

Textiles Curriculum Intent		Year 8
	The Textiles curriculum at New Line Learning Academy develops students as creative, confident and increasingly independent designers and makers. Through a carefully sequenced curriculum, students learn that successful textile design combines imagination with technical knowledge, practical skill and purposeful decision-making. Using the Design Wheel, students experience the complete design process through research, generating and developing ideas, planning, making, presenting and evaluating their outcomes. Students begin by establishing secure foundations in the formal elements of design, colour and textile processes, developing practical experience through weaving, hand sewing, machine sewing, printing and construction. These skills are deliberately revisited and refined so that students' progress from practising individual techniques towards selecting and combining processes independently. Increasing emphasis is placed on accuracy, craftsmanship, quality of finish and the ability to identify problems and adapt work during the making process. Creative research is embedded throughout the curriculum. Students explore the work of professional designers, artists and illustrators including Vivienne Westwood, Mary Blair and Tim Burton, considering how colour, visual style, character and creative influences can communicate identity, mood and narrative. Students use this research to inform their own ideas rather than simply reproducing the work of others. Practical projects become increasingly purposeful and challenging. Students' progress from foundational textile exploration into designing and manufacturing a hand puppet, combining textile techniques with character design and performance. Later, they independently design and manufacture a printed tote bag, bringing together hand sewing, machine sewing and printmaking to create a functional product for real-life use. This creates a clear progression from learning techniques, to combining techniques, to independently selecting and applying them for a defined purpose. Students also explore Textiles within its wider social, cultural, ethical and industrial context. They consider how fashion and textiles communicate creativity, culture and identity alongside exploring mass manufacture, global production, working conditions, sustainability and the environmental impact of consumer choices. This helps students understand Textiles as both a creative discipline and a significant global industry. The curriculum provides a strong foundation for KS4 Creative Design and Production, where students extend their understanding of materials and their properties, design development, prototyping and manufacturing processes. Ultimately, Textiles equips students to think creatively, design purposefully and make skilfully, while developing confidence, independence, problem solving, planning and the ability to adapt and evaluate their work.	
	Term 1 Topic	 Hand Puppet Project: Artist Research and Character Design
	 Big Picture <i>What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?</i>	

This term begins the Year 8 Hand Puppet Project, building upon the practical textile and design skills established during Year 7. Students explore how artists and illustrators develop distinctive characters and visual styles, using the work of Mary Blair and Tim Burton as inspiration for their own creative ideas.

The focus is on the relationship between research, visual communication and design development. Students consider how colour, shape, appearance and artistic style can communicate character, mood and narrative before developing original ideas for their own puppet.

This marks an important progression from Year 7: students are no longer simply learning how the Design Wheel operates but are expected to use the design process with increasing independence to research, generate, develop and communicate their own ideas.



Zoom In

What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?

Students begin by revisiting the Design Wheel and recognising how the research and design stages will eventually lead towards the manufacture of a finished hand puppet. The wider Year 8 DT curriculum continues to use the Design Wheel to connect researching and planning with making and evaluating.

Across the term, students explore questions including:

- How can visual design communicate character and personality?
- What makes an artist or illustrator's style recognisable?
- How do Mary Blair and Tim Burton use visual features differently?
- How can colour, shape and appearance communicate mood?
- How can research influence our own creative ideas?
- How do we develop an original character rather than simply copy an existing one?
- How can drawing and annotation communicate a textile design clearly?

Students investigate the work of Mary Blair and Tim Burton, identifying characteristics within their different approaches to illustration and character design. The original curriculum uses these artists to help students explore how creative styles have influenced film, animation, storytelling and wider popular culture, alongside how visual design can communicate mood, character and narrative. Students use this research to inspire their own ideas. They begin generating and developing original puppet designs, experimenting with different visual possibilities rather than immediately settling upon their first idea.

Greater emphasis is placed upon drawing and annotation than in Year 7. Students are expected to communicate their ideas clearly, showing how a design might eventually be translated from a two-dimensional drawing into a manufactured textile outcome. As ideas develop, students consider how their existing textile knowledge could be applied to their designs. This begins connecting the creative decisions made on paper with the hand-sewing and decorative processes that will be required during manufacture.

Substantive knowledge is developed through students' understanding of character design, illustration, visual style, mood, narrative, research, inspiration, design development, annotation and textile design. Applied and disciplinary knowledge develops as students analyse professional creative work, identify relevant visual features and selectively use these influences to generate and develop original character designs for a specific textile outcome.

Key vocabulary is introduced and revisited throughout the term, including illustration, character, visual style, mood, narrative, influence, inspiration, research, design development, annotation, original, textile outcome and communication.



Pre-Requisite Knowledge

What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?

Students build directly upon the Year 7 Formal Elements Project. They already understand the Design Wheel and have experience of researching professional creative work, developing ideas and applying colour and decorative choices within textile designs.

Practically, students bring experience of hand sewing, machine sewing, weaving, printing and textile construction. They understand that the appearance of a final product must be considered alongside how it will actually be made.

Year 8 therefore moves students beyond introductory design exercises. Rather than being heavily directed through each stage, students are increasingly expected to draw upon their existing knowledge to research selectively, develop original ideas and make decisions independently.



Pitch Up

How will we challenge ourselves?

Students are challenged to move beyond identifying obvious features of an artist's work by explaining how visual choices communicate mood, personality and character.

When generating ideas, students are expected to use Mary Blair and Tim Burton as influences rather than templates. They develop original characters and increasingly detailed designs using drawing and annotation techniques, reflecting the department's expectation that Year 8 students work with greater independence.

More confident students develop several possibilities before refining a final concept, clearly communicating how visual features and textile techniques could work together within the eventual puppet.



Wider Framework

How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?

This term establishes the creative direction for the entire Hand Puppet Project. The designs developed here will progress into planning and practical manufacture, where students apply their existing hand-sewing and decorative skills with greater accuracy before using their finished puppet within a short performance.

Researching and analysing artists also develops skills that transfer directly into Art and Design, while strengthening students' ability to independently research, analyse and present information about artists, illustrators and designers. The original curriculum identifies this explicitly as important preparation for increasingly advanced creative projects later in KS3 and at KS4.



Curriculum Hinterland

What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?

Students explore how illustration and character design operate beyond Textiles. Through Mary Blair and Tim Burton, they encounter the relationship between visual art, animation, film and storytelling and consider how distinctive creative styles can become recognisable within popular culture.

This helps students recognise that designers rarely work within completely isolated disciplines. Illustration can influence textiles, costume, film, animation and product design, while decisions surrounding colour, shape and character can communicate meaning to an audience without relying upon written language.



Authentic connections

How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?

Students explore imagination and individual creative expression by developing an original character. They consider how visual choices can communicate emotions, personality and mood and gain confidence in developing ideas that are recognisably their own. Students consider how artists, designers and illustrators contribute to wider popular culture and storytelling. They learn to recognise and respect different creative approaches while responding constructively to the ideas and designs of others. There are particularly strong links with Art and Design through illustration, character design, colour and visual analysis, and with English through characterisation, mood and narrative. These connections will become increasingly important as the finished puppet eventually forms part of a performance.

Careers Framework Skills: Creativity, Problem Solving and Speaking

Students develop creativity by generating original characters from a range of visual influences. Problem Solving develops as they consider how a two-dimensional character design could realistically become a textile product. Speaking develops through explaining, discussing and justifying design ideas using increasingly accurate creative and technical vocabulary.



Careers: Character Designer, Concept Artist and Storyboard Artist

Students explore how a Character Designer develops the appearance and personality of characters for creative productions; how a Concept Artist visually develops initial ideas for film, animation and other creative industries; and how a Storyboard Artist communicates characters, actions and narrative visually before production begins.

Students develop greater awareness of how characters and visual identities are deliberately designed within films, animation, games, advertising and other media they encounter every day. They become more confident in interpreting visual communication rather than simply consuming it. Students develop visual analysis, research, independent decision-making, drawing, annotation, communication and the ability to refine an initial idea in response to reflection and feedback.

 Resources <i>What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?</i>	 Assessment <i>How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?</i>
• Department resources introducing the Hand Puppet Project. • Existing research materials on Mary Blair and Tim Burton. • Examples of illustration and character design used within the department's project. • Students' Year 7 knowledge of the Design Wheel and Formal Elements. • Drawing, annotation and design-development materials. • Existing hand-puppet examples and department exemplars. • Sketchbooks/workbooks used to record research and design development.	Students complete a baseline assessment linked to the knowledge and skills required within the project. Formative assessment then takes place through artist research, design work, questioning and teacher feedback as students develop their puppet ideas. Substantive Knowledge: Students demonstrate understanding of character design, illustration, visual style, mood, narrative, research and the design-development process. Disciplinary Knowledge: Students demonstrate their ability to analyse creative influences, generate original character ideas and communicate increasingly detailed textile designs through drawing and annotation.

Term 2 Topic	 Hand Puppet Project: Idea Development and Final Design
	Big Picture <i>What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?</i>
This term moves students from research and inspiration into purposeful design development. Having explored the work of Mary Blair and Tim Burton in Term 1, students now use these influences to generate, develop and refine an original puppet design that responds appropriately to the project brief. The term-by-term curriculum specifically identifies this stage as idea development in order to develop a puppet design linked to the brief. Students learn that successful designers do not simply produce one idea and immediately begin making. Instead, ideas are explored, annotated, reviewed and improved before a final design is selected. Increasing emphasis is placed upon students' ability to communicate what their puppet should look like, how it reflects a particular character or mood and how the design could realistically be manufactured using the textile techniques available to them. By the end of the term, students should have developed a clear and purposeful design ready for the practical construction phase in Terms 3 and 4.	
	Zoom In <i>What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?</i>
Students begin by revisiting the project brief and the artist research completed during Term 1. They use their understanding of character, mood, narrative and visual style to generate a range of possibilities for their own puppet rather than copying the work of Mary Blair or Tim Burton directly. Across the term, students explore questions including: • What does the project brief require us to design? • How can research be transformed into an original idea? • What makes a character design visually effective? • How can colour, shape and decorative features communicate personality or mood? • How can drawing and annotation explain a textile design clearly? • How do we develop rather than simply repeat an initial idea? • Can the design realistically be made using the textile skills and materials available? • What makes a successful final puppet design? Students produce and develop ideas using drawing and annotation, an expectation made explicit within the original Year 8 curriculum. They consider visual appearance alongside practical manufacture, beginning to recognise that an imaginative idea must also be achievable using the hand-sewing, decorative and construction techniques that will follow. Students refine their designs by reviewing individual features and identifying improvements. They consider how the character's appearance communicates mood, personality and narrative, building directly upon the wider creative context established through Mary Blair and Tim Burton.	

The Design Wheel continues to structure this process. Students move from research into generating, developing and planning, understanding that each stage should influence the next before practical manufacture begins. Substantive knowledge is developed through students' understanding of design brief, idea development, character design, annotation, visual communication, design refinement, mood, narrative, textile techniques and final design. Applied and disciplinary knowledge develops as students interpret a project brief, generate alternative possibilities, draw upon relevant research, refine their ideas and produce a final design that balances creativity with practical feasibility.

Key vocabulary is introduced and revisited throughout the term, including design brief, design development, specification, annotation, refinement, influence, character, mood, narrative, visual communication, practical outcome, manufacture and final design.

 Pre-Requisite Knowledge <i>What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?</i>	 Pitch Up <i>How will we challenge ourselves?</i>
Students build directly upon Term 1, where they investigated Mary Blair and Tim Burton and explored how illustration and character design can communicate mood, personality and narrative. They already have a bank of research and visual influences from which to develop their own original puppet concepts. They also draw upon their Year 7 knowledge of the Design Wheel, colour theory and textile processes. Previous experience of hand sewing, machine sewing, printing and construction means students are increasingly able to consider not simply what a design should look like, but how it might actually be made. This marks an important progression from Year 7. Students are expected to work with greater independence when generating ideas and to explain and justify their choices rather than relying upon heavily directed design outcomes. The existing Year 8 curriculum specifically expects students to improve their creativity, accuracy and ability to work independently throughout the planning, designing and manufacturing process.	Students move beyond producing a single attractive drawing by developing several possibilities and refining ideas in response to the brief. They are challenged to explain how specific visual decisions communicate character and how their research has influenced their design without simply being copied. Students increasingly consider manufacturability when making decisions: whether shapes can be constructed successfully, how textile pieces may need to be joined and how decorative features could be achieved using the techniques available. More confident students produce detailed, well-annotated designs that demonstrate originality and clearly communicate both the visual appearance and practical intentions for their final puppet. This prepares them to enter the making phase with a purposeful plan rather than designing as they construct.
 Wider Framework <i>How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?</i>	 Curriculum Hinterland <i>What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?</i>
Term 2 provides the essential bridge between research and manufacture. The decisions students make here will directly inform Terms 3 and 4, where the curriculum moves into constructing and embellishing the puppet using hand-sewing techniques.	Students deepen their understanding of the role of design development within creative industries. Characters seen in theatre, animation and film do not usually emerge fully formed: visual ideas are sketched, altered and refined repeatedly before a final outcome is approved. The work of Mary Blair and Tim Burton continues to provide the contextual foundation, helping students appreciate how a distinctive visual style can

Students therefore begin to appreciate why careful design development matters: shortcomings within planning can create practical difficulties later, while clear design decisions support more confident and efficient manufacture.

The ability to respond to a brief, develop ideas and communicate a final design will continue to be strengthened in Year 9 and provides important preparation for KS4 creative design work. The original curriculum identifies researching, analysing, presenting and independently improving work as important foundations for more advanced creative projects.

influence character, storytelling and audience response across illustration, film, animation and popular culture.

Students therefore begin seeing their sketchbook or workbook not simply as somewhere to produce finished drawings, but as a place where creative thinking develops visibly over time.



Authentic connections

How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?

Students develop confidence in their own creative identity by turning external influences into original ideas. They reflect upon what gives a character personality and how visual choices can communicate emotions, humour or atmosphere. Students learn to respect differing creative responses to the same brief, recognising that there can be many successful solutions rather than one correct design. The project also reinforces the role of character design and storytelling within popular culture. This term has strong links with Art and Design through observational analysis, drawing, colour and design development, and with English through characterisation, personality and narrative. Students also draw upon Mathematics when considering proportion and how two-dimensional designs will translate into practical textile components.

Careers Framework Skills: Planning, Adapting and Listening

Students develop planning by organising the steps needed to progress from initial ideas towards a final design. Adapting develops as students review and modify ideas in response to the brief, practical limitations and feedback. Listening is developed through responding carefully to teacher guidance and peer feedback before making purposeful improvements.



Careers: Puppet Maker, Theatre Props Designer and Textile Product Designer

Students explore how a Puppet Maker combines character design with specialist construction skills to create puppets for theatre, film and performance; how a Theatre Props Designer develops practical objects that support storytelling and production; and how a Textile Product Designer develops ideas into functional products using appropriate materials and manufacturing processes.

Students learn that effective planning improves the quality of practical outcomes. The ability to explore alternatives, respond to feedback and refine an idea before committing to a final solution is useful within creative work, problem solving and everyday decision-making.

Students strengthen planning, visual communication, decision-making, annotation, independent thinking, self-evaluation and the ability to refine ideas constructively in response to feedback.

	Resources <i>What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?</i>		Assessment <i>How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?</i>
- Students' Term 1 mood boards and research on Mary Blair and Tim Burton. - Department exemplars showing puppet idea development and finished outcomes. - Drawing and annotation materials. - Existing Design Wheel resources. - Students' Year 7 textile technique samples to support decisions about manufacture. - Teacher modelling of idea development and refinement.		Formative assessment takes place through students' design development, annotation, questioning and teacher feedback. Students demonstrate how effectively they can respond to the brief, refine their ideas and communicate a purposeful final puppet design. Substantive Knowledge: Students demonstrate understanding of design briefs, idea development, character design, annotation, refinement and the relationship between designing and manufacture. Disciplinary Knowledge: Students demonstrate their ability to generate and refine original ideas, respond to feedback and develop a final design that is both visually purposeful and achievable using appropriate textile processes.	
Term 3 Topic		Puppet Theatre Project: Constructing and Embellishing the Puppet	
	Big Picture <i>What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?</i>		
This term marks the transition from designing to making within the Puppet Theatre Project. Students begin constructing the puppet developed during Terms 1 and 2, applying their existing textile knowledge to turn a two-dimensional character design into a three-dimensional textile product. The curriculum specifically identifies Terms 3 and 4 as the stage where students construct and embellish their puppet using hand-sewing techniques. Term 3 therefore focuses on establishing the construction securely and accurately, while beginning to apply decorative details that communicate the character's personality and connect the finished outcome to the original design. Students are expected to demonstrate greater independence than in Year 7, selecting and applying previously learned skills rather than encountering hand sewing for the first time.			
	Zoom In <i>What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?</i>		
Students begin by revisiting their final puppet design and considering how it must be translated into separate textile components before construction can begin. They recognise that the making stage remains part of the Design Wheel and that designs may need to be adapted when practical challenges arise. Across the term, students explore questions including:			

- How can a two-dimensional design be transformed into a textile puppet?
- How should we organise the stages of construction?
- Which hand-sewing techniques are appropriate for different parts of the puppet?
- How can fabric be joined securely and accurately?
- How do we achieve consistent, high-quality stitching?
- How can embellishment communicate character and personality?
- How can colour, texture and decorative details enhance the original design?
- What should we do when a practical process does not work as expected?

Students draw upon their Year 7 experience of hand sewing and textile construction, but the expectation now moves beyond producing individual technique samples. Stitches must be applied purposefully within a complete product. Students prepare and construct the main elements of their puppet, considering accuracy, positioning, secure joins and quality of finish. They develop greater control over hand-sewing processes and recognise how stitch choice and practical precision influence both the appearance and durability of the outcome.

As construction develops, students begin embellishing their puppet. Decorative features are selected to enhance the character rather than being added without purpose. Students refer to their design work and consider how details such as colour, shape, texture and applied decoration can communicate the personality, mood or visual identity established during Terms 1 and 2. Students also begin to make increasingly independent practical decisions. When difficulties occur, they are encouraged to identify the cause, consider possible solutions and adapt their approach rather than immediately relying upon teacher intervention.

Substantive knowledge is developed through students' understanding of hand sewing, construction, joining, stitch selection, embellishment, decorative techniques, accuracy, quality, finish and textile components. Applied and disciplinary knowledge develops as students interpret their design, sequence practical processes, apply appropriate hand-sewing techniques and adapt their work to construct and embellish an increasingly accurate textile outcome.

Key vocabulary is introduced and revisited throughout the term, including construction, component, hand sewing, stitch, seam, join, embellishment, decoration, texture, accuracy, durability, finish, quality and adaptation.

 Pre-Requisite Knowledge <i>What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?</i>	 Pitch Up <i>How will we challenge ourselves?</i>
Students draw directly upon their Year 7 hand-sewing experience, where they learned how textile materials can be joined and decorated using thread and developed an understanding of accuracy, safety and finishing. Year 7 explicitly introduced hand sewing before students progressed into machine sewing and making a sewn product.	Students are challenged to move beyond demonstrating that they can sew towards demonstrating that they can sew accurately and purposefully as part of a sustained textile project. Greater emphasis is placed on consistency, secure construction and quality of finish. Students are expected to identify weaknesses in their practical work and make corrections during construction rather than accepting the first outcome.

Terms 1 and 2 of Year 8 have provided the specific foundations for this project. Students have researched Mary Blair and Tim Burton, responded to the project brief and developed an original puppet design. They therefore enter Term 3 with both the technical foundations and a purposeful design. The challenge is now to combine the two successfully, applying previously learned techniques with greater independence and precision.	More confident students make increasingly independent decisions about stitch selection and embellishment, carefully controlling decorative details so that they enhance rather than overwhelm the character design. The wider Year 8 curriculum expects students to develop greater creativity, accuracy and independence throughout planning and manufacture.
 Wider Framework <i>How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?</i>	 Curriculum Hinterland <i>What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?</i>
Term 3 begins a two-term construction phase. Students will continue constructing and embellishing their puppet during Term 4, allowing sufficient time for practical techniques to be developed carefully rather than rushing towards a finished product. The department's curriculum deliberately allocates both Terms 3 and 4 to this process. The sustained practical project also prepares students for Year 9, where they will independently design and manufacture a tote bag, using machine sewing, embellishment and printing techniques.	Students deepen their understanding of puppet making as a specialist form of textile construction. A puppet must fulfil both a visual and practical purpose: it needs to communicate a recognisable character while also being sufficiently secure and functional to be used within a performance. This allows students to recognise that creative textile products often need to balance aesthetics and function. Decorative decisions affect how an audience interprets the character, while construction decisions determine whether the product works successfully. The project therefore begins to connect textile manufacture with the wider worlds of theatre, performance, costume and character production.
 Authentic connections <i>How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?</i>	
Students develop confidence and pride through seeing an original character begin to emerge from their own practical work. Sustained making encourages patience, perseverance and satisfaction in developing a specialist practical skill. Students appreciate the time, skill and craftsmanship involved in handmade textile products and creative performance industries. They also learn to respect shared equipment and work responsibly within a practical environment. Strong links continue with Art and Design through colour, texture, character and visual composition. Connections with Drama become increasingly important as students consider how their finished puppet will eventually function within a performance. Mathematical thinking supports measurement, proportion, positioning and accuracy during construction.	

Careers Framework Skills: Problem Solving, Adapting and Teamwork

Students develop Problem Solving when identifying why a construction process has not worked and selecting an appropriate solution. Adapting develops as students modify designs or techniques in response to practical difficulties. Teamwork is developed through sharing specialist equipment responsibly, supporting safe working and helping to maintain an effective practical environment.



Careers: Theatrical Costume Maker, Textile Craftsperson and Wardrobe Technician

Students explore how a Theatrical Costume Maker translates creative designs into constructed textile outcomes, how a Textile Craftsperson uses specialist hand techniques to produce detailed products, and how a Wardrobe Technician maintains, repairs and prepares textile pieces for use within performances.

Students further develop hand-sewing skills that can be used for repairing, adapting and creating textile products beyond school. They also develop perseverance and confidence in solving practical problems independently. Students develop dexterity, accuracy, patience, organisation, resilience, independent decision-making and attention to detail. They increasingly learn that mistakes within practical work can be analysed, corrected and used to improve subsequent outcomes.

	Resources <i>What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?</i>		Assessment <i>How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?</i>
	- Students' completed puppet designs and Term 1 artist research. - Department Puppet Theatre Project resources. - Teacher demonstrations of the hand-sewing techniques already taught within the curriculum. - Department puppet exemplars and practical samples. - Fabric, thread, needles and existing specialist Textiles equipment. - Embellishment and decorative materials used within the department project. - Visual construction guides and health and safety resources. - Students' Year 7 sewing samples for reference.		Formative assessment takes place through practical observation, questioning and review of students' developing puppets. Students demonstrate their ability to construct securely, apply hand-sewing techniques accurately and begin embellishing their product purposefully. Substantive Knowledge: Students demonstrate understanding of hand-sewing processes, textile construction, joining, embellishment, accuracy and quality of finish. Disciplinary Knowledge: Students demonstrate their ability to translate a design into a constructed textile outcome, apply appropriate techniques with increasing independence and adapt their practical work when problems arise.

Topic 4

Topic



Puppet Theatre Project: Refining, Embellishing and Completing the Puppet



Big Picture

What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?

This term continues the practical construction phase of the Puppet Theatre Project, with students refining and completing the puppet begun in Term 3. The curriculum deliberately allocates Terms 3 and 4 to constructing the puppet and embellishing it using hand-sewing techniques, allowing students to develop accuracy and craftsmanship rather than rushing the making process.

The emphasis now shifts from basic construction towards refinement, embellishment and quality of finish. Students consider how decorative details can strengthen the personality and visual identity established within their original character design while ensuring that their puppet remains secure and functional.

Students are increasingly expected to manage their own practical progress, identify what remains to be completed and make informed decisions about how to improve the quality of their finished outcome.



Zoom In

What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?

Students begin by reviewing the progress made during Term 3, comparing their developing puppet with the original design and identifying the practical stages still required.

Across the term, students explore questions including:

- How successfully does our puppet reflect the original design?
- Which areas of construction need refining or improving?
- How can hand-sewing techniques be applied with greater accuracy?
- How can embellishment communicate character, mood and personality?
- How can colour, texture and decorative details improve the overall design?
- What makes an embellishment purposeful rather than simply decorative?
- How can we improve the quality and durability of the finished puppet?
- How do we know when a textile product is successfully finished?

Students continue applying the hand-sewing techniques developed previously, but greater attention is now given to consistency, control and finishing. They check that joins are secure, practical components are correctly positioned and the puppet can withstand being handled during the performance stage of the project. Embellishment becomes increasingly important. Students use decorative textile techniques to communicate features of their character, referring back to the visual influences and design decisions established through their Mary Blair and Tim Burton research.

Students are encouraged to consider the relationship between aesthetics and function. Decorative details should improve the appearance and character of the puppet without preventing it from working effectively as a performance product. Throughout the term, students evaluate their work as it develops. They identify areas requiring improvement, correct practical faults and adapt aspects of the original design where necessary. This reinforces the idea that the Design Wheel is iterative and that successful designers refine their work throughout manufacture.

Substantive knowledge is developed through students' understanding of embellishment, hand sewing, textile construction, refinement, decorative techniques, durability, function, aesthetics, accuracy, quality and finishing. Applied and disciplinary knowledge develops as students refine construction, select and apply appropriate embellishments, solve practical problems and make judgements about the quality and functionality of their finished puppet.

Key vocabulary is introduced and revisited throughout the term, including embellishment, refinement, construction, stitch, join, decorative, functional, aesthetics, durability, accuracy, craftsmanship, quality and finish.

	Pre-Requisite Knowledge <i>What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?</i>		Pitch Up <i>How will we challenge ourselves?</i>
	Students bring together learning from the whole project so far. Their research into Mary Blair and Tim Burton has provided an understanding of character, mood and visual style, while Term 2 required them to transform these influences into an original puppet design. During Term 3, students began translating that design into a textile product using their existing hand-sewing and construction skills. They have already encountered practical challenges and begun adapting their approach where necessary. Their Year 7 Textiles experience also provides important foundations in sewing, decoration, accuracy and evaluation. Term 4 now expects students to apply those techniques with greater independence, consistency and control, reflecting their progression through KS3.		Students are challenged to move beyond simply finishing their puppet towards refining it to achieve a higher-quality outcome. They critically inspect stitching, joins, positioning and decorative details and identify specific improvements before declaring the product complete. More confident students demonstrate greater precision in their hand sewing and use embellishment selectively, recognising that additional decoration does not automatically improve a design. Instead, decorative choices should contribute to the character and remain consistent with the original creative intentions. Students are also expected to manage their time and practical workload with increasing independence, deciding which aspects of the puppet require the greatest attention before the end of the making phase.
	Wider Framework <i>How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?</i>		Curriculum Hinterland <i>What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?</i>
	Completing the puppet prepares students directly for Term 5, when the project expands from an individual textile product into a wider theatrical production. Students will make machine-sewn backdrops and plan a production that responds to the original brief. This creates an important progression in the project. Students move from designing a character → constructing the character → creating the environment and production in which that character will be used.		Students develop a wider appreciation of craftsmanship and finishing within professional creative production. Products intended for theatre or performance must not only look effective from an audience's perspective but also withstand repeated handling and use. They begin to recognise that professional textile makers often work from another person's concept or design and must interpret that visual information accurately while making practical decisions during manufacture.

The sustained construction experience also prepares students for Year 9, where they will be expected to apply machine sewing, printing and embellishment with increasing independence when constructing a functional tote bag.	The project therefore strengthens the connection between illustration, textile design, theatre and performance, showing students how different creative disciplines contribute to a shared final outcome.
 Authentic connections <i>How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?</i>	
Students experience pride in bringing an original character from initial research and sketches through to a completed physical product. They develop confidence in their practical ability and recognise how patience and refinement can significantly improve an outcome. Students develop respect for craftsmanship and the time involved in producing handmade textile products. They work responsibly within a shared practical environment and begin preparing their individual work to contribute to the collaborative performance later in the project. Strong connections with Art and Design continue through colour, texture, composition and visual refinement. Drama becomes increasingly relevant because the puppet must function successfully within a performance, while Mathematics supports accurate positioning, proportion and measurement. Careers Framework Skills: Planning, Problem Solving and Leadership Students develop planning by identifying the remaining stages required to complete their product within the available time. Problem Solving develops through diagnosing and correcting construction faults. Leadership is developed as students take increasing responsibility for their own practical progress, safe equipment use and contribution to an effective working environment. Careers: Puppet Fabricator, Theatrical Textile Artist and Production Maker Students explore how a Puppet Fabricator transforms character designs into durable physical puppets, how a Theatrical Textile Artist uses specialist textile and decorative processes to create visually distinctive pieces for performance, and how a Production Maker interprets designs and manufactures finished items to an agreed standard. Students strengthen practical sewing skills that can be transferred to textile repair, alteration and independent creative projects. They also learn the importance of reviewing work carefully before considering a task complete. Students develop independence, perseverance, time management, accuracy, quality control, practical problem solving and attention to detail. They learn that successful outcomes are often achieved through refinement rather than getting everything right first time.   	
 Resources <i>What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?</i> • Students' original puppet designs and research. • Developing puppets from Term 3. • Department Puppet Theatre Project exemplars. • Teacher demonstrations of existing hand-sewing and embellishment techniques.	 Assessment <i>How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?</i> Practical assessment focuses on how successfully students construct, embellish and refine their puppet, considering independence, accuracy, appropriate technique selection and quality of finish.

- Fabric, thread, needles and decorative materials used within the project.
- Practical quality and finishing examples.
- Visual guides supporting independent construction.
- Existing health and safety guidance for Textiles.

Substantive Knowledge: Students demonstrate understanding of construction, hand sewing, embellishment, refinement, function, durability and quality of finish.

Disciplinary Knowledge: Students demonstrate their ability to apply and refine textile techniques independently, solve practical problems and produce a completed puppet that successfully combines character, appearance and function.

Term 5

Topic



Puppet Theatre Project: Making the Backdrop and Planning the Production



Big Picture

What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?

This term expands the Puppet Theatre Project beyond the individual puppet and asks students to consider how their textile work will function as part of a complete theatrical production. Having designed, constructed and embellished their puppet, students now create machine-sewn backdrops and plan a production that meets the original project brief. This is the specific focus identified for Term 5 in the department's curriculum.

Students return to the machine-sewing skills introduced in Year 7, applying them within a new and more purposeful context. Alongside practical making, they begin to think collaboratively about setting, character and performance, recognising that successful design for theatre requires different creative elements to work together.



Zoom In

What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?

Students begin by considering the role of a backdrop within a theatrical production and how it can establish setting, atmosphere and context for an audience. They use the characters and ideas already developed within the Puppet Theatre Project to inform the visual direction of their backdrop.

Across the term, students explore questions including:

- What purpose does a backdrop serve within a theatrical production?
- How can colour, shape and visual details communicate setting and atmosphere?
- How should a backdrop relate to the puppets and characters already created?
- How can machine sewing be used to construct a textile backdrop?
- How can we apply our Year 7 machine-sewing skills with greater independence?
- How can different ideas be combined successfully within one production?
- How should a performance be planned so that it meets the original brief?
- How can we organise roles, resources and time effectively?

Students revisit the sewing machine, applying previously learned safety procedures and construction skills when making their backdrop. Unlike Year 7, where machine sewing was introduced as a specialist technique, students are now expected to use that prior knowledge with greater confidence as part of a larger creative outcome. Students consider the visual appearance of the backdrop, making purposeful decisions about how it complements the puppet characters and contributes to the overall production. Previous learning about colour, formal elements, mood and visual communication therefore continues to influence their practical work.

The second strand of the term focuses upon planning the production. Students consider how their completed puppets and backdrop will be brought together within a performance that responds to the project brief. They begin organising ideas, sequencing elements of the performance and considering how individual contributions can form part of a coherent final outcome. This introduces a stronger collaborative dimension to the project. Students need to communicate ideas, listen to others and make shared decisions rather than working entirely on an individual textile product.

Substantive knowledge is developed through students' understanding of backdrops, machine sewing, construction, setting, atmosphere, production, performance, design brief, planning and visual communication. Applied and disciplinary knowledge develops as students apply machine-sewing skills to a new textile outcome, make visual decisions appropriate to a theatrical setting and collaboratively plan how different creative elements can be combined within a production.

Key vocabulary is introduced and revisited throughout the term, including backdrop, setting, atmosphere, production, performance, machine sewing, construction, visual communication, composition, planning, sequence, collaboration and design brief.

 Pre-Requisite Knowledge <i>What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?</i>	 Pitch Up <i>How will we challenge ourselves?</i>
Students draw upon learning from both Year 7 and the Year 8 project so far. In Year 7, they developed foundational machine-sewing skills alongside knowledge of colour, textile construction and the Design Wheel. The Year 7 curriculum explicitly introduced sewing-machine skills before students applied their textile knowledge within a sewn product. During Year 8, students have researched Mary Blair and Tim Burton, developed an original character, planned and constructed their puppet and refined it using hand-sewing and embellishment techniques. Students now apply these accumulated skills within a broader context. Rather than designing one object in isolation, they must consider how several designed elements relate to one another and contribute towards a shared purpose.	Students are challenged to apply their machine-sewing knowledge with greater independence and accuracy, recalling previously learned procedures rather than treating the sewing machine as an unfamiliar piece of equipment. They also move beyond designing individual elements towards considering visual coherence. The backdrop should not simply be decorative; its colour, imagery and overall appearance should complement the characters and help communicate setting and atmosphere. Planning the performance increases the level of challenge further. Students must balance their own ideas with those of others, respond constructively when ideas conflict and organise a realistic production that can be completed and presented successfully in Term 6.
 Wider Framework <i>How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?</i>	 Curriculum Hinterland <i>What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?</i>

Term 5 prepares students directly for the culmination of the project in Term 6, when the curriculum requires students to present the products they have made through a theatre performance and evaluate the project. The term also strengthens the progression towards Year 9. Students will later be expected to design and construct textile products using machine sewing, embellishment and printing with increasing independence. Year 9 specifically requires students to trial machine-sewing and printing techniques before constructing and embellishing a tote bag. Students are therefore moving from learning textile processes in Year 7, to applying them within a creative production in Year 8, before independently selecting and combining them within functional products in Year 9.	Students explore the relationship between textile design and theatrical production, recognising that the visual world seen by an audience is created through the combined work of many different specialists. A backdrop contributes to setting and atmosphere, while puppets communicate character and narrative. Bringing these together helps students understand that creative industries are often collaborative: designers and makers need to work within a shared concept rather than producing unrelated individual outcomes. This broadens students' understanding of Textiles beyond clothing and fashion and demonstrates how textile skills can contribute to theatre, performance and set production.
Authentic connections <i>How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?</i>	
Students experience the satisfaction of seeing individual creative work become part of a larger shared outcome. They explore how setting, imagery and colour can create atmosphere and influence how an audience experiences a story. Collaboration becomes particularly important this term. Students learn to listen to different viewpoints, negotiate creative decisions and recognise that successful group outcomes depend upon individuals fulfilling their responsibilities. There are particularly strong connections with Drama, as students plan how their textile products will function within a performance, and Art and Design through composition, colour, setting and visual communication. Links with English develop through narrative, sequencing and planning how characters and setting contribute to storytelling. Careers Framework Skills: Teamwork, Listening and Leadership Students develop Teamwork by combining individual creative contributions within a shared production. Listening develops through responding to the ideas of others and negotiating group decisions. Leadership is developed as students take responsibility for aspects of planning, organisation and practical production. Careers: Set Designer, Scenic Artist and Theatre Production Manager Students explore how a Set Designer develops the visual environment for a performance, how a Scenic Artist creates and finishes backgrounds and scenery, and how a Theatre Production Manager coordinates the practical elements required to bring a production together. Students develop confidence in collaborative planning, organising tasks and working towards a shared deadline. They also strengthen practical machine-sewing skills that can be applied to future textile projects, repairs and independent making. Students develop collaboration, communication, organisation, time management, practical independence and shared decision-making. They also learn how to balance their own ideas with the needs of a wider team.   	

 Resources <i>What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?</i>	 Assessment <i>How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?</i>
- Students' completed puppets and original design work. - Department Puppet Theatre Project resources and exemplars. - Sewing machines and existing specialist Textiles equipment. - Fabrics, threads and materials used to construct the backdrops. - Teacher demonstrations and existing sewing-machine safety guidance. - Visual examples and department resources supporting backdrop development. - Planning materials used to organise the final production. - Existing Fashion and Textiles resources from the Year 8 project.	Formative assessment focuses on students' ability to apply machine-sewing techniques safely and accurately, contribute to the construction of the backdrop and participate effectively in planning a production that meets the brief. Substantive Knowledge: Students demonstrate understanding of machine sewing, backdrop construction, setting, atmosphere, performance planning and the requirements of the project brief. Disciplinary Knowledge: Students demonstrate their ability to apply existing textile skills in a new context, make purposeful visual decisions and work collaboratively to plan and prepare a coherent theatrical production.
Term 6 Topic	 Puppet Theatre Project: Performance, Presentation and Evaluation
 Big Picture <i>What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?</i>	
This term brings the Year 8 Puppet Theatre Project to its conclusion. Students bring together the puppets and backdrops created across the year to present their work through a theatre performance before evaluating the project and their own development. This completes the journey from artist research and initial character design through to manufacture, collaboration, presentation and reflection. The focus is no longer simply on whether students have produced a successful textile product. They consider how well their puppet functions within its intended context, how effectively the different elements of the production work together and how successfully their final outcome responds to the original brief. Students also revisit the Design Wheel, recognising that presentation and evaluation are integral parts of the design process. They use evidence from across the project to identify strengths, areas for improvement and the practical skills they need to develop further as they progress towards Year 9.	
 Zoom In <i>What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?</i>	
Students begin by completing final preparations for their production, bringing together the puppet, backdrop, character and planned performance developed during previous terms. They consider how their textile products will be presented effectively to an audience and ensure that each element is ready for use. Across the term, students explore questions including: How can we present our textile products effectively to an audience?	

- How successfully does the puppet communicate its intended character and personality?
- How effectively does the backdrop establish setting and atmosphere?
- How can individual contributions work together within a successful performance?
- Does the completed production respond to the original project brief?
- Which textile techniques have we applied most successfully?
- How has our practical work developed since Year 7?
- What would we change or improve if we completed the project again?
- What skills do we need to develop further in Year 9?

Students use their completed products within a theatre performance, giving the practical work an authentic purpose beyond simply producing an object for assessment. They consider how character, setting and visual design contribute to communicating a narrative to an audience. The collaborative nature of the performance requires students to coordinate their contributions, communicate effectively and respond to one another. This reinforces the idea that many creative industries depend upon specialists combining their individual skills to produce a shared outcome. Following the performance, students evaluate the project. They consider both the finished textile outcomes and the processes used to create them, drawing upon their experience of research, design development, hand sewing, embellishment, machine sewing and collaborative production planning. Evaluation should move beyond simple statements of preference. Students use evidence to explain what was successful, identify areas that could have been improved and consider how effectively the final outcomes met the original brief.

Substantive knowledge is developed through students' understanding of presentation, performance, audience, evaluation, design brief, success criteria, quality, function, feedback and refinement. Applied and disciplinary knowledge develops as students present their products within their intended context, evaluate the success of the design-and-make process and use evidence and feedback to identify meaningful improvements.

Key vocabulary is introduced and revisited throughout the term, including performance, presentation, audience, evaluation, reflection, feedback, function, success criteria, design brief, quality, improvement and refinement.

 Pre-Requisite Knowledge <i>What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?</i>	 Pitch Up <i>How will we challenge ourselves?</i>
Students draw upon the entire Year 8 project. They began by researching Mary Blair and Tim Burton and considering how visual style communicates character, mood and narrative. They then developed an original puppet design before constructing and embellishing it using textile techniques. In Term 5, students broadened the project by using their machine-sewing knowledge to produce a backdrop and collaboratively planning how the different elements could be combined within a theatrical production.	Students are challenged to evaluate their work using specific evidence rather than general statements. They consider the quality of textile construction, accuracy of techniques, effectiveness of embellishment, relationship to the original design and how successfully the puppet functioned within the performance. More confident students recognise that different parts of the project may have different strengths. A visually successful puppet, for example, may still have weaknesses in construction or functionality. Students therefore make

Students also bring forward the evaluation skills introduced in Year 7 Textiles. However, Year 8 requires them to make more detailed judgements because they are evaluating not only an individual product but also how effectively that product functions as part of a larger creative outcome.	increasingly balanced judgements rather than simply deciding whether the project was "good" or "bad". Students are also challenged to identify precise feedforward targets that can be carried into Year 9 rather than vague intentions such as "make it neater".
 Wider Framework <i>How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?</i>	 Curriculum Hinterland <i>What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?</i>
Term 6 completes the Year 8 journey through the Design Wheel and provides an important bridge into Year 9 Textiles. Students have progressed from the more supported practical foundations established in Year 7 towards a sustained project requiring them to research, design, construct, embellish, collaborate, present and evaluate. In Year 9, these accumulated skills will support greater independence as students design and manufacture a printed tote bag, applying machine sewing, printing and embellishment within a functional product. The feedforward generated this term therefore has a genuine purpose: students identify the practical and design skills they need to strengthen before entering the next stage of the Textiles curriculum.	Students develop an appreciation of the importance of presentation and audience within creative industries. Products created for theatre and performance are designed to be seen and used within a particular context, meaning their success cannot always be judged simply by examining them in isolation. The completed project also demonstrates how several creative disciplines can contribute to one production. Illustration, character design, textiles, set design and performance all combine within the final outcome, helping students recognise the collaborative nature of professional creative work. Students also understand that evaluation is used professionally to improve future products and productions. Feedback from users and audiences can inform subsequent design decisions rather than simply providing a judgement on completed work.
 Authentic connections <i>How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?</i>	
Students reflect upon their personal development and experience the satisfaction of seeing an idea progress from initial research into a completed product and performance. Presenting their work helps develop confidence and pride in their creative achievements. The final performance requires students to respect the contributions of others and recognise that a successful shared outcome depends upon cooperation and responsibility. Students also develop confidence in giving and receiving constructive feedback. There are particularly strong links with Drama through performance, audience and presentation, and with English through character, narrative and communication. Art and Design remains connected through visual evaluation and critique. Careers Framework Skills: Speaking, Teamwork and Listening Students develop Speaking by presenting and communicating through the final production. Teamwork develops as students coordinate their individual products and responsibilities within a shared performance. Listening is strengthened through responding to others during rehearsal, performance and evaluation and through receiving constructive feedback.	



Careers: Puppeteer, Theatre Director and Creative Producer

Students explore how a Puppeteer brings a designed and manufactured character to life through performance, how a Theatre Director coordinates performers and creative elements to communicate a story effectively, and how a Creative Producer helps bring together the people and practical elements required to deliver a finished creative production.

Students develop confidence in presenting their work, collaborating with others and reflecting constructively upon their own performance. They learn that feedback is most useful when it leads to a clear next step rather than simply identifying what went wrong. Students strengthen communication, collaboration, reflection, self-assessment, confidence, organisation and the ability to respond constructively to feedback. They also develop greater awareness of their own strengths and areas for development.

	Resources <i>What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?</i>		Assessment <i>How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?</i>
	- Students completed puppets and textile backdrops. - Original design briefs, artist research and design-development work. - Performance plans developed during Term 5. - Department Puppet Theatre Project resources and exemplars. - Evaluation and reflection materials. - Success criteria and teacher feedback. - Existing Year 8 Fashion and Textiles resources.		Students present their completed products through the theatre performance and complete the final evaluation of the project. Assessment considers both their understanding of the textile processes developed across the year and their ability to evaluate how successfully the final outcome responds to the brief. Substantive Knowledge: Students demonstrate understanding of the design process, textile techniques, construction, embellishment, presentation, performance and evaluation developed throughout the project. Disciplinary Knowledge: Students demonstrate their ability to present a completed textile product in its intended context, evaluate its success using evidence and identify meaningful improvements and feedforward targets for future Textiles work.