Queen Victoria's Stockings

Create your own designer socks.

How this links with the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site:

In 1832, Queen Victoria, who was still a princess at this point, visited Belper to see the cotton mills. There had been a long history of stockings being made for royalty from George III to Queen Victoria. However, advancement in the industrial revolution meant that Queen Victoria's stockings were finer and better quality than her predecessor's.

The stockings were made at Brettle's factory and heralded the invention of Chevening.

The first of these pairs are simple, plain white cotton stockings with a finely chevened ankle extending to a chevron (arrow head) one third of the way up the leg. On the under welt, the area below the double thickness welt at the top of the stocking, the Royal Cypher is chevened together with a crown. – Taken from North Mill Website, Belper.

Queen Victoria also had black stockings made and these are thought to be from after Prince Albert died in 1861, she wore black to mourn him for the rest of her life.

You will need:

- Needles
- Embroidery thread
- Scissors
- Socks
- Piece of cardboard – (from packaging, needs to be thicker than a cereal box)

| How to have a go:	
Step 1: Take a piece of cardboard and cut it so that it is just a bit wider than your sock, but not wider than the leg of the person who will wear the sock. I chose a black sock to match Queen Victoria's stockings from her days of mourning.	
Step 2: Put the cardboard inside the sock. This holds the fabric firm and stops you sewing the sock together.	
Step 3: Your sock is now ready to stitch!	

Step 4:

Choose the colours of thread you would like to sew. I have chosen blue for the Derbyshire flower and Yellow for the stalk from the design a family crest activity.

The thread is made up of 6 strands of thin thread, you can split the thread and for this project I have used 3 strands.
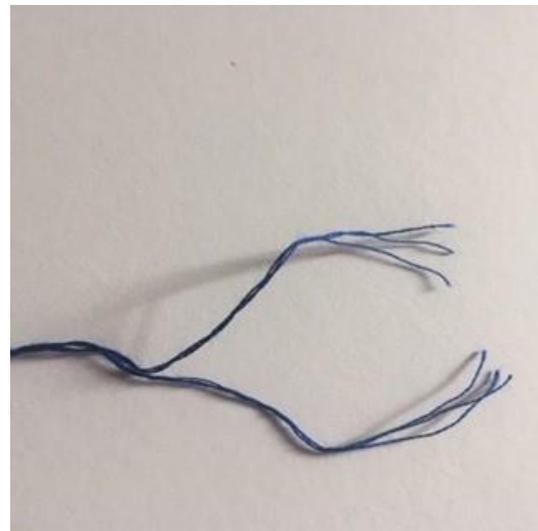

Step 5:

Starting with the blue thread, start to stitch your design onto your sock. You can be quite free with this, explore and experiment with what works well and what doesn't. Have fun with your design. Use big stitches and small stitches.
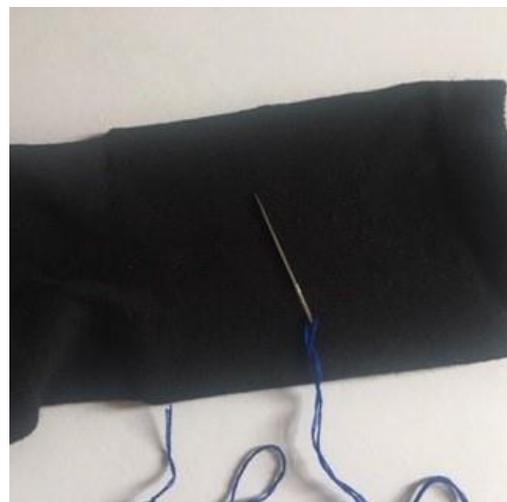
Big Stitches, go in and out of the fabric. You can mix them up with smaller stitches.

Repeat!
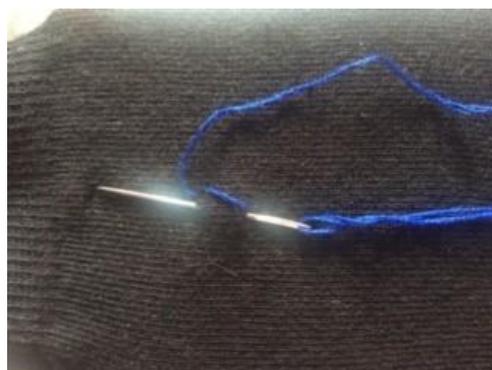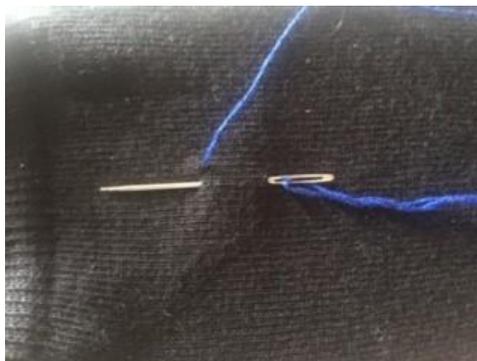
I undid some of the stitching a couple of times because it didn't work until I got it to a point I liked it.

You could use some chalk to draw onto the sock if you want some guidelines or use the paper technique from the Sketch to Stitch activity.

Step 6:

Once you are happy with the flower, move onto a different colour thread to make the stalk.

Step 7: Create the shape of the stalk by stitching the thread loosely to look like the stalk.	
Step 8: My Derbyshire flower is loosely based on the Derbyshire flag, it doesn't have to be perfect to look lovely. It looks unique and handmade, every one you make will be different and you will be wearing designer socks on the school run.	
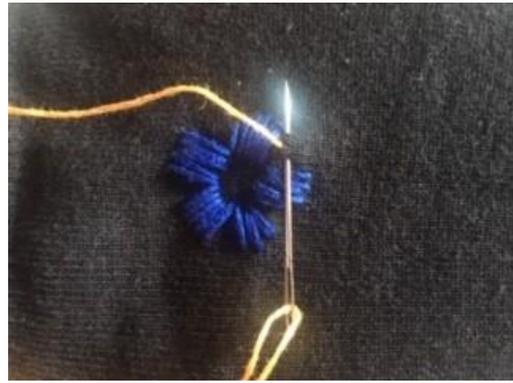
Please let us know what you think of this activity and share your work with us

When you have had a go at this activity, we'd love to hear what you think, or see your work. Please send us any feedback below by 12th October 2020.

Post us your work – If you would like to post us any of your work or let us know what you think of this activity with a note with your name and address (and age if you'd like to share that). We are hoping to have an exhibition in the Autumn on one of the mill sites of the work created by people all along the valley. We will return all your work to you after the exhibition.

Postal address:

Georgina Greaves (DVMWHS Creativity Packs)
Derbyshire County Council
North Block S7 - County Hall
Matlock
Derbyshire DE4 3AG

Send us a photo – Email a photo of your creation to info@derwentvalleymills.org

Social Media – If you use social media use #DVMWHSCreativity and post the images of your work and tag us at:

Facebook: @DerwentValleyMillsWHS

Twitter: @DVMillsWHS

Instagram: @DerwentValleyMillsWHS

Hope you enjoy doing this craft activity!