

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Quilt Making

**Objective:** The students will learn about different kinds of quilts and quilt making. The students will design their own class quilt.

**Terminology:** Sewing, Amish, Geometric Shapes, Pattern, Border and Quilt

**Discussion:** Ask the students what art is...Drawing, painting, photography, sculpture, music etc. Art is the use of human creativity to produce works that are appreciated for their beauty. One form of art that we may sometimes forget about is the art of sewing!

Ask the students if they have ever sewn anything. Talk about what you use to sew and what things can be sewn. A needle, thread, fabric, buttons, pillows, blankets, clothes etc....

Sewing is one of the oldest forms of art. The Stone Age people did the first known sewing. They used animal bones as a needle to stitch together animal fur for clothing and blankets to keep warm!

As time went on sewing evolved into much more! Not only can we still hand sew with needles and thread, but we also have sewing machines, and computers to help us create beautiful clothing, blankets, and even furniture.

One of the most creative forms of sewing came from the colonial settlers in America. When the settlers traveled to America from Europe, many of them did not have money to purchase their blankets. So with scraps from old clothing and materials that they had on hand, they began to cut pieces into shapes and sew them together creating the first patchwork quilts. Show the students the example of a quilt. You can pass it around so that they can see the stitches and feel the fabric.

Not many of these first original quilts have survived because they are made with perishable materials. Meaning that the fabrics would get so worn that the quilts would disintegrate, unravel, and come apart. Ask the students if anyone has a special blanket at home that is fraying or worn around the edges.

Quilts today are not only used as blankets for warmth and to cover beds, but people use them to hang on walls like pictures. There are quilting clubs, museums and even quilting competitions! Some quilts also tell family stories and are passed down from generation to generation.

Let's take a look at some quilts.

Present the students with the Double Nine Patch, Amish Quilt poster.

This is an example of a patchwork quilt made by the Amish people that lived in Lancaster Pennsylvania. This quilt has survived since 1920. It is almost 100 years old!

The Amish people came from Switzerland in the 1700's and settled in Lancaster PA. This particular group of people stays separate from modern society. They do not rely on the technologies, machinery, and mass media that we have today. You may have seen Amish people driving horse and buggies, and dressed very plainly in gray and white clothing. The Amish women do not use sewing machines to create their quilts, but instead, they hand sew everything. Their beautiful quilts are known throughout the country because of their geometrical designs and patterns. The Amish are still some of the most famous quilters in America today.

Let's take a look at the Double Nine Patch Quilt.

Ask the students what kinds of shapes make up this quilt. Squares, rectangles, and triangles make up the patterns for this particular quilt.

Ask the students to find some of the patterns that these shapes make.

This quilt is called the Double Nine Patch quilt because of the patchwork squares found in the middle of the quilt. This is called the focal point of the quilt. Each of these patches is created from 9 smaller squares. It also has 9 red squares. Have a student point out the 9 red squares on the quilt.

Next show the students the poster from the National Endowment for the Humanities. This poster has 6 more different geometrical Amish quilts.

Ask the students what a geometrical shape is. Geometric Shapes have clear edges and most have straight lines. Ask the students for examples of geometric shapes. Examples are rectangles, triangles, squares, and circles. Geometric Shapes can be flipped or turned and they remain the same shape. Use a plastic shape and flip and turn it showing the students that the shape remains the same.

Ask the students to point out the geometric shapes used in some of the Amish quilts.

Another important feature in Amish quilts are the use of patterns.

Ask the students what a pattern is. A pattern is the repetition of an item or shape.

Next ask the students to point out some of the patterns on the quilts.

The last feature that an Amish quilt has is a border. A border in quilting is the strip of fabric sewn to the outside of the quilt. It serves as a frame. Point out the borders on the quilt.

Now that the students have an understanding of what makes up a quilt, explain that they will each be designing a patch to create a classroom patchwork quilt.

**Materials:** Graph paper, pencils, scissors, markers, glue sticks, construction paper

**The students will have their own pencils, glue sticks, scissors, and markers.**

**The Project:**

The students will each receive a piece of graph paper and a pencil. They will begin by folding the bottom of the graph paper under to create a perfect square. Demonstrate counting the squares down and across and folding the paper on the straight line to create the square.

Next instruct the students to draw a border that goes the entire way around the square. Demonstrate this for them.

The students should then draw squares in the 4 corners. They will then connect the squares creating a large inside square on their paper. Demonstrate this.

Inside this middle square the students can then choose shapes to create a pattern. Refer to the quilt examples on the posters.

Once everything is drawn in pencil. Have the students go over their pencil lines in marker. The students can then choose markers, colored pencils, or crayons to color in the shapes of their quilt.

Stress that the students should stay in the lines of their shapes, and that the colors should create a pattern.

Once they have finished coloring the students can cut the blank bottom off of their graph paper off.

They will choose a square of construction paper to then glue their patch to. Have the students write their names on the back of the construction paper and the teacher's name as well.

The volunteers will take the patches and create a quilt on the bulletin boards.

**Demonstration is key to this project.**

