



Skills of the Huguenots - Weaving: Lesson Plan

Class	Key Stage	Time	Curriculum Areas
Year 3-6	2	90 - 120 minutes (dependent on art activities)	History (local / topic after 1066) Art and Design – materials, fabric design, weaving, Citizenship – British Values

Learning Objectives:

- To understand who the Huguenots were and where they came from
- To understand some skills of the Huguenots
- Understand some of the weaving process
- Carry out and create a basic weave and / or pattern design

There are links in the lesson plan mainly to the Huguenots of Spitalfields website. Pages from there can be downloaded or used as fact sheets or reading material as part of the lesson too.

Teacher / student activities	Timings	Resources	Notes
<p><i>Introduction:</i></p> <p>Explain that the Huguenots were French Protestants who came to England in the 17th century to escape persecution from the French Catholics. They were Britain's first refugees, and many settled in Spitalfields in Tower Hamlets London. They were very skilled and talented people including bankers, artists, architects and weavers.</p>	0.00-0.03	Slide 2 The image is the Huguenot cross. More information on faith is here .	
<p><i>Skills of the Huguenots</i></p> <p>Explain that the Huguenots brought many skills with them they settled in England: Silversmithing, brewing (making beer), cartography (maps), literary (Roget - explain what a thesaurus is), military, science.</p> <p>Banking and making bank notes</p> <p>Some wealthy Huguenot merchants made an important contribution to the setting up of the Bank</p>	0.03-0.9	Slides 3 - 9	

<p>of England in the 1690s (whose first Governor, Sir John Houblon, was a Huguenot).</p> <p>The Bank of England needed protective paper for their banknotes and Henri Portal (remember him?) agreed to manufacture a better kind of paper than they had been using previously. It was stronger with better definition and clarity, which greatly reduced the risk of forgery, and in 1727 Henry Portal obtained the privilege of making the notes of the Bank of England. His company also invented the metallic thread incorporated into the paper</p>			
<p><i>Luxury Goods</i></p> <p>These were often jobs and work that required a great deal of training. For this reason, these were often luxury goods. None more so than weaving!</p>	0.10	Slide 10	
<p><i>Huguenots – Master Weavers</i></p> <p>Discussion: Ask the children what the images are of on the slide (a shoe, a waistcoat)?</p> <p>Who wore them? (wealthy people)</p> <p>Would they be worn by ordinary people to school for example? (balls, expensive parties etc)</p> <p>Huguenot silk weavers brought new skills to England and settled in Canterbury, Norwich and Spitalfields in London. English weavers resented the Huguenots at first as they feared the loss of their business caused by the new arrivals. However, the Huguenots brought with them the new fashions from France and the skills with which to create sophisticated ball gowns and beautiful fabric.</p>	0.11 – 0.15	Slide 11	
<p><i>Mrs Fanshawe’s Dress</i></p> <p>Mrs Fanshawe’s Dress (1750s) is in the Museum of London. It is made from silk woven in Spitalfields, 14 different colours and silver thread entwined.</p> <p>Can ask: Would it be comfortable to wear? Who would have worn it? How expensive is it?</p>	0.15 – 0.18	Slide 12 There is more on Mrs Fanshawe’s Dress here .	

<p>We'll come back to this dress later!</p>			
<p><i>Silk</i></p> <p>Silk is a natural fabric as the fibres come from living things.</p> <p>From the website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A female moth lays 300-500 tiny eggs and after around 10 days, the larvae (silkworms) hatch. – The silkworms feed solely on large amounts of leaves from the mulberry tree for around 30-40 days. – The silkworms shed their skin up to four times, or molt, as they continue to eat and grow. – After their final molt, the silkworm builds a cocoon around itself. The cocoon is a protective casing spun from silk. – Inside the cocoon, the silkworm changes into a pupa, the stage between larvae and adult moths. – After around two weeks, the pupa emerges from the cocoon as an adult moth. – The adult moth looks for a mate so that the female can lay more eggs and begin the cycle again.- The thread from a mulberry cocoon when unwound can be 900 metres long 	<p>0.18 – 0.25</p>	<p>Slides 13-15</p> <p>Activity: Print out Slide 13 to colour or add details onto.</p> <p>Activity: As a group, discuss how different fabrics have different properties, using examples such as silk, wool, leather etc. Get a range of different fabrics or ask children to bring in examples. As a group, look at and discuss the fabrics.</p>	
<p><i>Spitalfields</i></p> <p>Explain where Spitalfields is – map of London, east London. Mainly working class, industry (houses), between the City and the Port of London.</p> <p>Over 20,000 Huguenots came to live and work in Spitalfields. That's more people than could fit in the O2 arena!</p> <p>Silk weaving was the main occupation for these people and it made the Master Weavers and owners of the houses, workshops or small factories very wealthy.</p>	<p>0.25- 0.30</p>	<p>Slide 17</p> <p>There is more on the towns Huguenots settled in here</p> <p>Could use map of London to locate Spitalfields and see where it is.</p>	

		Or use the Tube Map.	
<p><i>Dresses, Weaving and Silk</i></p> <p>Use the slides to explore 17thC and 18thC fashion. Explain that even wealthy ladies had very few dresses</p> <p>Have the children seen Cinderella or other programmes with these dresses? Beauty and The Beast etc.</p> <p>Can ask: Why is silk a luxury product? What does that mean?</p>	0.30-0.35	Slides 17 - 19 There is more on silk here	
<p><i>Value of Silk</i></p> <p>More on Mrs Fanshawe's Dress</p> <p>Explain an heirloom.</p> <p>What does the doll tell us about fashion?</p>	0.35 – 0.40	Slides 20 More on silk weaving and different roles here.	
<p><i>Silk Weaving Jobs</i></p> <p>A draw boy – to operate a draw loom, the weaver needed the assistance of a boy to pull the cords controlling the pattern harness</p> <p>Throwsters – had to de-gum and withdraw silk from cocoons to make the silk thread for use in weaving.</p> <p>Winders – made sure bobbins were filled with thread and placed in a bobbin rack in readiness for the warper.</p> <p>Dyers – produced bright stable (i.e. ones that did not change colour) dyes.</p> <p>Pattern Designers – see slide.</p> <p><i>Activity:</i> Ask the children to design a simple silk pattern from flowers. Use examples on presentation plus a newer interpretation as inspiration</p>	0.50-0.60	Slides 21 - 24 More on silk weaving and different roles here.	

		Could add 15 – 30 minutes for an art / drawing activity. Provide graph paper	
<p><i>Master Weavers</i></p> <p>Differences between the groups at extremes of the silk industry. Master Weavers in charge, merchants, bought and sold silk and silk products.</p> <p>Might need to explain some of the words on 25, dependant on class age / literacy.</p> <p>This is an example of a Master Weaver’s house in Spitalfields (18thC). Slide 26</p>	0.60-0.65	Slides 25 - 26	
<p><i>Journeyman Weaver</i></p> <p>Journeyman weaver made products, often on looms for 12 hours a day 6 days a week in own homes.</p>	0.65-0.70	Slides 27-28	
<p><i>Anna Maria Garthwaite</i></p> <p>Anna Maria Garthwaite (c.1688-1763) was born in Leicestershire and moved to London in 1730, where she worked freelance, producing many bold damask and floral brocade designs. She was interested in naturalistic, floral patterns. Hundreds of her designs in watercolour have survived and are preserved at the Victoria & Albert Museum.</p>	0.70 – 0.75	Slide 29	
<p><i>Fabric Investigation</i></p> <p>Investigate the examples of cloth, what do you notice about them – colours/design/pattern/material/thickness/quality/how were they made? – in pairs fill in chart with cloth attributes compared to school uniform/own clothes.</p>	0.75-0.85	Slide 30 Fabric samples (if you have them)	
<p><i>Sum Up</i></p> <p>The Huguenots designed many fantastic silk fabrics that were used to make very expensive clothing worn by very important and wealthy people in society.</p>	0.85-0.90	Slide 31	

James Leman is an example of a master weaver, and here are his designs. You can see this painting and his designs in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

