

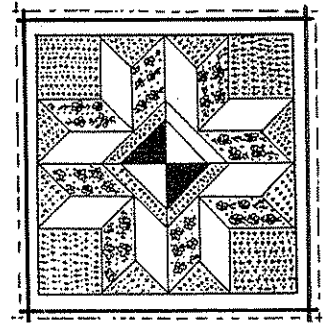
# LESSON 8

## TOPIC

Quilt Pattern Names

## TIME

1 hour



## MATERIALS FROM TRUNK

Feed Sack Quilt  
Denim Comforter  
Pattern Illustrations  
Quilt Pattern Name Game  
Parquetry Blocks and Quilt Patterns  
Worksheets #2 & #3

## OBJECTIVES

- 1) Students will be able to compare the patterns of a feed sack quilt with a denim comforter.
- 2) Students will understand that a quilt pattern can be given any name.
- 3) Students will be able to make a connection between quilt pattern and possible pattern names.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Thousands of quilt patterns are in existence and most quiltmakers like to give names to their quilts. In fact, it is a tradition to name the quilt pattern. Most patterns have more than one name. Some of these names are regional, where others may exist only in families. Most pattern names reflect something from nature, history, the Bible, or everyday life. The widespread use of specific names with specific patterns exists primarily because of the print media. Even so, the same pattern is often called by a different name by various media. A good source for comparing the names given to patterns by various print media is Barbara Brackman's *An Encyclopedia of Pieced Quilt Patterns*.

In general, we do not know for sure what nineteenth-century women called their quilt patterns. There are occasional references to quilt names in diaries and letters and some nineteenth-century magazines gave names to quilt patterns. However, the widespread emergence of the quilt pattern

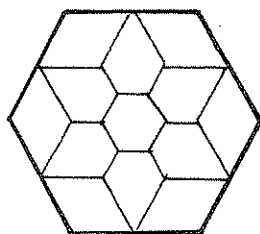
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industry came about in the twentieth century. Even though nineteenth-century patterns have continued to be used, the names most likely have changed over the years.

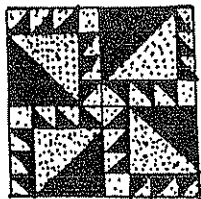
Nineteenth-century sources on quilts include such popular women's magazines as *Godey's Lady's Magazine*, *Peterson's Magazine*, and *The Delineator*. Twentieth-century sources include such publications as *Capper's Weekly*, *Aunt Martha's Patterns*, and *The Kansas City Star*. For example, *The Kansas City Star* newspaper ran a series between 1928 and 1961 on quilt patterns. The column ran weekly until 1937 and then appeared intermittently.

Some pattern names can be easily connected to the visual image in the pattern, where others are not so easily discernable. Two examples follow. The names listed are those found in print to identify the pattern.

Hexagonal Star  
Texas Star  
Hexagon Stars  
Friendship Hexagon  
Dolly Madison's Star  
Dolly Madison Pattern  
Star Garden



Bear's Paw  
Indian Trail  
Forest Path  
Rambling Road  
North Wind  
Irish Puzzle



Sources: Brackman, Barbara. *Clues in the Calico: A Guide to Identifying and Dating Antique Quilts*. McLean, Va.: EPM Publications, 1989, and Brackman, Barbara.

*An Encyclopedia of Pieced Quilt Patterns*. Lawrence: Prairie Flower Publishing, 1979.

## VOCABULARY

- Block** The basic unit of a quilt top. Blocks, often pieced squares, are stitched together to form the quilt top's design.
- Crazy Quilt** A quilt design made of odd-shaped pieces of fabric. Crazy quilts were usually made of silk or velvet cloth.
- Pattern** The quilt design.

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Piecing	To sew together pieces of fabric to form a quilt top.
Quilt Top	The first or top layer of the quilt.
Repeat	The arrangement of quilt blocks to form a pattern. An overall repeat uses the same quilt block for the entire top.
Symbolic	Patterns, pictures, designs, etc. that stand for or suggest something because of a relationship, association, convention, or accidental resemblance. Symbols are arbitrary, therefore the same thing can symbolize something different to different people.
Symmetrical	A figure that can be divided by a line into two identical and matching halves.

## *ACTIVITIES*

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1) Using the *feed sack quilt* and the *denim comforter*, introduce the students to the concept of pattern. Is there an overall repeated pattern to each quilt? The *denim comforter* does not have an overall repeated pattern. This design is called a crazy quilt pattern. The top is made of odd shapes of fabric. Do the students see a repeated pattern in the *feed sack quilt*? Explain that quilts like this one are made of blocks. Can the students determine how many blocks are in this quilt (answer:4)? Explain that quilt patterns usually have names. Churn Dash is a common name for this pattern.

2) Share the *pattern illustrations* with the students. Explain that this is often what a commercial pattern will look like (these patterns are reproduced from the *Kansas City Star* newspaper column). Explain that symbolic names are often given to quilt patterns. One activity would be to cover up the name of each pattern and make a list of possible names. Although *The Kansas City Star* assigned a name to each pattern, it could have any name. Is there a name the students like better than the one printed in the paper? Can they look at the pattern and see why the newspaper gave the quilt pattern its name?

3) Use the *quilt pattern name game* to help the students match pattern names to quilt blocks. This can be done as an individual or group activity. There are twenty cards. Ten cards depict different quilt patterns and ten cards illustrate the corresponding quilt names. Using the sides of the cards that contain the pictures, have students match the illustration of the pattern name to the quilt pattern. On the back of each card is the name of the pattern and a paragraph about the pattern. Once the students have correctly matched the cards, have the students read aloud the information on the backs of the cards.

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4) Use the two boxes of *parquetry blocks* and the accompanying *quilt patterns* to make visual representations of quilt blocks. This activity can be done as a group but works well in an activity center for small groups or for individual students to use independently. There are a number of patterns that students can match. Original designs can be generated with the parquetry blocks. Can the students give a symbolic name to the original design?

a) One aspect of quilt patterns that should be mentioned is the symmetrical format. Most quilt patterns have four identical corners. You might show the students this by folding a quilt block into quarters and showing them that the four corners have the same shapes arranged in the same manner (although not necessarily the same fabrics). A crazy quilt is a type of quilt pattern that is not symmetrical.

b) Similar kinds of activities can be done with construction paper triangles, diamonds and squares that can be arranged, glued down, and named.



5) Use *worksheets #2 and #3* to further familiarize the students with quilt pattern names. These worksheets use the most common names for patterns. However, since patterns can have more than one name there is really no absolute answer. If the student responds to a question with a different answer, ask the student why they made that choice.

## ASSESSMENT

### Levels of Achievement

#### For Objective 1

- a) Students recognize a simple difference between the feed sack quilt and the denim comforter (e.g. material).
- b) Students recognize that the feed sack quilt has a repeated pattern, whereas the denim comforter does not.

#### For Objective 2

- a) Students recognize that a quilt pattern can have more than one name.
- b) Students are able to assign multiple names to a quilt pattern.

#### For Objective 3

- a) Students correctly recognize one or two.
- b) Students correctly recognize three to five.
- c) Students correctly recognize six or more.

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## *EXTENDED ACTIVITIES*

### 1) CREATING AN ORIGINAL QUILT PATTERN:

Have the students design an eight-inch-square block using graph paper. Color in the block and give it a symbolic name. Make templates for the block and sew quilt blocks out of fabric.

### 2) COMPUTER GENERATED QUILT PATTERN:

Many good programs are available that allow the students to generate quilt patterns on a computer. If the students have access to such a program let them work with it. Discuss how this method of generating quilt patterns is different from other methods that are more traditionally used.