Review of Teaching Practice

Session/artefact to be observed/reviewed: Sustainable workshop (1st years)
Size of student group: 18 students
Reviewee: Hannah Refaat
Reviewer: Gabriele Raudonaityte

Part One

What is the context of this session/artefact within the curriculum?

BA (Hons) Fashion Textiles: Embroidery - Introduction to Industry Practice (FU001965).

This unit requires students to research and develop fashion textiles responding to racial, social, and climate justice. Its aims are:

- Build an individual Textile Sample Range for a fashion market.
- Develop forward-thinking textiles as part of a cross-disciplinary design team.

Students engage in collaborative activities considering sustainable, social, and ethical contexts. This workshop supports these aims through a student-centred, practice-led approach to sustainable textiles, structured in two parts:

1. A contextual presentation introducing my practice alongside examples of artists and designers working with sustainability, reuse, and material-led approaches. This models critical reflection and positions sustainable making within industry practice.
2. A practical, exploratory workshop where students apply techniques including darning, boro, sashiko, and the creation of yarns, fabrics, and woven surfaces.

Students are divided into three groups responding to inspiration images from painting books, promoting peer learning, discussion, and collaborative decision-making. Experimenting with composition, texture, and repair, they generate material responses, taking ownership of their ideas.

How long have you been working with this group and in what capacity?

This is my first time working with this first year group. I have delivered various three-hour workshops across first- and second-year groups, focusing on identity and heritage in textile practice.

This workshop builds on that foundation, shifting focus to environmental mending and recycling techniques, expanding technical vocabulary, and encouraging independent interpretation within a guided structure.

What are the intended or expected learning outcomes?

By the end, students will be able to:

- Identify and discuss sustainable embroidery approaches in contemporary practice.
- Apply researched recycling and sustainable techniques in sample development.
- Interpret visual inspiration into embroidered outcomes collaboratively or independently.

The emphasis is on active learning, experimentation, and confidence in translating research into material outcomes.

What are the anticipated outputs (anything students will make/do)?

Students will produce a textile sample responding to inspiration imagery, demonstrating sustainable embroidery, repair, and material-led processes. They will also engage in peer discussion, collaborative problem-solving, and reflective decision-making.

Are there potential difficulties or specific areas of concern?

The cohort is relatively quiet, which may affect discussion. I will encourage participation through prompts and adapt the session to allow individual work while maintaining reflection opportunities.

Students sometimes struggle to translate research into samples. Including hands-on making supports confidence building and skill development. Early experimentation is essential given the unit's short timeframe.

How will students be informed of the observation/review?

Students will be informed at the start of the session that it is being observed as part of a teaching review, communicated transparently to maintain a supportive environment.

What would you particularly like feedback on?

Feedback is welcomed on:

- Effectiveness of the student-centred structure.
- Balance between contextual input and active making.
- Support for transitioning from research to material experimentation.
- Structure of workshop, encouraging creative risk-taking.

How will feedback be exchanged?

Written feedback will be used for documentation and reflection, supplemented by a short follow-up discussion the following day to critically review and identify areas for development.

Part Two
Reviewer to note down observations, suggestions and questions.

What was good about what you reviewed? What worked well, and why?

- Despite the screen issue, you resolved problem quickly with the AV team
- Efficient student navigation, preventing gathering on one table, by explaining that each group would explore different embroidery techniques
- Well prepared PowerPoint presentation. You shared different hand embroidery techniques (Boro, Darning, Weaving), alongside relevant artists and your own work
- You checked students' understanding of the workshop aims and explained what they will create. You introduced your role as Specialist Technician and your involvement in the year 2, adding that they might see you in the Supervised Studio, which "breaks the ice" and encourages students to seek support
- You explained how this workshop relates to students' study project and how can they use techniques for their designs, checking their prior knowledge
- Checking if students have all materials they need, such as scissors, pens and needles, distributing them if needed
- Providing fabrics for students use, as well as Fine Art books to take the inspiration from
- You clearly explained how Fine Art images can be translated into embroidery and textile designs, encouraging experimentation with colour and fabric to develop personal interpretations
- Good circulation around the room, ensuring students understood the task, fostering active learning and demonstrating hand stitching techniques
- Identification of students who were disengaged, checking their understanding, explaining what needs to be done, giving suggestions where to start, making sure they were engaged

Did you notice anything that your peer might want to consider developing or changing?

- Some artist examples included dye techniques, which were presented verbally, but not clearly labelled on the slides. Clear captions identifying all techniques (dye, embroidery), would support recall
- At the start of the presentation, some slides moved quickly, making them difficult to follow. Slowing down and using a pointer to highlight specific techniques would help students who are new to embroidery

- Session aimed collaborative practice; however, I noticed students mostly working individually, while chatting. Perhaps suggesting working in the groups and sharing their designs with peers would be helpful

Do you have any questions about the choices your peer made?

- I was interested if students were familiar with embroidery terminology, such as Boro stitching. You confirmed that they were
- When asked about choice of inspiration books, you explained that these encourage interpretation, whereas students often directly copy textile books
- Are the PowerPoint slides shared with students after the workshop, so they could revisit the content for further research?

Do you have any suggestions?

- Observer introduction at the beginning of the session could be helpful. This was likely missed due to screen issue; however you later clarified my role and informed students about photos, which was good
- Allowing students to settle before starting the presentation could improve focus, as some were still unpacking during the presentation and not looking at the slides. Settling-in period could be used to ask questions and giving extra information
- You mentioned that students often chose small hoops, which can restrict their designs. Encouraging students to work without hoops at the start could be useful as well as suggesting best way to approach Fine Art designs, to whoever does not know where to start
- Some students arrived late and missed the presentation. While you supported students during circulation, briefly checking late arrivals and offering short recap could be beneficial

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Part Three

Reviewee to reflect on the reviewer's comments and describe how they will act on the feedback exchanged. Reviewee should return this to the reviewer once complete.



I feel the overall structure of my workshop was effective, as students were able to reference and contextualise the techniques they were asked to produce. At the beginning I introduced myself and outlined their upcoming module, explaining why these processes are relevant within the module context of sustainability, social practice, and ethical making. I also ensured that students had time to produce their own samples, which helped create an exploratory environment.





There were some practical challenges at the start of the session. AV issues caused a delay which disrupted the introduction. As a result, I forgot to acknowledge Gabriele at the beginning, although I did mention her after the presentation. The delay also meant students had limited time to settle before the presentation began. Reflecting on this with Gabriele's feedback, allowing around 15 minutes for students to unpack and prepare would help create a more focused learning environment and reduce the need to recap information for late arrivals.



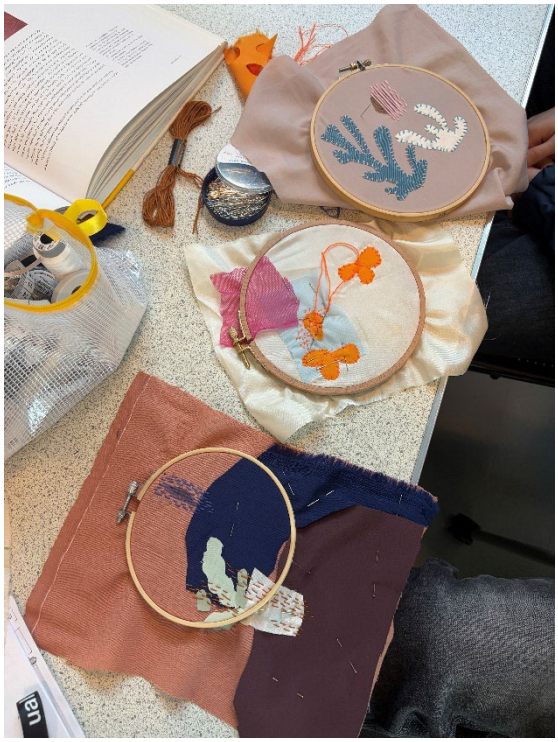


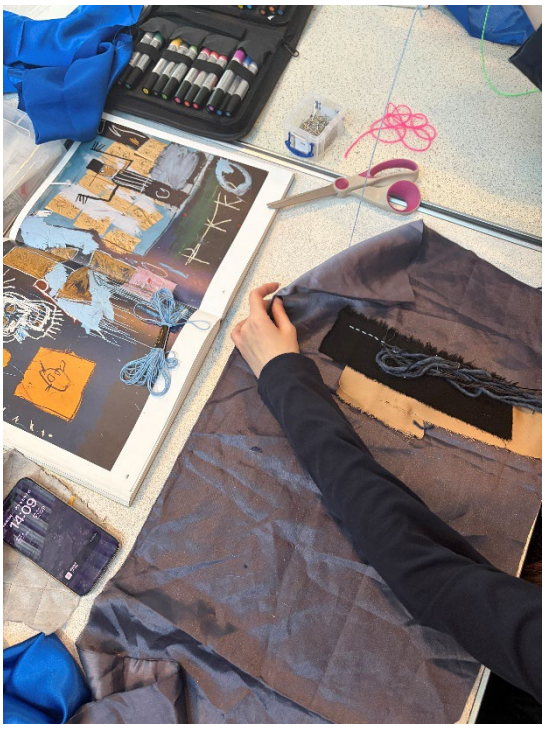
I organised the class across three tables so that students were arranged within their technique groups: Boro and Sashiko, Darning and Patchwork, and Weaving and Making Yarns. Books and materials were prepared beforehand so students could immediately engage with the processes. Working in the studio enabled students to translate drawing into making with my guidance. During the session I circulated the room, demonstrated techniques, and discussed how line and mark from drawing could be interpreted through stitch. This allowed me to provide individual feedback while maintaining a relaxed atmosphere. The room's TV also enabled students to refer to technique examples while working, supporting independent yet guided learning.





One part I would revise, after my feedback, is a slide in the presentation that included natural indigo dyeing and batik printing. Although these are sustainable processes, they were not directly relevant to embroidery mending techniques, which was the focus of this workshop. Removing this slide would help maintain clarity. I would also include clearer header slides identifying each technique so students can distinguish them when referring to the presentation. I also take on board that I could pause on slides for a bit longer, so students could absorb the information better and have time to look at the images. Students asked to access the slides afterwards, so I shared them with their tutors to upload onto Moodle.





Initially I planned for students to produce one collaborative piece on each table, but during the session I decided it would be more beneficial for them to work on individual samples. While many students had embroidery experience, they were less familiar with repair techniques. Focusing on individual samples allowed them to develop technical understanding while also exploring their own design responses. I also selected books from the library as references, as students at an early stage can find it challenging to translate drawing into material outcomes.





Finally, although I provided materials, many students brought embroidery hoops. In future I would suggest they avoid using hoops, as they restrict scale and experimentation. Encouraging students to focus on scale and could support more exploratory outcomes, particularly for first-year students who often bring very small hoops.

Overall, the workshop was engaging and students remained active throughout. Reflecting on the session has helped identify small adjustments that could further support clarity, student engagement, and learning.

