



Learning Activity

Years
3-6

Upcycling with Marjorie

Design and make an upcycled* bag, inspired by the crafty genius of Marjorie Bligh.



What you will need

- Notebook or sketch book
- Pen or pencil
- 3 different bags you already have at home (to consider the designs)
- Materials to make a bag, such as (but not limited to)
 - Old fabric (clothes you no longer wear, etc.)
 - Plastic etc. - look in your recycling bin (both hard plastics and soft plastics you can recycle at the supermarket)
 - String, wool, etc.
- General craft items to make the bag
 - Needle and thread
 - Knitting needles/crochet hook (if you know how to knit or crochet)
 - Scissors
 - Glue



What to do

Design and make an upcycled bag

1. Consider different bags in your home. Choose three different bags. Sketch and label them considering the following:

- What do you carry in each of the bags? (E.g. is one a good size for library books?)
- What are the positive features of each bag? (E.g. a bag with a flat bottom lets you carry cans of food from the shops.)
- Are there any design problems with any of the bags? (E.g. do the straps cut into your shoulder when you carry heavy items?)



2. Creating an upcycled bag

- Decide what you want to be able to carry in your bag. From this decide on:
 - Size
 - Basic design (including straps if required)
 - Does it need to be water resistant, or have any other features?
- Sketch your design, labelling any features.
- Decide on materials.
 - This bag is going to be made from upcycled materials you can find in your home.
 - The materials need to be able to be strong enough, and fulfil any other design requirements, e.g. comfortable straps, water resistance, etc.
 - Think about how you can use the materials in different ways
 - Sewing fabric from old clothes together to make them stronger
 - Knitting or crocheting plastic, etc.
 - Using materials together to give added features; e.g. add plastic from your recycling box to a fabric bag to give it strength.
- Make your bag.
 - Assemble your bag and test it. Does it carry the objects for which you designed it?
 - Make modifications if necessary, noting what you did. This is a very important part of the design process.

Take a photo of the bag (or sketch it if you don't have a camera) once you are happy with it.

*Upcycling vs Recycling

Upcycling is taking something we no longer want and creating something new of a higher quality – e.g. crocheting bread bags into a shopping bag or using old damaged spoons to create jewellery.

Recycling involves breaking down the waste material such as glass or plastic and using it to create a new product – e.g. recycling office paper into toilet paper or recycling plastic bottles into park benches.



Curriculum links

Year 4 Geography

The sustainable management of waste from production to consumption (ACHGK025)

The natural resources provided by the environment, and different views on how they could be used sustainably (ACHGK024)

Year 3&4 Design and technologies

Evaluate design ideas, processes and solutions based on criteria for success developed with guidance and including care for the environment (ACTDEP017)

Year 5&6 Design and technologies

Investigate how people in design and technologies occupations address competing considerations, including sustainability in the design of products, services and environments for current and future use (ACTDEK019)

Cross curriculum priority – Sustainability



Link to QVMAG

During 2019 and 2020 QVMAG featured the *Marjorie Bligh: Domestic Goddess* exhibition.

Marjorie was a Tasmanian icon, who was known for her advice on household management, craft and cooking. Her craft has a focus on thrift and upcycling, with many pieces made from upcycled clothes, pantyhose and plastic.

Below are photos of upcycled items from the *Marjorie Bligh: Domestic Goddess* exhibition at QVMAG.



A shopping bag made by Marjorie Bligh. It is constructed from bread bags which are cut up and crocheted together.



Toys and clothes Marjorie Bligh made by crocheting pantyhose.



A cushion Marjorie Bligh made from men's ties.