and why you chose those colors. Try to engage the person in conversation by asking:

Did you ever see a butterfly like this one?

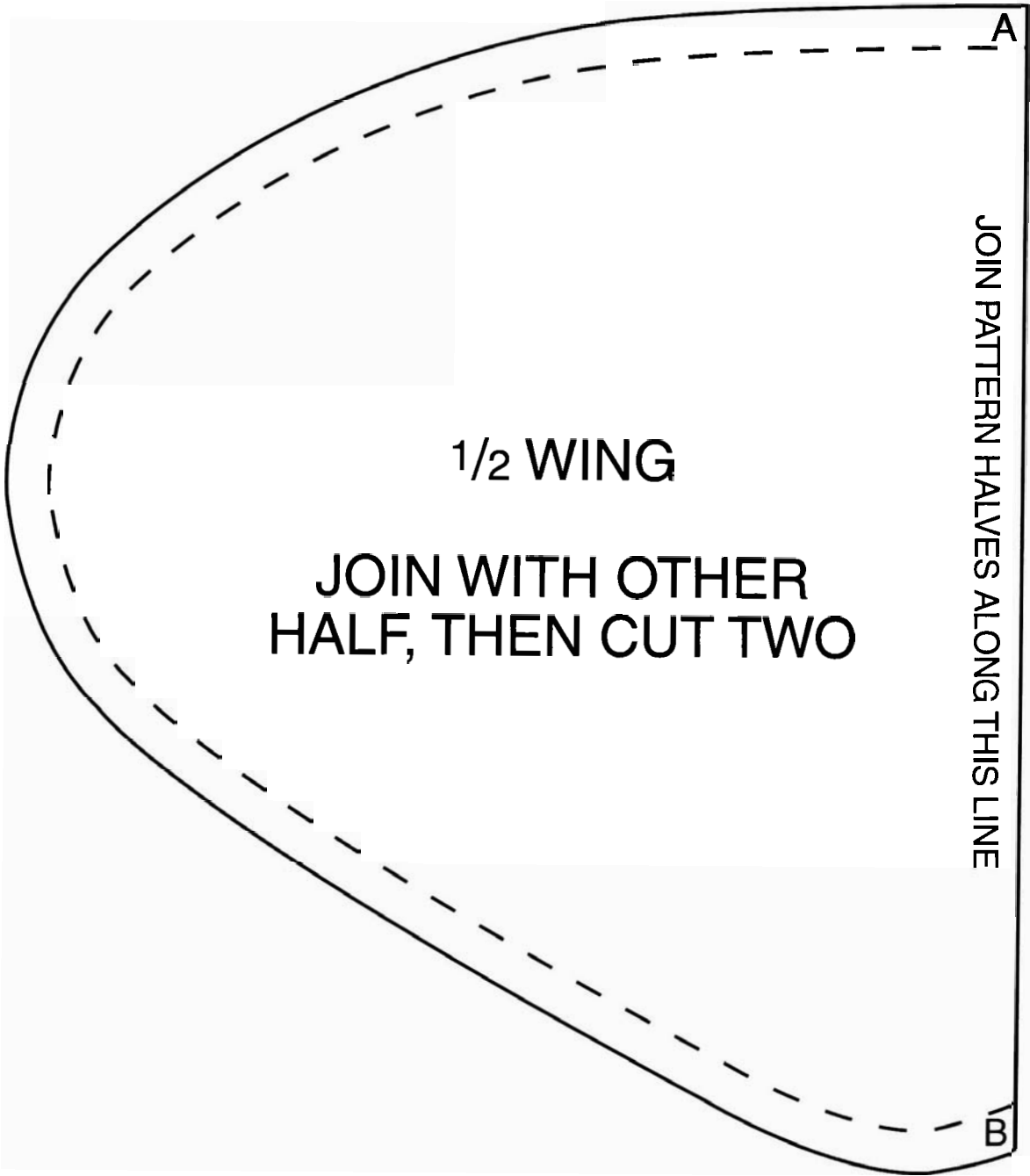
Does this look like a real butterfly?

Do you like the colors?

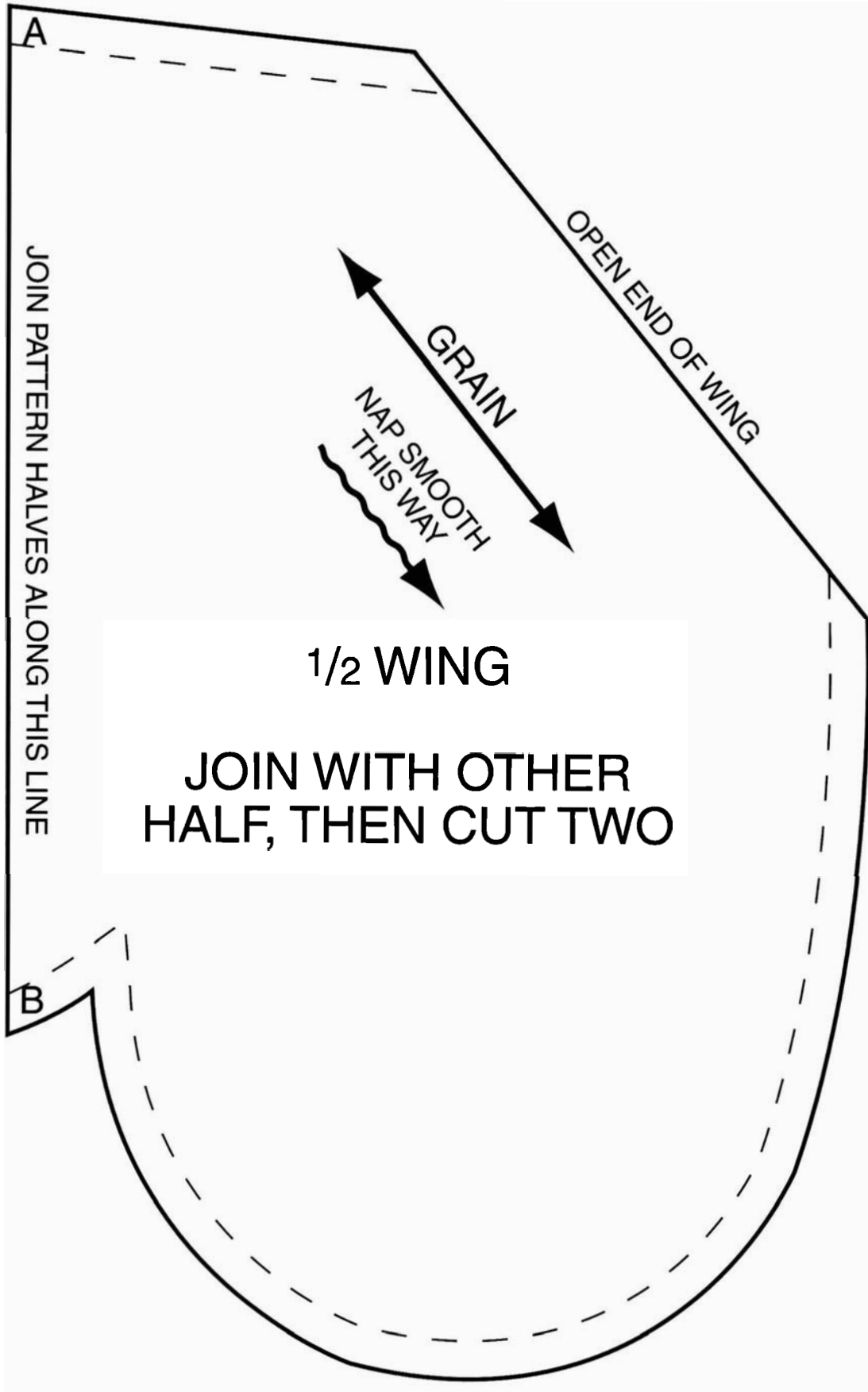
How do you like the way it feels?



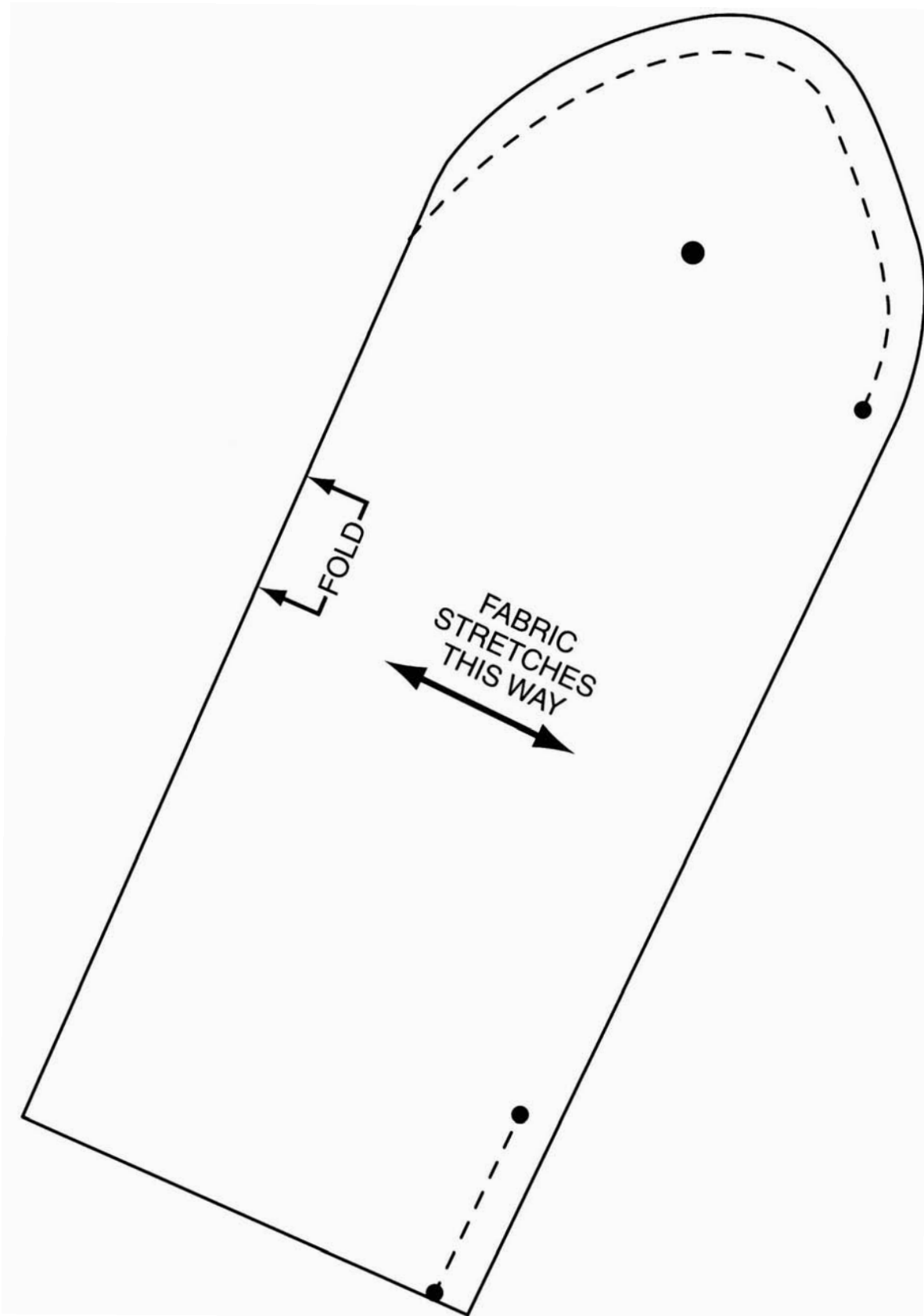
Butterfly Wing Pattern #1



Butterfly Wing Pattern #2

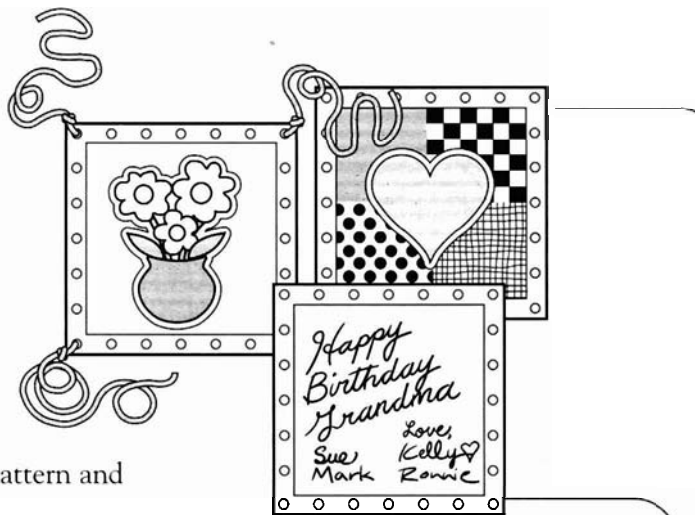


Butterfly Body Pattern



Sewing Cards

Medium: Mixed
Skill Level: Beginner
Usefulness: Excellent
Production: Individual



How to Make

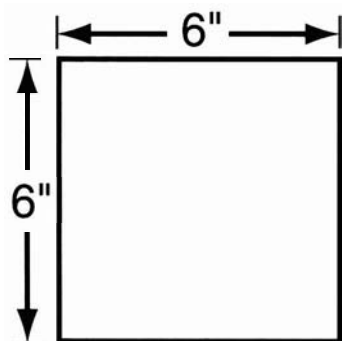
1. Photocopy or trace card pattern (p. 51). Cut out pattern and punch holes to make a template.
2. Cut poster board into 6-in. squares.
3. Place template on poster board squares, mark position of holes, and punch holes.
4. Cut bondable interfacing into 5-in. squares.
Hint: Overlap and tape together two 3-x-5-inch index cards to form a 5-inch-square pattern.
5. Place bondable interfacing on wrong side of fabric and adhere according to manufacturer's instructions.
Hint: Use whole cloth or create a patchwork or appliqué design from fabric scraps.
6. Trim fabric around square of interfacing and peel off paper backing.
7. Place fabric right side up on poster board square, making certain that no card holes are obstructed.
8. Iron fabric, bonding it with card.
9. Cut four 11-in. pieces of yarn.
10. Dip about 1 in. of each yarn length into glue and allow to dry.
11. Tie unstiffened end of yarn into each corner hole as shown (slip knot to back of card to hide).

Materials

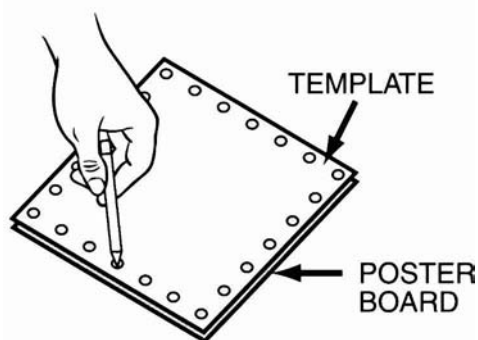
Card pattern (p. 51)
Tracing paper (optional)
Pencil (optional)
Scissors
Hole punch
Poster board, 6-in. square for each card
Bondable interfacing such as Thermo-Web Heat-n-Bond Ultrahold or Pellon Wunder-Under, 5-in. square for each card
Fabric (thin, tightly woven fabrics are preferred; thick fabrics require more bonding time), 6-in. square for each card
Iron
Yarn, 44 in. per card
All-purpose or white glue

Caution: Avoid fabrics with busy patterns or polka dots.

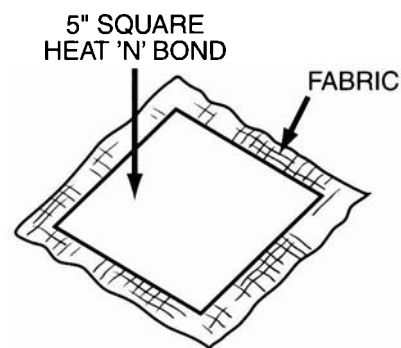
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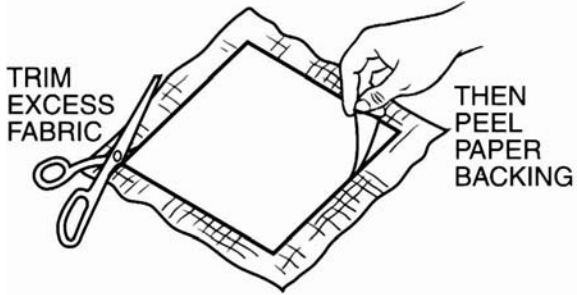
3



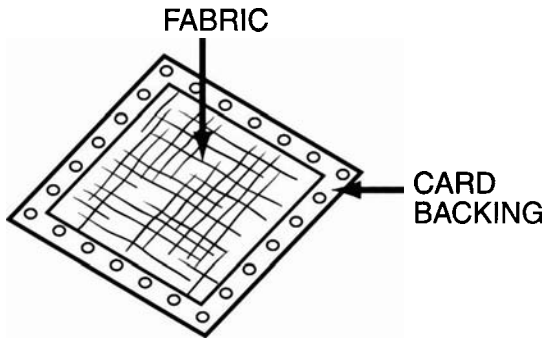
5



6



7



11



How to Use

Resident Level: All functioning levels

Promotes: Recollection of abilities and interests from the past
 Fine motor and eye/hand skills
 Tactile stimulation
 Social opportunity to decorate the environment

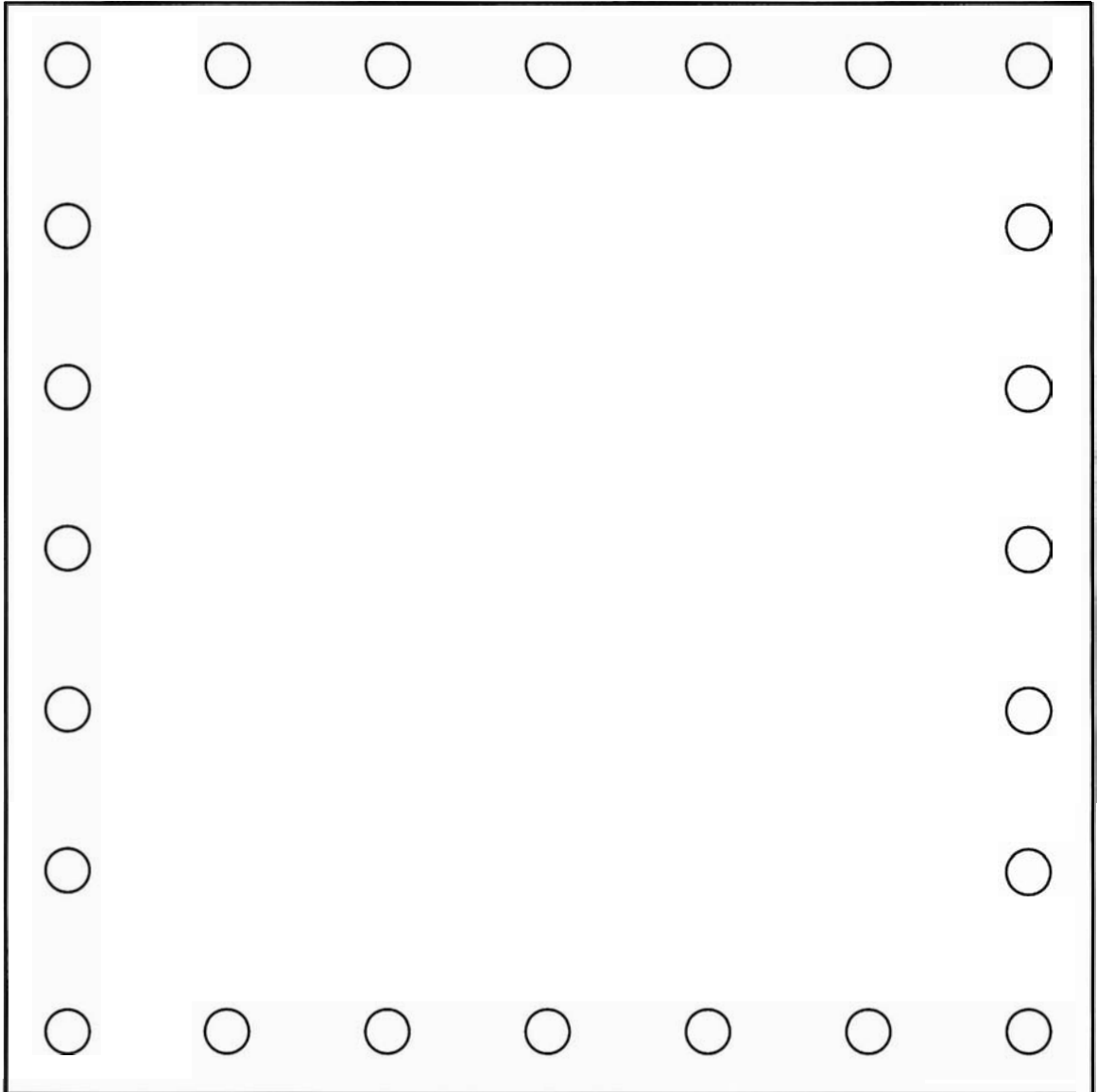
Encourage the person you are visiting to lace the yarn in and out of the holes in the card. Say, "Here is a picture you can sew. See, you sew it like this." Demonstrate how the yarn is laced through the holes. Give the sewing card back to the person you are visiting and say, "Now you try it."

Talk about how you made the sewing cards or try these questions to stimulate conversation:

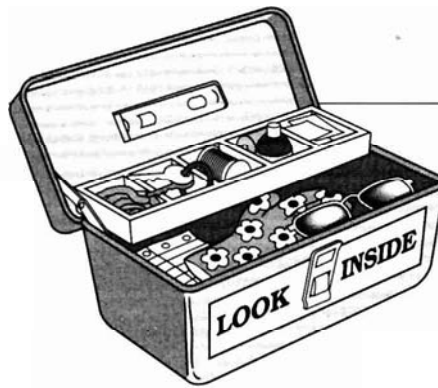
- Do you like to sew?
- What kinds of things did you sew?
- Did you sew your own clothes?
- Which of these pictures would look nice sewn together?

Cards can be sewn together to make an attractive "patchwork quilt" wall hanging. The cards can be worked on individually, or a small group of people can sit around a table and sew together. It is especially popular with those who liked to sew in the past but now lack fine motor skills.

Sewing Card Pattern



Look-Inside



Medium: Mixed
Skill Level: Beginner
Usefulness: Excellent
Production: Individual/Group

Container

Tackle box

medium-sized plastic box that has several compartments, easy-to-open latches, and an easy-to-hold handle.

Purse or Tote

(medium-sized) that has several compartments, easy-to-open latches, and an easy-to-hold handle.

Briefcase

(medium-sized) that has several compartments, easy-to-open latches, and an easy-to-hold handle.



Items

Fishing gear

work gloves, bandannas, small picture books of fishes or waterfowl, small rulers, several bobbers, rubber worms, spinners, brochures about fishing, notepads, small mail order catalogs of outdoor clothing/equipment, wind-up reels with a few inches of line and a weight at the end, key rings with keys

Caution: Remove all hooks from fishing lines.

Daily items

key rings with keys, notepads, pencils, scarves, grocery coupons, junk mail, checkbook covers, sunglasses, musical greeting cards, small calendars, address books, wallet, coin purse, play paper money

Office articles

small rulers, pads of paper, pencils, erasers, junk mail, small calendars, business cards, key rings with keys, small solar-powered calculators (no batteries)

Caution: Be certain that all items are safe. Do not include items that look or smell like food. Avoid sharp items and small items that might be swallowed.

Materials

Permanent marker

Paper

Wide cellophane tape

Container and items to go inside (see chart at left for suggestions)

How to Make

1. Write "Look Inside" in large letters with an indelible marker on a piece of paper.
2. Use cellophane tape to attach "Look Inside" labels on both sides of box, purse, or briefcase.

Hint: if you prefer, use fabric/craft paint to write the words on container.

3. Place gear inside box.
4. Review box contents with nursing or activity staff to make certain all items are appropriate.

How to Use

Resident Level: All functioning levels

Promotes: Focus and concentration
Use of hands and fingers
Diversional activity when resident needs distraction
Reminiscence
Opportunity to keep important belongings nearby
Sense of security

Encourage the person you visit to sort through the container and look at the different items. Say, "Here is a tackle box for fishing. Let's open it up and see what's inside." Or, "Here is a purse (or briefcase). Let's see what's inside. Can you help me reorganize it?" Demonstrate how to open the box. Take out some equipment and show the person how to use it. Then say, "Now you open the tackle box (purse/briefcase) and see what's inside."

Ask questions to stimulate more conversation:

Do you like to fish?

What kind of fish did you catch when you went fishing?

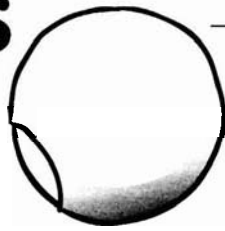
Where did you go fishing?

Do you like to eat the fish you catch?

Did you ever carry a purse (or briefcase) like this?

What did you put in it?

Squeezies



Media: Mixed
Skill Level: Beginner
Usefulness: Excellent
Production: Individual/Group

How to Make

1. Cut off end of soda bottle to make a funnel.
2. Stretch lip of balloon over neck of funnel.
3. Pour $\frac{1}{2}$ cup millet into funnel and shake gently into balloon.
4. Put funnel to your mouth, forming a seal around your cheeks and chin.
5. Blow into funnel until all the millet is in the balloon and balloon is partially inflated.
Caution: BLOW. . .do not suck in. Once in the balloon the bird seed will stay, but if you leave seed in the funnel it may "spurt" out when you remove your mouth from the funnel.
6. Release excess air from balloon and remove balloon from funnel.
7. Place seed-filled balloon on a flat surface and push down on neck with your thumb to push out seed from balloon neck.
8. Tie a snug knot at base of balloon neck.
9. Cut off excess balloon neck about $\frac{1}{4}$ in. above knot.
10. Cut off neck of a second balloon at its base.
11. Stretch second balloon over seed-filled balloon, concealing knot of first balloon.

Materials

Scissors

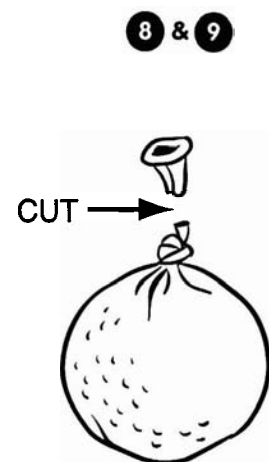
Empty 16-oz. plastic soda bottle
2 round balloons, 12-in. size, same color¹

Measuring cup ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) or any container with line drawn to indicate $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

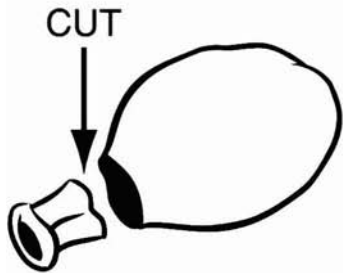
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup millet bird seed²

¹**Caution: Do not use "pearlized" colored balloons as the colors come off on your hands. Do not use yellow balloons as they are mistaken for lemons and sometimes bitten.**

²Mixed bird seed can be sifted to separate the millet from other seeds. This is a good way to involve younger children and is also less costly.



10



11



How to Use

Resident Level: All functioning levels

Promotes: Use of hands and fingers
Tactile stimulation
Diversional activity when resident needs a distraction

Squeezies are very useful for people who are tense or anxious and for folks with arthritic hands. Squeezies are also fun to toss and catch, but be careful not to throw them hard, and do not throw them toward a person's face.

Encourage the person you are visiting to squeeze the ball between the thumb and fingers. Say, "Here is a balloon you can squeeze without breaking it. Can you squeeze it like this?" Demonstrate by squeezing the squeezie with one hand and then with the other. Try using your fingers to flatten the squeezie into a flat pancake or make it into a cube shape. Then give it to the person you are visiting and say, "Now you try it."

Talk about how you made the squeezies and then ask these questions:

Do these things remind you of anything?

Do your hands feel tired when you squeeze it?

What type of work did you do that made your hands tired?

Which color squeezie do you like best?

Wave Machine

Media: Mixed
Skill Level: Beginner
Usefulness: Excellent
Production: Individual/Group



How to Make

1. Decide whether you will make “Starry Nights” or “Ocean Waves.”
2. Fill salad dressing bottle half full of mineral oil.
3. Fill bottle rest of the way with blue or blue-green tinted water.
4. Add sequins and pennies or glitter and seashells.
5. Screw on bottle cap. Using pliers, gently tighten cap so that it cannot be opened by hand.
6. Starting at base of bottle neck, wrap PVC tape around neck and cap. Gently pull the stretchy tape as you wrap so that it conforms to shape of neck and cap.

Materials

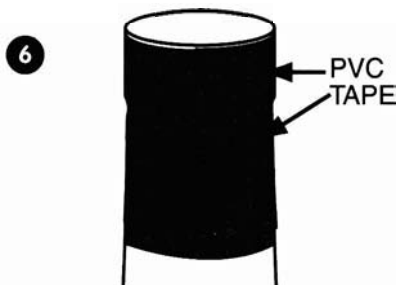
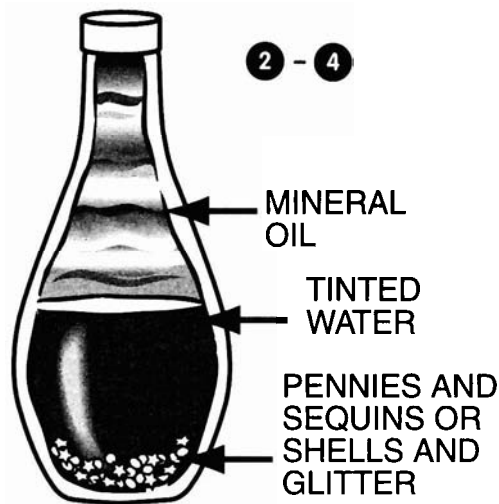
Salad dressing bottle, clear, plastic, washed, label removed
4 oz. mineral oil
pliers

Ingredients for “Starry Nights”

$\frac{1}{2}$ c. water with 3–4 drops blue food coloring
1 tsp. star-shaped sequins
5–6 shiny pennies
PVC tape, blue if available (other colors are acceptable)

Ingredients for “Ocean Waves”

$\frac{1}{2}$ c. water with 2 drops blue and 1 drop green food coloring
1 tsp. glitter
5–6 small seashells
PVC tape, green if available (other colors are acceptable)





How to Use

Resident Level: All functioning levels

Promotes: Visual tracking
Use of hands, arms, and eyes
Upper extremity strength and range of motion
Focus and concentration

Wave machines are wonderful with people who have substantial limitations. They are much appreciated by people who have a need to bang or rock rhythmically. The wave machine seems to absorb and redirect repeated vocalizations and motor patterns. For the most part, the people who enjoy wave machines are not conversationalists.

Encourage the resident to reach for and pick up the wave machine with both hands. Say, "Look at this colorful bottle. You can shake it and watch the colors move." Slowly tip the bottle back and forth so the colors flow. Say, "You can also make sounds with the bottle." Then, holding the bottle by its neck, shake it back and forth like a rattle. Give the wave machine back to the person and say, "Now you try it."

Discussion ideas:

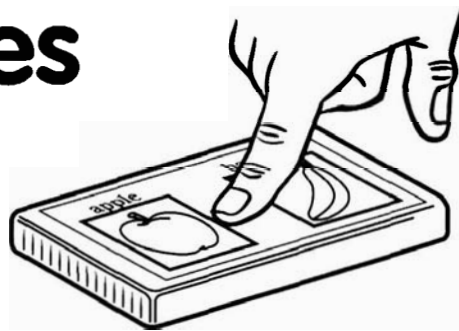
Does this remind you of going to the ocean?

Have you ever gone to Florida?

What is your favorite thing about the beach?

Picture Dominoes

Media: Mixed
Skill Level: Beginner
Usefulness: Good
Production: Individual



How to Make

1. Cut board into 18 rectangles, each $2\frac{1}{2}$ x 5 inches. Or ask your local lumber company to cut them for you.
2. Sand each rectangle (wooden domino) until smooth.
3. Photocopy domino pictures (pp. 61–66) and color with crayons or markers. Use bright colors and be careful to color matching pictures identically. For example, if you color one cat white with black spots, you must color the matching cat white with black spots in the same places.
4. Cut out the 18 paper dominoes.
5. Pour glue into cup. Add water until glue is of a consistency that is easily applied with a paintbrush.
6. Use paintbrush to spread a thin, even coating of glue on top surface of one wooden domino.
7. Carefully place a paper domino on glue-covered surface. Smooth out any wrinkles or air bubbles.
8. Use paintbrush to spread a thin, even coating of glue on top surface of paper. Smooth out any wrinkles or air bubbles.
9. Check after 15 minutes and smooth out any new wrinkles.
10. Allow dominoes to dry completely.
11. Apply additional coats of diluted glue or polyurethane. Sand lightly between coats.

Materials

90-in. piece of softwood, 1 in. x 3 in. x $\frac{1}{2}$ in. board with as few knots as possible¹

Sandpaper or steel wool

Domino pictures (pp. 61–66)

Crayons or permanent markers in bright colors

Scissors

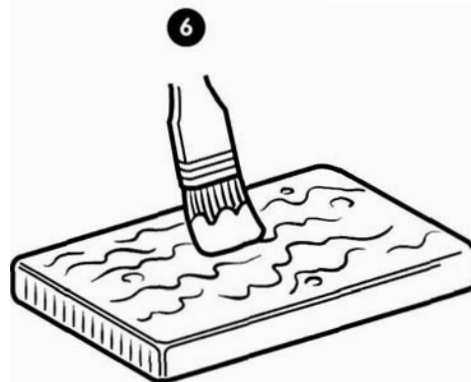
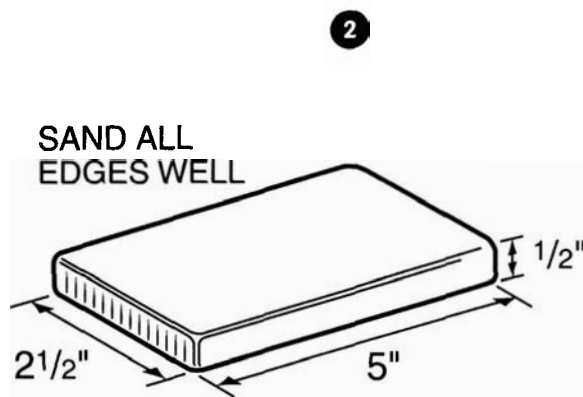
White glue

Small bowl or cup

Small paintbrush, 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide

Satin-finish polyurethane (optional)

¹Real dimensions of a 1 in. x 3 in. board are $\frac{3}{4}$ in. x $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.



How to Use

Resident Level: All functioning levels

Promotes: Cognitive matching skills
Focus and concentration
Use of hands and eyes
Maintainence of reach, grasp, and release skills

Dominoes can be used with one person or with a small group. They should not be used with people who are agitated. Encourage the person you are visiting to stack the dominoes, to sort them, or to play the game of matching the pictures. Say, "Here are some dominoes with different pictures on them." Show the person you are visiting that the pictures can be matched. Also show the person how you can stack the dominoes, sort them, or build with them. For example, you can line up several dominoes with matching pictures and then say, "Now you try it."

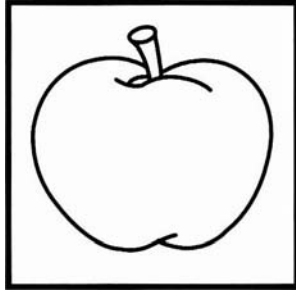
Talk about the different pictures on the dominoes and about how you made the dominoes. The person you are visiting might also respond to these questions:

Did you ever play dominoes when you were younger?

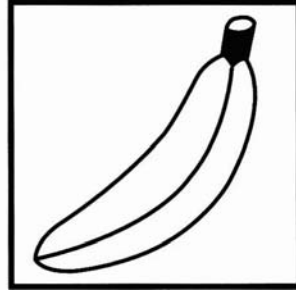
Whom did you play with?

Domino Pictures #1

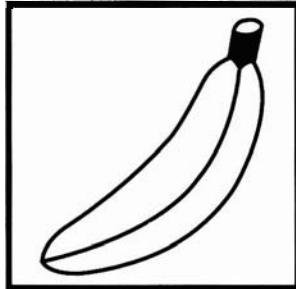
apple



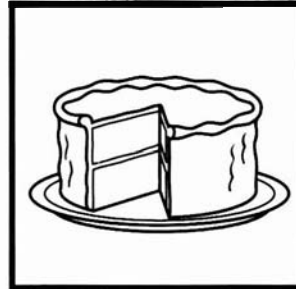
banana



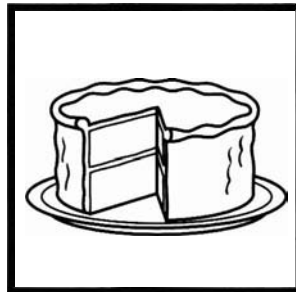
banana



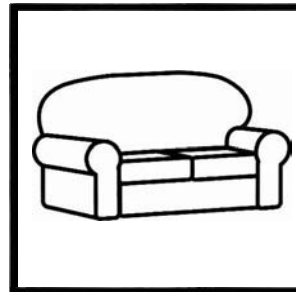
cake



cake

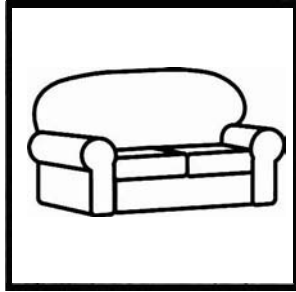


couch

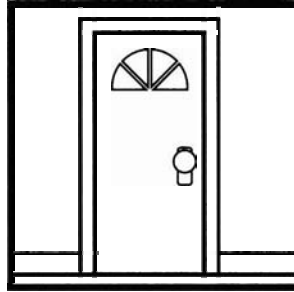


Domino Pictures #2

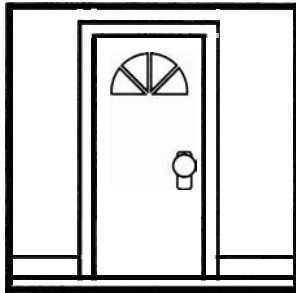
couch



door



door



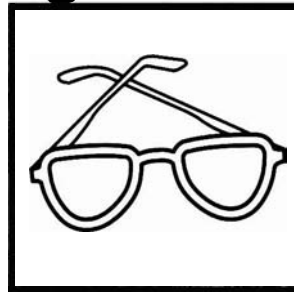
dresser



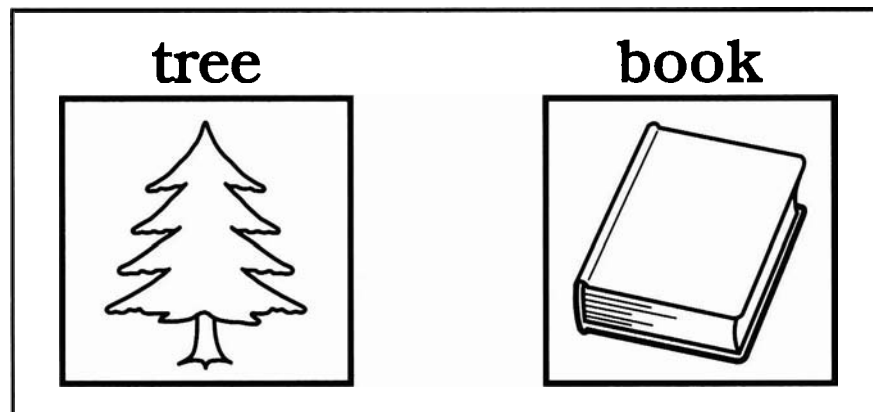
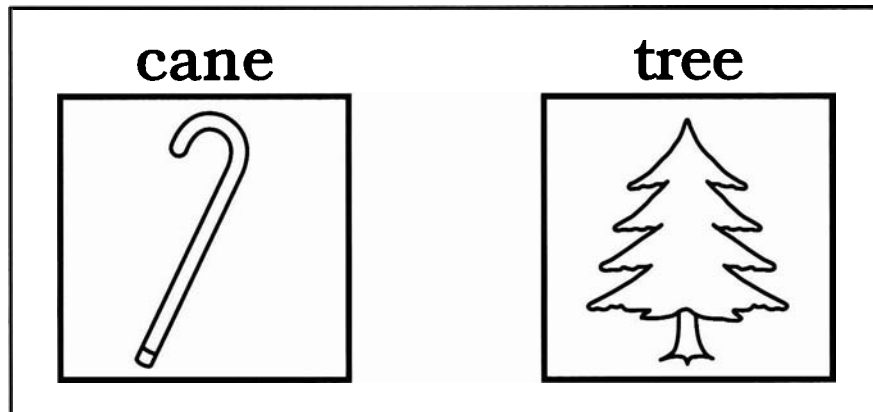
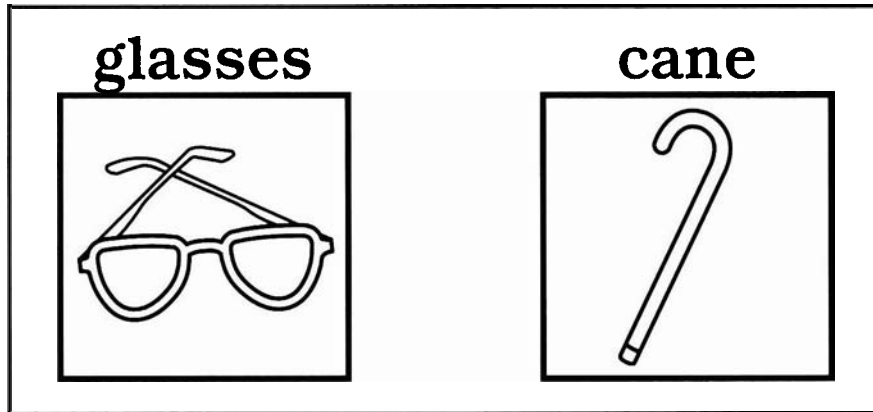
dresser



glasses



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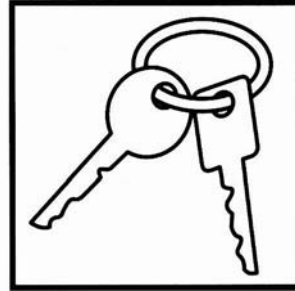


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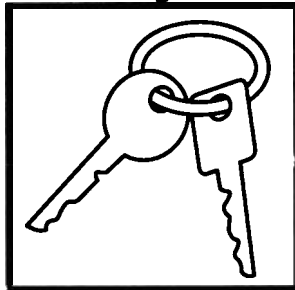
book



keys



keys



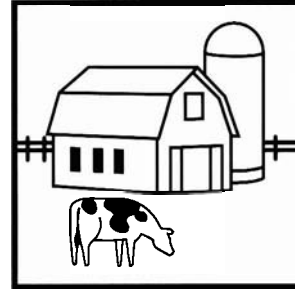
garden



garden

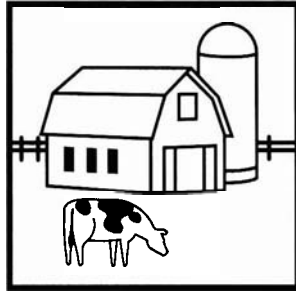


farm



Domino Pictures #5

farm



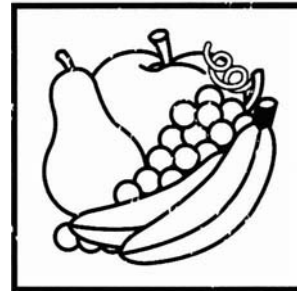
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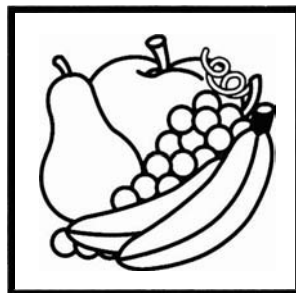
baby



fruit



fruit

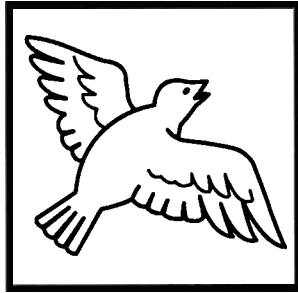


bird

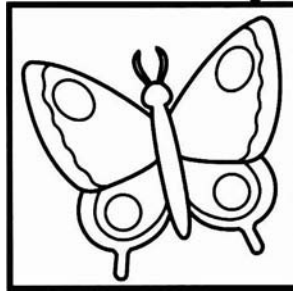


Domino Pictures #6

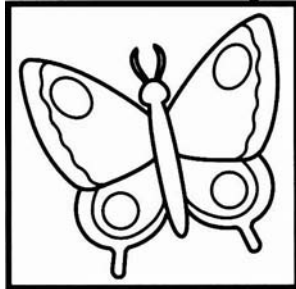
bird



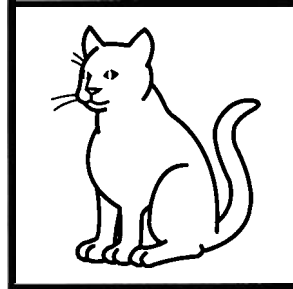
butterfly



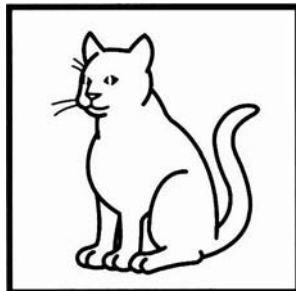
butterfly



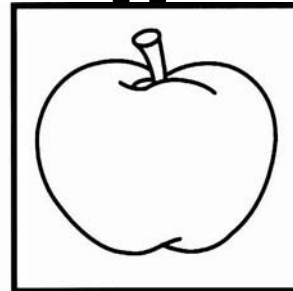
cat



cat

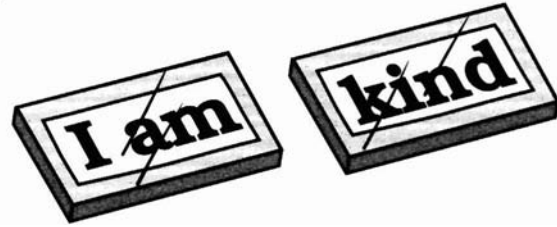


apple



Message Magnets

Media: Mixed
Skill Level: Beginner/Intermediate
Usefulness: Excellent
Production: Individual



How to Make

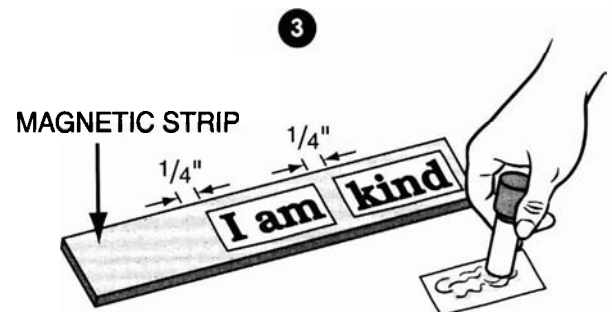
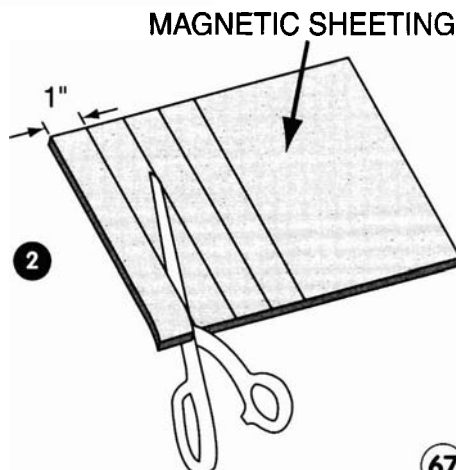
1. Photocopy vocabulary words and phrases (pp. 69–73) and cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. strips.
Hint: Do not color the words or background because that makes the messages harder to read.
2. Use scissors to cut magnetic sheeting into 1-in. strips or ask a sign shop to do this for you.
3. Place glue on back of each word or phrase and stick paper to magnetic strip. Allow $\frac{1}{4}$ in. between pieces of paper. Continue until magnetic strip is filled.
4. Place tape over paper and magnetic sheeting.
5. Turn taped magnetic sheeting face down onto a cutting surface.
6. Use a knife or razor blade to trim excess tape all around magnetic strip.
7. Cut magnetic strips between words and phrases.
8. Keep magnetic message strips in bags or boxes.
9. Prepare metal tray. Make certain tray has no rough edges. Be sure that it will attract the magnetic strips. Cover any designs, imperfections, or too-shiny surfaces with Contact paper or spray paint.

Materials

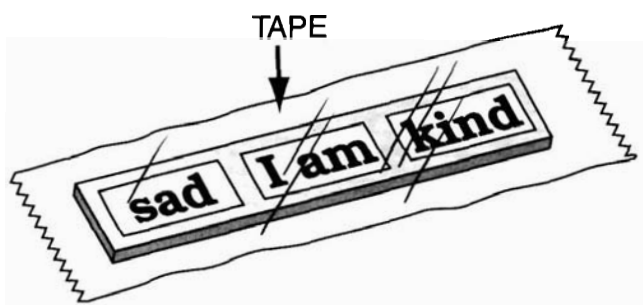
Paper strips with words (pp. 69–73)
Scissors
Magnetic sheeting¹
Glue stick
Transparent tape, 2 in. wide
Cutting surface²
Craft knife or single-edge razor blade
Bag or box for storing message strips
Metal tray or cookie sheet
Contact paper, solid color or spray paint, light-colored (optional)

¹Available at sign shop

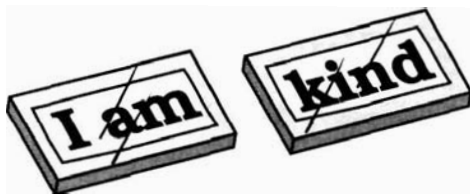
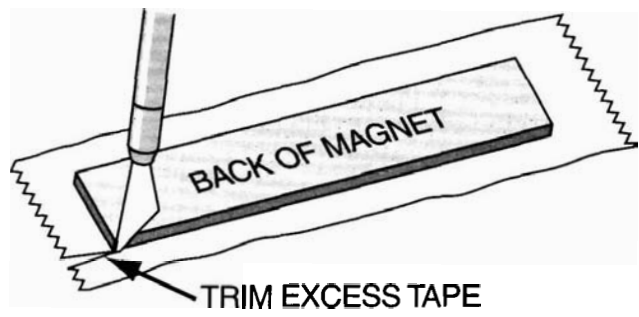
²Cutting surface might be a cutting board, a pad of newspapers, or a piece of sturdy cardboard



4



5 & 6



How to Use

Resident Level: All functioning levels

- Promotes:
- Visual tracking
 - Reaching and range of motion of upper extremities
 - Means of communication
 - Eye/hand skills

Message magnets are popular with many people who live in nursing homes. Encourage the person you're visiting to use the magnets as a way to communicate. The words can be read individually or arranged in sentences. Say, "Here are some magnets with words on them. You can use them to make sentences." Demonstrate by arranging the magnets into a sentence. Then say, "Show me another sentence you can make with these words." The magnets can be stacked, sorted, put on a refrigerator, cookie sheet, etc.

Discussion will vary, depending on the sentences or words that the person puts together. Follow the lead of the person you are visiting and ask questions about the sentences they "write." For example if a person forms the sentence "I am good at sewing," you can ask them something like "What kinds of things do you like to sew?"

Vocabulary Words and Phrases

I miss

I am

I can usually

Can I please

I love

my house

I like

my apartment

I want

my dog

I need

my cat

I don't like

my daughter

I am good at

my son

I'd rather be

my husband

Vocabulary Words and Phrases

my wife

a hot bath

my kids

looking out the window

my grandchildren

listening to music

my friend

dancing

the outdoors

singing

the ocean

going to church

warm weather

enjoying myself

snow

taking care of others

holidays

cooking

Vocabulary Words and Phrases

housework

sitting under a tree

playing cards

watching a movie

fishing

watching TV

sewing

reading

gardening

walk by myself

playing piano

write a letter

knitting

pick out my own clothes

crocheting

get myself dressed

working

take care of myself

Vocabulary Words and Phrases

make friends easily at a party

go for a walk ice cream

go to bed meat and potatoes

have a drink cakes and pies

have a snack desserts

sit by the window fresh fruits

find my friend vegetables from my
garden

watch TV trees and flowers

sailing

Vocabulary Words and Phrases

hungry

lonely

thirsty

proud

tired

ashamed

bored

annoyed

happy

sleepy

sad

glad

angry

kind

cold

excited

hot

nervous

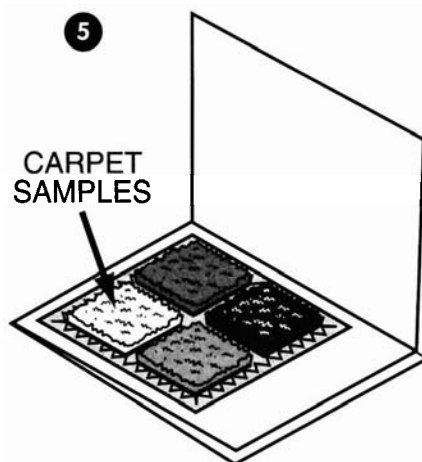
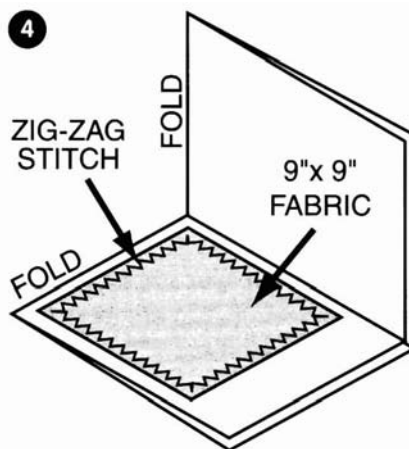
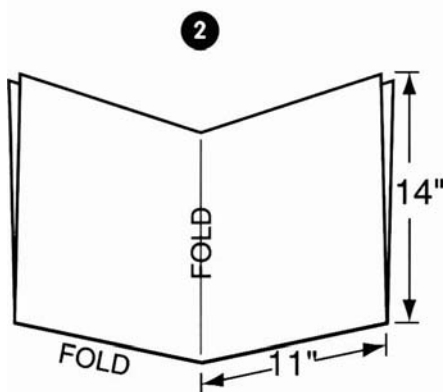
Home Decorator Folder

Media: Mixed
 Skill Level: Beginner/Intermediate
 Usefulness: Excellent
 Production: Individual



How to Make

1. Choose a room to be featured in folder and select materials accordingly.
2. Fold poster board in quarters to make a giant greeting card or folder, 14 in. x 11 in. Press folds flat with your thumbnail, the side of a ballpoint pen, or a butter knife to make creases crisp.
3. Open folder with fold toward you.
4. Place background cloth in lower right quadrant. Use a large zigzag stitch to sew background cloth to double layer of poster board.
5. Glue carpet samples to fabric. Make certain they are attached securely.



Materials

1 sheet poster board, 22 in. x 28 in.

Sturdy fabric for background, neutral color, 9 in. x 9 in.

Sewing machine

Thread

Glue

3 or 4 carpet samples, each less than 4 in. x 4 in.¹

Scissors

Wallpaper samples²

Strapping tape

Contact paper, clear or white

Transparent tape

Paint chips³

Fabric samples⁴

Marker, black

Pictures of rooms⁵

¹Carpet samples are available from carpet stores. They are usually attached to a plastic backing, from which they can be easily separated. Select different textures and colors.

²Wallpaper samples are available from home decorating stores. Ask for old sample books.

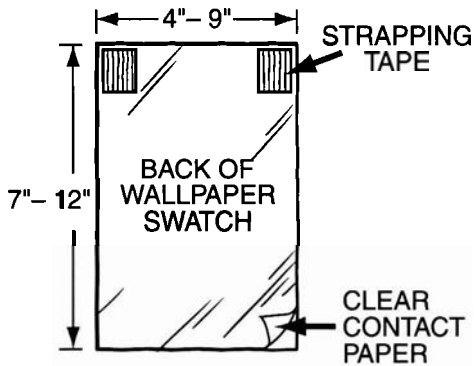
³Paint chips are available from hardware store, home decorating stores, and paint shops. These samples are usually attached to cards or brochures. Old ones are usually free.

⁴Fabric samples are available from home decorating stores, fabric shops, and friends who sew. Select different textures, patterns, colors, weights, and fibers. Use four very different fabrics and coordinate the fabric with the room. For example, terry cloth is good for kitchens and bathrooms; satin and lace are more appropriate for a bedroom.

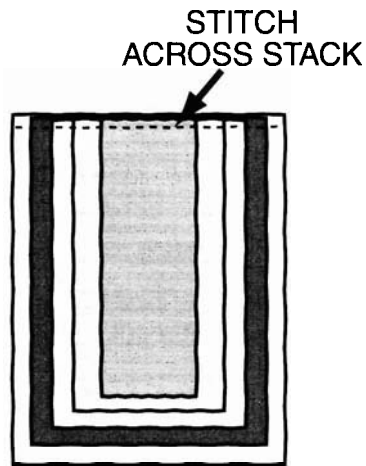
⁵Pictures of rooms may be cut from magazines or wallpaper books.

Note: Select materials that are color-coordinated. Look for varied and interesting textures. Bright, cheerful colors are most enjoyable. Avoid pale pastel themes or dark, drab colors.

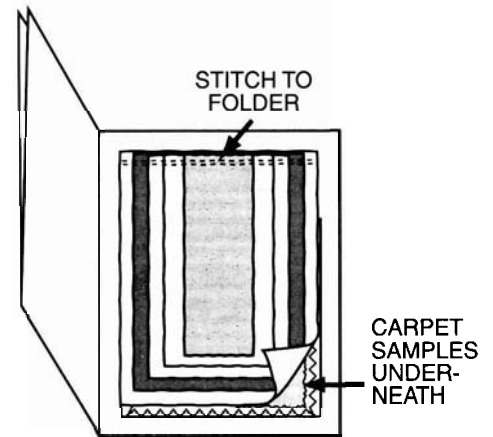
7



8

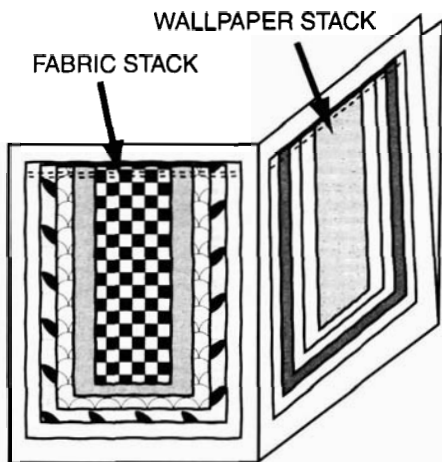


9

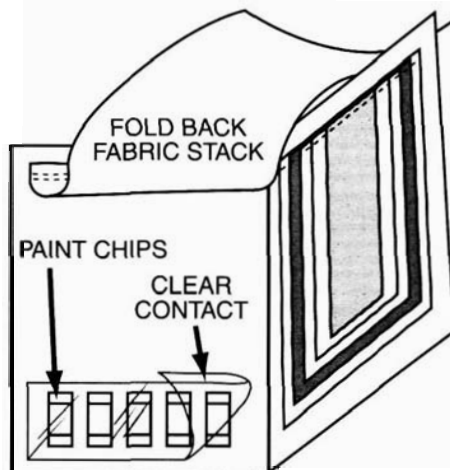


6. Cut four different sizes of wallpaper. Exact measurements are not important but swatches should be no larger than 9 in. x 12 in. and no smaller than 4 in. x 7 in.
7. Reinforce each piece of wallpaper with strapping tape at upper corners. Cover the back with clear or white Contact paper.
8. Stack wallpaper with smallest on top and largest on bottom. Use a large straight stitch to sew pieces of wallpaper together across top.
9. Place wallpaper stack in upper right quadrant above carpet samples. Stitch across top of pieces of wallpaper, through double layer of posterboard. Reinforce seam ends.
10. Cut four different sizes of fabrics. Exact measurements are not important but swatches should be no larger than 9 in. x 12 in. and no smaller than 4 in. x 7 in.
11. Arrange in a stack (as for pieces of wallpaper). Pin and stitch together across top. Although some fabrics will ravel, do not hem them.
12. Place fabric stack in upper left quadrant. Stitch through fabric swatches and double layer of posterboard. Reinforce seam ends.
13. Tape paint chips in bottom left quadrant. Completely cover chips with transparent tape or clear Contact paper.
14. Across top of cover print in large letters name of room being decorated.
15. Glue a full-page color magazine photograph of appropriate room (kitchen, bedroom, living room, dining room, or bathroom) to cover beneath room name. Tape around photograph edges.

12



13



14 - 15



How to Use

Resident Level: All functioning levels

Promotes: Sensory stimulation
Sense of achievement
Reaching and sitting balance
Manual dexterity
Reminiscence

Encourage the person you're visiting to look through the book and decide how to decorate a living room, kitchen, bathroom, or other room using the upholstery, wallpaper, and rug samples in the book. Say "Here's a book with samples of rugs, wallpaper, and fabric you can use to decorate a room." Then choose one of the fabrics, wallpapers, and carpet colors. Give the book to the person you're visiting and say, "Now, you pick some fabrics and wallpaper you like." If the person you're visiting doesn't talk much, you can just look at the different fabrics, wallpapers, and rug samples together and ask the person to touch them.

Describe your home and explain how you made the home decorator kit. Talk about the different decorating materials or try these questions to stimulate conversation:

What are your favorite colors?

What colors did you use when you decorated your home (or apartment)?

Tell me about the rooms in your house (or apartment).

Many conversations can be started about the different fabrics and wallpapers, but the home decorator kit is also enjoyed without conversation, for the colors and textures of its materials. The home decorator kit is especially enjoyed by women.

References

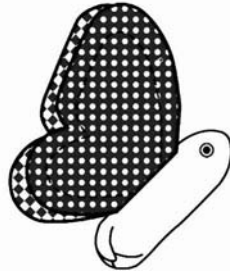
Alzheimer's Association, 919 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1100, Chicago, IL 60611-1676, 1-800-272-3900, www.alz.org.

American Health Assistance Foundation, 15825 Shady Grove Rd., Suite 140, Rockville, MD 20850, 1-800-437-AHAF, www.ahaf.org.

National Council on the Aging, 409 3rd St., SW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20024
1-800-424-9046, www.ncoa.org.

Someone I Love Has Alzheimer's Disease (Videotape), Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130
617-524-0980, fax: 617-524-8838.

Talking with Children and Teens about Alzheimer's Disease: A Question and Answer Guidebook for Parents, Teachers, and Caregivers. University of Pittsburgh, Center for Social and Urban Research, Pittsburgh, PA, 1992.



Simple Gifts guides adults to help youth produce items specific for people with Alzheimer's disease. Research shows that people with Alzheimer's may prefer to handle and manipulate things rather than engage in conversation.

Sixteen projects, ranging from a fleecy muff to a home decorator folder, include detailed instructions and patterns.

The program also encourages participants to learn about the disease and to become involved in community intergenerational opportunities.

If, however, you want to help but are uncomfortable visiting in person, items can be made and delivered to the care facility director or caregiver.

This is a "win-win-win" situation for everyone—the resident, the adult and youth volunteers, and the care facility or caregiver.

