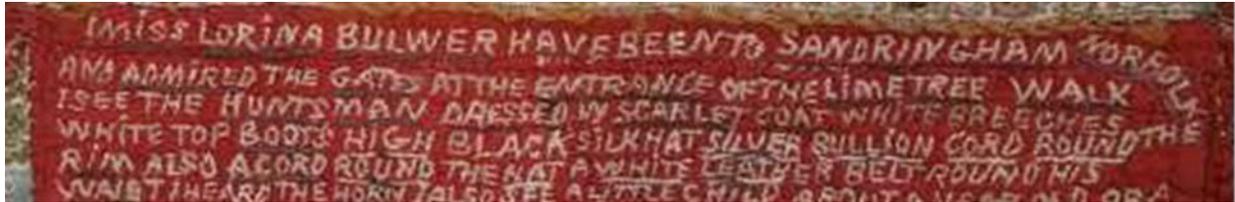




## Activity 1: Free Writing

Information Lorina's stitched art is known as *samplers*. The words are stitched in a constant stream. She doesn't use punctuation and always writes in capital letters. This makes her writing feel urgent, as in this snippet:-



Picture Transcript:

'I MISS LORINA BULWER HAVE BEEN TO SANDRINGHAM NORFOLK - AND ADMIRED THE GATES AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE LIMETREE WALK - I SEE THE HUNTSMAN DRESSED IN SCARLET COAT WHITE BREECHES - WHITE TOP BOOTS HIGH BLACK SILK HAT SILVER BULLION CORD ROUND - THE RIM ALSO A CORD ROUND THE HAT A WHITE LEATHER BELT ROUND HIS - WAIST I HEARD THE HORN I ALSO SEE A LITTLE CHILD ABOUT ...'

### Activity Instructions

'Free writing' is when you write continuously for a set time or amount of words- you choose which. Free writing is a good way of expressing yourself- like Lorina did- and allowing your mind to be creative. Lorina often used the following words in her samplers, and you could use them to begin your piece:

CHILDREN, NIBBLE, TRAVEL, WOMEN, LEADER, THIEF

Choose a word, or one of your own. Then take a pen or pencil and paper and begin. Don't stop until you have reached your time limit or word count and then see what you have written. You could even follow Lorina's inspiration and write in capitals with no punctuation!

How did writing like this make you feel? Were you surprised at what you wrote?

**OPTIONAL EXTRA** If you have sewing equipment, why not try stitching the words like Lorina? There's information at the back of this pack on how to stitch capital letters.

## Activity 2: Texture Tracing

### Information

Lorina's samplers are made from leftover scraps of fabric stitched together. The fabrics were many different types and textures.

The sections of her writing are stitched in short passages, which are then sewn together to make one large sampler.

Lorina made several large samplers and you can see them at Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse or online at <http://norfolk-museums-collections.org/>



### Activity instructions:

Find a few different materials around you- maybe a pair of jeans, a woolly jumper, a table, a leaf or the bark of a tree. They will all feel different to the touch- rough, smooth, bumpy...

Cover one of the textures with a piece of paper and gently colour over it with a pencil, crayons, or chalks (felt pens won't work very well for this). Be careful not to go over the edges! You should soon see the texture beneath coming through on to the paper.

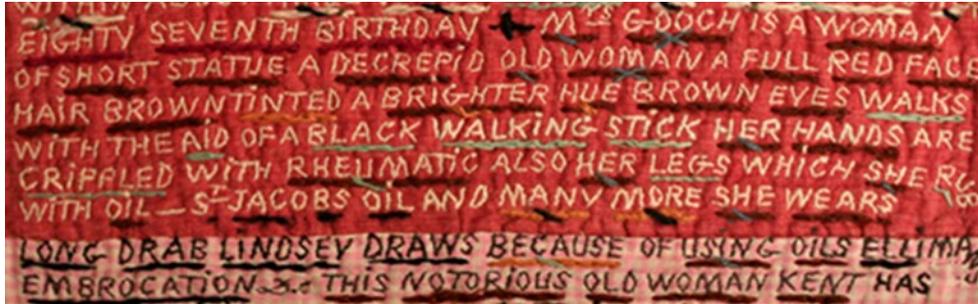
Try it with lots of different textures and colours and see which ones you like best.

**OPTIONAL EXTRA** You could cut your textured papers into strips, mix them up and stick them together to make larger pieces of striped paper, like Lorina's samplers. How about using these larger papers as a background to draw or write on?

### Activity 3: Pictures in Words

Information:

When Lorina writes about other people she exaggerates to create a very clear picture of what she thinks about them. Here are two examples:



Picture transcript:

'MRS GOOCH IS A WOMAN

OF SHORT STATURE A DECREPID OLD WOMAN A FULL RED FACE

HAIR BROWN TINTED A BRIGHTER HUE BROWN EYES WALKS

WITH THE AID OF A BLACK WALKING STICK HERE HANDS ARE

CRIPPLED WITH RHEUMATIC ALSO HER LEGS WHICH SHE RUBS

WITH OIL- ST JACOBS OIL AND MANY MORE SHE WEARS

LONG DRAB LINDSEY DRAWERS BECAUSE OF USING OILS ELLIMANS

EMBROCATION & C THIS NOTORIOUS OLD WOMAN'

Another paragraph says:

'OLD MAD MOLLY HAWES WHO WAS TAKEN TO COLNEY HATCH ASYLUM IN A TINKERS CART

STRAPPED IN SHE LOOKED AS IF THE DEVIL HAS CHASED HER THREE TIMES THROUGH THE

FLAMES OF HELL FIRE AND TURNED OUT THIS HIDEOUS WILD BROWN EYED OLD WOMAN'

## Activity Instructions

Exaggerating really helps to be creative with words and express feelings, and Lorina often used more than one descriptive word at a time, like this: 'HIDEOUS WILD BROWN EYED OLD WOMAN'. For the activity below, think of the weirdest and most wonderful words you can!

1. Think of a thing that you like. e.g. FRIEND
2. Then use a describing word to exaggerate it once. e.g. SMILING
3. Then do it again. e.g. KIND (repeat this more times if you wish)
4. Then put it altogether: KIND SMILING FRIEND.
  
5. Think of a thing that you dislike. e.g. MUD
6. Then use an adjective, verb or noun to exaggerate it once. e.g. MESSY
7. Then do it again. e.g. SLOW (repeat this more times if you wish)
8. Then put it altogether: SLOW MESSY MUD

## Activity 4: Intuitive Collage

### Information:

Sometimes Lorina used her fabric scraps to create pictures as well as words. This gave her samplers a collage effect, with many different elements overlapping and building up the whole image.



A collage is a picture made of lots of different pieces. Intuitive collage is when you choose and arrange those pieces in response to how you are feeling.

### Activity Instructions:



To create a collage you will need some old materials to cut up, such as old magazines, leaflets or packaging, a background to stick them on, and some glue.

Find colours to express the mood of your collage, using pictures and words, like Lorina did. You could also use some of your textured paper from Activity 2, either as background or you could cut out shapes or letters.

Your subject could be anything- perhaps the view from your window, or a pet, or a person, a self-portrait- or even the thing you described in Activity 3.

Cut or tear out what you want in your collage. Arrange these pieces on your background until you are happy with how they look, then stick them in place.

**OPTIONAL EXTRA** Try adding to your collage with your own drawing or lettering.

### Show us what Lorina inspired you to make!

We really hope you enjoyed the activities in this pack. If you'd like to share what you've made with us, contact [gressenhall.museum@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:gressenhall.museum@norfolk.gov.uk) with a photo of your creation.



Lorina Bulwer was a fascinating woman. If you would like to find out more about her, there is an information sheet at the back of this pack, along with sewing instructions for how to stitch capital letters.

This activity pack was created by *Kick The Dust-Norfolk*, which is a project to inspire young people to get involved in changing our museums for the better.

If you are aged between 16 and 25 and would like to find out more about all the exciting opportunities offered by *Kick The Dust*, please contact our project worker [rachel.duffield@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.duffield@norfolk.gov.uk)

### **Lorina Bulwer: Further information**

Lorina Bulwer was an inmate the Great Yarmouth Union Workhouse in the early 20th century and was listed as a 'lunatic'.

During Lorina's time at the workhouse, which we think was around fifteen years, she created embroidered samplers. She was given the materials to do this.

On her samplers Lorina stitched words, all in capital letters, with no punctuation. They read as a constant stream of thought, sometimes angry, sometimes funny.

They provide us with an insight into her mind as well as the world of the workhouse.

Through our research and the details in her samplers, we know a lot about Lorina Bulwer. She was born in 1838 in Beccles, Suffolk.

At school she was taught needlecraft and then later moved with her mother to Great Yarmouth to help her run a boarding house until her mother died in 1893.

In 1901 Lorina appears on the census in the workhouse. Workhouses were established in 1834 as a place where the poor could go to receive food, shelter and clothing. However, the conditions were made tough to deter people from coming in - and many people did fear entering a Workhouse. This fear is depicted in Charles Dickens' 'Oliver Twist' and in Berlie Doherty's 'Street Child'. Across the country there were 835 Workhouses, 22 of them in Norfolk, which closed in 1930.

We think Lorina may have gone to the workhouse after her mother died because her closest remaining relative, her brother, was not able to take care of her. She would spent the rest of her life there, until she died in 1912 from influenza.

In the workhouse, Lorina created her samplers. At this time *The Barbazon Scheme* encouraged workhouse inmates to use handicrafts as occupational therapy. Perhaps this is why Lorina was allowed to stitch the samplers. They are unique, and a rare example of something created by a workhouse inmate and poor woman of the time.

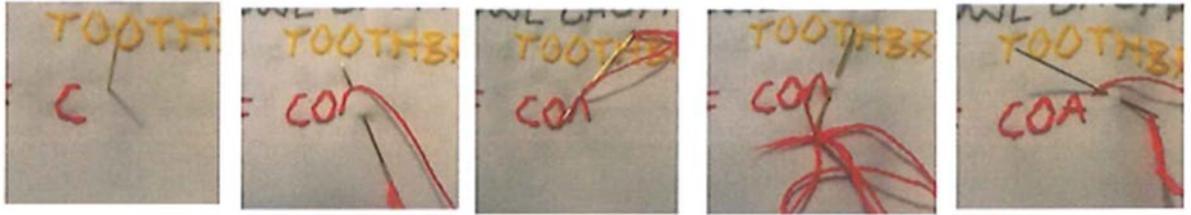
### **Stitching like Lorina: helpful hints**

Lorina always stitched in capitals. Capitals are quicker to stitch because they have fewer curves than lower case letters. Lorina also increased her speed by using the minimum number of stitches per letter.

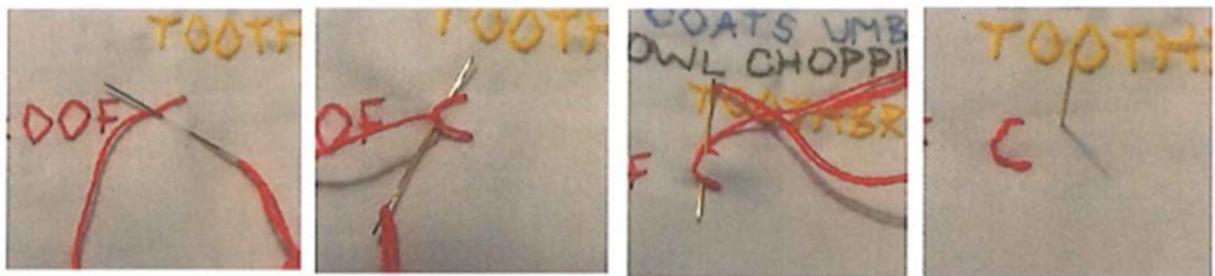


The pictures on the next pages might help you to do the same by following where the needle goes in and out of the fabric.

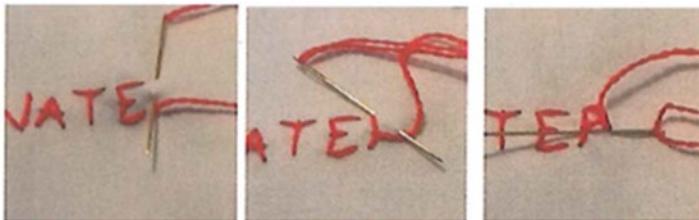
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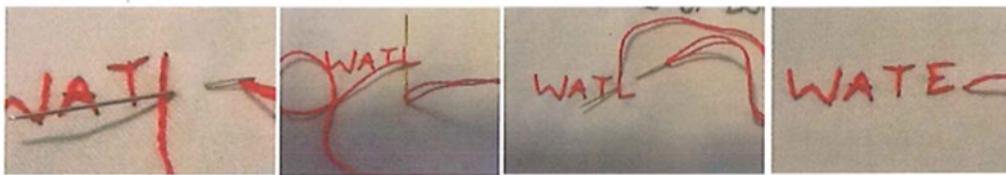
C & G



R, B & P

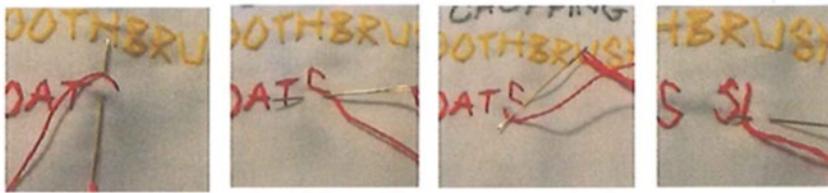


E & F

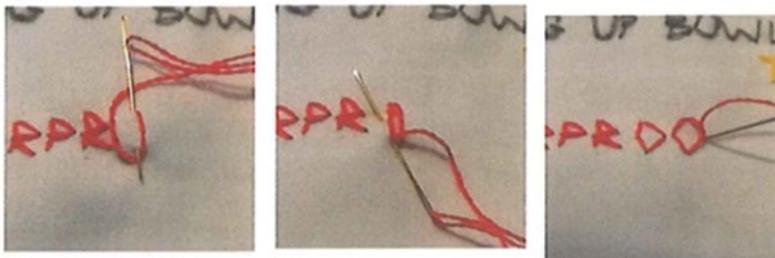


Lorina's Lockdown Challenge: A creative writing and art activity pack

S



O



N



Some examples of finished letters:



Lorina's Lockdown Challenge: A creative writing and art activity pack

