Sewing Tips
- "Right" sides of fabric should face each other as seam is sewn.
- Knot thread at beginning and end of seam by making a few small stitches in one place.
- Use only about 36" of thread when hand sewing so it won't tangle.
- Pull thread firmly and gently so fabric won't gather.
- Make small cuts (notches) on the inside of tight curves so the fabric lays flat.
- Finishing edges of fabric: use selvage edge; fold and sew; cut with pinking sheers; fray; use glue; add fringe
- Casings can help strengthen (insert stiffeners) and gather (insert ribbon and pull to tighten -or- insert elastic.)
FABRIC
- Does it fray easily? Does it need to drape? Does it need to look aged?
- Can use old sheets, blankets, curtains, old clothes, tablecloths....
- Is there something other than fabric that might be used?
FASTENERS
- Help build the costume; sew, glue, staple, lace together, zipper, hot melt glue gun..
- Connect costume parts: Velcro, ribbon, buckles, snaps, buttons, hooks, brads (paper fasteners), duct tape...

Costumes
1. PLAN ~ Establish the character. It should be easy to recognize.
      Ideas to help planning:
        a. Play 20 Questions: If it were a plant, what type of plant would it be? If it were an animal, car, etc.
          what type would it be? If it were ten times bigger, what would it wear? If it were tiny......
        b. Would it exist in the past, present or future?
        c. "The Doorway": If the character is standing in a dark doorway, would you see it's shadow as hulking,
          bristling, flowing, top heavy, smooth, skinny.....?
        d. How will the character move? What posture will it have? Will the costume restrict movement?
Colors: Which work best to show personality...yellow, gray...?
Texture: What material would work best....soft, hard, shiny, lumpy...?

2. **CONSTRUCT** ~ Start a new costume **or** change old clothes **or** mix and match parts?

3. FINISH ~ Think about the total look. What details could be added? Consider face, feet, hands...
Have fun: draw with hot glue and paint over it; use markers or fabric paint; add "found items"

IDEAS:
BASIC SHAPE: Fold material in 1/2 and cut head hole. A "T" shape will add sleeves...
      What else could be used for the costume's foundation?
HAT: Start with an adjustable ball cap and change the color, add to it, remove parts...
      What other than a cap could be used?
HAIR: Braids can be made by cutting panty hose legs lengthwise into three pieces and braiding them.
      What other materials could substitute for hair?
FACE: Makeup can help establish a character's personality.
      Would a mask be better for your character?
BELTS: A buckle may be made from cardboard.
      What else may be tied, hooked, snapped around a costume?
SHOES: Put an old pair of shoes inside a decorated paper bag.
      Must a foot covering look like a shoe?
ACCESSORIES: What might be carried by the character, added to the costume, etc.?

Some References: www.costumes.org   "HOW TO"
Creative Costumes for Children (Without Sewing) by Mark Walker
Easy Costumes you don't have to sew by Goldie Taub Chernoff