

Fabric Creation

Directions What makes a fabric pattern appealing to you? What you like may be quite different from someone else’s favorite. The people who design fabrics must come up with ideas to please many different people. Read the article below about fabric designers. Then answer the questions and try your hand at designing with the Discovery activity.

Without fabric, a clothing designer would not get very far. Fabric designers try to predict what fibers, textures, and colors will be popular. Then they design suitable fabrics. These professionals are not only creative artists, but they are also technical experts and merchandisers. They may work closely with a textile company’s research and development department on weaves, knits, patterns, prints, and colors.

Today, fabric designers typically work out their ideas on computer. They can experiment with different yarns, textures, and color combinations. Once a design is approved, they transmit it directly from their computer to the fabric mill for production. Since new fabrics often inspire clothing designs, a fabric designer’s work may influence fashion trends.

- Which do you prefer in the fabrics you wear, solid colors, patterns, or both? Why?

- Patterns can be very different. Examples are plaids, stripes, geometrics, florals, scenics, borders, small prints, and bold prints. What patterns do you tend to like the most in your clothes? The least? Why?

- Fabrics have different qualities that make them better suited for certain garments. If you were a clothing designer, what garments would you make from quilted fabric, a soft woven fabric, and a stretchy fabric?

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CHAPTER 26 Selection and Care of Fibers and Fabrics (Continued) Focus on *Artistry*

4. How do patterns affect the way people look? Consider vertical stripes as opposed to horizontal ones and bold prints as opposed to small prints.

5. What do you think these terms mean as related to fabric patterns?

a. Repetition: _____

b. Balance: _____

c. Emphasis: _____

Discovery

Original Design Now it is your turn to try your hand at fabric design. Choose one of the ideas below or come up with your own idea for a design creation, perhaps for a garment you would wear. Draw squares on plain paper to make sketches. Then do a final larger version. Plan a display and explanation of your work for the classroom.

- Scottish Clan Tartans* Investigate the plaids used historically in Scotland to identify different clans, or families. These are called tartans. Then create a plaid to represent your family. You could base it on each family member's favorite color or make several designs that your family can vote on.
- Child's Garment* What fabric pattern do you envision for a child's garment? Identify the garment and create the fabric pattern.
- Stripes* What can you do with stripes? You can use lines of different widths in a bold or delicate design. The lines could be vertical, horizontal, or diagonal. Suggest clothing uses for the design you create.
- Famous Artist* Study the artwork of a famous artist. Then create a fabric pattern that is a take-off on the artist's style and use of colors. How could the fabric be used?

Putting It on the Line

Directions Did you know that appliances account for about 20 percent of most homes' energy use? Clothes dryers are among the biggest energy hogs. Families can cut back on their energy use by air-drying some or all of their laundry. Follow the steps below to compare line-drying with machine-drying.

1 **Set up a drying location.** If you do not have a clothesline or a drying rack, set one up. Here are some ways to do this:

- Borrow a folding clothes rack.
- Carry out the experiment at the home of a friend or family member who has a drying rack or an outdoor clothesline.
- Hang a clothesline in the backyard or in an indoor area where there is space, such as a basement or attic. Talk with your family about the possibilities. To put up a simple clothesline, screw two heavy-duty eyehooks into two opposite walls, trees, or posts. Make sure they are well anchored so they will not pull out from the weight of heavy, wet laundry. Then string clothesline rope between the hooks and secure it with a knot at each end. Make sure the line is tight.
- Hang clothes to dry on hangers in an empty closet, on a shower rod, or on a towel rack. You can also mount a tension rod (similar to a shower curtain rod) between two walls that are close together. A doorframe may work for this.

2 **Wash and hang a small load of laundry.** Shake each item briskly to remove wrinkles. Then hang items to dry in the location planned. Follow these guidelines:

Outdoor Drying

- For large items, like a towel, drape them with only a couple inches overhanging on one side. Secure with several clothespins spaced a few inches apart.
- Small items, such as socks, can be pinned directly to the line without draping.
- Shirts can be pinned to the line by the bottom hem. You can also put them on hangers, button them at the top, and hang them from the line. Use plastic or vinyl-covered hangers to prevent marks on wet clothing.

Indoor Drying

- With a drying rack, simply drape each item over one of the rods. The smallest items, such as washcloths and socks, go on low racks. Larger and heavier items, such as blue jeans and bath towels, go on upper racks. For faster drying, spread items over the available space. Dark clothes should not be touching light-colored ones, as dye can transfer.
- If you use a rod to hang clothes, place each item on a hanger and hang it from the rod. The waist of pants can be slipped around the hanger and buttoned. Secure them with clothespins, too, if needed.

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CHAPTER 26 Selection & Care of Fibers and Fabrics (Cont.) Focus on *Environment*

- 3 ▶ Time yourself.** Record the amount of time it takes to hang the clothes to dry.
- 4 ▶ Check the clothes for dryness.** Check every 15 to 30 minutes to see which items are dry. Record how long it takes each item (or type of item, such as T-shirts) to dry on the clothesline.
- 5 ▶ Take down the laundry.** Record the amount of time it takes. As you remove items, pay attention to how they feel and smell. Are they stiffer to the touch than if they were machine-dried? Do they smell fresh or musty? Record your observations.
- 6 ▶ Wash another load of laundry.** Use similar items to those in the first load so the comparison can be accurate.
- 7 ▶ Put the laundry in the dryer.** Use the heat setting you normally use. Record the time it takes to load the laundry into the dryer and start the cycle.
- 8 ▶ Check for dryness.** Check every 15 to 30 minutes to see which items are dry. (You may remove things as they become dry. If you do this, the remaining items will dry faster.) Record how long it takes each item or type of item to dry.
- 9 ▶ Unload the dryer.** Record how long this takes. Note the feel and smell of the machine-dried items. How do they compare to those that were line-dried? Do they have more static built up on them? Do they smell like fabric softener? Record your observations about machine-drying.
- 10 ▶ Determine how much electricity your dryer uses.** This information may be printed in the owner’s manual, or you may find it online. If you can not find the specific model, look for a similar one. Then check your family’s gas or electric bill to find out how much you pay for the energy used to run the dryer. Calculate the total cost for the amount of time needed to dry one load of laundry.

Summarize Your Findings

On separate paper, write a summary that takes all factors into consideration—energy savings, cost, time, effort, and the quality of air-dried and machine-dried laundry. When would you consider it worthwhile to air-dry? Would it be useful to air-dry certain laundry items but not others? Explain your ideas.