

Develop the love of reading in your child. Make your child a star and save money making your own story books.

How to make a fabric book with your child's illustrations

Creating a fabric book for your child to illustrate is not only really easy but is a whole lot of fun. The picture book used in these instructions, is kindly provided by www.childrens-books-without-adult-themes.com.au. (See their website for conditions of use)

The things you will need to create the children's picture book 'The Bear that Loved to Scare', are:

- * Access to the web to download the story
- * Computer and an inkjet printer
- * Fabric Pens for your child to illustrate the story
- * Overlocker or needle and thread
- * 8 sheets of A4 Printer 100% cotton fabric inkjet printer sheets.

(These are found in many craft stores, but if you can't find them in your town you can order these from PicNic's Country Crafts at a reasonable price, (www.picnicccc.com.au or phone Nicole on 07 4061-9955)

NOTE: this article assumes that you are familiar with the techniques of printing on fabric with an inkjet printer. Whilst this is very easy to do, a crash course is highly recommended if this is new to you. Once you learn this technique you can do all sorts of awesome stuff, like more books, a quilt with photos, or even scrapbooking pages with your photos on a number of different fabrics, even silk or organza! A great DVD to show you the endless possibilities is 'Lynn Koolish teaches you Printing on Fabric' available from www.dvdeducator.com.au. An added bonus with this DVD is that it shows you how to make your own inkjet fabric printer paper, which will save you heaps and is a great way for you to use up all those fabric scraps!

Now we have our supplies, lets get started and have some fun. Your child is going to love watching their new book take shape so let's get them to help out.

First step is to go to www.childrens-books-without-adult-themes.com/pages/Fun-free-stuff.aspx and download the story, 'The Bear that loved to Scare' (Please be sure to read the conditions of use, as this story is copyrighted.)

Next we simply need to print the story onto our fabric sheets.(the instructions for printing onto fabric sheets is covered in the DVD 'Lynn Koolish teaches you Printing on Fabric') Leave to dry for at least an hour.

Now the real fun begins. Have your children add the illustrations onto each page. Use permanent fabric pens, colours or black, both work well.

Don't forget to write their name as the 'illustrator' at the top of each page. Then leave to dry overnight.

Now you can remove the paper backing and wash the fabric as per the instructions on the 'Lynn Koolish teaches you Printing on Fabric' or the product package. Allow to dry and then press.

Use spray adhesive to stick
pages 16 and 1 back to back with pages 2 and 15,
pages 14 and 3 back to back with pages 4 and 13,
pages 12 and 5 back to back with pages 6 and 11
pages 10 and 7 back to back with pages 8 and 9

Overlock (serge) around the edges (top, bottom and right and left side) on each page of the four sheets you now have left after glueing

the sheets back to back. Alternatively, if you prefer, you can do a blanket stitch around all edges. Consider using bright colours for your stitching.

Iron each sheet, then carefully fold in half and press the foldline. Do this one at a time as it gives a much neater finish.

Place pages in order from page 1 to page 16.

Bind the book by simply sewing through all layers along the spine of your book (the fold line you just ironed in the centre of your pages) - you may find you need to do this by hand as it is likely to be too thick for your sewing machine to handle. You can staple this if you like, but I prefer sewing (because staples can be sharp to young hands.)

Enjoy and cherish reading this book with your child; they grow up so fast. When they get too old for it - don't throw it; keep it for the grandkiddies. Just as parents are proud of what their children do, young children are also proud of what their parents have done.

I am sure this will be the first of many fabric books you and your child create - have fun.