



Craft School: Jasleen's Challenge

Secondary Toolkit

For ages 11-16

26/27

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Craft School

1.1 Welcome to Craft School

Craft School is the nationwide craft challenge, open to all learners from Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4 (ages 3-16). Each year, we invite learners to create their own 3D work in response to a creative brief.

Underpinned by our Make First approach, learners take the lead in an open-ended craft process, exploring materials and making their own decisions about their work. By thinking through making and taking creative risks, they build practical skills and develop their voices as makers.

At the end of the programme, learners will submit their work to be featured in the Crafts Council's online gallery, recognising the journeys, discoveries and learning that have taken place through making.

Every participant will receive a Craft School certificate and digital badge.

This year Craft School is available through our **new membership**, this new offering creates space for us to gather all our support and resources for educators together. Membership gives access to all current and previous Craft School resources, our Make First pedagogy and exciting new opportunities to come such as our Collections Box- a handling collection of the nation's contemporary craft.



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1.2 Make First

Make First is Crafts Council's craft education pedagogy, or method of teaching. We've examined our work with learners, teachers and maker educators to pinpoint what's special about craft learning and packed it all into the Make First approach.

Make First is a learner-driven approach that empowers children and young people to follow their curiosity, explore materials, make decisions about their work, and develop their voice as makers.

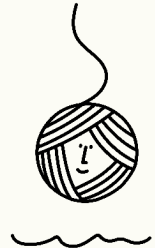
The key principles of Make First are:

- Make First is playful and open-ended; enjoy the making and don't focus on the final outcome
- Dive straight into making! Pick your materials and have a go
- Explore your interests and develop your voice as a maker
- Tweak and tinker with materials to develop your ideas
- Start again, work on several things at once or repeat the same thing with different materials
- Fail and try again to become a braver maker
- Make First is about the joyfulness and pleasure that comes from making
- Build skills and knowledge from your interactions with materials and the physical world
- Learn together as a community

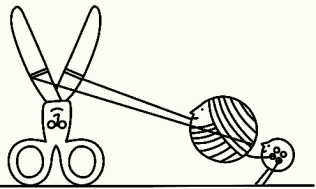
**What is
the Make First
approach?**



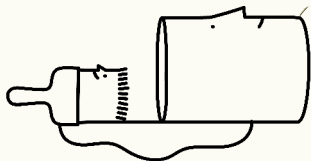
what is make first?



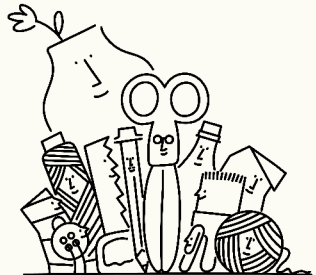
Dive straight into making!
Pick your materials and have a go



Experiment with materials to
develop your ideas



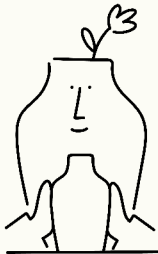
Fail and try again to become
a braver maker



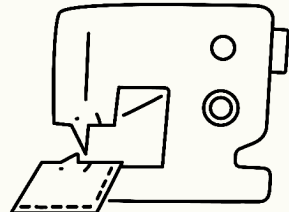
Learn together as a community



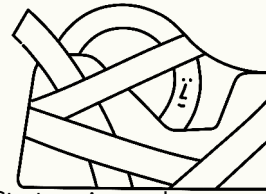
Make First is playful and open-ended;
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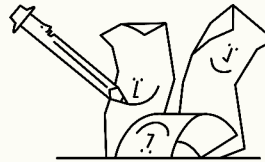
Explore your interests
and develop your
voice as a maker



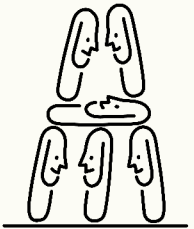
Build skills and knowledge from
your interactions with materials
and the physical world



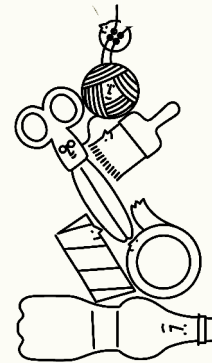
Start again, work on several
things at once or repeat the same
thing with different materials



Make First is about the joyfulness and
pleasure that comes from making



Make First can be
scaffolded by discovery
resources, challenges or
technical drawings



Make First can support a
range of learning outcomes
across the curriculum



Make First is supported through a
classroom environment that encourages
collaboration and supports learners to
make their own choices

make first in your school



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The Challenge

2.1 Timeline Overview

Launch Event: September 2026

Online CPD Programme: September 2026 – March 2027

Online Educator Forums: September 2026 – May 2027

Submission Deadline: May 2027

Online Gallery: June 2027

2.2 The Programme Overview

We're committed to supporting educators and facilitators throughout their Craft School journey. Here's what's available to help you make the most of the programme:

- Resource Hub
- CPD Programme
- Monthly Educator Forums



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Resource Hub

Access our free Resource Hub, where you'll find a range of materials to support your delivery and engagement with Craft School.

Watch our CPD films with Maker Champion Jasleen Kaur as she shares her creative process and sources of inspiration. These videos are a great way to explore the brief and spark ideas with your learners.

CPD Programme

Craft School: Jasleen's Challenge offers a free programme of live online CPD sessions designed to deepen your practice and develop your understanding of the Make First approach. Each session begins with a previous Craft School participant sharing their experience of the programme, followed by a craft expert introducing their practice in relation to this year's theme, **Community**. You'll then take part in a hands-on Make Along led by a maker, before ending the session with a Q&A and group discussion.

Together, these sessions provide practical, material-led approaches that you can adapt and take back into your own educational setting.

Monthly Educator Forum

Join colleagues from across the country and the Crafts Council Learning Team for dedicated Educator Forum sessions. These forums provide a space for educators and facilitators to connect, share practice and discuss their progress with the challenge.

Some forums are tailored to specific age groups, while others are open to all.

All key dates and further detail about the programme are in the accompanying document.



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2.3 About our Maker Champion

Jasleen Kaur is an interdisciplinary artist whose work explores community, cultural memory, inherited traditions, and ideas of belonging, often using everyday objects to challenge dominant narratives. Her Turner Prize-winning installation, *Alter Altar*, reflects on traditions and histories, examining how culture is inherited and reimagined.

Having trained in jewellery and silversmithing, making is an important element of Jasleen's practice. In 2011, works from her *Tools for Living* series were acquired into the Crafts Council's Handling Collection.



Photo: Robin Silas

2.4. The Brief

For this year's challenge, Jasleen Kaur invites learners to use craft and making to explore the theme of **Community**.

Educators and learners will be working together to reflect on the communities they are part of, whether personal, local, global, or digital, and express their ideas through craft.



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Digital Badging

When your pupils take part and submit their work, they'll receive a Digital Badge and paper certificate issued by the Crafts Council.

Digital Badges are a verified, shareable record of achievement — a small digital certificate that carries proof of what your pupils have learned or accomplished.

These badges are embedded with information about who issued it, what criteria were met, and when it was earned, so anyone who views it can confirm it's genuine with a single click.

Ideal for a CV, website or email signature it's a lasting piece of evidence they can carry with them: something to point to in a portfolio, a college application, or a conversation about what they've made and why it mattered.



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4.1 Craft School: Jasleen's Challenge at Key Stage 3 and 4

Craft has long been a way for communities to share stories, preserve traditions, and express identity. Through Craft School: Jasleen's Challenge, learners can explore how making connects people across generations, cultures, and places. It provides an opportunity to explore social history, cultural exchange, and their role in evolving communities, while broadening their perspectives on what constitutes meaningful creative work.

This challenge encourages learners to think critically about the role of craft in their lives and in the world around them, using hands-on creative practice to explore themes like heritage, migration, and community narratives. Critical thinking in this context means asking deeper questions about the objects and materials they encounter, reflecting on different perspectives, challenge assumptions, and consider how craft can tell stories or represent communities.



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Key Stage 3 (Ages 11–14)

At Key Stage 3, learners explore their own communities and think about how different communities connect, change, and keep traditions alive. Craft becomes a form of storytelling, allowing learners to examine global influences and historical contexts that shape cultural identities.

Learners can experiment with a variety of media to explore both personal and collective identities. By studying artists and craft practitioners who use making as a means of storytelling, they can reflect on their own histories and the ways in which materials and techniques carry cultural significance.

Craft School as a cross curricular approach:

Citizenship:

By examining how empire and migration have influenced craft practices, students develop a deeper understanding of how material culture preserves stories of resistance, adaptation, and belonging.

Learners explore themes of ethical consumerism, sustainability, and community resilience, considering how craft can be used to address social and environmental issues.

History:

Learners can research significant cultural movements, traditions, and historical events that have shaped communities.



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Key Stage 4 (Ages 14-16)

At Key Stage 4, learners are encouraged to engage with craft in a more conceptual and critical way, using making to explore themes of culture, heritage, and identity, using making to:

- Investigate themes like culture, heritage, and identity
- Amplify underrepresented voices through personal and collective expression
- Reflect on myths, personal histories, and shared memories
- Respond to historical and contemporary issues (e.g., migration and colonial legacies)
- Experiment with materials to challenge conventional narratives and express complex ideas

Craft School as a Cross-Curricular Approach:

History:

Students explore cultural heritage and national identity by linking historical events to contemporary social issues. By comparing traditional crafts with modern interpretations, they examine how cultural narratives are preserved, adapted, or challenged over time.

PSHE:

Activities align with modules on identity, self-expression, and community. Students reflect on their own identities and the communities they belong to, considering how tradition, inheritance, and storytelling shape social engagement. Craft offers a meaningful way to understand themselves and others, while connecting to culture and community through art and design.





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4.2 Scheme of Learning

These sessions are designed to be flexible and adaptable. You can explore them in any order you like, you might choose to spend six hours on just one session, or let your learners decide where to go next after completing an activity.

Using the Make First approach, these are intended as open-ended explorations rather than a fixed sequence of lessons. They are here to inspire you and your learners, giving you the freedom to guide your learning journey and see where it takes you.

When beginning to explore the brief and this challenge with your learners, it's valuable to start with some key questions and discussions:

- What is a community?
- Which communities do you belong to?
- Where do you experience a sense of connection with others?

Understanding community is fundamental in helping us recognise the different ways people come together, support one another, and create shared experiences.

Some communities come together because they live near each other, sharing spaces like schools, parks, libraries, places of worship, or community centres. Others may be connected by family—immediate or extended—including guardians, caregivers, and wider support networks.



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TOP: Jasleen Kaur in her studio

Photo: Elijah Serumaga

BOTTOM: Turner-Prize winning Alter Altar

Some communities are spread far apart, connecting online or through shared interests and ideas. There are also communities that exist across borders, linked by history, heritage, or traditions. In *Alter Altar* (2023), Jasleen Kaur uses found objects to explore how traditions are inherited and reimagined.

Communities can be built around shared culture, language, religion, or perspectives. They may also form through activities like singing, sport, dancing, playing, or sharing food. While communities often unite around similarities, they also embrace differences.

Before beginning this work with your learners, take some time to reflect on the community you'll be working with.

What is the context of your school?

When will the sessions take place?

As a warm-up exercise for yourself, you might find it helpful to create a mind map or a web of communities to explore the backgrounds, connections, and experiences of your learners.



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For younger learners in EYFS, you may want to start by exploring the idea of family, including extended family, guardians, and those who care for us. Encourage learners to think about places where communities gather, such as libraries, places of worship, parks and local meeting spaces.

You might begin by asking questions like:

- What is a community?
- Who is in your family and who else helps to take care of you?
- Where do you feel a sense of belonging?
- What brings people together: traditions, spaces, events, food, celebrations?
- How can we build a strong community through helping, sharing, or learning together?

	Session Exploration	Key Question for Study	Activity	Materials & Equipment
1.	What is community?	What does community mean to you? What stories of community can you see from your local area? What stories are missing or unseen? What do you feel not a part of? Which communities do you choose? Which ones are default?	Warm up: Watch and Discuss Watch the video resources featuring Jasleen Kaur. In small groups, discuss the topics that arise, particularly reflections on materials and community. Prompt learners to think about alternative ways to define ‘community’: team, group, crew, flock, form group, or even unseen communities like commuters, neighbours, or social spaces they interact with but don’t usually define. Work together to create your own group definition of “community”. Material Exploration Lay out a range of materials available in your learning setting – fabric, cardboard, string, wire, natural objects, paper, etc. Invite learners to select materials they feel drawn to and reflect: What does this material/object say about me? What parts of my community (family, school, hobbies, culture, neighbourhood) does it connect to? Learners can document their exploration through mark making, sketches, notes, or small constructions. Emphasise that there is no fixed outcome – this is an open-ended investigation of personal identity and community. Reflections: 3D Mapping and Building Connections Using large sheets of paper on the floor, invite learners to start mapping their communities by arranging their materials and drawings spatially. They may want to use string and pins to show the web of their community and how it overlaps and coexists. Encourage learners to build 3D structures – stacking, weaving, connecting materials to show relationships, overlaps, and links between different aspects of their communities. Allow the structure to be messy, layered, and dynamic, reflecting the complexity of real-life communities. Once completed, photograph the 3D map as a record. Optional reflection prompt: explore how connections and communities have evolved (“Then and Now”) and what they might look like in the future.	Jasleen Kaur video clips (Resource Hub) A wide, sensory-rich mix of materials: recycled packaging, plastic, cardboard, containers, fabrics, cutlery, brushes Post-it notes or labels to annotate why learners are drawn to particular materials. Pens, pencils, charcoal for mark making; mixed-media supplies – glue sticks, scissors, collage materials, paint if appropriate. Clay or plasticine for 3D sensory exploration or symbolic modelling.

	Session Exploration	Key Question for Study	Activity	Materials & Equipment
2.	What makes up our communities?	What can you see, hear, smell, and feel in your local community? What stories do everyday objects tell? How do different environments influence our senses? How can we translate sound and found objects into visual stories?	Warm up: Watch and Discuss Jasleen encourages learners to walk around their local high street for inspiration and to notice what makes up our communities. Explore Local Community Walk around your neighbourhood to make multisensory observations. What do you notice in your area? What can you see? What can you hear? What can't you see and hear? Alternative: if walking isn't possible, use Google Maps. Take inspiration from Jon Rafman's 9 Eyes, which showcases unexpected scenes captured through Google Street View, revealing hidden or overlooked moments in public spaces. Ask students to imagine and make notes of what they would hear, smell and see. Activity Take photographs, sketches or recordings of the things that make up your local high street or area. Using explorative mark making or rubbings of surfaces, record textures, sounds or languages that you can hear. Include things like music from cars, different languages heard or smells of food being prepared. How could you draw the senses – sound, or the different smells of foods? Learners make a collage using images, rubbings, objects and recordings from their exploration. Plenary: Community Reflection Ask learners to reflect on the different communities they've observed. What roles do everyday activities play in shaping our understanding of community? How can something as simple as a street impact the identity of the people who live there? How can physical spaces influence social structures, identities, and connections?	Clipboards or sketchbooks; pens, pencils, coloured pencils, markers. Cameras, tablets or smartphones for photos, video, audio (and Google Maps access if staying inside). Printed maps or Google Street View access to annotate observations. Mixed-media supplies: paper, fabric swatches, natural or recycled materials; learners could collect scraps of paper, leaflets, posters from the street. Glue, scissors, collage materials; paints or pastels for abstract sensory expression; voice recorder or video app.

	Session Exploration	Key Question for Study	Activity	Materials & Equipment
3.	How does creating a Hybrid Object merge Identity & Materials?	How do materials reflect cultural traditions and history? What value do discarded or found materials hold? How does Jasleen Kaur transform objects into new meanings? What do these objects say about your personal or community identity? How do materials shape our memories and connections?	Before the session Encourage learners to bring in objects from home and around school or their community spaces – they will be used in this session. Warm up: Discussion Examine Jasleen Kaur’s work and discuss how she creates hybrid objects by transforming everyday items. Play the Jasleen Kaur video from the Resource Hub; you may also show pictures of Tools for Living from her website. Discuss: where does Jasleen find inspiration? How does she combine materials in unexpected ways? What makes her objects both familiar and strange? You may want to introduce Chindogu, the Japanese art of the ‘useless’ object. Ask: who decides the values of objects? Where is the balance between aesthetics and function? How can something be “beautifully useless” but still meaningful? Activity: Material Exploration Allow students time to discuss the objects they have brought in. What value do these materials have? What do they say about the spaces they belong in? Choose materials that describe you, your heritage or communities you are part of. Put objects together – what story do they tell? Use glue, wire, string, or tape to assemble a new tool or symbolic object. Combine contrasting materials (soft fabric with hard metal, a brush with a spoon). Optional: add decorative elements inspired by cultural patterns or personal heritage, reflecting on the balance between aesthetic and function. Ask students to deconstruct and reassemble objects in new ways – what stories do the new objects tell? What stories do they omit? Plenary: Reflections Group share: invite learners to present their hybrid objects. What story does your object tell? What stories might it hide? Does your object prioritise how it looks, how it works, or both? If you could place your object somewhere (a gallery, a home, a street market), where would it belong?	Tools to deconstruct (depending on materials): scissors, screwdrivers. Found/discarded objects: spoons, brushes, textiles, cutlery, tools, fabric, discarded items. Cardboard, glue, wire, string, tape for assembling Printouts of patterns.

	Session Exploration	Key Question for Study	Activity	Materials & Equipment
4.	What objects build connection?	Who is Giles Tettey Nartey? How does his art connect people through craft and ritual? What objects or spaces help us gather, collaborate, and share experiences? How can these objects be used as symbols? How does your work represent personal or community identity? How can feedback help refine your final piece?	Warm Up Show examples of Giles Tettey Nartey's work (focus: material culture, craft, ritual). Giles Tettey Nartey is a British-Ghanaian artist and architect whose work explores filmmaking, installation, performance, and design, focusing on material culture and the connection between craft and ritual. Studio Lenca explores ideas of identity, community, and belonging using bright colours, playful shapes, and everyday materials – recently working with paper clay, a soft recycled material made by mixing clay with old paper. Discuss: how do objects create connection? What textures, shapes, or materials feel welcoming? Activity: Material Exploration Inspired by the two makers, challenge learners to create a vessel, structure or object that holds or supports connection and collaboration. This could be: - a table for sharing and dialogue - a seating area for gathering - a set of tools that encourage teamwork - or a symbolic object that represents connection in a unique way. Learners are encouraged to make models using recycled materials. Provide a variety of materials and encourage experimenting with textures, shapes, and structures. Support collaborative decision-making, prompting learners to think about who their vessel is for and how it fosters connection. Plenary: Reflections Arrange vessels around the space; students move around to observe and discuss. As a group reflect on: How does your vessel foster connection? How did the choice of materials (recycled objects, paper clay) influence the story your object tells? How were you inspired by Giles Tettey Nartey and Studio Lenca?	Paper clay – made by mixing clay with (usually recycled) paper pulp; fun, tactile, and quite messy, which makes it very engaging. Clay, wood, metal, cardboard, fabric, paper, string, tape. Found objects and natural materials; scrap materials. Sketchbooks; digital research access.

	Session Exploration	Key Question for Study	Activity	Materials & Equipment
5.	What hidden narratives are there in your communities?	What hidden stories live within the materials you've chosen? Can you combine images or objects that wouldn't normally be seen side by side? What story does that tell? How might the meaning of an object change depending on who is using it? What do materials say about class, culture, or identity? How might one person's everyday object be another's symbol of power, struggle, or comfort?	Warm up: Stimulus Encourage learners to think about the objects, clothes, tools, and materials that surround them at home, at school, or in their communities. What objects do you interact with daily? What do these objects say about your life or environment? What hidden or overlooked stories might these everyday items hold? Allow time for students to mind map and discuss in pairs or small groups before sharing as a class, thinking about the symbolism and significance behind materials. Main Activity Show examples of Jasleen Kaur's work, particularly her combination of everyday objects like a flip flop and a formal business shoe. Discuss how these objects are reimagined and layered with new meaning when combined. Why do you think Jasleen chose to combine these two very different objects? Ask learners to choose objects or images that are meaningful to them or represent something from their community, culture, or history: - objects of cultural significance (a Nazar, incense, a horseshoe) - items tied to superstitions or traditions (charms, symbols, heirlooms) - personal or family items (clothing, a family photo, a worn tool) - discarded objects with hidden histories. Encourage students to experiment by combining their chosen objects or materials in unexpected ways – cutting, folding, painting, collaging, mixing textures (fabric with metal, photos with natural elements). Remind students to think about symbolism in relation to culture, identity, struggle, comfort, or memory. Allow time to create, moving around and observing others' works. Plenary Bring students together to reflect. What hidden or overlooked narratives have surfaced in your work? What connections can you make between the objects you've used and your own identity, community, or history? What messages might your object tell others? How does this activity challenge our perceptions of what art can be? If time allows, students can document their creations (photography or drawing) and write a short reflection on the hidden narrative their object tells – this could form part of a larger unit or portfolio.	Old magazines/newspapers, photocopied images, photographs, digital or printed images. Tracing paper for layering narratives visually; acetate sheets and markers to explore transparency, layering, and distortion. Fabric scraps or personal textiles, thread, safety pins, buttons, bottle caps, foil, wood. Paper clay, glue, string, wire, scissors, markers, paint.

	Session Exploration	Key Question for Study	Activity	Materials & Equipment
6.	If my heritage or community could speak, what would it say?	How do artists like Neera Sehgal and Joke Amusan use materials to connect past and present? How can textiles be a language for unspoken stories? Is a quilt more powerful as one large piece or as many smaller ones? Why? What does it mean to collaborate creatively? How can making help communities feel seen and heard?	Warm up: Stimulus Look at these two artists. Neera Sehgal is an artist and printmaker pushing the boundaries of technique while preserving the art and craft of Indian woodblock printing – bridging cultures and generations through printmaking. Joke Amusan is a German-Nigerian artist based in London whose work explores Black womanhood, identity, heritage, and migration, creating sculptures and installations that invite people to connect, share stories, and celebrate their true selves. Ask learners: how do these artists use their heritage and identity in their work? What techniques or themes do you notice? If heritage or community could speak, what stories might it tell? Main Activity Inspired by these makers, learners create a personal square that represents their identity, family heritage, or community. These individual pieces can be stitched together to form a collective quilt that celebrates diversity and shared stories. Modifications: if you can't stitch, heat press or glue as an alternative to one material process. Plenary Display the quilt-in-progress as a group. Invite learners to briefly share: What does your square represent? What story are you adding to the collective quilt? Reflect as a group: how do our individual stories come together to create something bigger? What can we learn about identity and community from this collective artwork?	1 square of fabric per learner (cotton or canvas, 20x20 cm); large fabric backing for quilt assembly. Embroidery thread and needles, pins, fabric scissors, fabric scraps for patchwork. Fabric glue or iron-on adhesive (optional); iron and ironing board (optional); sewing machine or hand-sewing tools. Permanent fabric markers or pens. Inspiration prints/images from Neera Sehgal and Joke Amusan.

	Session Exploration	Key Question for Study	Activity	Materials & Equipment
7.	How can craft preserve and reimagine tradition?	Which craft traditions exist in your family, culture or local area? What happens to a tradition when it is passed to a new generation – what is kept, and what changes? How does Jasleen Kaur reimagine inherited traditions in works like Alter Altar? Can a traditional technique be used to say something completely new?	Warm up: Stimulus Revisit Jasleen Kaur’s Alter Altar and discuss how she takes inherited traditions and objects – religious, domestic, cultural – and reimagines them in new contexts. Ask learners to mind map craft traditions they have encountered: a grandparent who knits or carves, henna at weddings, rangoli, corn dollies, football scarves, friendship bracelets. What traditions do we inherit without noticing? Main Activity Introduce one or two accessible traditional techniques as a starting point – for example simple weaving, braiding, coil pottery, block printing, paper cutting or basic embroidery stitches. Demonstrate the technique, then invite learners to deliberately reimagine it: swap the traditional material for an unexpected one (weave with plastic bags or headphone wires, coil with newspaper, embroider onto a crisp packet or a photograph); change the scale dramatically; or combine two traditions from different cultures in one piece. The question driving the making is: what does my version keep from the tradition, and what does it change? Encourage learners to research the origins of their chosen technique as they work, and to record their experiments and failures as part of the journey. Plenary Display the works alongside images of the traditional techniques that inspired them. Discuss: what has each maker preserved, and what have they transformed? Who ‘owns’ a tradition? How does changing the material change the meaning? How might your piece be read by someone from the tradition’s original community?	Images/examples of traditional techniques: woodblock printing, kente weaving, coil pottery, embroidery, paper cutting, basketry. Yarn, string, fabric strips, plus unconventional alternatives: plastic bags, wires, newspaper, packaging, crisp packets. Clay or paper clay; needles, thread, embroidery hoops; printing ink, rollers, lino or foam board. Sketchbooks for research and documenting experiments; access to digital research.

	Session Exploration	Key Question for Study	Activity	Materials & Equipment
8.	What does community look like at the table?	Where and how does your community gather to eat and drink? What objects make shared eating possible – and what do they say about the people using them? How does Jasleen Kaur use food and drink objects (like the Irn-Bru bottles in Alter Altar) to speak about culture and belonging? What would a vessel designed for your community look like?	Warm up: Stimulus Look at how food and drink appear in Jasleen Kaur’s work – everyday bottles, plates and kitchen objects elevated into art that speaks about migration, class and belonging. Discuss: what foods, drinks and rituals bring your communities together? A Sunday roast, iftar, bubble tea after school, a chippy tea, chai with grandparents? What objects hold these rituals – teapots, tiffin tins, takeaway boxes, best plates kept for guests? Main Activity Learners design and make a vessel or table object for a real or imagined community gathering: a sharing plate, a cup for a specific person, a centrepiece, a serving spoon, a container for a food that matters to them. Work in clay, paper clay, or constructed materials. Push learners to embed meaning in the surface and form: impressed patterns from meaningful textiles, text fragments, colours of a flag or football team, shapes borrowed from family objects. Alternatively, groups can collaborate on a full ‘table setting’ for an imagined community feast, deciding together who is invited and what the table needs to make everyone feel welcome. Plenary Set the table: arrange all vessels together as one shared meal. Photograph it as a collective installation. Reflect: who is this table for? What stories do the objects tell side by side? What does hospitality mean in your community – and how did you build it into your making?	Clay, air-drying clay or paper clay; modelling tools, rolling pins, texture-making objects (lace, coins, keys, fabric). Alternative construction materials: cardboard, papier-mâché, foil, found containers to transform. Paint, glazes or varnish if available; scraps of patterned fabric or paper for surface reference. A table, cloth and camera for the final collective installation. Images of food-related works by Jasleen Kaur and vessels from different cultures.

	Session Exploration	Key Question for Study	Activity	Materials & Equipment
9.	How can making be an act of care or protest?	What is craftivism, and how have communities used craft to speak out or care for one another? What issues matter to your community right now? Is a handmade message more powerful than a printed one? Why? Where is the line between protest, care, and celebration in craft?	Warm up: Stimulus Introduce the idea of craftivism – craft used for activism and community care. Look at examples such as protest banners, the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, yarn-bombing, trade union and Suffragette banners, and contemporary makers like Corbin Shaw, whose textile works explore masculinity, football culture and belonging. Discuss: why do people choose slow, handmade methods to carry urgent messages? What does the time and care invested add to the message? Main Activity Learners identify something they want to say on behalf of a community they belong to – a celebration, a demand, a thank you, a warning, a memorial. They then craft the message: a mini banner or pennant flag in fabric and felt; embroidered or appliquéd text; badges or patches; a woven or collaged placard. Encourage learners to think hard about audience and placement – who needs to see this, and where would it live? The school corridor, a bus stop, a bedroom door, a community centre? Emphasise that care counts as much as protest: a banner celebrating dinner staff or welcoming new arrivals is as valid as one demanding change. Plenary Hold a ‘silent gallery’: display all pieces and let learners read each other’s messages without commentary, then discuss. Which messages stayed with you, and why? How did material choices (soft felt, rough stitching, bold appliquéd) affect the tone? What would happen if these works were actually placed in public? What responsibilities come with speaking for a community?	Fabric, felt, old banners/ sheets, pennant flag templates. Embroidery thread, needles, fabric glue, iron-on letters or appliqué scraps. Badge-making materials or safety pins and card for patches. Markers, fabric paint, stencils and sponges. Images of craftivism: protest and trade union banners, memorial quilts, yarn-bombing, Corbin Shaw’s textile works.

	Session Exploration	Key Question for Study	Activity	Materials & Equipment
10.	How can we design a monument for our community?	What do the monuments and public artworks in your area celebrate – and who or what is missing? Who decides what gets remembered in public space? How do artists like Hew Locke and Yinka Shonibare challenge or reimagine monuments? What would a monument to your community look like, and where would it stand?	Warm up: Stimulus Look at how contemporary artists engage with monuments and public memory: Hew Locke's reworkings of statues and ships, Yinka Shonibare's Nelson's Ship in a Bottle on the Fourth Plinth, and local examples of statues, plaques, murals and memorials learners know. Discuss: what and who is commemorated near us? Whose stories are missing from public space? What might a monument to everyday community life look like – to carers, to a youth club, to a language, to a bus route? Main Activity Learners design and build a maquette (scale model) for a monument or public artwork celebrating a community, person or story they feel deserves recognition. Working with recycled and mixed materials, they consider: form (figurative, abstract, functional – could the monument be a bench, a gate, a fountain?); site (where exactly would it stand, and why?); scale (imagine it 10 metres tall – what changes?); and surface (textures, patterns and materials that carry meaning for that community). Encourage quick prototypes first – three rough ideas in ten minutes – before committing to one to develop. Learners photograph their maquette in situ or against a photo backdrop of its intended site. Plenary Hold a 'planning committee' crit: each maker pitches their monument – who it is for, where it goes, why it matters – and peers respond as community members. Would you want this in your neighbourhood? What questions would local people ask? How does deciding what to commemorate change how you see your own community?	Cardboard, boxes, tubes, wire, foil, modroc or papier-mâché if available. Clay or paper clay for figures and details; glue guns (supervised), tape, string. Paint and mixed-media surface materials; found objects for symbolic detail. Cameras/tablets to photograph maquettes against real or printed backdrops of proposed sites. Images: Hew Locke's reworked statues, Yinka Shonibare's Fourth Plinth commission, local monuments and murals.

	Session Exploration	Key Question for Study	Activity	Materials & Equipment
11.	How do digital communities take physical form?	Which of your communities exist mostly or entirely online? What would your online community look like if you could hold it in your hands? How can craft – one of the oldest technologies – represent the newest ones? What is gained and lost when connection happens through a screen?	Warm up: Stimulus The brief invites learners to reflect on communities that are personal, local, global, or digital. Discuss the digital communities learners belong to: group chats, gaming clans, fandoms, content communities, family WhatsApp groups spanning continents. How do these communities show care, conflict, belonging and identity? Note craft connections: weaving was the original binary code (over/under), and early computing used punch cards derived from Jacquard looms. Main Activity Learners translate a digital community into physical, crafted form. Possible directions: weave or stitch a ‘network map’ where threads physically connect nodes representing people across the world; build a soft sculpture of an emoji, avatar or icon that carries real meaning in their community; craft a ‘server’ or ‘group chat’ as a vessel or container holding tokens contributed by its members; or embroider fragments of meaningful messages (with permission and care around privacy) into fabric. Push learners to consider distance and connection materially: taut versus slack threads, knots, broken and repaired lines, glowing colours against dull ones. Plenary Share the works and reflect: what surprised you about giving physical weight to something digital? Which materials best captured how your online community feels? How is belonging online the same as, or different from, belonging in a physical place? What does your piece reveal that a screenshot never could?	Wool, thread, string, wire for network mapping; pins and boards or embroidery hoops. Fabric, felt and stuffing for soft sculptures; needles and thread. Beads, buttons and tokens to represent people and messages. LED tea lights or reflective/ fluorescent materials for ‘glow’ (optional). Reference: images of Jacquard looms and punch cards; network diagrams; learners’ own (privacy-checked) screenshots as visual reference.

	Session Exploration	Key Question for Study	Activity	Materials & Equipment
12.	How do we curate our community of makers?	What story does our body of work tell when it comes together? How do curators decide what to show, how to arrange it, and what to say about it? How has your thinking about community changed since Session 1? What makes a strong Learning Journey submission?	Warm up: Stimulus Learners step into the role of curators. Look at how exhibitions communicate: images of gallery installs (including Jasleen Kaur's Alter Altar install shots), wall texts, labels, and lighting. Discuss: what decisions has the curator made? How does placing two objects side by side create new meaning – just like combining materials did in earlier sessions? Main Activity As a group, curate an exhibition of the whole challenge. Learners audit all work made across the sessions (including photographed experiments and 'failures', which are central to Make First), then make curatorial decisions: a title and concept for the show; which pieces to include and how to group them (by theme? by material? by maker?); display methods – plinths from boxes, hanging systems, fabric backdrops; and interpretation – labels, wall text, a printed or digital catalogue, QR codes linking to process photos. Assign roles: curators, technicians, writers, photographers, marketing. This session doubles as preparation for the Craft School submission: compile the Learning Journey PDF, select the three final-piece photographs (one whole work, two details) and draft supporting text together. Plenary Open the exhibition to an audience – another class, staff, families – with learners leading tours and answering questions about their work. Close with a final reflection circle: how have your ideas about community changed since the first session? What did making teach you that talking couldn't? What do you want to make next – and which communities will you make it with?	All work and process photographs from across the challenge. Boxes/crates for plinths, fabric for backdrops, string and pegs for hanging. Card and pens for labels and wall text; access to a computer for the catalogue and Learning Journey PDF Camera for final documentation: one whole-work photo and two detail shots per final piece, labelled to the Crafts Council file-naming format. Install images of exhibitions, including Jasleen Kaur's Alter Altar.



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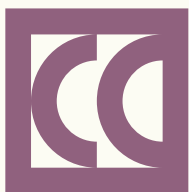
Key Language

Encourage learners to come up with their own definitions of key terms before referring to the provided ones.

Use these open-ended questions to guide their thinking and stimulate discussion:

- What do you think this term means?
- Can you think of an example that helps explain this term?
- How would you describe this in your own words?
- What do you think this term means in the context of craft, identity, or community?

By having students discuss these terms first, educators can help them arrive at their own understanding. The definitions provided are available for reference if needed, but the goal is to encourage independent thinking and group exploration.



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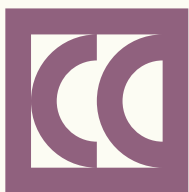
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Community	A group of people who live in the same area or share something in common, like culture, interests, or goals.
Identity	The way you see yourself and how others see you—this can include your culture, background, personality, and experiences.
Heritage	The history, traditions, and culture that are passed down through families or communities over time.
Migration	When people move from one place to another, especially to live or work in a different country.
Culture	The ideas, beliefs, customs, and way of life shared by a group of people.
Colonial / Colonialism	When one country takes control of another and its people, often changing or replacing the original culture.
Craft	A skilful activity where you make things by hand, like sewing, woodworking, or ceramics.
Narrative	A story or message that something tells—this can be through words, pictures, or even objects.
Symbolic Object	An object that stands for a bigger idea or feeling—like a heart symbolizing love.
Patchwork	The way you see yourself and how others see you—this can include your culture, background, personality, and experiences.
Embroidery	The history, traditions, and culture that are passed down through families or communities over time.
Ritual	When people move from one place to another, especially to live or work in a different country.
Installation (Art)	The ideas, beliefs, customs, and way of life shared by a group of people.
Multisensory	When one country takes control of another and its people, often changing or replacing the original culture.
Hybrid Object	A skilful activity where you make things by hand, like sewing, woodworking, or ceramics.



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4.3 Making Resource List

This is a resource list that includes items that can be found and used in many different ways. While it is extensive, you are not limited to these materials. Be creative, resourceful, and mindful of our environment! Here are some suggestions, but feel free to explore beyond them.

Human-Made Objects:

- Card
- Cardboard
- Boxes
- Paper
- Bubble wrap
- Foil
- String
- Found objects: Spoons, buckets, fabrics, buttons
- Old cloth
- Dried food: Spaghetti, Lentils, Peas
- Materials to print on (e.g. recycled boxes, deconstructed cereal boxes)
- Strips of fabric, ribbon, wool, paper, natural fibres, or recycled materials

Natural Objects:

- Leaves
- Potato
- Sticks
- Stones
- Hands and Feet
- Clay
- Mud
- Sand

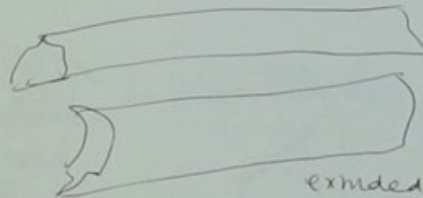
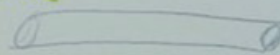
Tools:

- Scissors
- Pegs and Clips
- String and Yarn (various thicknesses)
- Ribbons (soft and colourful)
- Old T-shirts (for cutting and weaving)
- Fabric Strips (different textures and colours)
- Beads (large and colourful for threading)
- Large Needles (plastic, blunt-tip)

- Large Needles (plastic, blunt-tip)
- Wooden or Cardboard Frames (for weaving or knotting)
- Rubber Stamps (for printmaking)
- Sponges and Potatoes (for stamping)
- Found Objects (buttons, spoons, fabric scraps)
- Clay (air-drying or playdough)
- Playdough Tools (rolling pins, cutters, moulds)
- Plastic or Wooden Tweezers (for handling small items)
- Bead Threading Kits (large needles, threads)
- Pots and Buckets (for collecting materials)
- Magnifying Glasses (for exploring textures)
- Tape (for securing materials)



print shadowale
on metal



exuded clay
symbol



plate
image

martyr mages-

05.

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Sharing your work

5.1 Submissions

We invite everyone who took part in Craft School to submit their work so it can be recognised and celebrated as part of this national showcase. All submissions will be featured in the Craft School Online Gallery.

Work should be submitted by **May 2026**

5.2 Submissions Process

The submission is made up of 3 parts:

PDF - Learner's Journey

Questionnaire - Educators Statement

3 Images

PDF - Learner's Journey

Craft School is all about the learning journey, and we want to see how your learners have engaged with the brief and the Make First approach. The Learning Journey will show us how your learners have followed their interests, developed their voices as makers, experimented with ideas, started again, or tried different materials.



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Please compile all evidence of their learning journey into a single PDF. This will be adapted to suit your group, their age, needs and abilities. PDF may include: Photos of the learners working, their different experiments, images of 3D work, Sketchbook pages or annotations.

Questionnaire - Educator Statement

The Educator Statement invites the education provider to reflect on Craft School: Jasleen's Challenge, considering how the Make First pedagogy has informed your delivery and the impact it has had on both your teaching practice and your learners. This is also the stage where your contribution will be considered for the Teacher Award. By sharing how you have embedded Make First into your practice, you will help us celebrate the inspiring work taking place in your learning setting.

3 Images

We will need 3 good quality photos to go up on our website.

Each class or group should submit one entry. We ask that the teacher curates this selection of images to reflect your group's outcomes and experience.

Images should be in jpeg format and no more than 3mb in size.

Please label each of your files using the following format:

'Setting/School Name_Learner Name_Date_Title or Detail Description.jpeg'

For example - St John School_Joe Smith_2024_Blue Play Park.jpeg



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IMPORTANT NOTE:

We will not seek direct permission for the use of these images.

By submitting these images you are confirming that your school has already obtained consent from parents or carers for any images that include their child to be used in promotional or exhibition materials by organisations working with your school, including the Crafts Council.

Please only name learners you have consent to share names of on the website. Their names will appear alongside the name of their school.

We do not seek direct permission to share these learners names alongside images of their work. **By sharing these names you are confirming that your school has already obtained consent from parents or carers to do so for use in promotional or exhibition materials by organisations working with your school, including the Crafts Council.**

Should you have permission to share the images of a learner but not their name then please replace their name in the image file name with 'Learner 1', using consecutive numbers for subsequent learners where this also applies (e.g., "Learner 2").

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Further Reading and Resources

Anti-Racism and Anti-Ableism

Make First is built on the principles of inclusion, anti-racism, and anti-ableism. It aims to create spaces where all young people feel welcome, valued, and free to create.

We encourage educators to explore the Crafts Council's new resources on [diversity and inclusion](#), available on our website, for practical ideas and further reading on inclusive practice.

Here are some makers and artists to inspire you:

- Dima Srouji
- Esna Su
- Woo Jin Joo
- Fernando Laposse
- Tavares Strachan
- Sofia Niazi
- Rabbits Road Press
- Portland Inn Project
- Rebecca Davies
- Yinka Shonibare
- Pearl Alcock
- Vanley Burke
- Chila Kumari Singh Burman
- Creative Black Country
- Derek Bishton
- Matt Shaw
- Maddie Broad
- Naomi Reid
- Catherine Rive
- Open Play Early Years
- Jo Delafons
- Helaina Sharpley
- Kye Yeon Son
- Yi Crafts
- Donna D'Aquino
- Coralla Maiuri
- Amarjeet K. Nandhra
- Feministo!
- Denzil Forrester
- Sandra George
- Julian Germain
- Rene Matic
- Corbin Shaw
- Giles Tettey Nartey
- Hew Locke
- Lady Kitt
- Black Girl Knit Club
- Joke Amusan
- Studio Lenca



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Anti-Racism and Inclusivity further reading:

All ages

NSEAD: [Anti-Racist Art Education Action \(ARAEA\) resources and curriculum checklist](#)

National Education Union: [Framework for developing an anti-racist approach 2024](#)

Southbank Centre: [Building inclusive and anti-racist schools](#)

Art UK: [Anti-racism resources, with lesson-ready studies of diverse makers and artists](#)

Leeds Beckett University: [An introduction to anti-racism for school governors and academy trustees the centre for race, education and decoloniality](#)

Disability Arts Online: [Guides, toolkits and webinars on accessibility and inclusive practice](#)

Claire Penketh: [Advancing Anti-ableist Pedagogy in art, craft and design. \(accessible, with a text-to-audio version\)](#)

Shape Arts: [Resources on making art, galleries and creative careers accessible](#)



Photo: Amy Leung

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Craft Careers

Craft in the UK

Craft contributes **£3.4 billion** to the UK economy each year, and the wider creative industries are growing twice as fast as the UK economy overall. British craft is in high demand, with skills transforming industries from aerospace to architecture.

Creative Careers

One in every 15 UK jobs is in the creative sector – from design and fashion to film, games, and craft – totalling nearly 2.5 million jobs. These industries are worth £124 billion to the UK economy, more than construction, and have grown by 50% since 2010. In 2006, 11 million people bought craft. By 2020, that number had risen to 38 million, with sales worth £3 billion.

As automation changes the job market, creativity and technical craft skills are becoming even more valuable. Hands-on, artisanal work is expected to grow – not disappear. Our Make First approach builds both practical and essential 21st-century skills like problem-solving, collaboration, and critical thinking. These are vital in any career, especially in self-employment – which is twice as common in the creative industries.

Routes into Craft

There are many ways to enter a craft career: academic and vocational courses, apprenticeships, placements, and learning from master makers.



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Explore Craft Careers

Craft School is a great chance to explore careers in the creative industries.

Use our website and [Discover Creative Careers](#) to challenge outdated ideas about where craft can take you.

Download our [Craft Careers School Pack](#).

Visit our [Craft Careers page](#) for personal insights from makers, practical advice, and over 20 job profiles detailing what to study, skills needed, and career pathways. Each page includes a downloadable PDF.



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