

# Jewellery and Programming

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The desire to decorate our bodies has been evident since the beginning of mankind. People of the ancient world adorned themselves with jewellery made of seeds, berries and shells, and later, with bones and teeth from the hunt (12, Phillips). Throughout history, jewellery has not solely been used as aesthetic ornamentation; it has played a role in religious and spiritual symbolism. Early examples of this are the Egyptians. The colourful jewellery that the Egyptians produced added striking contrasts to their earth-toned garments, however the majority of their jewellery often symbolized their gods. It was worn as a symbol for protection; their dead were even adorned with jewellery for accompaniment into the afterlife (All about gemstones, 2008). During the Victorian Era (1837-1901), many people wore to signified mourning (Vigna, para. 3, 2009). Jewellery began as a means of self-decoration as well as a way to tell stories and convey messages.

Its appeal and function is as customary today as it was millennia ago.

Jewellery can be beautiful and evoke strong emotions. It is tactile and allows the wearer to touch and experience the art form. An article in the *Encyclopaedia of Aesthetics* quotes Shiner as saying “[a] functional craft work is not something to be merely contemplated but to be touched and enjoyed in being used” (para. 14, 2008). As technologies have developed throughout time, so have the techniques and materials used in the making of jewellery. Contemporary jewellery not only encompasses the use of precious metals, but the latest trend involves the use of everyday, human-produced materials. With the introduction of plastics and synthetic materials, the potential for creating beautiful and funky objects is unlimited.

## References

- All about gemstones*. (2008). The History of Jewellery: Origins of Jewellery Design. Retrieved from [http://www.allaboutgemstones.com/jewellery\\_history\\_early\\_man.htm](http://www.allaboutgemstones.com/jewellery_history_early_man.htm)
- Shiner, L. (2008). *Craft encyclopedia of aesthetics - Encyclopedia of aesthetics*. Oxford University Press (e-reference edition). Retrieved from <http://www.oxfordaesthetics.com/entry?entry=t234.e0135>
- Phillips, C. (1996). *Jewellery: from antiquity to the present*. London: Thames and Hudson Ltd.
- Vigna, L. (2009). Heirlooms: navigating the personal in contemporary jewellery. *The art jewellery forum*. Retrieved from <http://www.artjewelleryforum.org/on-collecting/heirlooms-navigating-the-personal-in-contemporary-jewellery/>
- Wees, B. C. (2009). *Timeline of art history – the metropolitan museum of art*. Nineteenth century American jewellery. Retrieved from [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/ajew/hd\\_ajew.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/ajew/hd_ajew.htm)

## Programming Ideas

Creating fun, funky and fast jewellery projects out of everyday objects is simple. Just keep your eyes peeled for discarded items when walking down the street, taking out the recycling, visiting the local coffee shop or visiting a friend. Using existing materials from everyday life to create beautiful jewellery is a trend that has been adopted by professionals and amateurs alike.

Here are some ideas of everyday materials that can be used to make jewellery in your library:

- Bottle caps
- Fishing flies and feathers
- Fabric and lace
- Guitar picks
- Buttons
- String
- Sea glass
- Sea shells
- Labels
- Pop can tabs
- Sponge ear plugs
- Tooth picks
- Wine corks
- Candy
- Old plastic signs
- Stamps
- Magazines
- Photographs
- Measuring tapes
- Bicycle tires
- Plastic laminate
- Sticks and stones
- Cds
- Electronic Mechanisms

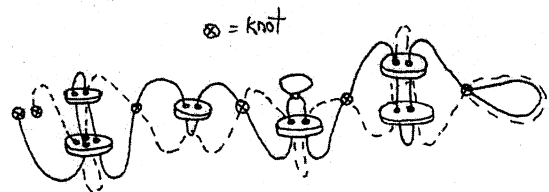
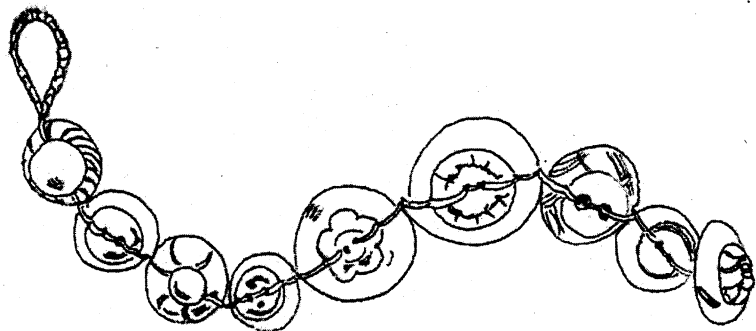
Here are some found-object jewellery project ideas that would work well as library programs:

### Button bracelet

Basic equipment:

- Buttons (any kind)
- Glue
- Scissors
- Embroidery floss
- Ruler

1. Cut 1 meter of embroidery floss. Place a dab of glue at each end and twist tightly with your fingers. When the glue dries, each end will act as a needle for threading the buttons.
2. Measure your wrist and arrange the buttons in a row, on a flat surface. They should measure the width of your wrist, plus a few centimetres for safe measure.
3. Take the prepared embroidery floss, fold it in half, make a loop (large enough for the last button in the row to fit through) and tie a knot.
4. Begin by weaving one button at a time, ensuring that you knot in between each button. This will ensure that the buttons will not flip over.

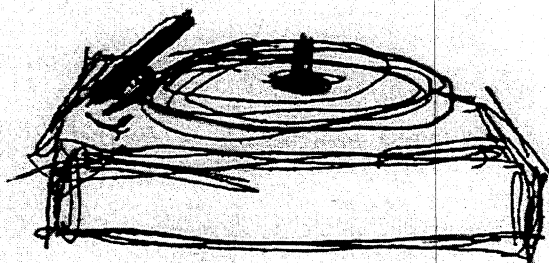


Adapted from Creative Kismet. (28 September 2007). Button bracelet tutorial. Message posted to <http://blog.creativekismet.com/2006/07/03/button-bracelet-tutorial/>

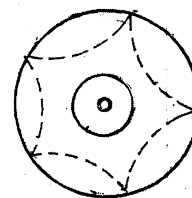
## Vinyl Record Cuffs

### Basic Equipment:

- Vinyl record (any colour and condition)
- Sharp scissors
- White marker
- Boiling water
- Fine grit sand paper/emery board
- Tweezers
- bottle



1. Using a white marker (or anything that will endure heat and remains visible), draw the pattern for your cuff using an overlapping second record to trace pattern.
2. Place the record in boiling water or in a 200 degree oven. When the record begins to bubble (oven), or is pliable (water), remove and cut with sharp scissors.
3. Smooth edges with sand paper
4. Place smoothed shape into oven or boiling water until pliable, remove (using tweezers or oven mitts) and bend around a bottle. The vinyl will cool immediately and remain in the shape of the bottle. If the desired shape is not achieved immediately, place back into heated environment and repeat.
5. Adorn cuff with drawings, trinkets, fabric etc. (anything from the tickle trunk!).



Adapted from DerAnanian, G. (2005). *Bazaar Bizarre: Not your granny's crafts!*. New York, NY: Viking Studio.

## Jewellery Resources for Librarians

### Books

- Baskett, M. (2002). *Wire jewellery in an afternoon*. New York: Sterling.
- Beal, S. *Button it up: 80 amazing vintage button projects for necklaces, bracelets, embellishments, housewares and more*. Newton, CT: Taunton Press.
- Bourgeois, S. (2006). *A Passion for Buttons! – more than 50 inspiring projects for chic and unique earrings, necklaces and rings*. Cincinnati, OH: F+W.
- Lee, S. (2008). *Semiprecious salvage: creating found art jewellery*. Cincinnati, Ohio: F+W.
- LeVan, M. (2005). *Fabulous jewellery from found objects: creative projects, simple techniques*. New York: Lark Books.
- LeVan, M. (2006). *The art of jewellery: paper jewellery – 35 creative projects*. New York: Lark Books.
- Parnes, T. (2007). *Jewellery and accessories from everyday objects*. Chanhassen, MN: Creative.
- Schwider, B. (2008). *Junk to jewellery: a step-by-step guide to using found objects in jewellery you can actually wear*. New York: Crown.

### Electronic Resources

ETSY: your place to buy and sell all things handmade: <http://www.etsy.com>