

**Illinois State Museum – MuseumLink Art**  
**Keeping Us in Stitches Activity: Geometric Shapes Pieced Quilt Top Design**

**Purpose:** to help students understand the design process of pieced quilt blocks and quilt tops and the knowledge of geometry a quilter needs to design pieces that fit together.

**Illinois State museum Web site used:**

[http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/art/htmls/ks\\_piece.html](http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/art/htmls/ks_piece.html)

**Objectives:** the students will be able to create one or more paper quilt blocks (and work in a group to create a quilt top) by arranging geometric shapes of cut fabric pieces so they fit together into a block of a specified size.

**Grade Level:** 2-5

**Time Required:** one 40-50 minute period

**Materials:**

scissors, glue stick, poster board

one paper block foundation for each student (printout)

coordinated pre-cut (cotton) fabric pieces (for 25 students making 1-2 blocks each

100 two-inch squares of fabric A

100 triangle half-squares (2") of fabric B

100 triangle half-squares (2" of fabric C

100 one-inch squares of fabric D

These pieces can be cut rapidly with a rotary cutter and a plastic quilter's rule on a cutting board. Ask a quilter to help.

**Motivation:**

Students view the pieced quilts online, in books, in their literature illustrations, and in person. They discuss how quilters use geometric shapes such as squares and triangles to make blocks and blocks to make quilts.

Shown the pieces they are going to use, students watch the teacher arrange pieces on a foundation paper, noticing the variations possible and how the pieces must be inside the edges of the block.

The teacher demonstrates how to use the glue stick on the paper section, then press down the fabric piece (putting the glue on the fabric is messy, difficult, and time-consuming).

**Procedure:**

- Pass out paper foundations to students
- Have glue and scissors ready on desks/tables
- Divide fabric pieces randomly among students or groups who share
- Students pick up and arrange pieces on their printed grid, trying various arrangements until satisfied
- Students use the glue stick to glue their fabric to the paper grid

- Teacher and students arrange their finished blocks on a large poster board to design a quilt top

**Assessment:** As the students design, they should show awareness of symmetry, balance, repetition, and color contrast. The same elements are part of a whole quilt design done together as a group. Neatness counts because each block will be part of a whole. /some children may need help with the space-relationships.

**Illinois State Board of Education Standards Addressed:**

**Visual Arts:**

**Elementary School:**

**25.A.1d:** Identify the elements of line, shape, space, color and texture; the principles of repetition and pattern; and the expressive qualities of mood, emotion and pictorial representation

**26.B.1d:** Demonstrate knowledge and skills to create visual works of art using manipulation, eye-hand coordination, building and imagination.

