

## Weaving

An activity based around weaving, can offer access to all abilities. It can be an individual or social activity and offers levels of success and engagement to all, whether that be actually creating a woven pattern or simply enjoying the textures of the chosen articles. Weaving activities can be used to decorate a whole space, an object in the space, on a simple frame encouraging fine-motor skills. In all cases, ensure that the resources have inspiring visual and tactile qualities to encourage engagement by all participants.

Working with larger structures gives opportunities for social interaction and cooperation. Long strings or netting stretched across the space will create a giant loom. A large withy structure, such as a giant nest, creates a frame for participants to add to. Long hanging cloths in the space create a space for bodies to weave through. When covering large areas, remember to make everything accessible to wheelchair users as well.

Using smaller frames creates more intimate spaces where participants can decorate their own areas, and enables increased focus and concentration. Frames can easily be made with wooden rods woven together with strings criss-crossing the shape.

Various weaving resources:

- Ribbons and wool in a variety of colours, lengths and thickness. This will enhance the experience and give opportunities for making choices, identifying preferences and feeling part of the process, particularly for those that can't necessarily weave themselves.
- Stripped plastic or space blanket can offer different textures and respond to the light in unique ways. They also have sound qualities and encourage movement.
- Feather boas and or scarves of varied colours and textures provide instant lengths that can be woven through frames.
- Battery operated lights can be attached to weaving resources or simply strung through netting themselves to add another dimension to the work.
- Grasses and reeds, so often used for weaving baskets and hats, provide an alternative resource.

An example activity:

- Create a giant loom, - this can be made with withy rods twisted together to make a hoop. Strings can then be randomly criss-crossed from edge to edge, creating spaces through which ribbons/wool can be woven. Allow access from both sides for interplay.
- Putting mirrors behind it can enhance the visual image and encourage responses from participants when they see themselves engaging.
- Prepare baskets of different ribbons, wool and streamers. These can then be explored by clients prior to the act of weaving - feel the differences - soft, rough, bobbly, pull between fingers and toes, tie in hair or onto clothes, adorn yourselves, look in mirrors.
- Encourage clients to make choices, indicate preferences and choose favourite colours.
- Perhaps use a character or puppet to draw them to the loom and assist them, play with them.
- Encourage participants to weave chosen ribbons/wool through the web, in and out, tie them on, pass the strands through to each other and create your own masterpieces.
- Sing as you work together - perhaps about colours, or the 'in and out' action, or passing to named participants.

Links

Puppet (Prop)

Cloths (Prop)

Visual Art (Activity)

Workshops - Lady of Shalott, Strings

Videos

Lady of Shalott weaving and boat

Puppet weaving

Tartan Weaving