



PRESENTS

# KIDSEUM AT HOME

*Creative fun and learning for the entire family,  
all from the comfort of home!*



Introduction  
to  
LESSONS  
ON  
LAOS

# 1

## DIY SCALES

### AGES

7-9 years old

### SKILL LEVEL

Beginner

### DESCRIPTION

For this project we will be making our own scales with a thread acting as the fulcrum to balance our materials.

### MATERIALS

Wooden Stick	Hole Puncher
Beans/ Rice/ Beads/ Etc.	Thread / Twine
Scissors	Pen or Pencil
2 Plastic/Paper Cups	1 OZ Water Cup

Materials with an (\*) are optional, use only if available.

### MUSIC

Listen to music curated for this lesson!

Check out the **Spotify Playlist**:

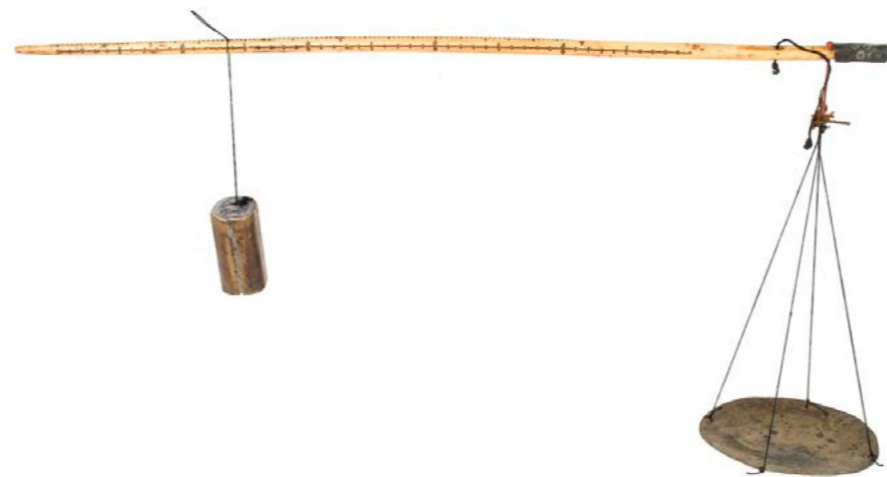
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/2reCAtQWfEg0diBCEhLS7?si=VUxGGwKQRO6ihJpk8l2Gpg>

### Background

A **scale** is a tool that is used to **measure** the **weight** of objects or materials. Steelyard scales are very common and can be found throughout Southeast Asia. In **Laos** this was once a very important tool that was used to measure food, medicine, metal and other goods. They consisted of a wooden **beam**, cords, a plate and **weights**. The beam held both the plate and the weight suspended on cords. The scale would eventually balance out the beam as items were added to the plate. Once balanced, the objects and the weights are **equal** in how heavy they are. However, these types of scales become less popular after the invention of electronic scales. Yet, they are important in **retaining** the history and traditions of Laos.

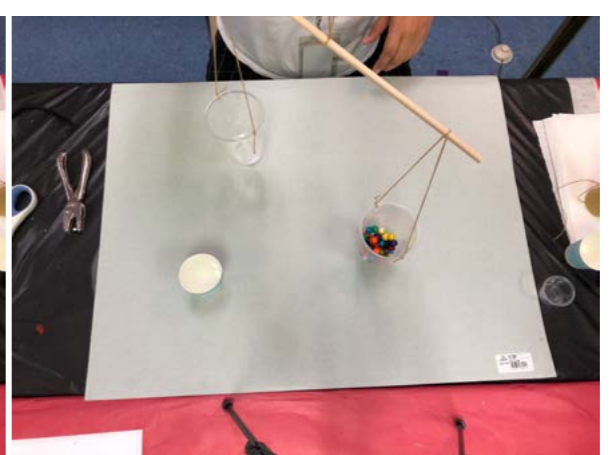
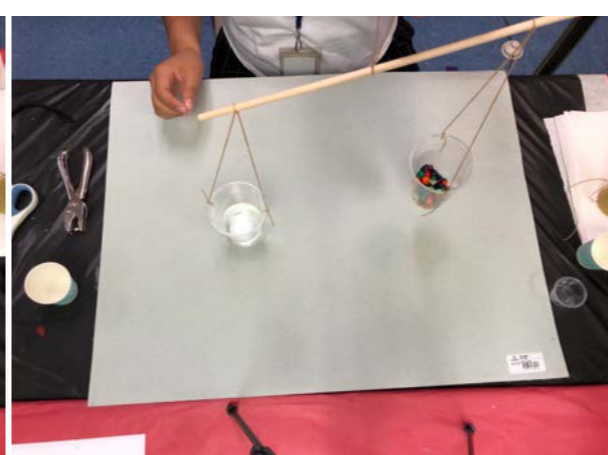
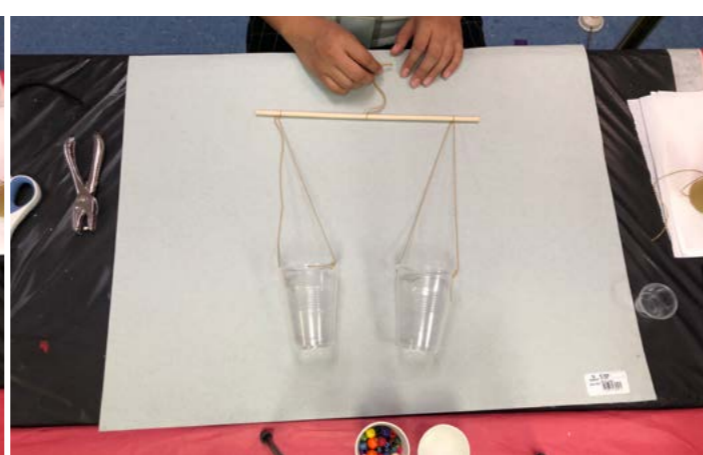
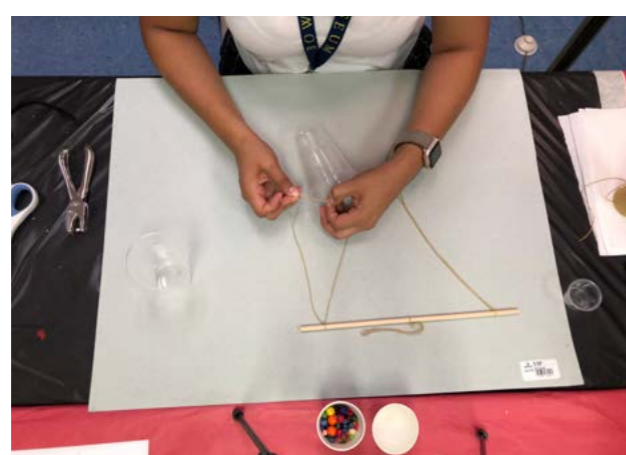
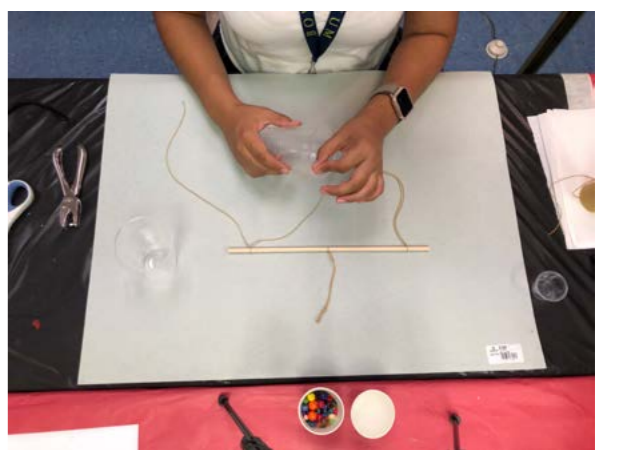
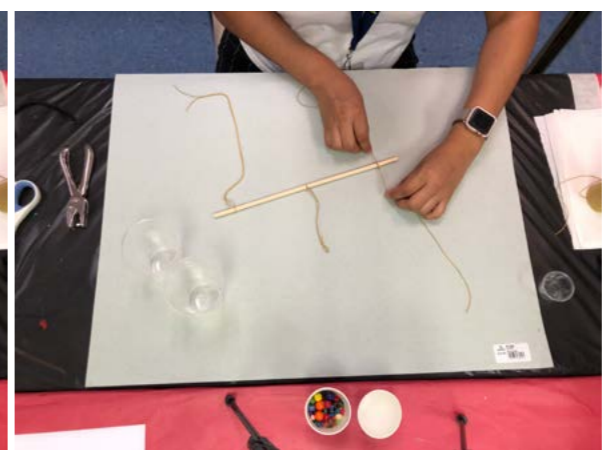
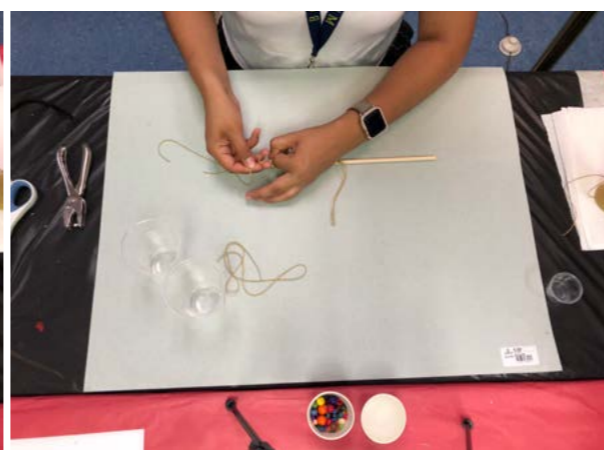
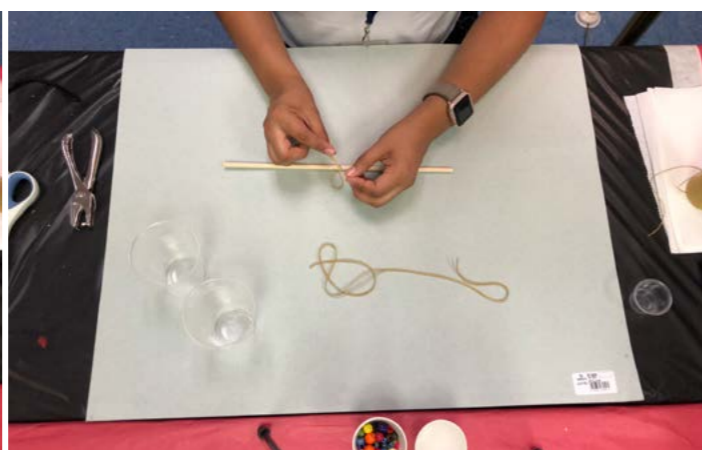
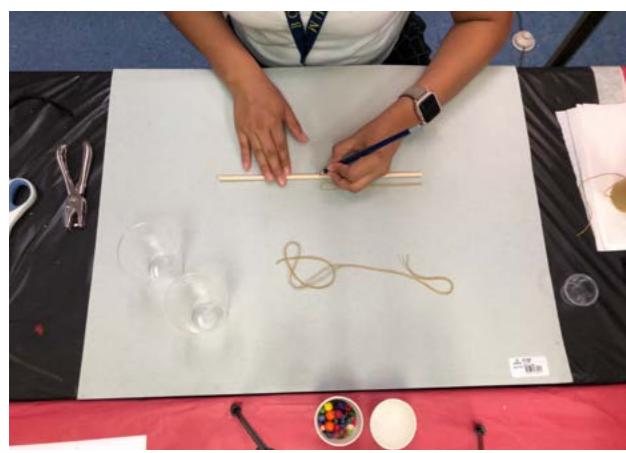
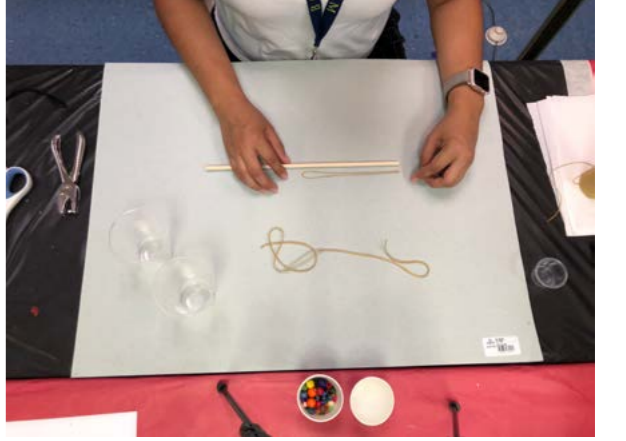
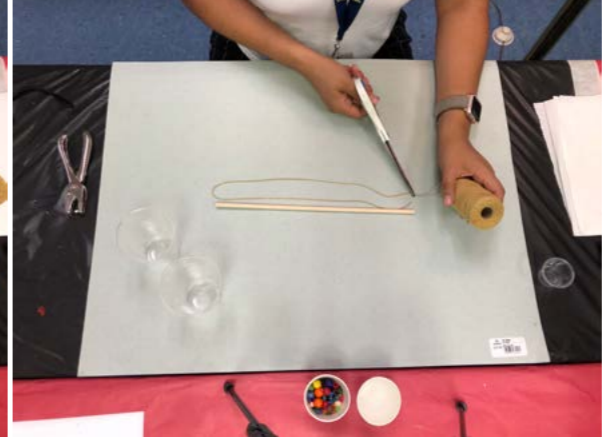
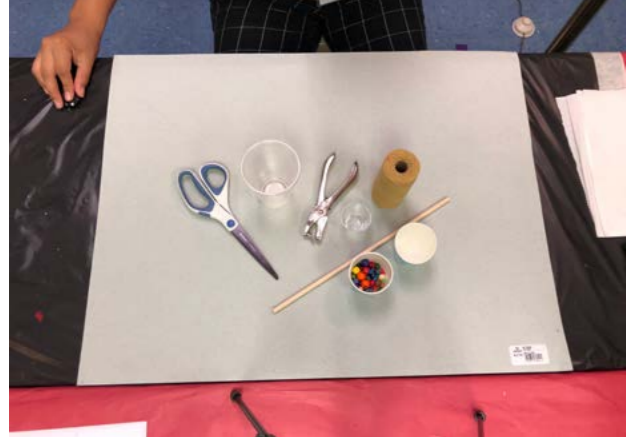
### Fun Facts

- Balancing scales were mostly used in Laos, Myanmar and Thailand.
- Weights of different sizes were used by merchants to measure goods with accuracy.
- In Laos the weights were rounded or pointed with ribbed markings.
- Laotian weights were commonly made of brass.



## Procedure

1. Take 2 cups and use the hole puncher to make two holes near the rim of each cup, on opposite sides.
2. Measure a piece of thread equal to the length of your stick, then cut and repeat.
3. Measure a smaller strip that is  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the stick length.
4. Mark the middle of your stick with a pen or pencil.
5. Then make two markings on both ends of the stick. These markings will help place your threads.
6. Take the shorter thread and tie it to the stick on the centerline. Tie a loop on the end.
7. Take the two other threads and tie one on each of the marked lines.
8. Tie the longer ends of the threads to the cups.
9. Thread the ends through the holes on the cups and tie them.
10. Once tied you can use the scale by holding it by the center thread.
11. Use your 1 oz of water and pour it into one cup.
12. You can add other materials to the other cup until the weights even out.
13. Empty the cups and balance other materials as desired.



## Key Vocabulary

<b>Scale</b> an apparatus used for weighing.	<b>Laos</b> a Southeast Asian country between Vietnam and Thailand.	<b>Measure</b> calculation of exact dimensions within time or space, such as length, quantity, duration, weight, or capacity.
<b>Beam</b> a long, heavy timber or piece of metal or stone used as a major support in a building.	<b>Weight</b> 1. the heaviness of an object, esp. as expressed in terms of a recognized system of measurement 2. also: a body of determinate mass, as of metal, for using on a balance or scale in weighing objects, substances, etc.	<b>Balance</b> a state in which opposing forces are equal
<b>Equal</b> of or having the same value, measure, or quantity as something else.	<b>Retain</b> to have in mind; be able to recall.	

# 2

## WEAVING TEXTILES

### AGES

8-11 years old

### SKILL LEVEL

Intermediate

### DESCRIPTION

For this project we will learn the basics of weaving using common materials to create our own textile.

### MATERIALS

Plastic Large Eye Needles	Burlap
Yarn (Various Colors)	Scissors

*Materials with an (\*) are optional, use only if available.*



### Background

Almost every country has their own version of a textile. A **textile** is a type of cloth or fabric that is woven either by hand or by using a tool called a loom. To **weave** a textile a person will take several strands or threads of material, such as cotton, wool, yarn and other fibers, and **intertwine** them. This intertwining will create a solid and uniform piece of fabric. During weaving, designs can also be added by adding different colored threads in a desired pattern. Other details can later be added such as beads and tassels.

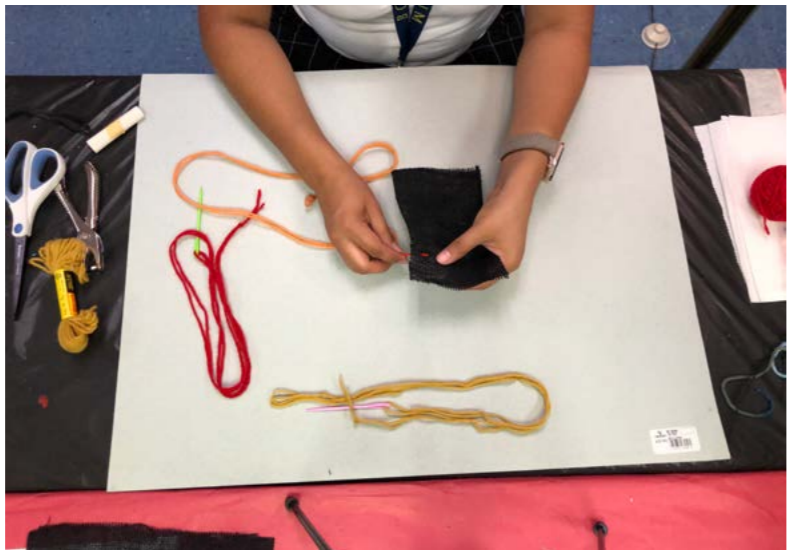
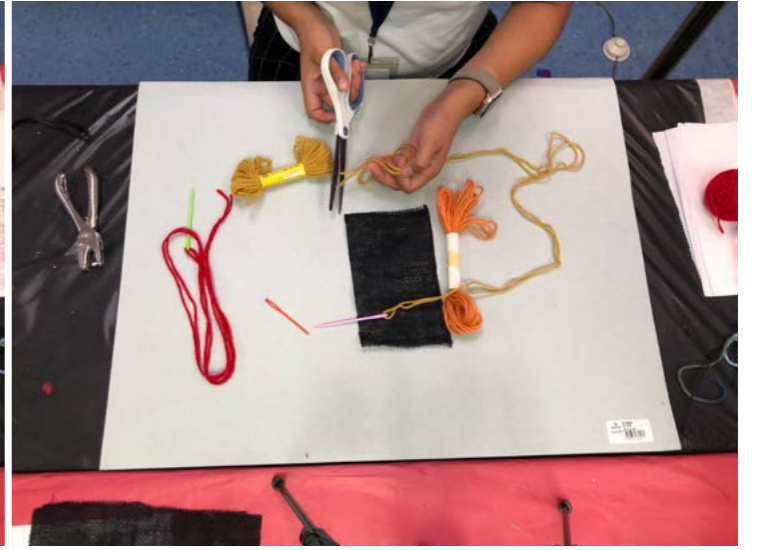
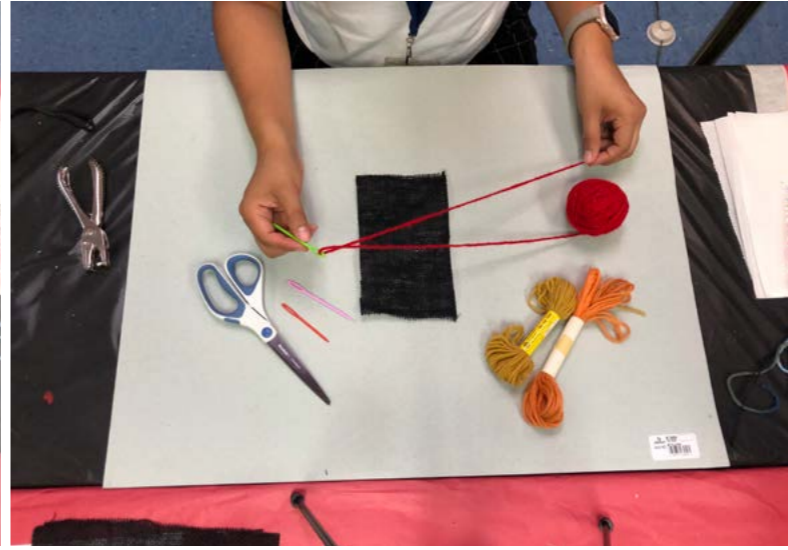
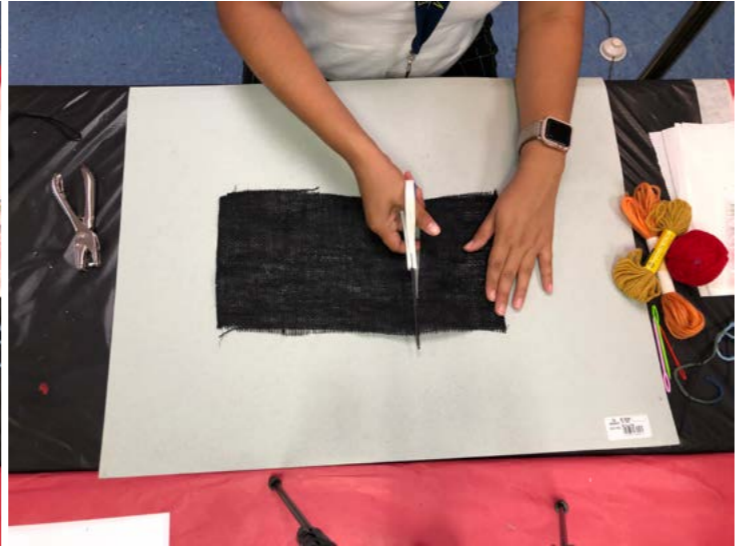
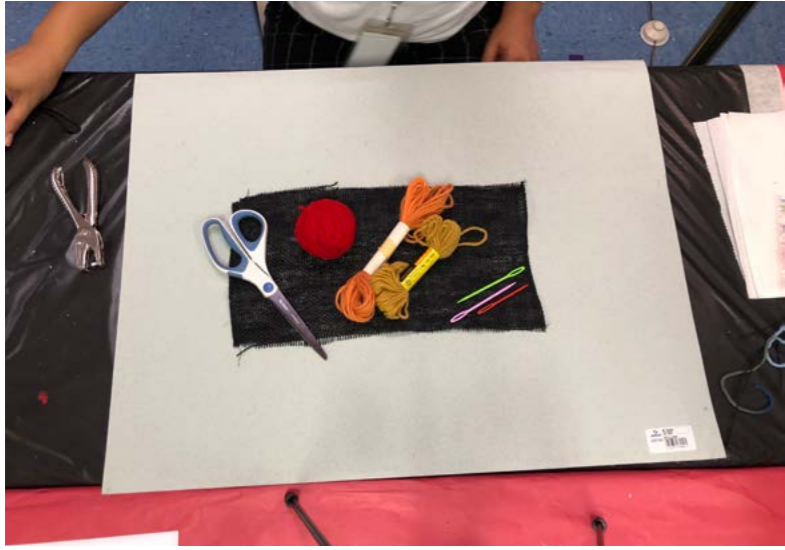
In Laos, textiles were once very important to reflect culture and beliefs, and to demonstrate skill. Weaving textiles was a **skill** that was learned by young girls for personal use. However, as time passed newer generations of young women have slowly began to spend less time weaving and more time pursuing **careers**, making weaving a dying form of traditional art. However, this does not mean that the art form has been completely lost.

There are still Laotians who continue to make textiles, just as they were made by their ancestors. This practice requires the use of **silk**. Silk is a fiber that is derived from the silkworm. A silkworm is an insect that undergoes several stages to reach adulthood. It begins as an egg, then becomes a larvae (worm), followed by the pupa (cocoon), and finally it becomes a moth. When a silkworm is in the larvae stage it will eat leaves until it is ready to **pupate**. Before pupating, the worm has to make a cocoon. During this stage **cocoons** are gathered and dissolved in boiling water to make silk threads. These threads are then cleaned and dyed for weaving textiles. Laotian people prefer to exclusively feed their silkworms mulberry leaves, because they have noticed the texture and quality of silk changes based on the worm's diet.

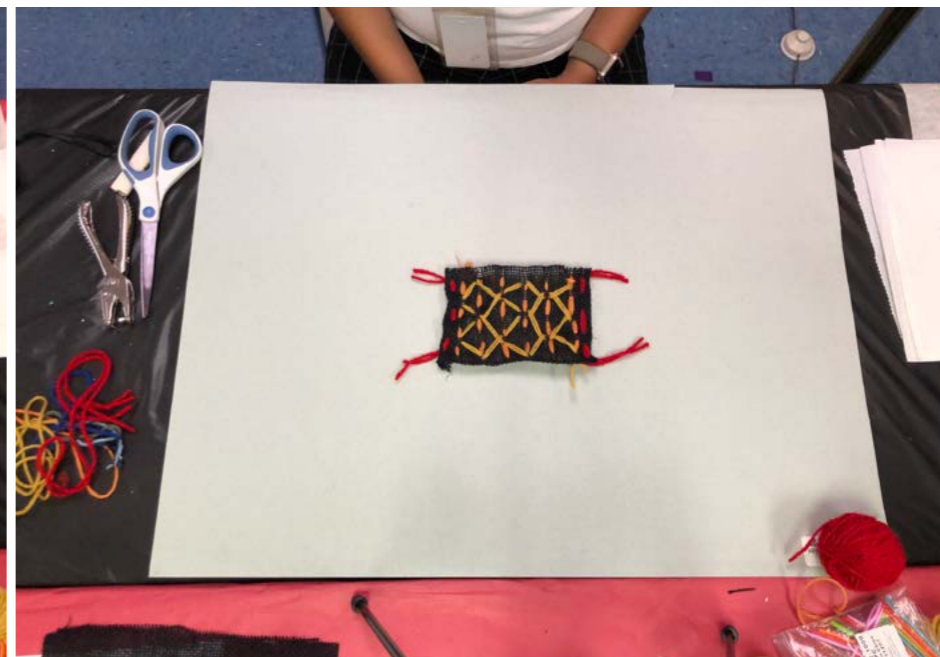
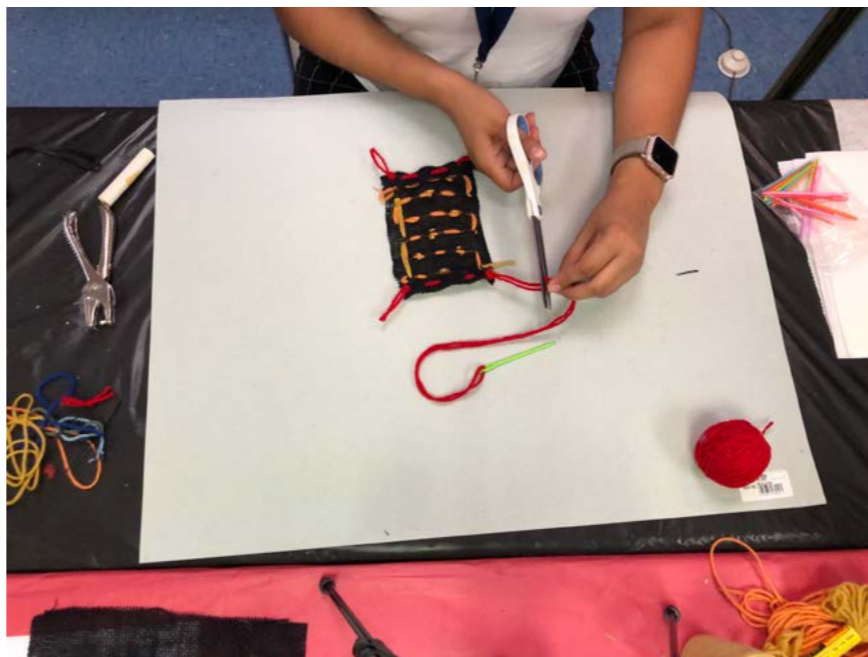
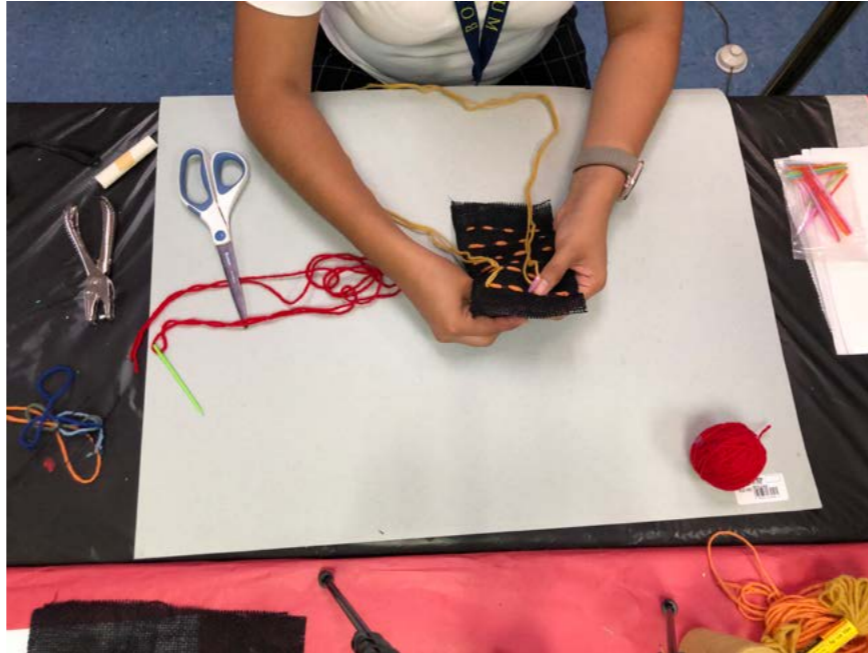
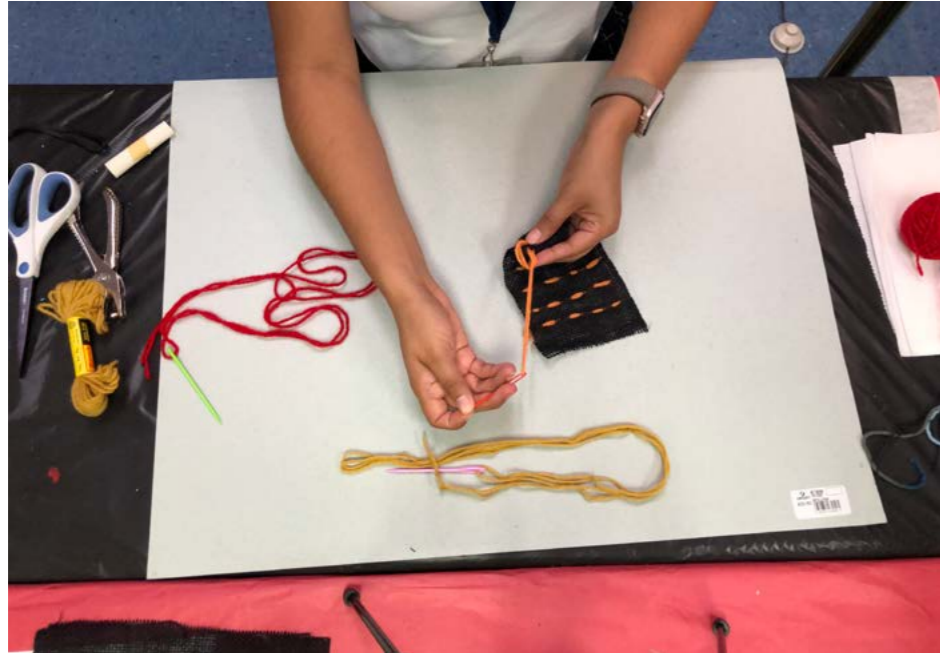
Once enough silk is gathered, it can be used to produce various types of textiles with their own meaning and use. For example, a **Shaman's** cloth was traditionally woven using silk and cotton. A Shaman is a healer that uses rituals to heal the people. These cloths also incorporated various symbols or motifs that were believed to chase away evil spirits. Other types of clothing include those proudly made by women out of love for their future family. They make clothing, decorative wall pieces, or other woven goods in preparation for marriage and their growing family.

## Prep

1. Use your scissors to cut a small rectangle in the burlap.
2. If you have several needles, use one for each color of yarn. Otherwise you can change the thread as needed.
3. Stretch one piece of thread out to a long length and cut it.
4. Thread one end through the eye of the needle and pull out the other side until the needle sits in the middle of the thread.
5. Tie the two ends of the thread together with a single knot.
6. Repeat with any other yarn colors or as needed.
7. Take your burlap piece in one hand and your needle in the other. Choose a place to start and push your needle through from the bottom.
8. Pull the thread out towards the front.
9. Then take the needle and push the needle down through the burlap to make a stitch.
10. Repeat this until your thread is all used up.
11. Take the remaining yarn and loop it over your needle, then push the needle through the burlap once more to secure it.
12. Cut the thread and reuse the needle if necessary.
13. Repeat this process with other colors of thread or create patterns.
14. When finished, you can add tassels at the ends by threading the yarn through and tying it.







## Key Vocabulary

<b>Textile</b> a woven or knitted fabric.	<b>Weave</b> to make (fabric, baskets, or the like) by passing threads or strips over and under each other; interlace.	<b>Intertwine</b> to twist together, one about the other; interlace or interlock.
<b>Skill</b> a craft or trade that requires training and attention to detail.	<b>Career</b> a profession or occupation chosen as a life's work.	<b>Silk</b> a fine, soft, shiny fiber produced by certain insects, esp. by the silkworm in spinning a cocoon.
<b>Pupate</b> to become a pupa.	<b>Cocoon</b> a fibrous covering produced by immature insects, such as butterfly and moth larvae, to protect them during metamorphosis, or by some spiders to hide their eggs.	<b>Shaman</b> among certain native Asian and North American peoples, a priest or healer believed to have exclusive contact with the supernatural.

Source: Object: Door Curtain (Paa Kang), early to mid 20th Century Lao Loum or Tai Daeng culture; Houaphanh Province, Laos Cotton and silk; 18 × 62 in. 2016.15.63 Anonymous Gift

Bowers Museum Archives. Moo Won. Textiles of Laos: Traditions, Techniques, Spirituality. <https://www.moowon.com/stories/textiles-of-laos>. Accessed August 17, 2020.

The New York Times. The Woven Art of Laos. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/31/travel/laos-textiles-weaving-silk.html>. Accessed August 17, 2020.

## State and National Standards

### DIY Scales

California Content Standards:

**K.MD.1**

Describe measurable attributes of objects, such as length or weight.  
Describe several measurable attributes of a single object.

Visual and Performing Arts Standards

**2VA.Cre2.5**

Use bilateral or radial symmetry to create visual balance.

### Weaving Textiles

Visual and Performing Art Standards.

**HSS-1.5.3**

Compare the beliefs, customs, ceremonies, traditions, and social practices of the varied cultures, drawing from folklore

Visual and Performing Arts Standards

**4VA.Cre2.4**

Use fibers or other materials to create a simple weaving.



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