

Westchester Library Sewing Workshops Program
Kate Perri
May, 2015

Learning to sew and creating individualized projects, whether by hand or machine, teaches many skills that bolster construction principles, math, and fosters artistic problem solving. Its ruminative quality is relaxing and the step-by-step nature of the process benefits every age group.

These proposed sewing workshops are designed to steadily build and reinforce skills by a making a variety of projects. The age group, number of students, class time and the number of consecutive dates that workshops are offered drive the size and type of projects.

Each workshop and projects will be designed with the particular library and its Community in mind.

Hand sewing workshops, for children ages 8 to 11 will teach basic hand and embroidery stitches to construct and embellish projects. Measuring, cutting and the use of tools will be reinforced. Lifelong skills of sewing on buttons and making simple seams will be taught.

Machine sewing workshops are designed to make students comfortable at the sewing machine. WLS sewing machines will be used. The first class will start with a thorough demonstration of the sewing machine including: how the machine makes stitches, the parts of the machine, safety issues, winding and inserting the bobbin, threading the machine, backstitch, presser feet and their uses, and utility and specialty stitches. There will also be a discussion and demonstration of consistent seam allowance and the use of tools. (These topics to be adjusted depending on age group, time frame, projects and the type of sewing machine provided for classroom use. A short discussion on the differences between commercial and home sewing machines as needed.) Safety issues will be addressed. Students will practice threading and bobbin winding, straight stitching and backstitching. A small project will be made, which will introduce basic construction concepts and provide students with a finished project to take home.

In all subsequent classes proper sewing machine use and safety issues will be reviewed. The use of measuring, marking, cutting tools and ironing will be demonstrated as projects are made. The importance of consistent cutting and accurate seam allowances will be reviewed and fostered. Depending on the scope of the projects, curved seams, fabric preparation, and finishing techniques will be explored. One or more projects will be finished by the end of the workshop.

Whenever possible Library resources should be showcased. Books on sewing and crafts for kids, simple home decoration, accessories, quilting and fabric can be displayed and discussed as time allows. Technology such as copier machines for printing photos onto fabric can be used to make photo pillows or accessories. Possibly a 3-D printer can be used to make components or

embellishments for a project. The University of Fashion On Line Classes can be referred to for specific sewing lessons such as zippers and garment making details.

For all workshops the scope of projects should be determined before publishing class details. Considerations of space, availability and number of machines, materials budget and number of students will determine the projects. A classroom volunteer/s may be required. All classes should have pre registration and a limit on class size.

One-day workshops of 2 or 3 hours are possible, depending on projects, to benefit the community. Workshops can be designed as holiday events, charitable donations and specific group/family projects.

Proposed classes by age group

Sew Much Fun

Ages 8-11 Four to Six week one hour classes Afterschool

Students will make multiple small projects during the course of the workshop. Tracing, measuring, cutting, pinning and a variety of hand and embroidery stitches and sewing buttons will be taught and practiced consistently. Students will work at their own pace and have opportunity to pick materials and embellishments.

Projects to be made from felt, cotton fabric, gloves, socks. Possible projects: stuffed critters and monsters, hand puppets, initial pillows, dolls, samplers, small holiday items (Halloween, Thanksgiving, Valentines, etc. as appropriate).

Tweens or Teens on Machines

For students entering 7th grade or older Four 2 hour classes Afterschool

A machine sewing workshop. Consistent seam allowance, straight and curved stitching, measuring, marking and embellishments will be explored. Projects made from simple shapes from cottons and canvas. Students will work at their own pace and be encouraged to pick from an assortment of materials and trims.

Possible projects include: small bags such as cosmetic bags and drawstring bags, tote bags and accessories. Pillows such as photo pillows (depending on access to copier machine), initial pillows, quilted pillows, shaped pillows and stuffed animals (depending on overall age group). Larger projects: bed sized pillowcases, larger tote bags, possibly a simple garment.

Adult Machine Sewing

Four 2 hour classes Daytime

A machine sewing workshop, as described in Teens Workshops. Project categories to be discussed. Small projects in Quilting, Home Decoration, Accessories are possible. Specific skills to be taught, such as zipper applications, quilt making skills, appliqué and trims, depending on scope of projects.

Adult machine sewing workshops/class ideas:

Home decoration:

- PILLOWS including the use of trims, welting, zippers & other closures
- SIMPLE TABLE DRESSING napkins, placemats, tablerunners

Quilting – small projects to explore cutting, piecing and other quilt techniques, possible homework may be required to finish projects:

- SIMPLE SHAPES small quilts, pillows or tablerunners built on one simple shape
- CLASSIC BLOCKS THAT BUILD blocks that build from squares and triangles to make classic blocks that can be showcased as pillows, table runners, larger quilts
- T SHIRT QUILTS learn the techniques that can turn a collection of old shirts into a pillow or great quilt
- PILLOWS FROM VINTAGE ITEMS: men's ties, ladies hankies, men's shirts used in new ways to make a treasured heirloom

ONE DAY WORKSHOPS (two – three hours)

- MAKE A BLOCK COMMUNITY QUILT: Each block of the quilt can be worked on by children, families, or other groups. Showcase an event, history, or person, etc. Simple sewing or drawing on precut blank blocks will be put together and professionally quilted for hanging in the library. History of quilt making and samples of quilts could be shown and discussed.
- FAMILY HOLIDAY SEWING small take away sewing projects for Thanksgiving, Halloween, etc. can be done in one class period.
- TEEN UPSCALE T SHIRT CLASS: Make a backpack or pillow from a treasured T shirt. (Sewing machines would be needed.)

All one day Workshops would require pre registration and a pre determined limit on size. A volunteer may be needed depending on the project.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE FEES

\$125 per hour teaching
up to 3 hours prep/plan time @ \$75 per hour
plus a predetermined materials fee based on projects and
expected size of class

Fees include travel time, use of basic sewing tools such as scissors, pins, markers, etc.

Kate Perri is a teacher, author and fiber artist. She has taught sewing and quilting to adults and children for over 20 years in a range of venues. These venues include:

The White Plains Library Teen Center, The Rye Free Reading Room/Rye Historical Society, Rye Arts Center, Etui FiberArts, The American Folk Art Museum, The Quilt Cottage, Blythedale Children's Hospital, Greenwich Adult Day Care, GEMS program at White Plains YWCA, and in numerous afterschool programs in Westchester Public Schools. Kate also teaches privately in her White Plains studio.

She has created many designs for quilts, accessories and special needs sewing and has completed several hundred custom quilts projects. Kate has published two books on sewing and quilting. Her quilts and fiber artwork have been exhibited.

BFA in Designer Crafts from The Maryland Institute College of Art.

contact:

914.946.5935

kate@kateperridesigns.com