The Story Animals

Fish

Finished size: approximately 20cm long

What you will need:

- Fabrics (see fabric note) – 1x Fat Quarter (50cm x 53cm). Available at major fabric retailers and enough to make three fish.
- Fish paper pattern piece (see page 6)
- Sewing and paper scissors
- Pins or quilter's clips and pin cushion
- Sewing machine or needle and thread. Doll needle or long needle.
- Heavy-duty or waxed thread (floss)
- Stuffing (polyester fiberfill or similar) You can use recycled material. Wash and dry old pillows on the gentle cycle in your washing machine. Leave to dry in the sun.
- Pen
- Unpicker
- Iron
- **Optional:** Buttons, embroidery thread or paint/brush for eyes and scales

Note: Buttons may not be suitable, depending on the age of the children you are making the toy for. Alternatives include painting, ironing on vinyl cut outs or hand embroidering eyes.

Seam allowance

1cm seam allowance is included on the pattern piece.

Fabric note: For all **Story Animal** projects, we prefer to upcycle, reuse and repurpose – please recycle all materials wherever possible. You could choose any cotton fabrics, ie. flannel sheet or fabric offcut. Using garments or repurposing fabrics you have at home often means the item has a textile story which adds a personal value of the finished item.

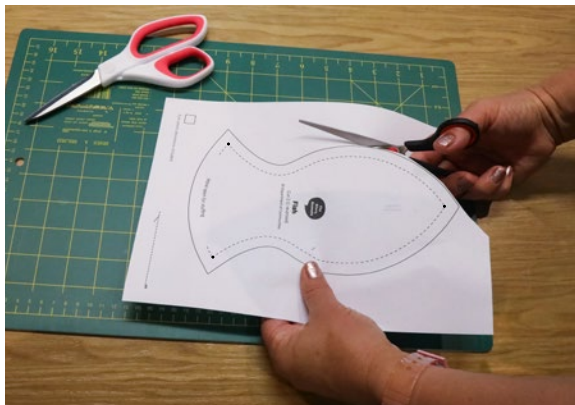## Step-by-step instructions

See our video on YouTube.
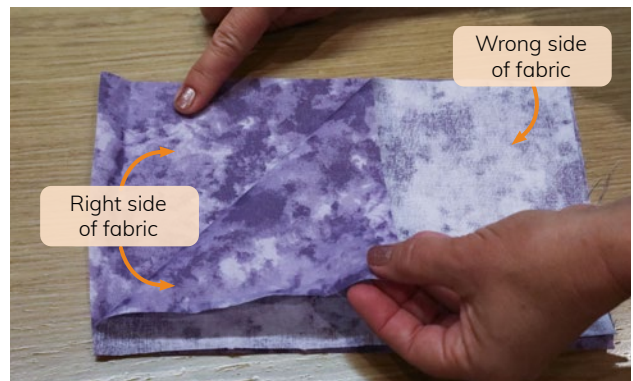
What you will need:

Pin cushion

Fish pattern

Fabric and thread

A Fat Quarter is 50cm x 53cm

Stuffing

Buttons

Paint brush

Sewing scissors

Pins

semco. ACRYLIC PAINT

Needle

Quilter's clips

Unpicker

Paper scissors

Pen

Paint

Floss

Iron and ironing board or mat

Making the fish

Instructions:

1. Cut out the pattern piece using paper scissors.

Wrong side of fabric

Right side of fabric

- Place the fish pattern piece on the fabric and pin securely.

On the fabric use a pen to mark dots and the tail opening

2. Prepare your fabric;
- Place two pieces of fabric with the right sides facing each other.

or use a pen to trace around the pattern piece.

3. Cut out the fabric

- Using sewing scissors, cut around the pattern piece along the lines, as the 1cm seam allowance is already included. You should have two identical pieces.
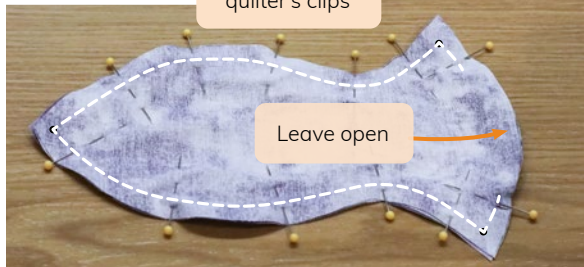
Tip: keep scraps for stuffing.

4. Prepare to sew

- Place the two fabric pieces right sides together.

- Pin them in place to prevent shifting while sewing.
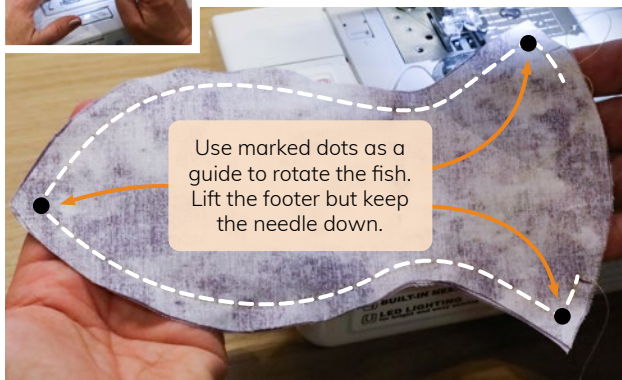
Use pins or quilter's clips

Leave open

5. Sew the fish

- Sew around the edges, following the 1cm seam allowance and leave the tail open for turning inside out and stuffing.

- Back-stitch at the beginning and end to secure the stitches.

Use marked dots as a guide to rotate the fish. Lift the footer but keep the needle down.

6. Clip the curves:

- Carefully clip the curves and corners without cutting through the stitches. This helps the fabric lay flat when turned right side out.
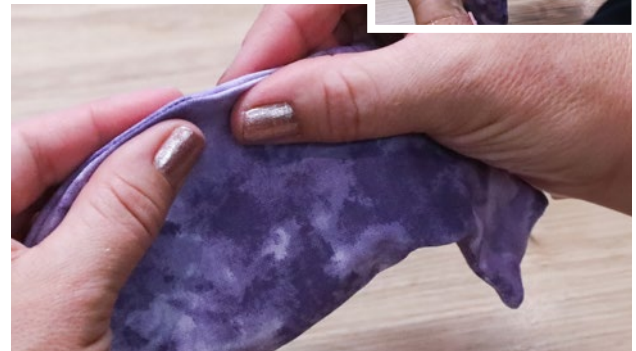
Don't clip opening

7. Turn the fish right side out:

- Turn the fabric fish right side out through the opening.

- Use a pencil or end of the scissors to gently push out the corners and roll the seams flat.

8. Iron the fish (optional):

- Use an iron to press the fish flat, ensuring the seams are crisp.

9. Stuff the fish:

- Stuff the fish with small pieces of polyester fiberfill or similar stuffing material, including fabric offcuts, until it reaches your desired level of firmness.

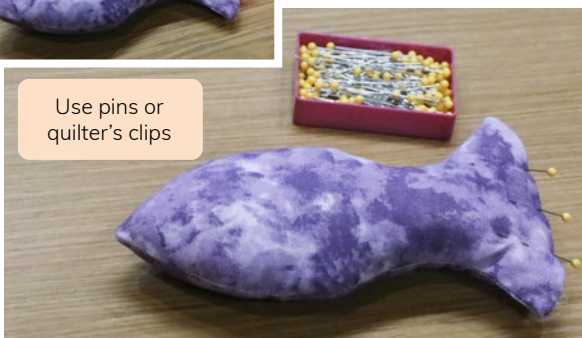**Tip:** Don't overfill the tail

10. Close the tail:

- Fold the edges of the opening inward and pin or clip together.

Use pins or quilter's clips

- Sew shut.

- Optional: You could stitch a pattern across the tail.

11. Eye socket

- Using a needle and floss, stitch back and forth through to head a few times to make an indent or 'eye socket'.

12. Add buttons (optional):

- If desired, sew on buttons, embroider,

or paint eyes on both sides of the fish.

- You can also add any other decorative elements like scales or patterns using fabric paint or additional stitching.

You made it!

Note:

Indigenous print fabric is living art. Usually, the fabric will name the artist who designed the print, on the 'sedge' – the border of white running down one side of the material. Out of respect for the artist, the print process and the story of the pattern, keep all of your scraps wherever possible. You can use any smaller scraps as stuffing. Trim and keep larger offcuts for future projects.

Further information:

If you have any questions or need further assistance, feel free to email thestoryanimals@communities.wa.gov.au
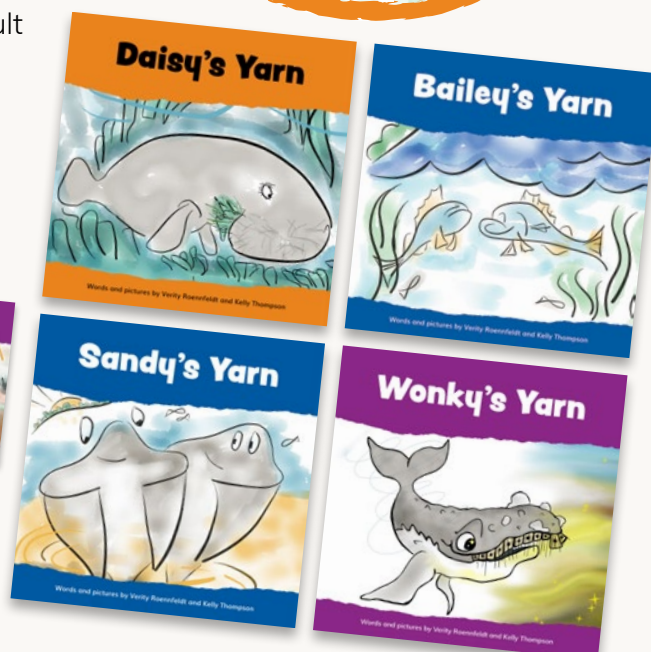
The Story Animals

The Story Animals are handmade fabric characters made from new and recycled fabrics.

The Story Animal characters feature in short story picture books, The Story Animal Yarn Books. These 12 stories use metaphor to allow safe big conversations about difficult themes and issues. The characters and their stories promote healing for children who have experienced trauma, their families and communities.

To learn more visit:
www.communities.wa.gov.au/thestoryanimals

Daisy's Yarn

Bailey's Yarn

Sandy's Yarn

Wonky's Yarn

Frongo's

Peta's

Eli's

Sapphi

Osca

Demetri

Gracie'

Marlee's Yarn

Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**

DC1562 0525

1cm seam
allowance
included

Mark dot
on fabric

suggested
eye position

The
Story
Animals

Fish

Cut 2 (1 reversed)

© Department of Communities

Mark dot
on fabric

Mark dot
on fabric

leave open