

## Weaving In the Early Years

During these cold winter months and indoor recesses, I have taken the opportunity to teach my Kindergarten students how to weave. Girls and boys, it does not matter. So many of them love the idea of creating something they have put a lot of effort into. They can touch it. They can create patterns. They use them as blankets for the stuffed animals or little rug, or something that holds a precious collection.

The benefits of weaving are numerous. Weaving helps to build fine motor skills (pincer grasp), aids with visual tracking, builds hand/eye coordination, and helps in strengthening both the dominant and non-dominant hand. I have come to know my students well as rich conversations often occur when our hands are busy weaving. Since I am a French Immersion teacher, I can also teach and reinforce vocabulary associated with weaving.

These projects take several days and, when one child is done for the moment; they tuck their loom into our weaving basket until they are ready to continue at another time. Inevitably, someone will decide they want to "sew" and the next thing I know I have a group of children all quietly weaving in our room. This year, I decided that once they had completed one weaving board, they could start a second one and add beads.

### How to Make a Loom:

I collect sturdy cardboard and cut them into 8" x 15" or so pieces to create a loom. With scissors I cut slits about ¼" apart on each end of the cardboard. (Note: The loom will last for 2-3 years if the cardboard is sturdy) Then, I pick two yarn colours and alternate the colours on the board (the warp). The children select a colour of yarn to begin. I knot the yarn on a plastic needle (mine are purchased from Amazon) however; children do not need a needle for this activity.



**Let's Begin:** Let's say my warp is black and white. I instruct the child to only go under the white one way, and on the way back go under the black. Most children can learn this within 5 minutes. Do not make the yarn too long. Be prepared for confusion, knots, and undoing a mess. Be patient. Once a child understands the concept, they do not need a great deal of help. They often will help the next child who decides they want to learn too.

Hint: We use a fork to push the yarn moving horizontally across the loom (weft) can be pushed together tightly.

**Changing the Colour:** Invite them to come to you when they have about 6 inches of yarn left. You can then tie the next colour of yarn to the first colour. Keep going until most of the board is filled with yarn.

**Removing It From the Loom:** Cut all the threads at the back of the loom. Take two-warp yarns and knot them together until there are no free strands left. This doesn't have to be perfect. Do the same on the other side. Cut ends equally to create a fringe.



### Displaying The Completed Work

This year I decided to display completed pieces like this. Stay tuned for pieces that have beads added to them!

If you have any questions or comments please email me at [sbronkhorst@gscs.ca](mailto:sbronkhorst@gscs.ca)

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