



## Human Loom Games

**In this activity we investigate how fabric was made in the ancient world up until very recently. You may want to link this activity to the others in this pack on spinning and dyeing.**

### You have

**Game 1:** Two lengths of different coloured washing line rope

**Game 2:** Two lengths of wool with a metal or wooden spoon attached to the end

**Activity 3:** Card, scissors, a pencil and some wool

### Activity

#### Game 1 – Human weaving

You can use this game as a warm-up for the Human Loom game. This game will get you used to the concept of weaving. You will need two balls of wool with a metal or wooden spoon attached to the end. Two teams line up for a relay race. The first person in each team takes the spoon with the wool attached and threads it through her clothes down through her top and trousers or skirt, then passes it to the person next to her to thread up from the bottom of their clothes to their collar and then passes it to the next person to thread down through their clothes and so on. The winning team is the first to successfully thread itself together! If the activity leader is feeling particularly mean, they can put metal spoons in the fridge before-hand so that the spoon is really cold – this will elicit plenty of shrieks and make the game great fun! Be aware when playing this game with children about the possibility of inappropriate touching – ensure ground rules are laid down first – mainly that you may only thread the spoon through one's *own* clothes!

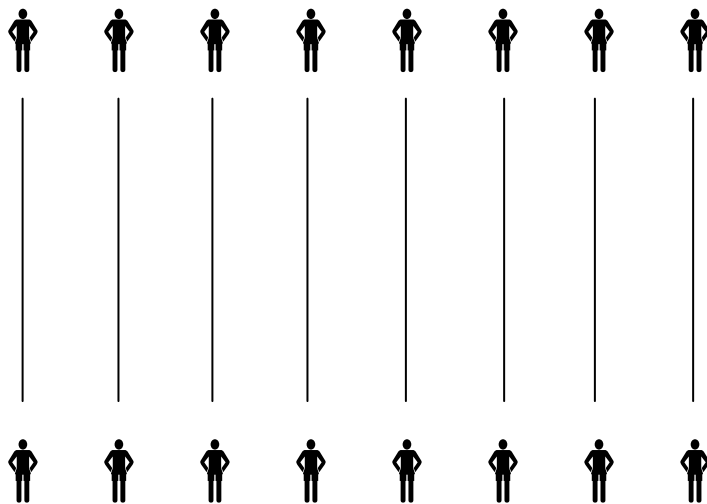
#### Game 2 – Human loom

In this game you will make a human loom using pieces of rope. When you play it you will see how a loom really works. You will need about 10 people to play this game, it could work with fewer but the more the better! This is a team activity.

Cut 8 2-3m lengths of one of the colours of rope to make the 8 pieces of 'warp' (the strings that would hang down on a loom – like in the picture above). Keep the other length of rope long, this is the piece you're going to weave.

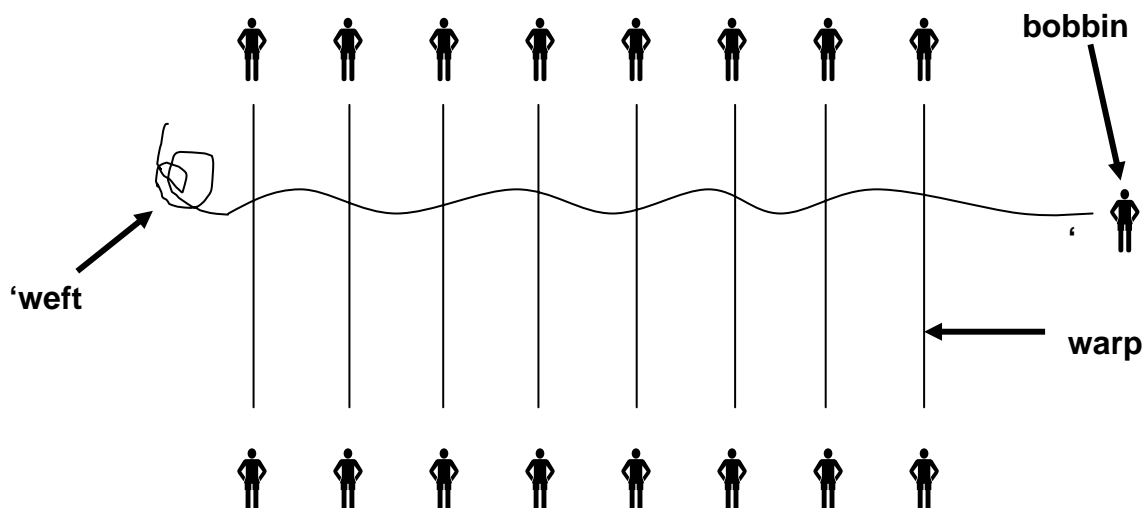
Stand as in the picture holding a length of rope between two people:

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This represents the basis of the loom with the warp threads.

Next nominate a person to be the 'bobbin' and two people to be the weavers. Have your other rope (which represents the 'weft') coiled up and held by one person. The 'bobbin' takes the end of the rope and weaves in and out of the warp ropes stepping *under* and *over* the ropes, helped by the weaver, turning back the other way when he or she gets to the end. The weaver will need to make sure the weft is straightened after being thread under and over.

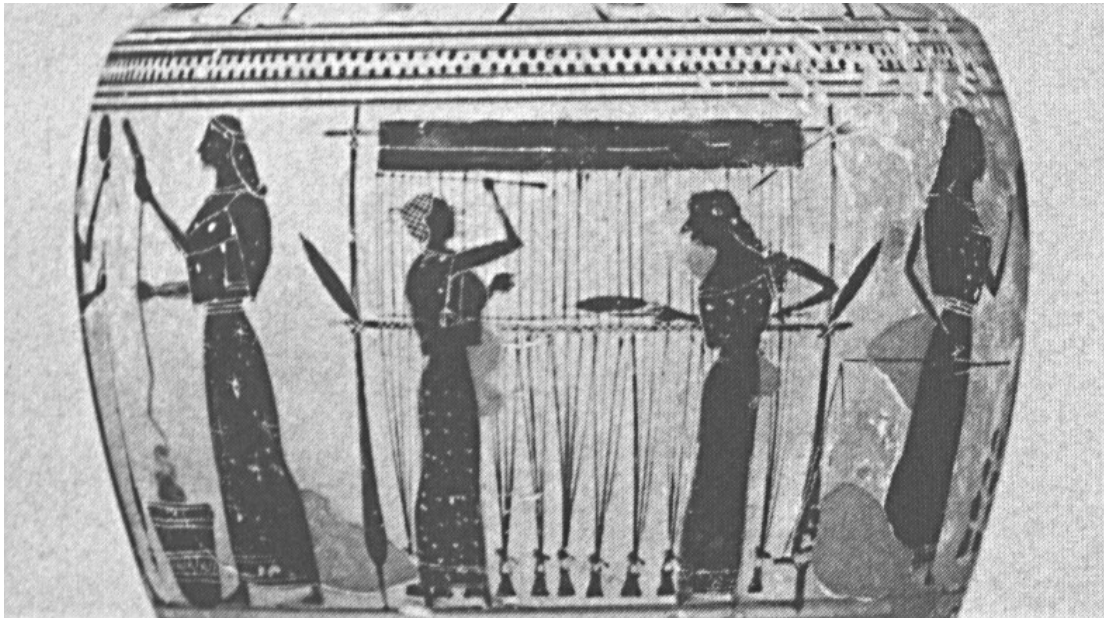


Keep going until you have 'weaved' some 'fabric'. You might find it easier to shout out 'under' and 'over' to the 'bobbin' so that she or he knows which way to go.

## Useful Questions

- Swap 'roles' taking it in turns to be a weaver, a bobbin or warp. What are the important things to note about each role?
- How quickly can you do it?
- What makes it easier to weave?
- What makes it difficult?
- If you were to build a real loom, what would be the major features of your loom?

Have a look at this picture, these women are weaving on a loom:

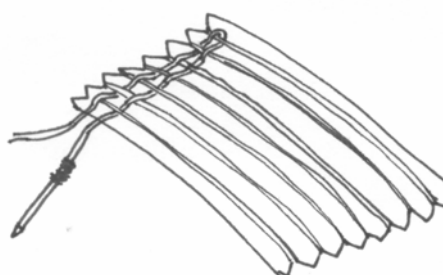
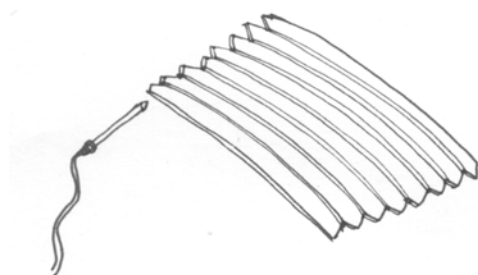


- Can you see other parts of the clothes making process?
- Can you find the bobbin, the weft, the warp and the loom weights?
- What do you think the loom weights are for?
- Can you find some other archaeological evidence of looms and weaving?

## Research Opportunities

Now you've tried weaving on a large scale, why not try weaving some wool yourself? You could try the spinning activity in this pack and weave some wool you've spun yourself!

To make a mini loom cut a piece of card like this and wrap the yarn around to make the warp. Using a pencil as a bobbin, tie yarn of a different colour from the warp to the end and thread backwards and forwards, under and over the warp:



## Useful Websites

To find other weaving artefacts, try searching on:

[www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/childrenscompass/](http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/childrenscompass/)

More ideas on weaving patterns:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/design/textiles/fabricsrev2.shtml>

	National Curriculum	QCA Unit
KS 1	Science Sc1, Sc3, Sc4	Unit 4D, Unit 5D, Unit 6C, Unit 6D
	PSHE & Citizenship 5	N/A
KS 2	Science Sc1, Sc3, Sc4	Unit 4D, Unit 5D, Unit 6C, Unit 6D
	PSHE & Citizenship 5	N/A

## creativeminds

The Creative Minds project works with museums libraries and archives across the Yorkshire region, to provide young people with learning opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths (S.T.E.M.). This ground-breaking project is the first of its kind in the country and is managed by MLA Yorkshire. This pack was developed by Creative Minds with funding from Yorkshire Forward.

