



Sunrise on the Prairie

PatternLite



Block Handout • Elizabeth Eastmond of OPQuilt.com

The National Museum of the American Indian, one of the Smithsonian Museums, is doing a quilt-a-long online (2026).

I decided to do a second version of their third block (patterns available online). For this version you'll need a 9-inch square of sunny yellow, and yardage of six other colors. See Information on original artist on the last page.

Cut:

2 1/4" WOF strips of six harmonizing colors (This is slightly larger than the original pattern called for, as I wanted to have it look like five mountain peaks behind my sun.)

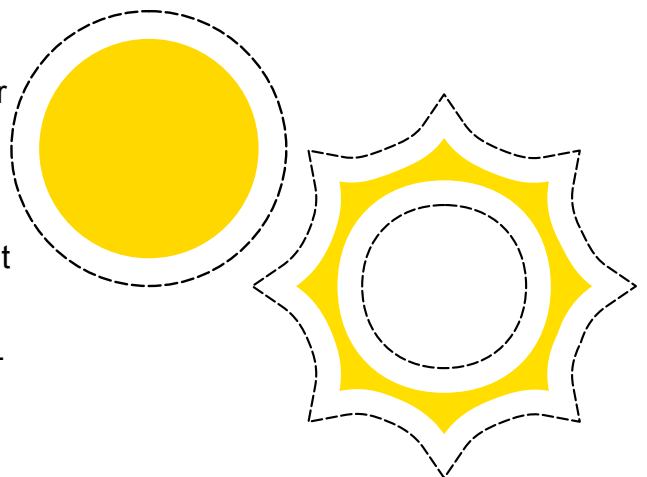
Trace:

Inner circle of pattern on last page

Outer circle of "rays" in pattern on last page

Add seam allowances to both. Don't forget the inner edges of the outer sun rays. Clip curves often to get the smooth edges.

Tricky, but pretty necessary: Line your pieces with white fabric if the background will show through. Cut the white exactly the same size as the shapes, and tack down with a couple of dabs of glue to your sun fabric. Use a lot of pins. In the end, your appliqué – then quilting – will hold it in place.





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Please go to <https://americanindian.si.edu/quilting/> to download the original pattern.

Following their pattern, sew your cut strips in the order you've chosen (I went from dark to medium and back to medium-dark). Cut at a 45-degree angle. **If you are using my measurements, you'll need 8 or 9 cut strips.**

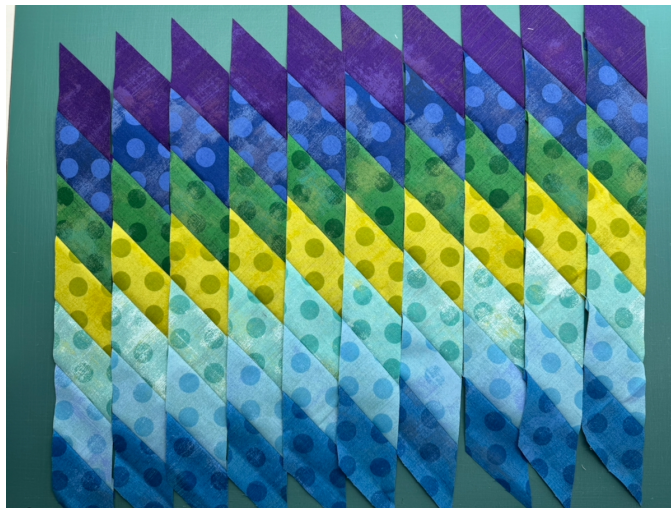
[Shown here is my first block, where I had purple at the outer edge. I didn't include it in the second block.]



Line up the cut edges as shown on left (again, I left off the purple in the second block).

Pin like crazy, then stitch very slowly so you don't stretch all those bias edges.

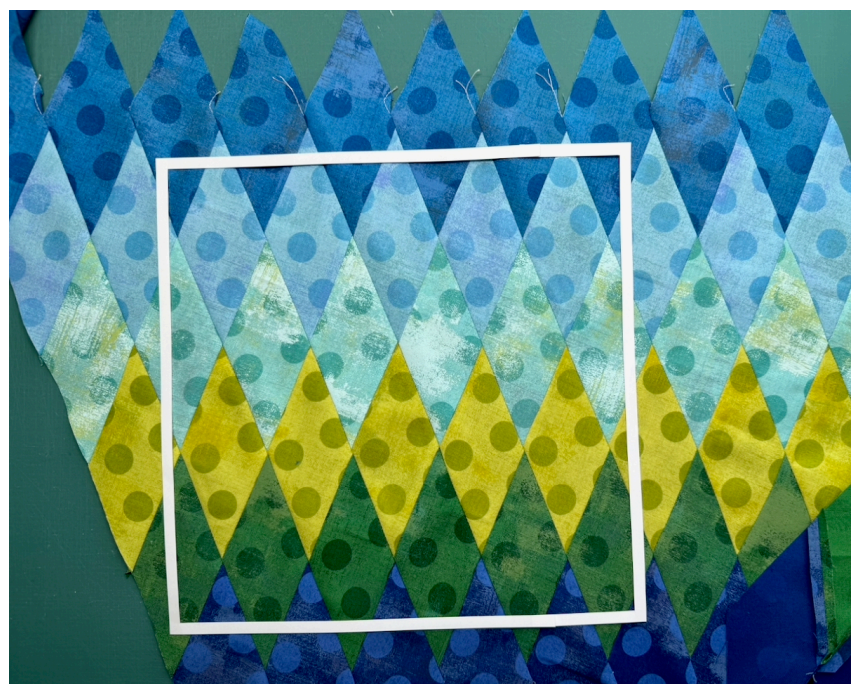
I stitched two together, then pressed the seam OPEN. Then repeated that...and then sewed pairs together. Repeat until all are sewn together.



The blocks for this project finish at 10" To figure out how to arrange your "mountains" (which is how I thought of them), Cut a 10½" square of paper. Carefully cut out a 10" square out of that, leaving a narrow ½" square of paper, with the center cut out (see right).

Arrange it how you want it, by moving the square around. I wanted five "peaks" to be centered.

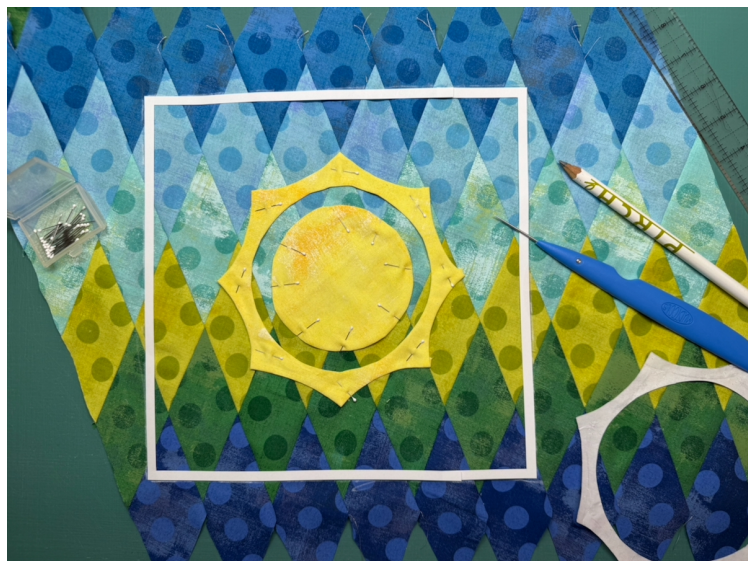
You can see I only needed 8 strips, but I was glad to have the extras, just in case.





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Carefully lay your prepared appliqué in the center, again nudging your sun motif and the paper guide so you have it just right. Pin down your sun motif with small appliqué pins.

With care, lay a square transparent ruler over the paper guide, and **trace** the outer edges all the way around with a marking pencil or wood pencil.

Cut about ½" away from that line. Why? I like to trim my final block **AFTER** the appliqué is finished, in case of fraying while handling.

(I used that blue "stiletto" clay tool to help nudge everything into place.)



Stitch down your sun motif.

Trim up the square to 10 ½". It's kind of lumpy-bumpy, even if you pressed it well. Just use your rectangle rulers and press down firmly.



Elizabeth
OPQuilt.com 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Write if you have any questions—

Email: opquilt@gmail.com

Web: www.opquilt.com

Instagram: [occasionalpiecequilt](https://www.instagram.com/occasionalpiecequilt)

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Motif should measure 7" when finished.

The original NMAI block design is by Emma Alcazar and can be seen at the link on the first page. IG: Emmy_Quilts

This block design is a variation of her original work.