

# It's the 2026 Inspire Charity Knitting Challenge



*Get crafting and give a warm woolly hug at story time!*

In celebration of the National Year of Reading Inspire, Mansfield Building Society, Trussell and Creative Lives are supporting crafters to get together to make **Story Snugglers**. Jane Withers' characterful patterns will inspire you to make super simple woollies that little ones can wear to stay warm and cosy while enjoying a bedtime book.

[inspireculture.org.uk/Knit](https://inspireculture.org.uk/Knit)



Working with



# Knitting Pattern

## Yarn

Two colours of DK machine washable yarn  
200g first colour, 100g second colour,  
total 300g

Needle size 4mm UK

## Abbreviations

**K** - knit

**Sts** - stitches

**Tog** - together

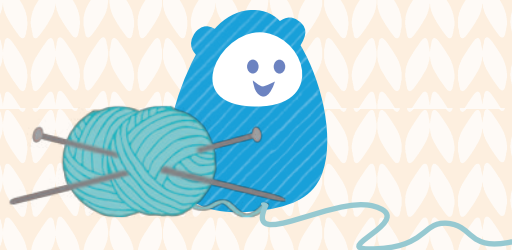
**Alt** - alternate

**Sl** - slip

The Story Snuggler is made from six 23cm  
(9 inch) squares



Knitted square in two colours



## Pattern for squares

With first colour cast on 91 stitches

Next row: Knit to end

Next row: K43, k2 tog, yarn forward, slip stitch  
purlwise, yarn back, k2 tog, knit 43 to end \*

Next row: Join second colour and knit to end  
(don't cut the first colour)

Next row: K42, k2 tog, yarn forward, slip stitch  
purlwise, yarn back, k2 tog, knit 42 to end

Next row: Change to first colour and knit to  
end \*

Next row: Repeat the last 4 rows, from \* to \*  
changing colour every two rows and reducing  
the number of stitches before and after the  
decrease, (43, 42, 41 etc) continue to repeat  
the decreasing until 5 stitches remain  
(keeping the continuity of the colour changes)

Next row: K2 tog, yarn forward, slip stitch  
purlwise, yarn back, k2 tog

Next row: K3 stitches

Next row: Cast off, leaving a long end for  
sewing up later

Repeat this square 5 more times

## Hood

You can choose to add a plain or looped  
hood band

### Plain hood band

With first colour cast on 90 stitches

Next row: K8 rows garter stitch

Cast off

### Looped hood band

Add some fun loops to the band at the front  
of the hood, they can be all the way around  
the face like a mane, or at the top of the head  
and just between the ears, or at the side of  
the cheeks like whiskers!

We recommend using this technique to add 4  
rows of textural loops wherever you decide to  
put them along the band, 4 rows with a plain  
row in between will make a neat textural effect  
- that can't be pulled out!

### Fully looped hood band

With first colour cast on 90 stitches

Next row: Knit

Next row: (creating the loops)

1. Knit into the first stitch on the left needle\*
2. Don't drop the loop,  
keep it on the left needle
3. Bring the working yarn to the front
4. Wrap the working yarn around your  
left thumb
5. Bring the working yarn to the back again
6. Knit into the stitch that is still on the left  
needle one more time
7. Pass the second stitch on your right needle  
over the first (like a bind off)
8. Knit next stitch\*
9. Repeat from \* to \* to the end of row

Next row: Knit to end

Next row: Make loops\*

Next row: Knit to end\*

Repeat 2 more times (4 rows of loops)  
and cast off

## Ears

With second colour only cast on 4 stitches

Next row: K to last stitch and increase 1 stitch

Next row: Continue to increase at the end of  
each row until 20 stitches

Next row: K and cast off 1 stitch at the end of  
row. Continue to decrease at the end of  
every row until 4 stitches remain

Cast off then repeat for second ear



Detail of loops

Story Snugglers are designed as simple hand  
knitted or crocheted ponchos, in one size with  
loose hoods and without fastenings, for children  
aged 2 to 4 years (not suitable for babies):

1. Donations must be hand-made and  
meet the pattern specifications.
2. Seams should be tension tested to  
ensure they are secure, all loose ends  
are to be sewn in and cut off.

3. Embellishments will be integral to the  
knitted or crocheted construction and  
fixed loops, which protrude from the  
garment, shall be no more than 7,5cm  
in circumference.
4. To comply with the Textile Products  
(Labelling and Fibre Composition)  
Regulations 2012 a fibre content label  
must be attached to all donations.

# Crochet Pattern

## Yarn

Two colours of DK machine washable yarn  
200g first colour, 100g second colour,  
total 300g

Hook size 4mm UK

## Abbreviations

Ch – chain

Dc – double crochet

The Story Snuggler is made from six 23cm (9 inch) squares. We have used the first colour for the cape and ears and the second colour for the hood.

## Pattern for squares

With first colour chain 71

Next row: dc to end 1 chain, turn

Next row: To decrease: Dc34, skip 2 stitches, dc34 to end, 1 chain, turn

Next row: \*Dc33, skip 2 stitches, continue to dc to end, 1 chain, turn\*

Next row: Repeat from \* to \* decreasing the number of dc. (dc32, dc31, dc30 etc) each time creating a square, until you reach the corner with 2 stitches, pull through and tie off

Using this method of decreasing in the middle of the row makes a square by crocheting an L shape



Crochet square

You can choose to add a plain or looped hood band

## Plain hood band

With second colour join one side of the hood squares together with over stitching.

Start on wrong side facing and with second colour dc along the front edge of the hood (approx. 70dc), 1 chain, turn and repeat for six rows

## Looped hood band

With second colour join one side of the hood squares together with over stitching. Start on wrong side facing

1st row: Dc to end (approx. 70dc) 1 chain, turn

2nd row loops: Dc20, then to create loop: \*Dc next stitch but do not pull through, you should have 2 stitches, wind yarn around left thumb and place yarn to back, holding the loop, finish the dc, dc\*, repeat \* to \* 14 times more, dc20 to end 1 chain, turn

3rd row: Dc to end 1 chain, turn

Repeat 2nd and 3rd row 2 more times and tie off

## Ears

With first colour chain 13. Row 1 dc 12 ch1, turn and repeat to create a square measuring approx. 9cm (3.5 inches)

Make 2 of these



# Construction

## Knitted hood construction

Join two 23cm squares together at one side with an over stitch. This will become the centre top seam of the hood.

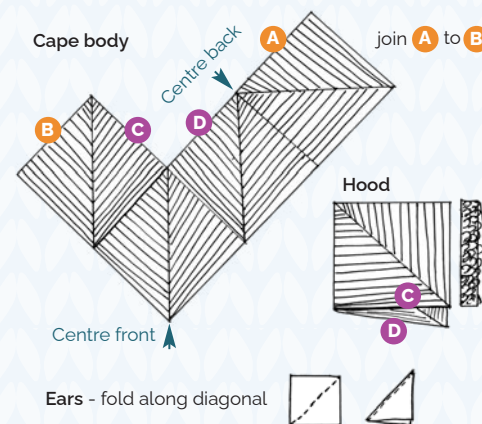
Now join the front hood band to the two squares. Place with right sides together along the long edge of the two squares, pin if necessary to secure whilst over stitching. Now create the centre back seam of the hood by joining the squares along the second side with over stitching. The knitted hood is now complete and ready to be attached to the cape body.

## Crochet hood construction

Join centre back seam of hood with over stitching. The crochet hood is now complete and ready to be attached to the cape body.

## Ears – method for knit and crochet

Fold the small squares diagonally to form triangles. Join with large over stitching (for gathering up) along the 2 open edges. Pull to gather and shape the ear, stitch securely into place along the made seam, approximately 6cm (2.5 inches) from the centre front of the hood.



## Construction of the cape body – method for knit and crochet

Lay out and pin together four 23cm squares as follows:

With wrong sides facing and always keeping the **neat finish** on the lower edges, start with the front square and place in a diamond orientation, top and bottom points at centre front. Next place the right-side square (diamond orientation) on the right – and the left side square (diamond orientation) on the left, both with neat lower edges and proceed to over stitch together. This will create the front of the cape.

To create the back of the cape, turn the work over and place the fourth square (diamond orientation) at the centre back, over stitch in place at each side, see diagram.

## Hood attachment – method for knit and crochet

With right sides together pin the lower edge of the hood to the neck opening of the cape. Match the hood and cape at the centre back and the centre fronts. Ease any excess at the lower edge of the hood around the neck opening. Over stitch together.

## Finishing – method for knit and crochet

Story Snugglers will be well loved! Please tension test to make sure all the seams are securely fastened, a few strong pulls will test the seams and guarantee they won't come apart. Tidy all loose ends by tying them off and neatly stitching them in with a needle, this will help to add strength and durability to the finished product. A light steam finish will improve the appearance of the final garment.



All Story Snugglers donated by 1 August will be part of a stunning exhibition at **Mansfield Central Library Gallery** from **Saturday 15 August to Sunday 27 September 2026**. After the exhibition they will be donated to Trussell. We hope they go on to be the spark at the start of a lifelong love of reading.

Find Jane's helpful 'How to' videos and all the latest woolly information online at [inspireculture.org.uk/Knit](http://inspireculture.org.uk/Knit)

Inspire Libraries will be delighted to receive your handmade Story Snugglers.

Get together with others to take part, visit: [yournottsdirectory.org.uk](http://yournottsdirectory.org.uk) and find your nearest library craft group to knit, crochet, and share ideas with creative friends.



Returns label:

We love to celebrate the generosity of all makers in the exhibition!

For your name to appear on our list of makers please fill in the details below and attach to your work before handing in at your nearest Inspire Library.



Please fill in and attach a yarn fibre composition label for all Story Snugglers

Composition label for textile products	
Yarn fibre	Percentage composition
eg: Acrylic	100%

From (name of individual or group)

.....

at (name of library or place)

.....

**THANK YOU!**