Dear Diary Daily Quilting Challenge with Anna Maria Horner

Chapter 1 - Dear Diary Daily Quilting Challenge

Overview

(upbeat music) - I'm Anna Maria Horner, and I'm thrilled to introduce you to the Dear Diary Quilt. It's a month-long challenge of building a beautiful sampler-style quilt, and I'm gonna show you how to do that day-by-day starting with more simple blocks and gradually growing to more complex blocks. This is the first time I've ever designed a sampler quilt and I've always been intrigued by the history. They were very often created by a quilter who wanted to show off all of her skills and as a way for her to collect sort of a whole group of knowledge of different styles of blocks, in case she ever found herself living outside of her quilt community and not having the resources. So this is an opportunity for us to do that for ourselves, to try some new things, and to give it a modern spin in a really contemporary color palette. We'll begin by sharing my color map, and this is gonna be a guide for you to base your pallette choices on. And I'll show you how I've translated that color map into the fabrics that I'm gonna use. We'll cover a variety of traditional style blocks and also how to piece them on a sewing machine. Applique has become a real favorite of mine when I'm doing patchwork, but I don't want you to be scared of it. So I'm gonna show you the handwork methods, as well as by machine. I named this quilt Dear Diary because I love the idea of logging it day by day, and by the end of it, we will have built a beautiful quilt.

Materials

- To create the Dear Diary quilt you'll need your basic patchwork supplies and that includes thread for the sewing machine and for hand sewing. I've got a light and a dark color and I'm using Aurifil 50 weight which I find great for the machine as well as hand sewing. You'll also need your basic cutting tools which include scissors, a rotary cutter, rotary mat, and some cutting grids, you want to have straight pins as well as needles for doing the hand sewing. For tracing and placing your applique shapes, be sure to have a marking tool like a simple pencil, a fabric glue stick, print and cut all of your template shapes, and if you want to try the machine version of doing applique be sure and have some fusible like Steam a Seam on hand. The finished quilt is approximately 64 by 80 and that's a really nice twin size quilt. I used a total of about ten yards to create that and it can be from scraps or a very specific assortment. You'll also need your sewing machine and iron and ironing surface ready.

Day 1 - Fabric notes

- Traditional sampler quilts have a huge variety of blocks and a big variety of fabrics. For this project, I've created in your PDF a color map that really lays out a full range of color for you to create your fabric palette from. Instead of doing it all in prints and only having one way of creating it, I wanted to show it to you in color and value to make it really easy to interchange your own versions or your favorite fabrics in this map. You can see over here in all my fabric choices, this is my entire palette for the quilt. I've arranged them with cools on one side and warms on this side, and I've also arranged each color category from light all the way up to darker fabrics and lots of variety in between, so I have a variety of print here and I have a variety of scale. I have some tiny prints, I have some tonal prints, I have larger scale ones that are really fun once they're chopped up into small pieces, but I also have some woven yarn dyes, so there are slightly different weights and

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textures in here which is really a lovely mix. In fact, this quilt can be entirely scrappy. Maybe you don't even decide what fabric you're gonna use until each day and you decide what you wanna do on that given day of a block. That would be a true history of a monthlong in quilting how you feel every day depending on what fabrics that you pull. So translating this map to fabric is as simple as deciding this purple color here maybe stands for this fabric here, and the same goes for say, a bright blue, maybe it's always this, or maybe you have a few bright blues. And again, you can completely do this quilt in solids, you can keep the same variety of fabrics that I have here but do something really neutral. This quilt includes lots of different styles of blocks but there are also lots of different sizes of blocks. There are some applique blocks, which on the map just are shown as this solid sort of blank space, so you could really fill that background fabric that the applique is gonna go onto with anything, whether it's light or dark, I've just left those bank to note that they're applique. And there are several that are 12 inches, some that are 16 inches. If you find a 16 inch block that you really love, you could maybe make it again in the space of another 16 inch block. So keep in mind that same size blocks are interchangeable. To be honest, creating this quilt had me trying blocks that I'd never tried before. Some of them were so simple, I really didn't have a lot of interest in them, but even the simplest blocks, even straight strip pieces, if I've alternated just two colors, you might alternate several colors and do a gradation, so fell free to play around within the confines of basic patchwork and some of those that I didn't really find interesting in the past, going through the process of actually making them and playing with color and palette while I was doing it has me actually wanting to use them in other quilt designs in the future.

Day 2 - Strip Blocks

- Our first blocks are gonna be simple strip piece blocks, and we've got two of them over here on the quilt map, you'll see them here and here. And they're created to end at a finish eight by eight inches square. And to do that we're gonna have eight total strips in each block. The strips are gonna be cut 1 1/2 inches wide, and I'd go ahead and cut them at about 10 inches long. So I've just alternated between two colors here for each of the two different styles of blocks, and all you're gonna do is sew them together with 1/4 inch seams on their long edges. Don't forget to sew them right sides together. You don't have to backstitch at the beginning or end. If you're more comfortable pinning your strips together, you can, but these are pretty short lengths, so I'm just gonna go for it, making sure I'm alternating the two colors. So just continue sewing one after the other until all eight are put together. All right, so now we have these pretty, stripey pieces all put together, and we're gonna turn it over and press all the seam allowances in one direction to get it nice and flat before we trim it up. Okay, so from the backside, we're just gonna press the seam allowances all in one direction. I sort of hold the end that I'm pressing towards and tug it a little bit, just to encourage everything to lie flat. Gonna press from this side as well, but it's so pretty! Okay, so now that it's nice and flat, we can trim it up. So I'm just gonna flip it over here. Now we already have 8 1/2 inches here just by how wide these strips were cut, but what we need is to have it 8 1/2 inches this way as well. So I'm just gonna start by doing one straight edge here and then measuring off from that. Remember this whole thing, the length of these strips were 10 inches. So we've started with one straight cut on one end, and now we have a good, clean, square edge to measure off 8 1/2 inches long. Because I'm not starting at zero on my mat right now, I'm just gonna use the ruler to mark the 8 1/2, and cut straight up. So now we have one perfectly squared 8 1/2 inch cut block, and you can do the second one exactly the same way.

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Day 3 - Checkerboard Blocks
- Today we're gonna create the checkerboard blocks, but just a few of them 'cause there's several across the quilt. Today's are gonna finish at four by eight inches and four by 12 inches. And they actually begin exactly the way yesterday's strip blocks began. So I've already got some strips for one of them here. This is gonna be for the four by eight inch finished block. And I cut my strips at 1 1/2 inches wide, but this time I went 15 inches long. I wanna leave all that extra length, even though it's just gonna finish at eight because we're gonna create seams going the other way too. And for the other block that's gonna end at 12 inches long, I'm gonna cut those strips 1 1/2 inches wide by 18 inches long. I'll point them out on the color map there. The four by 12 inch checkerboard block is gonna be down in this lower left corner. And then this black and blue one here up towards the center is going to be four by eight finished. So those are the strips that I've got cut out now. I've already pieced the strips for the four by eight block, just alternating the two different colors. And just like yesterday, I've pressed all the seams in one direction. That's just the first part of getting a checkerboard. The next part is going to be to cross-cut it the other direction perpendicular to the direction of these strips. So we're gonna cut every 1 1/2 inches across. I'm just using the small grid here. I've already cleaned off a nice square corner and a clean straight edge on this side so that I have a really good spot to start my cutting. So lining up the 1 1/2 inch mark with the clean edge there, you're just gonna continue to cut eight of these sections. It's a good idea to go ahead and always use your cutting mat as extra visual insurance that you've got everything square as you cut. So lining up along a top line and a perpendicular line. Just need four more. And this is eight. That's the last one we'll need. Okay, then this is just scrap. And let me show you the magic of seam allowance pressing that's gonna happen when we turn this into a checkerboard. All we have to do is flip every other one to create our checkerboard. The nice thing about having already pressed our seam allowances in one direction is that one is going this way and the other is gonna be going that way. That's gonna disperse the bulk evenly when you join these together on the vertical seam so that we don't have all the seam allowances being pressed in the same direction. So now we just need to make all these little pieced sections across to finish this block. So right sides together using a 1/4 inch seam allowance. And just be sure that you're matching up the seams between the black and the blue fabrics. You can actually somewhat feel that they're matching up because, again, that bulk of the seam allowance going two different ways sort of joins in really smoothly together when you've got the lines lined up. If you wanna use pins here, you can, but these pieces are so small, I like just doing them without. (sewing machine beeps) So this is what it looks like when it's joined up. And then you can continue sewing just like this all the way down the block, keeping an eye on your seam intersections. If you're more accustomed to doing your simple patchwork by chain piecing, you can certainly do that by pairing together two strips at a time. And especially when we have an even number of pieces, it makes the sewing go just a little faster. So I'm not cutting thread or picking up here. I'm just leaving it right there underneath the presser foot and feeding in the next pair. Be sure and keep your seam allowances facing the right direction as they go under the presser foot as well. (sewing machine beeps) So these are chained together, and you can just cut between them now to finish up the piecing. So now we have two sections of four by four, and just one last seam between them and we'll have this block finished. So this block is finished. I'm just gonna flip it over and press all the seams to one direction. Ideally, you won't need to square up this block. It should measure 4 1/2 by 8 1/2 as it is now. But if there are some jagged edges that are sticking out, you can certainly smooth those off. And then go ahead and complete the 4 1/2 by 12 1/2 inch block, the pink and the brown one down in the lower left corner, exactly the same way, just with a few

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extra sections to finish it.

Day 4 - More Checkerboard Blocks
- Today is the day to finish up the rest of the checkerboard blocks. And while they're made exactly the same way as we did yesterday. They're just put together in a slightly different formation. Right now I'm working on one that's gonna finish at 4 by 16 but it alternates two different fabric pairs. So it alternates between a yellow and blue and then a pink and blue. And I've got these strips cut just about seven inches long and again all of these are starting at one and a half inch wide. So I've already centered the long seams between the strips to create the alternating sections. Cut them, flipped them and now I'm going to be sewing them together in little four by four sections. You can see this one still needs to be flipped here. And I'm gonna go ahead and do this four by four block and this four by four block and do it chain piece so it goes just a little bit faster. We're creating this section of four by four checkerboards up here, it's gonna finish at 4 by 16. Okay so right sides together in quarter inch seam. Just gonna keep it under the presser fit and feed the next pair in. I'm actually gonna continue with the next color pair as well. Attach all the secondary cut strips together to make your four by four blocks. Two in each of the fabric pair varieties. And then the final step for this 4 by 16 block is going to be putting them together to create one long alternating checkerboard. I'm gonna do that now. So quarter inch seams, right sides together. So now it's time to grab another yellow and blue. Just make sure you've got it flipped the right way. You don't want your blues next to each other. Okay so right sides together and quarter inch seam. Last seam in this block. Okay this block is finished but ready for pressing. Let's have a look at the mat and see where the other checkerboard blocks are that we're gonna finish. We're gonna do his little six by six section right here. I've got that in my blues and greens strips. So because it's six by six inches we have six total strips. So three of the blue and three of the green. And I've got those cut probably at about 15 inches so we have lots of extra for the extra seams that we're gonna take. And then we have two different identical small checkerboard sections. We have this little two by eight section right here. Another two by eight section right here. So all you're gonna do with these is a one seam before you do the secondary cutting to go the other way. I love the vintage flair that this tiny checkerboard quilting does and if you like creating minis this is a perfect one to include in those.

Day 5 - Plaid Strip Blocks
- Today we're gonna make the biggest block so far. This one finishes at 16 by 16 inches, and it's what I would call the plaid block. Some of it is a continuation of what we've already done, some strip piecing, as well as some tiny kind of checkerboard piecing, but it also brings in just regular square patchwork components. And let me show you the logic of how it comes together, as well as how we're gonna piece the strips and components. While this block may look complex, it actually comes together quite simply. We're gonna have two different long strip pairs. So I've got this green and yellow strip here, and then I have this pale pink and yellow and blue strip here. And those are gonna be pieced just like our others, so you're gonna want four pieces total, two blue that are 16 inches long, 1 1/2 inches wide, another two that are 16 by 1 1/2, and then the other pair the same thing. And once you've pieced those together, they're actually gonna get subcut to create these sections here. You can see that I've got the yellow and green already sewn and subcut to get included. We're also gonna have nine 4 1/2 inch squares, and those are my cream-colored squares here. Let me show you a little bit of the logic of how this lays out. So you can see that while this was all joined together, I just cut it to separate it, and it's gonna get included in the overall logic of the patchwork. So the

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other thing besides two pairs of long strips and the nine 4 1/2 inch squares are gonna be these little tiny checkerboard sections right here, but these aren't alternating between the pair. These actually are four different fabrics. And I thought the easiest way to do that was just go ahead and cut four different 1 1/2 inch squares for each of these sections. Each of the four fabrics needs four 1 1/2 inch squares. I'm gonna go ahead and start working on these other long strips before I subcut them. Okay, so 1/4 inch seams, right sides together. Okay, now I'm gonna press this open before I do the subcutting. So I'm just gonna press this to one side so that it's nice and flat before I subcut it into 4 1/2 inch sections. I'm gonna cut sections of 4 1/2 inches, which is exactly the size of this little ruler. Really convenient. I'm gonna need a total of six of these, but so far I only have one pair of strips done, so I can only get three. I've already got one of these little foursomes put together here, but I'm gonna do another one. So I just need one each, these pretty little fabrics. Just pay attention to the block image itself to know what order to put them in. So I'm gonna put the pink with the gray and then the green with the blue. I'm just gonna cut this right here. I'm not even gonna bother to press these. I'm just gonna open them up and make sure that they're laid out with the blue next to the gray, blue next to the gray and the green next to the pink. And on the back, just put your seam allowances heading towards two different directions to distribute the bulk. (sewing machine beeps) I'm just gonna do a quick press to get that ready to include in some assembly. So I'm gonna use my finished block here to show you how everything's gonna lay out, just to kind of play through the logic of how this goes. And I'm gonna use three of the 4 1/2 inch squares. So you can keep building this block. So I'm just gonna sew these one to the next, these five pieces. Then I'm gonna sew these five pieces one to the next, press their seam allowances in opposite directions, and then join them along this seam. So you'll continue building just this way, completing all your pairs, all your foursomes, and all the rows together until you've finished this block.

Day 6 - Half Square Triangle Block

- It's time to introduce some half square triangles to the Dear Diary quilt. And today we're gonna have a really simple start with that. We're gonna create a 12 inch finished block and it's made up of 16 total half square triangles. But I'm gonna show you a technique for creating two half square triangles at the same time. We're gonna start with eight four inch squares of one color and eight four inch squares of a second color. The next step is to pair two of them together with their right sides facing each other all lined up on all four edges. And we're just gonna draw a line from one corner to the opposite corner with a straight edge and a pencil or pen, whatever you have handy. And the next step is gonna be to take this to the machine and sew a quarter inch to the right side and a quarter inch to the left side. And right after you're done with that, you're gonna cut on your drawn line. And now you have two half square triangles that are ready to be pressed and then trimmed. To get the size right on this block, you're gonna wanna trim all of them by just putting the corner of your grid up to the edge and making sure they're square and making sure that this diagonal seam falls right into the corner. And when each of the pieces is trimmed, they need to be three and a half inches, and once you've got 16 of those, you can assemble all of them as I have here to create your 12 and a half inch block. And remember that's 12 and a half inches before it goes into the final quilt. When it's assembled into the final quilt, it'll be 12 inches.

Day 7 - Diagonal Half Square Triangle Blocks

- Today we'll be making more half square triangles, but we're a combine them in the block with whole squares as well. We only need three total fabrics, and we're gonna make two blocks that are

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identical. Let me show you on the map the blocks that we'll be doing. Here are the two blocks right here. You can see that they're actually identical, and they're set right next to each other, but they're flipped before they are so that they create this nice diagonal line. And this is what they look like in real life, way prettier. So each of two blocks has six whole patches in this kind of aqua color, and it also has 10 half square triangles. And the way that they're flipped back and forth is what creates that solid dark blue line. So in order to create 10 half square triangles, we only need five pairs for each 'cause, remember, we can make two half square triangle blocks with one pairing of fabrics. So you'll need for both blocks a total of 10 three inch squares of one color, 10 three inch squares of a second color, and then you're gonna need 12 2 1/2 inch squares of your blocks that are gonna stay whole, and that's that aqua color. So I've already got some pairs set up here. And again, we're gonna put the dark blue and the pink together, right sides touching. I always choose the lighter fabric to draw on so that I can see the pencil line. Just gonna draw a line from one corner to the other. And remember, the next step is to sew 1/4 inch to one side of that pencil line and then 1/4 inch to the other side. Gonna cut on our drawn line to separate the two blocks. And press them open. I've already got these pressed here. And this one I have squared and sized. So we have the cutting set so that it's gonna be a tiny bit bigger than what you need. These need to be trimmed to 2 1/2 inches. And this one I've already got trimmed. Let me show you the trimming on this one. This grid right here has this handy line on the diagonal that is perfect for cutting half square triangles because I can set that extra line right inside there at the same time that I'm lining up the 2 1/2 inch mark. So ideally you only wanna have to trim along two different sides to get your half square triangle. Okay, so let's just create this top row of one of the blocks here. So we have a whole, a half square triangle, another half square triangle, and then another whole aqua square. So to create that one, just pay attention to the image there or the finished version of it. Flip around everything so that it looks just like the block does. I like to leave these laying out in a row next to me and then pick them up and put them together one at a time instead of taking a stack to the machine like I do with some piecing because it's really easy to accidentally turn your block the wrong way and get the graphic wrong, so I'm just gonna do two pieces at a time. So I'm gonna put these sides together first. Right sides together, 1/4 inch seam allowance. (sewing machine beeps) And again, when you're trying to get a graphic just right, it never hurts to lay it out again right next to it, have a good look at it, make sure you've got it right. Go ahead and flip it over, right sides together before you take it to the machine. (sewing machine beeps) And the last piece. Now, if you'll notice here when these come together, it looks like there's a little jog there, but you really don't need to worry about that. That's exactly the way that it should be if it doesn't line up, because when the next seam comes across to assemble those rows together, it's gonna pass right through there, and it's gonna have your lines matching up. So if you're 1/4 inch off right there in terms of a straight line, you're doing it exactly right. (sewing machine beeps) So you can continue creating all your half square triangles to create all the different rows. Once you've finished each of the blocks, make sure that you turn them correctly in relationship to one another to create that nice pointing graphic. Sew them together, and you have finished today's work.

Day 8 - Multi Half Square Triangle Block

- Today is another day of creating a half square triangle block this one is going to finish at eight inches by eight inches and composed of 16 little individual units. Let me show you on the map here, it's just up here at the very top almost center of the quilt and this is what it looks like all sewn up in the pretty fabrics. I've used four different colors of fabrics in this yellow, green, blue, and this pink.

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But they're all cut in various amounts depending on how much they're used in the block. For the yellow we're going to cut six squares. For the blue and green four squares each, and for the pink just two squares and let me show you how they pair up. For every pair that you see here, the pink and the yellow, the yellow and green, the green and blue and the yellow and blue you're going to need four half square triangles each, each of those different color varieties of half square triangles are going to be put together into one unit that you see here. And then you're going to do this exact same unit four times and it's just going to be a matter of how they're turned once they're put together that creates the final block. You can see I've got one of the quadrants here with each of the four color varieties and that lays in just like that. And then when you recreate it again it's going to go here, here, and here. Really the beauty of so much patchwork has to do with how you orient and change the design and lie colors next to each other. Even though we're doing a lot of repetition here, it's the way that we've turned the design that creates that pretty pinwheel.

Day 9 - Pinwheel Half Square Triangle Block
- Today we have another half square triangle block, but it is combined with some whole squares as well. And we're only gonna use two different colors of fabric. The finished dimension on this block is gonna be eight inches by eight inches. Let me show you where it is on the map. It's just up here near the top, right underneath the long checkerboard section. And you can see that pretty graphic quality that happens even in the solid color. And it really comes across, even in these printed fabrics. This actually would be a nice opportunity to play maybe with a couple different tones of purple in the background so that there's some subtlety and some change in color, but keeping the whole graphic quality of the sort of windmill design. Let me point out to you that there are a total of eight half square triangle blocks, and then there's eight solid blocks as well. So to create that from your two colors, you need to cut four of the pink squares. And you're gonna cut those at three inches. Four of the maroon squares. Also cut those at three inches. Pair them together to create eight half square triangles like we have by tracing the line, sewing 1/4 inch on each side of the line, cutting on the drawn line, and then trimming them to 2 1/2 inches. You're also gonna need eight of the 2 1/2 inch squares from the dark background fabric. And this is what each quadrant of the block looks like. It has two of the whole squares, two of the half square triangles set just like this. And you recreate this exact same thing four times and then put it together by changing the orientation of how it goes. This is such a pretty, simple little block. I love the high contrast between the background and the little windmill shape. And while it's a very simple part of this whole quilt, I can picture a whole baby quilt made of lots of different bright-colored ones put together. So have some fun with it.

Day 10 - Four Patch & Half Square Triangle
- Today we're gonna be creating a 12 by 12 inch block, and it's gonna include the half square triangle again, but we're also gonna combine it with some small four by four patches. In a sense, this entire block is a bit like a nine patch. It's made up of nine different components, some four patches, as well as some half square triangles. And these are actually the largest half square triangles we've done so far. This is the block in the upper corner here. It's a play between small patches and some larger diagonal shapes. And then this is what it looks like in the finished quilt. So you can see I've not only played with scale of patches, but also with scale of prints. And this is a real kind of experiment style block where I've used a textured yarn dyed fabric combined with some real printy prints. And if you look over here to my pieces that are getting ready to go into this block, you can see a medium size

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print, some tiny prints, and even these much larger scale prints that are really interesting once they get chopped up. Let's go over all of the components and the piece numbers of fabrics that you're gonna need for this. We're gonna create these little four patches by first making 2 1/2 inch squares. Of the light gray, you'll need a total of eight 2 1/2 inch squares. Of the dark gray, you'll need a total of four 2 1/2 inch squares. You'll only need two of these bright blue 2 1/2 inch squares, but you'll need a total of six maroon 2 1/2 inch squares. So all of those are gonna create the center block, as well as the four corners. And all of those are four patches. To create the four half square triangles, and these are bigger half square triangles than we've made so far, we're just gonna cut two of each color 'cause, remember, every time you put a pair together, it creates two half square triangles. We wanna finish with a 4 1/2 inch half square triangle. And to arrive at that, let's start with just over five inches, maybe 5 1/4, 'cause, remember, we can trim down to that perfect 4 1/2 before we include it in the final block. So being a nine patch, you're really gonna be creating three rows of three blocks put together. And let me kinda lay out over here on the finished block where everything belongs. So half square triangles kind of go in a T in four positions here. And the little four patches go in the corners here and in the center. Once you have all nine components of this block put together, lay them out in the correct orientation, making sure that how they're tilted and turned matches the color map. And keep them that way as you take each set of three to sew at the machine. And don't forget that once this is all sewn together and pressed with seam allowances distributed in different ways to make it nice and smooth, it needs to be 12.5 inches before we put it into the quilt.

Day 11 - Half Square Triangle Cross Blocks

- Today we're gonna create some cross blocks, and they have half square triangles in each of their corners. There's a total of four of these blocks, but two are exactly alike, and then the other two are exactly alike, and they share enough similarities in fabric and design that putting the four together makes a really stunning graphic contrast. So, these are the four cross blocks over here on the bottom left side of the quilt. And again, you can see that they share using this coral color and this rust color at their edges, and then when they come together they create another square on point, which I think is really stunning. And here is the finished version of them in my quilt. If you don't want to use black and white, you can use some different colors here, but I really like the stunning graphic quality of this. So, you can see that this block is just exactly the same as this block here, and this one is just exactly the same as this one here. Each of these blocks measures six inches, so that by putting all four of them together you're gonna have a 12 by 12 finished block section. Let me show you how each of the blocks breaks down in components. Each of them has four half square triangles. You can see these two correspond, which is perfect because every time you make a half square triangle, you're making two at a time. And you can see these two are exactly the same. So, I have black and coral and black and rust for this block. These need to be trimmed to three inches each before you put this whole block together. So, we're gonna cut those squares at about 3 1/2. So, after you've completed and trimmed those, you're gonna cut these little strips to set in. These are 1 1/2 inches wide, and they're three inches long. So, you need four of the white ones and then this little square in the center is 1 1/2 inches wide. So, you're gonna sew this block together just like you would any block. You're gonna sew these pieces together, one to the next, these, these, and then put together each of those sections to create the block. The other block is only different in that it still has rust and coral on the corners, but it has this other kind of gray big print dotty fabric or whatever you choose. So, just keep in mind that the only thing that is different about each of the blocks is half of the half square triangle, but they're still gonna pair together with the rust and the

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pink. And then the other difference of the other style block is it's gonna switch out what goes as the cross and what goes as the center.

Day 12 - Bordered Bowtie Blocks
- Welcome to the Bow Tie Block. This is such a sweet little block, and I've seen it in a lot of vintage quilts. Upon close inspection, I've noticed that a lot of them are made by hand-piecing in a little tilted square on point. But I think doing it on the machine is going to be a little bit simpler. And there's a method you can use by just adding in a little corner with sewing. And so let me show you first where this block is on the map. We actually have a couple of them. And then I'm going to break down the components for you. One of the Bow Tie blocks is just here. And then an identical one is over here, just tilted a different way. And then there's another one over here that's a totally different variation of color, but it's made exactly the same as what I'm going to show you. This is what we're going to be making right here. And we're going to start by explaining how this works here in the center. The center is really just a four patch. But before we put the four patch together, we're gonna add little corners on the blue. So each of these four pieces, two blue and two maroon, are cut at 2 1/2 inches. But before we assemble them, we're going to add little corners on here by using these 1 1/2-inch square maroon blocks. And I've already got one assembled here. You can see where they're joined together. So in order to do the next one, I'm just gonna lay those right sides together. And I'm gonna sew from this point to this point. You just wanna be sure that these two edges are matched up here at the corner. And then once that's sewn across there, you can trim off the excess and flip and press this back. I'll go ahead and do that now. Okay, so there's my seam across there. I'm just gonna trim by eyeballing a quarter-inch seam allowance. And now I can flip this back and press. Now both of the blue squares have this little corner maroon addition to them, so they can all be put together by sewing these two together and then these two together, pressing their seams in the opposite direction and sewing the final block together. And then on either side of that, you can add these white border pieces. And then this little square and the longer border piece together. This little square and the other one border piece together. And then you can put the three sections as a final block together. And this is what it's gonna look like. And you're gonna do the exact same block again. And then there's a second variation in color that I can show you finished right here. And these are the fabrics that make up that. So these are your squares for the center. So you'll need 1 1/2-inch squares to add to the grain here to create that little bow tie section. And then the borders for this are made from this pretty black printed fabric. You can see how differently these blocks look simply by changing out the fabrics, but still using the exact same sewing, which I think is one of the best things about patchwork.

Day 13 - Bowties in a Row Block and Staggered Bowtie Block
- You may have noticed by now that we are building our skills from one day to the next. One day we'll learn a basic form of something, and then maybe we do a variation on it the next day, or add to it a bit. So in that spirit, we're going to be creating the bowties exactly the same way, and in fact in exactly the same size, we're just arranging them differently. So let me show you these little bow ties in a row on the quilt map. One of the section is four bow tie blocks way over here in the upper right edge of the quilt, and it looks like this here. So you can see there's two that are exactly the same of one type of fabric, and another two that are exactly the same the other type of fabric. We just flip flopped the direction that the bow tie goes as they get assembled. And the other section is down here at the very bottom center of the quilt. And again, there is four of them, but these are all

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exactly the same, and we've staggered their setting, we've bumped it up and down, and bumped it up and down. And we've done that with these extra inset pieces here. So these are all the pieces that we need to create these two different sections. This one in the upper right is gonna finish at four by 16 because it's really just four four inch square blocks on top of each other. This one is also gonna be 16 inches long, but it's gonna be a little bit higher, it's gonna be six inches high because we've added these two inch borders to either side of the block. So you might remember that when we create each of the bow tie blocks we have whole squares, and then we have whole squares that get amended by these little additions to create those kind of chopped off corners. So once you've created your four bow tie blocks, just add on those little borders at the bottom of one, at the top of the other, the bottom, and the top. And then you can assemble them in a row. And I think what's really interesting is it has some of the same color fabrics then adjacent to one another so that kinda creates this blend together of the bow ties so they don't really look exactly like bow ties, they look like kind of joined bow ties. And then here, you're just gonna be creating four bow ties again, two of one kind, two of another kind, and alternating them, not just the style of fabric that you've used, but also alternating the direction that the bow ties are turned.

Day 14 - On Point Block

- Today we're gonna create two on point blocks. One finishes at 12 inches and one finishes at eight inches square. And they are just created by using squares that are turned on their point, so they're more diamond shape. And then there's some setting triangles around the edges and on the corners. And I'm gonna show you a neat trick for cutting those. So here's the 12 by 12 inch square block over here, these pretty yellow, blue, and aqua, and lime squares and triangles. And then the other is formatted differently and it's a different size, but it uses all the same piecing techniques as the big one. And this is what they look like finished out of the materials. So you can see that, again, I've played with yarn dyes and with teeny tiny prints. And right here in the center I've had a lot of fun fussy cutting this little rose. So it's a nice opportunity to fussy cut something in the center. And even all the rest of it you can if you choose to. This also, it has no real center, but I almost took on a sort of argyle or gingham approach in terms of the colors that I played through here, which is a really fun trick. These are all the large squares that I need for the larger block. And these are 3 3/8 inches. We have nine of these aqua squares, we have four of the yellow, and we have just one of this bright blue. You can see that I've used a different component here of design in the center. It's all from the same fabric as the original one, but I decided to fussy cut it in a different part of the fabric. And doing something like that is just as easy as using your clear acrylic ruler right over the material to see where you want the design to be centered. I wanna show you now how we're gonna cut triangles to set into these edges and corners here. So in order to do these triangles here I'm actually first gonna cut some 3 5/8 inch squares and then I'm gonna cross cut them on an angle to create the triangles. So each side will need two triangles, which means you're only gonna need one square per side. That's a total of four squares to create those two triangles. So the corner pieces start with a 4 1/4 inch square. I'm gonna take this ruler here and I'm gonna cross cut it once, like we did for the edge triangles, but then before I pick anything up I'm gonna cross cut it this way as well. And that one square is gonna yield all four triangles that we need for the corners. We're all familiar with how one square sews onto the next, but let me show you how I sew the squares to the edge triangles and how this block begins to get assembled on the diagonal. Let's start with this corner over here. Because I'm creating in diagonal rows this piece is gonna go to this one is gonna go to that one, and then finally we'll put the corner on. So I'm just gonna turn this one over right sides together. You

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want this to be in line here and it's expected that these points will come past here. So we're gonna sew with a 1/4 inch seam allowance. And then we're gonna do the same on the other side. Once those three pieces are put together I'm just gonna finger press those seam allowances outward and then lay this corner piece there, so that the edges are aligned here and these points are passing up the others there. Just centering the triangle as best you can in that square. Okay, so you can see that we've created this lovely and perfect little corner now. Keep in mind that the point of where these three pieces comes together should be 1/4 inch away from the edge, because when we come back to assemble the line of assembly will come right at that point. So you can continue assembling these rows of pieces on the diagonal and then the rows to each other to complete the block. Let's go over the pieces that you'll need for the smaller eight by eight inch block. You'll only need two maroon squares that are cut at 3 7/8, those are here. You're gonna need two pink squares that are cut at 3 7/8. And for these four rest triangles we're gonna start with one 5 1/2 inch square and you're gonna cross cut it twice. Remember, in that X cut like we did on the previous block. To get these four triangles here. And then you'll do the exact same thing with the yellow. You'll cut one 5 1/2 inch yellow square and cross cut it twice to get these four setting squares on either side. And then you can assemble this piece to that one and then one, two, three, four in a row, the next four, the next two, and assemble your diagonal rows to finish this one.

Day 15 - Flying Geese Star Block

- Today we're gonna create a cute little star style block. And it's created by using half square triangles on the corners, setting in a flying geese on each of the four sides, and centering that all around a beautiful square in the center. It's gonna finish at eight inches and we're actually gonna make two exactly the same of this, exact same fabrics and everything. So I'm gonna go over how to do one and then you can repeat it for the second one. Let me show you where they are on the map. Here it is right here with that pretty bright blue center and then there's another one set over here on the side of the quilt. This is what it looks like finished. On this one I didn't really choose to fussy cut, I just let the print happen the way it happened in the middle. But this section right here is the flying geese. It's just this triangle that is twice as long as it is tall, which is a very traditional flying geese block. And then these are the half square triangles on each of the corners. So all these components come together to make a finished eight inch block. And I'm gonna show you how to make the flying geese and we're gonna make four at a time, it's really cool. We all know now how to make half square triangles, so I'm gonna leave that to you. For each of these two blocks the center piece needs to be cut at 4 1/2 inches square, whether you fussy cut it or not. And these corners here are half square triangles that need to be trimmed to 2 1/2 inches once they're made. So we're gonna start that by cutting two three inch squares of one color and two three inch squares of a second color. And those put together, remember, two together make two at a time. So then you'll have your four for the corners. For the flying geese we're gonna start with one large square. The large square is what ends up being the goose, it ends up being the triangle. And we're gonna cut that at 5 1/4 inches. And then the smaller pieces are those that are on the side of the geese, or the background. Those are gonna be cut at 2 7/8, we need four of those. So every set of four flying geese is gonna need one large square cut at 5 1/4 inches and four smaller squares cut at 2 7/8. Let me show you now how I create four flying geese at one time and eliminate the need to do any trimming. So I'm gonna take one large square and four of the small squares. We're gonna layer right sides together a small square up in this corner, a small square down in this corner. And you should expect that they're gonna overlap here in the center, that's what you want. The next step is to draw

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a line from this point to this point over these two pieces. The line just needs to be visible to you. You might not be able to see it on camera perfectly. And because that yarn dye fabric lines to move around a little bit more than a regular quilting cotton I am gonna go ahead and place a pin here and here. Similar to half square triangles, we're gonna be sewing a line 1/4 inch all the way down to the right and then again all the way down to the left, 1/4 inch away on either side. Keep in mind if you're used to using 1/4 inch foot that's got a guide along the side up against the edge of your fabric you won't have the opportunity to use that here, because there is no edge. You need to know where on your presser foot 1/4 inch is in relationship to where the needle is to be sure that you're staying 1/4 inch away from your drawn line. Now I'm gonna turn it around and sew down the other side. After you've sewn those two lines you're gonna cut on the drawn line. They kind of look like little fox faces. You're gonna press these triangles back before we move onto the next step. Okay, so the next step with each of these is to lay a square again at the remaining corner of the big square or what started as a big square and is now a triangle. And we're gonna draw a line on each of these from point to point. And I bet you can guess what we're gonna do next. We're gonna sew from here to here 1/4 inch away from the line and the same on the other side. And you may notice here that that 1/4 inch away is gonna fall right where these two pieces intersect and that is exactly what you want to get your flying geese in line. That's one, now I'm gonna do the other. And the last cutting step for each of these sets is to cut right on that drawn line again. And these four units are your four flying geese. So once they have a good pressing they are gonna be ready to include into your block. Okay, let's clear this out of the way and let me show you the final assembly steps of all these pieces. So we have our square in the center, our half square triangles oriented the right way with the yellow touching the square there, and then the flying geese are gonna set in on each of the four sides. And make sure they're all pointing. They all wanna head toward that pretty rose. Really in essence this is like a nine patch. So you would assemble three pieces at a time, the corner to the center to the corner. And then the center side to the center to the other center side. And then that unit. And then you can put all those three together. Okay, so now you can make a second one just exactly like this.

Day 16 - More Flying Geese Star Blocks & Extensions

- Today we'll be making the exact same blocks we did yesterday, those beautiful little eight inch blocks that have a pretty 4 1/2 inch square cut in the center, four flying geese that we made all at the same time, and four of the half-square triangles on the corner. Let me show you where this new variety of them exists in the quilt. So the two new ones are this pink purple one here, and then this brown, green, and bright blue one over here. This is one of the ones that we made yesterday, and then it's also over here as a repeat. But one other thing that we're gonna do today is add this little extension section on each side of these three. But first let me show you these finished blocks. So you can see that they have the exact same arrangement as yesterday's however they have this addition here. This is our original block, but they've got this little extension here where I've continued the same colors, just to make the block a little wider and set it into the design of the quilt. So once we're done with these, we're also gonna add these bits to the side. And one of the blocks that we did yesterday is also gonna need that same extension on either side of it. Let's review all of the pieces and the sizes that we need to create today's blocks. For each of them, we're gonna need a 4 1/2 inch square for the center, we'll also need two of each of the two fabrics used in the half-square triangles on the corner, and those are cut at three inches square. And then as you may recall for the flying geese, we need one large square, that's the goose fabric, that is cut at 5 1/4 inches square, and then four smaller squares that's the background to the goose cut at 2 7/8. So

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complete all that cutting for each of the blocks in the fabric variety that you're choosing. And then you can create those blocks after having done it yesterday, but additionally we are gonna create these little extension pieces here. And these are simply cut at 2 1/2 inches square, 2 1/2 by 4 1/2 inches square, and then another 2 1/2 inch square here out of the same fabric. So you can do that for each of the blocks in the same fabrics that continue the design here. And let me put one together with yesterday's fabric to show you how that works. This simple three piece side unit comes together so simply with just two seams. 1/4 inch seam allowance and right sides together. (sewing machine whirs) (beeping) Turn it around and put the other little square on the opposite end. (sewing machine whirs) (beeping) Okay now we can just pull the block in, and honestly, sew this on any side because all sides are exactly symmetrical. Yay, there's something that you can't possible mess up! Isn't that great news? All right, so I just, I noticed that my seam allowances on the block are pressed this direction, so I'm just gonna hand press these down in the opposite direction so they nestle in and lie flat. If you're more comfortable pinning, go ahead and do that. So this is ready for pressing. You can finish your other two blocks, add their extensions, and then you have finished today's patchwork.

Day 17 - Flying Geese Crisscross Block

- If there are any lead roles in this Dear Diary Quilt, this is definitely one of them. This is a big, beautiful block. It is a finished 16 inch square block, and it has components that we've learned already, but they just come together in a new way. Let me show you where it is in the quilt map. Here's the block right here. It's an X of flying geese, all headed towards the center. And this is the finished block. I absolutely love this one and the opportunity to play again with some of my favorite fabrics and these repeating elements of always fussy cutting this rose, even though it doesn't take up a lot of space on the quilt, really kinda pulls and ties the color all together. So we've learned how to make flying geese four at a time, and it's just convenient that this does that four different times. So we can use the same method to create four and just repeat the process four times. For our center, we're gonna cut a square at 4 3/8 inches. And for our flying geese, we're gonna cut the large squares, this white, which, remember, is the goose. We're gonna cut those at five inches. And then the background squares we're gonna cut at 2 3/4 inches. To make four sections, we'll need four of the white squares and 16 of these smaller pink squares. And then for these setting triangles that go in each side, we're gonna start these by cutting them, two of them at 8 1/2 inches square, and then we're gonna cross-cut them. So cut two squares first that are 8 1/2 inches, cross-cut both to end with four of these triangles. Those are the large triangles that go on the sides. And then finally on the corners, we're gonna do just a little bit more cross-cutting. We need to cut two black squares that begin at 3 5/8 inch square. Cross-cut so that we end with four of these triangles. I'll use the finished block to show you the logic of how all the components come together in this beautiful X block. So you can create the flying geese four at a time and then join them, one flying into the next one, just with simple 1/4 inch seams to create each of these four units. And then after that, that's really all of your pre-piecing, and it comes down to putting together your components on a diagonal like we've done in some other blocks. So you can join one of the large setting triangles to one side of the flying geese unit and then to the other side and then add the corner on the end. And then you've got this whole section complete. And then you can add a corner to a flying geese section, to the center, to flying geese, and to the final corner over here. And then this section is gonna be put together just like this one over here. So then you have three main components that get sewn together with the final two seams to complete this block. And remember that this should

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measure roughly 16 1/2 inches before it gets included into the final quilt.

Day 18 - Log Cabin Block
- Today is another showoff in this quilt, but it is our first log cabin block. It's a very traditional block. It's really easy to put together, and it plays out in a very simple logic as it starts in the center and sews out concentrically as you go. Here it is in the map down here. You can see that I've taken advantage of the piecing style by kind of keeping these warm and pink colors on one side and keeping the cooler and more yellowy-green colors on this side. This is the finished block here. It has a real primary feel because of the colors that I use, but I love how bold it is against some of the tiny fussy patchwork of the rest of the quilt. So we're gonna start by explaining all of the pieces and how they need to be cut in order to create this block. For the center, you'll need a 4 1/2 inch square. And then you're gonna start working out the strips going throughout the entire block. Every single one of them, however, is 2 1/2 inches wide and various lengths. The inner ring starts with this yellow. You're gonna cut a length of 4 1/2 inches long and a length of 6 1/2 inches long. For the cream, 6 1/2 inches and 8 1/2 inches. For the green, 8 1/2 inches and 10 1/2 inches. Can you see how this logic is working out? Whatever the last measurement was on the previous ring is the same as the first measurement on the next ring. For the coral, you're gonna cut 10 1/2 inches and 12 1/2 inches. For this printy coral and green, you're gonna cut 12 1/2 inches and 14 1/2 inches. And then the final corner is gonna have red cut at 14 1/2 inches and 16 1/2 inches long. Let me show you how we get started from the center. I'm gonna combine the square with the 4 1/2 inch yellow piece. Right sides together. And sew with a 1/4 inch seam allowance. If you're a pinner, pin away. (sewing machine beeps) So I'm going to turn the block. It came out this way. I'm gonna turn it counterclockwise for the next strip. And the next one is yellow. So that's gonna go here. I've just finger-pressed here, and I find that to be suitable when we're still working with a pretty small piece. Once we get to larger expanses of fabric, you may want to go to the iron to press between every seam. (sewing machine beeps) Okay, come straight out and turn counterclockwise. Open it up for a finger-press, and then we'll move on to our white piece. And you know you've picked out the right piece if it fits in length up against the piece that you've already got. (sewing machine beeps) Okay, so I've turned it counterclockwise again, and I'm gonna sew down this side, and then we will have completely encircled or ensquared our little center square. Okay, so we have the first round sort of complete here, made up of two colors against the center square. In terms of pressing seam allowances, I always have a tendency to just press everything out as I go. That tends to be the most natural way for me to press it when I'm turning each of these. But again, you may, at least with every round, wanna take it over to the ironing board to give it a good press. And I've just finished this one, so I would turn again this way to put the green, green, and then move on to the pink and then the big pink and green print and then the red, and then you have yourself a beautiful log cabin block.

Day 19 - Pineapple Block
- Today we're going to create a Pineapple Block. And this is the last of the big 16-inch square blocks. And it comes together really simply. It's sort of like the Log Cabin that you continue to sew around concentrically. But at every round, you're going to do an extra trimming step because we're going to set this one on point. Let me show you where it is on the map. Here's a Pineapple Block right here. And then here is the beauty all finished, ready to be included in the quilt. So it starts with a square, but it's on point. Let's go over the pieces that we need to cut to create this. For the center, you'll need to start by cutting a five-inch square. You'll need six total colors to create your strips.

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And all of them are going to be 2 1/8 inch wide. Of the black, you'll need four that are five inches long. And of the pink you'll need another four that are five inches long. The next two colors need to be 6 1/2 inches long. And you want four each of the aqua and the pink. And then the green and the white you need four each that are eight inches long. We're gonna begin by placing the pink and orange strips on each of the four sides of the center square and sew with a 1/4 inch seam allowance. I'm just going to finger press these at the machine. And unlike the Log Cabin where the strip goes all the way down across both joined, we're actually only placing strips against that center square. So as long as it meets this corner down here, whatever overlap happens here, which should be just a quarter inch with the previous seam, is just fine. But you do wanna sew the entire piece on. And continue in just the same way for the other two sides. I'm gonna press these now so that they're nice and flat. Unlike the Log Cabin that has full sections of strips all the way around, these have these cutouts here. And we have one more step to complete on this section before we add the next row. And that's to cut these at a 45-degree angle. To get the first one, I'm gonna utilize this 45-degree line on the mat here, making sure at the same time that I'm keeping my straight edges against the straight lines of the mat. It's gonna ensure that everything is square. And then I'm also gonna pull in this large grid ruler to line up with that angle. The ideal place to cut this from here to here is gonna be 1/4-inch away from this intersection here. So I'm gonna keep my eye on that as well, with the 1/4-inch line on the edge of this ruler. So once you have that first straight edge cut at an angle, you can use that to line up one side of your ruler. And then this next perpendicular angle will help you to cut the other side. And again, keep that 1/4-inch line intersecting with the intersection of those pieces of fabric there. Now you can continue all the way around in just the same way to get all four edges cut. These freshly cut edges are gonna get the next round of strips on each of the four sides. Now I'm gonna press this to get it nice and flat. With this trimming, we have a little bit of help now with this pink edge here that we can use our ruler just on it and trim across. We do that on all four sides. Now we can add those pale pink and yellow strips to that side. And now that you've seen the logic of how this whole thing plays out, continue doing this all the way around, adding strips to four sides, trimming them across each corner, adding the next round of strips to where you just trimmed. When you have the center square all stripped out to the edges and trimmed, it's time to add the corners. The corner piece starts with a 9 3/4-inch square. And then we're gonna crosscut it twice. So if you can imagine all of these triangles originally started as a square, and then we take our grid and cut on this angle and this angle to end with these four triangles. And those get added as the final corners of your Pineapple block.

Day 20 - Kaleidoscope Block

- Introducing our first template of this entire Dear Diary Quilt. These are going to create the kaleidoscope blocks. So we've got four kaleidoscope blocks all put together. Each of them individually is seven inches square, but put together, it creates a big 14 inch square block. And the first template is template A, it's this triangular shape here. If you prefer working from template plastic, you'll wanna take your template plastic, lay it over the printed template, and trace the shape. That gives you a more firm edge to cut with your rotary blade up against it. For each of the kaleidoscope pairs, you use two fabrics for that template. And let me show you what they all look like together and where they are in the map here. This is the section right over here. You can see by putting a black in the corner of every one of those kaleidoscope blocks, when they join, it creates this pretty little black square on point. So I've got all my pairs of kaleidoscope templates cut, and I've also precut what's gonna end up being the corners. The corners are created by first cutting

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squares at three inches. I have two squares at three inches of the pink fabric, and I've cross cut them to create four total triangles. I did the exact same with this purpley maroon color, there were two squares, and now there are four triangles. For the black, I have that on a few more corners, so you need to start with four three inch squares, cross cut them to create eight triangles. Let's lay out one of the kaleidoscope blocks so that you can see the sequence of how the sewing is gonna go. You really and truly just alternate these A template triangles and the center like pieces of a pie. What you'll wanna pay careful attention to is the corners because they're a little bit different for each block. In this block, I have a pink on one corner, I have a black on two opposite corners, and on this remaining corner here, I actually have this purpley fabric. I'm gonna start sewing, right sides together, with four pieces of the pie first to create one section, starting with just two. Sew right sides together and 1/4 inch seam allowance. (sewing machine whirs) (beeping) Open that up, and I have a tendency to press the seam allowance with my fingers just away from where I'm gonna sew next. This next seam is gonna take you just over on top of the previous seam that you created in that inner corner. (sewing machine whirs) (beeping) Again, after I open, I'm gonna tuck that seam allowance back away from the next seam that I'm gonna sew. Make sure you pick up a leopard piece. (sewing machine whirs) (beeping) Okay, I'm gonna give this a quick press of the iron, and then I'm gonna do this four pie piece section all the same way. Now we're gonna sew the two pieces together to create a whole eight-piece pie. (sewing machine whirs) (beeping) Okay, so I've got my pie pieces all sewn together and pressed and now, just make sure that you orient it so that the yellows are going into the corners and you can sew each of the corners on straight across here with a 1/4 inch seam. (sewing machine whirs) With a final pressing, this kaleidoscope block is ready to go. Now you can sew it exactly the same way in the other three varieties. And be sure before you put them together that you turn and orient them so that the four triangles in the center are creating a square on point, and that you have paired together the pinks in one outer edge, and the purples on the other outer edge to create that secondary design.

Day 21 - Bullseye Block

- Introducing curves. You knew that it had to happen. We've done lots of straight patchwork, all kinds of straight patchwork, and now it's time to gradually, and gently, and kindly introduce you to some curves. We're gonna start that with some bull's eye blocks, and we've got three of them. I do not know if that is the traditional name for this block, but it's what I call it. So, let's have a look at where they are in the quilt. These three 12-inch blocks right here are what I'm calling the bull's eye blocks. They're all pretty different in terms of color, but I like setting them in a row to kinda create a curvy design element over here. Here are two of the finished blocks. They have all of the machine sewing done so far. This is the third variety. So, you can see that I kind of paired colors together in these radiating curved forms here so that you can see a continuous line in that pie shape, but it has that curve running through it. Let's have a look at the pieces and templates we need to create the bull's eye blocks. We're going to be using templates B, and C, and D. And again, if you prefer using template plastic, go ahead and trace those and cut them out on template plastic before cutting. For every single one of these three bull's eye blocks, you use a total of five fabrics. You have one pair of fabrics for four of the sections of the pie, and another pair of fabrics for the other four sections of the pie. And they'll always go together no matter where they are as they go around the circle. And then you have a fifth fabric for the center, so this is template D, the circle. Template B is the outer ring, and template C is the center ring. Now, something really important to keep in mind about template B, you'll notice that if I put this over here, it doesn't fit. So, four of the same fabrics always

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need to be cut with template B facing right side up, and then the other four need to be cut with template B facing right side down. If it helps you at all to pair your two opposing outer ring fabrics right sides together, and then just cutting, you can do that and cut four, and that'll create all eight pieces for the outer ring. Otherwise, just keep in mind that one fabric has one direction with the template, and the other fabric has the other direction. With template C, it doesn't matter because it's symmetrical. So, now that you have been introduced to the templates and how they work, let's have a look at how the piecing goes. I've got one of the blocks already going in the order that it is meant to be pieced. You can see it kinda creates a donut in the center. So, the only real curve that we have to worry about in today's sewing is between the B piece and the C piece, and that's a very subtle curve. In other words, it's not really steep and curvy. A good way to begin doing curved piecing is to go with a rule of halves. Fold this piece over, and press a crease in the center fold, and do the same with the curve. In other words, joining these two points of the other piece and press a crease. That just gives you a reference point, besides the outer two edges, to join them up together. So, I can see the creases that I've pressed with my fingers there and I can line them up. I'm gonna place one pin right there. Don't forget with curves what you want to line up one piece to the next is 1/4-inch away from the edge. That's the two lines between the two pieces that are gonna fit together. So, once that center point is marked with a pin, and put together, you can sort of drag this up for the edges to meet, and pin there. And then drag this up, and you can see it's carrying the rest of the fabric with it, but that's okay, for these edges to meet, and pin there. So, you can see there's a little bit of curvy bulk underneath. So, as you're sewing, you just need to be sure to keep everything smooth, so enter it in smoothly, and gradually sew underneath the foot pedal, making sure that no gathers are forming with that bigger piece underneath as you do. When I'm sewing curves, I just take my time. If I continued sewing here, you can see this would all be folded over. So, I'm gonna stop here with the needle down, raise the presser fit, and make sure I'm just dispersing that bulk underneath out of the way so I have a nice, smooth line to finish. (machine humming) Simple as that. We have a nice, smooth curve. So, these are gonna get paired together with the opposite color and the opposite orientation of this shape. So that they would join together really smoothly, I just decided to press all the brown ones down towards the other edge, and all of the green ones in towards the center. So, I'm gonna give this another press before I join it with this one. Now that that's pressed, I'm gonna fold them right sides together, making sure that curved seam of each of them is lined up, seam allowances facing opposite ways. If you want to pin this, you can, because this is on the bias, so it will give a little bit. Keeping that in mind, you'll remember you just shouldn't pull and stretch on this as it goes through the machine. Just guide it in gently. (machine humming) Okay, so that's 1/4 of this whole. I've already got half of it all put together here. Now I can do a straight seam between here and here to get the other half done. (machine humming) There's the second half, and now I can join them onto each other. So, one side, and then the other side. (machine humming) Because we've got an opening in the center here, just don't stretch and tug at it too much to pull it out of its square shape. Look how pretty. Doing an entire circle would be a very hard first lesson with curves, but we've broken it down into eight pieces so we only have small, subtle curves, joining them together by dispersing your seam allowances really smoothly just really ensures success at this first attempt at curves, if it is your first attempt. And then the last thing that we're gonna do for these blocks today is to add the circle on top. If you want to have a little bit of help with placement, you can fold it in half and line that up with the center seam across here, making sure that you just disperse the excess equally on both sides. And then open it up. Just gonna stick one pin into each of the eight sections all the way around because we don't want it

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slipping and having it get too close to the raw edges when we're sewing 'cause we have just a little bit of overlap of about 1/2-inch underneath. Okay, now I'm gonna machine baste a 1/4-inch away from this raw edge all the way around that circle, taking my time, and by machine basting, I just mean taking a longer stitch. So, you can change the setting on your machine to have less stitches per inch. (machine beeping) (machine humming) I find it's easiest to keep my hands flat on the work and help it turn as it goes under the foot. (machine humming) Every now and then I give the presser foot a little bit of a lift just to tilt it underneath. You can now take the other two bull's eye blocks to this stage with all the machine piecing done, and we're ready to do hand applique tomorrow.

Day 22 - Bullseye Block continued
- There are so many different ways to prepare for applique and so many different methods of applique, but I chose this one specifically because I felt like it went well with the rest of the piecing and the patchwork for this particular quilt project. One of my favorite methods for preparing to do hand applique is to first machine baste, and you might remember that was the last step of all of our bullseye blocks yesterday. We just machine basted in a circle all the way around. That machine basting is just a temporary placement technique so it has put our circle where we want it, and it also is providing a little indication of where we're eventually gonna turn this underneath and stitch down. Another reason that I like it, not only because it's simple, but because you need so few tools to perform the next step. I just carry around a seam ripper, and a thread, and needle. So the process of hand sewing is first lifting out these machine stitches, just a few at a time. And I have found the seam ripper to be the easiest way to do that. Now whether or not it shows up very well on the camera, I can see an indication of where the stitch line was because of the needle holes that have punctured the fabric, and that's actually gonna help me know where to turn the fabric for sewing. I've got my needle threaded with just the regular machine weight that I use. This is the 50 weight Aurifil, and I've got it double threaded and knotted at the end. The reason I double thread it is not because you need the durability of two threads, but really just because I don't like waiting for that single tail to slip through my needle eye as I'm sewing. Now the term needle turn comes from the fact that you can take the needle and grab the edge and press it underneath to turn the fabric. So you're using the needle to turn the fold. So I'm turning right where those puncture lines were from the needle. And I can press with my finger just a little bit to keep it in place. The first step is to have the needle come from underneath the fold and right out the edge of it, and pull all the way through. And then the stitching process is really just a blind stitch. If you are used to sewing a pillow closed between two folds, or used to sewing a quilt binding down where you have a folded edge against a flat edge, that's exactly what this is. And so I'm just gonna be taking a little stitch out of the background and immediately slide into that fold underneath and take another stitch. And I keep meandering back and forth between the two, another stitch of background, another stitch underneath the fold. Don't feel like you have to take a lot of stitches. I try to load four to six stitches at a time, just to save time, but if you can only successfully do a down and up in the background and then a down and up through the fold, that's plenty. So again, background and fold and background. And I'm gonna clip out a few more stitches before I do anymore. One of the reasons I really like this method is because your whole piece is really secure and in place and not gonna shift or move around until you get to it. Liza Prior Lucy actually taught me this method. Well she didn't specifically teach me, I saw her doing it, and I thought oh I wanna try that. And that's the beauty of quilting, is passing on your tricks and sharing them. When we get into a little bit more of the other applique blocks, I'm gonna show you some machine methods too. So if you're looking at this and

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thinking oh man, I wanna do that hand work, sit tight, I'll show you machine methods as well. Be sure when you pull your length of thread through that you don't pull it too tight because it's gonna kinda draw up your fabric. So you can constantly be checking by smoothing it out. And I'm not just performing this at a flat table because I'm filming, this is my preferred method of working. I don't hold the work up in the air, I don't put it in a hoop, I like having the table to work against for resistance as I'm pressing my needle down and up, and because I feel like I know I've got everything stable and flat and smooth. And sometimes if I wanna sit on the couch or in bed and watch movies, I'll just put a big flat book in my lap to do the same thing. You'll notice too that I haven't used any pins. That's another great thing about the basting, is it sorta keeps the whole piece in place until I get to it. But you also notice I'm using my fingers as pins. I'm kind of changing the shape of my fingers to adapt to the edge of this circle, and holding it all down in place. Again, I wouldn't be able to do that if I were holding it up in the air in a hoop. So you can continue just like this, clipping out the basting, hand stitching down right after you've made that nice little turn, all the way around until you need to rethread. And I always do the knotting just on the backside, just take a couple of whipstitches, and then you can give it a press. And do this hand-turned applique for all three circles, and then your bullseye blocks are complete.

Day 23 - Large Fan Block

- Today, we'll be creating more curves, but we'll be doing it with these beautiful fan blocks. There's three different varieties in this size, and these finish at eight inches in our quilt. Let me show you where they are on the color map. The three fan blocks we're making today occupy the lower, right corner here. And you can see that we have other fan blocks that are different sizes in different positions in the rest of the quilt. So one, two, three are the fan blocks that we're gonna do today and they all are created by way of three different templates: our e template, our f template, and our g template. I've already got everything cut out using these. For each block you'll need one g, you'll need three of one color f and three of another color f, and you'll need one e. Let's go through the logic of how one of these blocks lays out and then we'll sew one together. So they all have six blades, or six spokes, whatever you want to call it, to the fan, and they just alternate between the two fabrics. These six blades here need to get put together first, so we're just gonna sew them one to the next along their long seams with 1/4-inch seam allowances. (sewing machine whirring) Okay, we have all six blades of the fan put together and I'm gonna press all the seam allowances to one side on the back before I add the outer and inner corners to this piece. Let's start by connecting this seam here you might remember the rule of halves where with conquered by dividing and folding over, making a little finger press in the center of this curve. With this, we don't have to do that 'cause the center is right here on this seam between these three pieces and these three pieces. so we can just connect that finger press crease with that seam, just place a pin. You'll see now we're dealing with a quarter of a circle, so it's a more severe curve than the little eight sections that we were doing, but I think that we're ready. So the next step in pinning is to get the ends connected, and you can line up these edges to do that. It feels kind of wonky, and wrong, and foldy, but I promise it gets better. So then smoothing one curve into another is just a matter of kind of dispersing the fullness of this outer corner piece. So you can see it starts kind of smoothly adapting itself. Not all the way over here where the ripples are, but up against these raw edges, it really starts adapting to the curve. We do the same on this section of it, just kind of dispersing the fullness evenly across that curved edge. I always find the table such a huge friend in these situations instead of holding things up in the air because you really can see what you're working with and know that

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no folds are hiding in your hands anywhere. Okay, so this seam is just gonna be 1/4 of an inch, slowly working our way around that curve. (sewing machine whirring) If you see any ripples forming underneath a section that's about to head under the needle, just stop, lift the foot up, and smooth everything out until it's ready to go under the needle. (sewing machine whirring) All right, so we have a really, nice, smooth curve using our gradual pinning all the way across. I really think that blocks tend to tell you how they want to be pressed when you look at the back of them and see where they're headed. You can tell that all the seam work that has given this fan strength is really shoving that outer corner piece down, so let's go ahead and listen and press it that way. I want to mention, too, that when you're working with curves it's totally normal for that curve to stretch a little bit as you're sewing. So you can see when I line my edge up with the edge of the mat, it's not perfect. That doesn't mean that when we go to sewing we can't just kind of cheat it in a little bit like this to make is square, or when we go to our final assembly, we can certainly trim up the edges to make sure that it's square. Just allow yourself a little bit of imperfection and don't let it stop you in your forward-moving progress. All right, so really this little curve here is much smaller but much the same technique as pinning and prepping it to go under the machine needle here. I'm just gonna fold this in half, make that little crease, and then line that up with the center seam again. And I'm just gonna do a pin here, and then on the outer edges and make this curve sound. This one gets slightly fussier because it's a smaller curve. That just means take a little bit extra time. Putting a lot of pins in here, any more than this, would have you stopping and starting so much to take the pins out, you may end up with not a very smooth sewn line. So I think this is sufficient. Keep in mind that only the part that is passing under the needle needs to be flat. All of this really can't lie flat until it gets under the needle, so take your time and continue to adjust the fabric as it goes under. (sewing machine whirring) Okay, so once that's pressed, even if it feels just a little bit wonky, the pressing is really gonna be what smooths it all out. And again, we can square this up before we go to our final sewing. All right, so after even some pressing, I'm not totally satisfied with this edge right here, so I'm just gonna square it up a tiny bit. Remember our total size of this block needs to be eight and a half before it gets included in the quilt. I'm not too worried about that right now as long as I take off just a teeny, tiny little bit by getting edges square. And again, this is just a very common occurrence when you're doing curved piecing. The more you do, the better you get at it. There's our fan block. So we have two other varieties here with this other fabric, and you can continue making fan blocks just the way that we've done this one, and I promise you will get better with every, single one.

Day 24 - Small Fan Block

- We are going to make some more fan blocks today. But these are gonna be slightly more petite, which makes them slightly cuter. But these three are gonna be all exactly the same, in terms of the fabrics that we use, at least that's what I did in my Dear Diary Quilt, your quilt is your quilt of course. In addition to them being a little bit smaller, they're gonna get a few extra border pieces. Let me show you on the quilt map here how those happen on the design. These are the three small fan blocks right here. You can see they're designed, color-wise, exactly the same way. I've already got one of them started, but we are gonna add these little sashing pieces to them. On this block we're only gonna add one of the sashing pieces and that has to do with the assembly, and I'll show you that here. And here they are in real beautiful life. So you can see these two have two edges that are bordered with that brown and pink dot fabric. But then this one up here only has one of its borders added to it. And that's because the final assembly just asks us to sort of keep that line open so that it joins more smoothly with the section above it. Keep in mind that sometimes I'm showing you a

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whole section of a quilt, but really all the blocks that you've done up to this point, unless they were joined in a four by four block and I've specifically said to join them together, most of your blocks should be totally free. They won't join together in sections until we have the assembly day. I just wanted to point out why we're only doing one side of the border on this third fan. So let's look at all the pieces. Again, just like the big fans, we have templates for the small fans. We have the H, I, J, templates. So each of the blocks is gonna need one of the black corners, three of the maroon blades, three of the white blades, and one of the leopard corners. So we're gonna do that three times. So three of these, a total of nine of these, a total of nine of these, and a total of three of these. We're gonna cut these border pieces from a fifth fabric, and they're gonna measure 2 1/2 inches wide by 6 1/2 inches tall, and then 2 1/2 inches wide by 8 1/2 inches tall. You can go ahead and cut three of the long ones and three of the shorter ones, but we're not gonna use one of the long ones, you can just set it aside for later. You can see that I've already got this fan block complete, so I'm gonna start on the short side by adding a border piece. (sewing machine whirs) (beeping) Okay, so I'm just gonna finger press that away from the block, and then take the long piece across the top. (sewing machine whirs) (beeping) So give this bordered fan block a pressing, and this should finish at 8 1/2 inches before it's ready to go into the quilt. You should have two finished just like this, and another fan that only has the small side unit added to it.

Day 25 - Small Fan Block (alternate method)
- Well I hope you're not tired of fan blocks. Because we have four more little fan blocks. But all these are exactly the same. And today, I have given you an alternative method in making them. In case you haven't loved doing that small curved piecing. If things are more wonky than you would like for them to be and you can't seem to quite get them right or get comfortable with it, I have an alternative method for you. And it's really based a little bit in applique. So we're gonna do machine piecing. But then we're gonna use the same method of machine basting to prep for hand turned applique. So let's look at all of our pieces here. We're only using two of the three templates for the small fan blocks. We're gonna use the inner corner template and then the blade template. But you don't need to worry about using that outer corner template. Instead we're gonna cut 6 1/2 inch squares for the background and then float the blade sections and the inner corner over it. So we're gonna need one inner corner, one 6 1/2 inch square background, three of one color and three of another color using that blade template. I already have these six blades put together. Alternating between the two colors. And I'm just gonna float it on top of the square. And I'm gonna keep moving it. You don't want to have it here, you want to have it pushed all the way into that corner until these outer straight edges line up with the edges of the block. I'm gonna do the same thing with the small inner corner. Gonna pin through all three layers here at this edge. So these pins are just gonna hold things in place so that I can so some machine basting. And we're gonna do that all along this edge 1/4 inch away from the raw edge. From one edge of the square all along this curve to the other edge. And the same here. Machine baste from this edge all along the curve to this edge. (beeping) (machine whirring) So now this block is ready for a needle turn applique just like we did the center circle on the bullseye block. Remember this is just an alternative method. If you like the piecing of the small blocks, just go back to how we did it the day before and use all three templates in your cutting for all four blocks that end up together in a quadrant of little fans.

Day 26 - Flower Petal Block
- Today we'll be creating a Flower Petal block. This is a four-part block. And each of the four parts

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has this pretty petal shape. And they all meet in the center. You might see it called an Orange Peel block or a Cathedral block. And I'm gonna show you how to do it first using templates that we cut, as well as machine piecing. Let me show you where these live in the color map. The one we're making today is this pretty pink and yellow one right here. These finish at eight inches square. We're also gonna be making these other two using different methods tomorrow. This is what the block looks like finished. I used this pretty pale background and bright coral pink for the petals. And the templates that we're gonna be using are the L template and the K template. Now if you wanna use a rotary cutter to trace around these, particularly if you've traced these shapes onto template plastic, you can. But you may wanna have scissors nearby because it may be easier to trace the shape onto the fabric first and then hand cut it out with the scissors. Let's get piecing one of them. So you remember our rule of halves, to give the curved pieces one additional spot besides the endpoints to line up. We can do that with these as well. So I'm gonna fold this in half. Line up those halfway marks. Doesn't seem like it's gonna fit. It's going two different directions. But I promise it will. Pin in place. The next place to pin is at the end. And on these, you can line up those straight edges. Straight edge of the petal and that little short straight edge of the background piece. We're gonna pin that. Our seam should fall right in the middle of the thickness here. Same thing on the other side. Now that we've got all of our reference points that we know are correct, we can kinda let this just blend in. Just kinda massaging the materials until they match up. I think I can just put one pin here in the middle. And that'll be safe. And same thing over here, one pin. I'll say, too, that very often I find that I really like to have the piece that's gonna ripple the most between the two on top so I can have a good look at it as it's going under the machine to keep an eye on whether or not there's any gathers happening. This petal shape can essentially stay flat as we go. And it's the background piece that we're sort of forcing into curvy submission here. So let's take it to the sewing machine and sew it with a 1/4-inch seam allowance. Sometimes when I take the pins out, I sort of use them to keep the pieces in place, and just sort of hold and tack them. Okay, so that seems a little weird. But once you get it pressed, and I'm gonna press in towards the flower petal. It makes it easier to keep the bulk away from this edge right here. And it also allows that flower petal to sort of puff up. Any shape that you press the seam allowance towards is gonna puff up. And I think that's gonna be pretty for this block. Just keep your eye on this straight edge here and the straight edge here. Even if it means that you have a little bit of an extra fold of this applique, that's completely fine, just to keep our block square. We're gonna do this other side now, too, exactly the same. You can kind of ignore that this piece is already here. So I'm gonna find my halfway mark again. Find the halfway mark here. Now this time, this edge is gonna line up with the other background edge, because we've taken away some of the seam allowance of the pink that was there. Same thing, pin it down, force it into submission. Again, I really rely on this table for resistance, instead of holding things up in the air, trying to match up the edges and fiddle with them until they're smooth. And I'm using all my fingers almost like pins here to keep it in place so I can get that anchor in. Okay, ready to sew. Okay, so the second one is on. And we're gonna do the same pressing of seam allowances in towards the flower petal. And that's gonna overlap that first seam by just a bit. Okay, so you can continue with all four pieces exactly the way that I have. And you may even wanna square each of these using a little 4 1/2-inch grid ruler. This has been so handy for this entire Dear Diary project. I find that I've used that size a lot. You can see that the edge of the flower petal is just exactly at the 1/4-inch line here. So when you sew these together, the goal is that they are practically butt up against each other, which is really hard to demonstrate, because these bits are tiny. Okay, so when you sew these two together, they're practically gonna be touching there. And that is desirable. And the same

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thing's gonna happen with the next pair that comes in here to create that center point. This piecing of curves in the center with those little tiny seam allowances can be a little bit tricky to get it right, as far as the points coming together. But just go slow, be patient, try not to unpick too much, and just move on. If it's a little bit too much for you in terms of the piecing of something so small and curvy, I'm gonna show you a different method tomorrow that uses applique that you may like better. Once you have all four of these quadrants put together, your block should measure 8 1/2 inches square before it gets included in the quilt.

Day 27 - Flower Petal Block (alternate method)
- How did those flower petals go for you yesterday, hm? If you didn't absolutely love the piecing of those little tiny curves, I'm gonna show you an alternate method today and in fact two different alternate methods that are both around applique. One is by hand that we sort of already done, and another is by machine and using fusible. You might like this trick a lot and it might really get you going on a perfect path of applique for what we've got coming up in the following days. So let me show you here the other two flower petal blocks that we have in the quilt to just remind you where they are and what they look like. Here are the other two flower petal blocks just here, and this is what it looks like finished. I have the same background fabric on both of these intentionally, but you can really do whatever you want. These pieces over here are already prepared to do the applique that I've shown you that starts with machine basting. So really all you need is the Kay template for this block. You don't need those little skinny background pieces, and let me show you on the back of this. You can see the machine basting through there as well. So if you liked the process of using the seam ripper to pick out those stitches and your needle and thread to turn the edges on the stitched line or the line that was previously stitched to do the needle turn applique. You'll notice that, that will have it all turned down, and stitched in place. And the same position on this square as the flower petal from the piece version. So you're still gonna be tackling this inner corner and trying to get the petals to come in just right. But guess what? If you wanted to avoid that, instead of having four different pieces here, you could just cut one eight in a half inch square and then place all four petals onto that and do your applique. That could be easier for you. Really, it's completely up to you. Maybe you only have scraps big enough to do the four and a half inch squares here or maybe you wanna change up how different the backgrounds are between them, but if you wanna use all the same fabric, it may be just as easy to cut one big square, four petals, machine, applique. Okay, so we know how to do that, we've already done that. Let me cover with you another method that uses some fusible and might make this even easier. It's all on the machine, but it's still applique and takes a bit of the fuss out. So we'll use these squares again, and I'm gonna cut some petals from this other material to do our second block, but before I cut out the petals, I'm gonna place a fusible on the back side of this. I'm using a product called Steam-A-Seam. It's very similar to a Pellon 805. What it is, is a sheer sheet of fusible that's tucked right now in between two paper backings. So when I peel one side back, the sticky side is what I wanna put down against the back of the material nice and smooth, and I'm not being specific about this because once I cut petals from this, I can reuse, I can put all of my petals on one side, and then I can reuse this for other fusible applique later. This product after you peel one of the backing papers is nice and sticky. So you can just put it on the back side of the fabric or the wrong side, and you don't need to give it another pressing. That might actually make it hard to take off the other backing paper. So all we need to do now is use this papery side which is really conveniently easy to draw on and trace our shape, but because this is not gonna be a needle turn applique, it's not gonna have a seam allowance. This is gonna be raw

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edge. I actually wanna trim the seam allowance off of this petal shape which basically just means I'm gonna trim right on the black line. Okay now this is the shape and size that our petals are once they're turned, but we don't have to do any turning, lucky us. I'm just gonna trace it just like this. I'm not being really picky about where on the fabric print design this petal lands. In fact, leaving a little bit to chance sometimes is nice. So you can continue tracing all four and then I'll show you with one of them how we're gonna applique it. Let's cut out this one over here. Now the next step is going to be fusing this onto one of our little squares, and again if you wanted to use one whole square of material, one benefit of having four is you can kind of twist the design around a little bit for some interest which I can call too, and now we just need to peel the backing paper off of this, but make sure that the gluey sheet, which I can tell it's on there because this is sticky. The back of the fabric is sticky now. So I peeled this off. Placing this petal is gonna be a quarter inch away from each of these edges here. That's only true if you have four different squares. If you had one whole square, you could have all your petals peeled and just make sure they touch in the center. Okay, so now this is on here nice and smooth. I'm gonna give it a little press with a iron before I stitch it down at the machine. So to stitch this down, you can use really any simple decorative stitch or something as simple as a zig zag on the edges of this. Just remember that your thread is gonna show. So choose a color that you like. I really like this 51 stitch. It looks like a little row of cross stitches. So I'm gonna select that from my digital display. And I've already tested this out. I can change the width of it, I can change the length of it, but I like it at the default. So I'm just gonna stitch it exactly the way it is. If you're not sure how wide or long the stitches are gonna be, you might wanna try it on a scrap piece first. (machine whirring) Just slow down when you get towards the end, and then turn and pivot. That is gonna have some of the stitch elements overlapping. The other side just to the tip, but I never let that bother me. (machine whirring) Okay so here it is machine stitched. You can see this is a really wide stitch and this machine has the ability to make that more narrow to pack the stitches close together. So just play around and find one that you like. So if you like that machine applique method, you can go ahead and perform that on all four of these quadrants. Sew them together with a quarter inch seam allowance. Make sure that finished block is eight and a half inches square and by now I've actually shown you most all the ways that I do applique. How I prep it, whether I do it by hand, whether I do it on the machine, and we have a lot more applique coming.

Day 28 - AppliquÃ© feature blocks

- We've landed at my favorite place in this entire quilt and that is the applique days. So this quilt has a total of six places created just for applique and you're really gonna rely on your pdf to give you the dimensions of those backgrounds as well as gather the templates that I used in my applique to get the shapes, but what you decide to do within each of those blocks is completely up to you as well as what fabrics you use for the background. I mostly use my luminous fabric in this kind of pink and white and hot pink as backgrounds, but in one spot I used a black. This black background makes a beautiful applique block and this one exists way up here at the top of the quilt, and just really kind of balances some of the dark spots throughout. These other blank cream spots that you see in the quilt are the applique blocks and even though you'll get a guide in your pdf that shows the different styles of applique I've done on each block. It's really completely up to you. You can choose to do whatever you want with these shapes. I've got these needle turned and completed. This one is prepped only in that the edges are turned and it's just glue sticked into place, and ready to be stitched down. So you could use today simply to play with the shapes and some fabrics, some backgrounds and some petals and some flowers and decide what you want your applique blocks to

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be, and just prep all of them using whatever your favorite method has become after we've tried out a couple, but bear in mind all the template shapes that I've given you for these applique blocks. Do not include seam allowance in terms of the shape and size they become. I did that so that if you wanted to do the raw edge method, you'll cut right on the line with the Pellon or the fusible and if you wanna have edges to turn under, just add that on as you're cutting. So trace with a pencil or pen onto your fabric, and then add additional quarter inch seam allowance around that for turning, and on that note I wanna show you this product that I have called In Bloom-Mylar templates that, and also I have an acrylic set that allows you to cut and then the Mylar temples help you prepare those turned edges. It's a really fun little trick that I do at the ironing board and I'll show you how I got from just cut fabrics to this prepped and glued down block here. So, I've got my four blocks ready to go here. You can see they are wider than this template shape. I actually used my In-Bloom acrylic template to cut that with a rotary blade because some of the shapes that I've given you are exactly the same as my template products, but there's also another Mylar version of this that is the exact same shape, but it's minus the seam allowance. So that's what I'm gonna use now that they're cut to prep. So the trick is at the ironing board and with foil. So I'm gonna lay my shape right side down against the foil. I'm gonna slide the Mylar template all the way down to the edge of the fabric here because we don't actually need a seam allowance here. I only added seam allowance around the top edges when I cut it out because it's gonna be tucked underneath there, so there's no reason to bother to turn that edge underneath. So I'm just gonna get this in the center of the foil. This is regular kitchen foil, nothing fancy. It's easier to use the standard kinds of the really thick kind, and we're just gonna hold the template in the center of the fabric, and I'm gonna use the foil to wrap it up and around. So I've already slid out of place there, there we go. So you wanna just smooth it out. And then you're gonna use an iron to press all the way around this edge here. Just stay on the edge of it. These Mylar templates are semi-heat resistant. You would never wanna touch an iron directly to it, but the fabric edge as well as the foil helps protect it, and we're gonna create a crease by doing that. So again, you don't wanna run the iron over the whole entire thing. It just needs to be pressing on the edges. And the foil will heat up, so just be careful with your fingers. I usually like to bring it to the edge of the board as well, and do it a bit from this side. I just have it slid off the side of the ironing board to allow for the bulk of that foil 'cause I don't wanna press it all down. Okay, let it lie flat to cool off because if you pick them up, it can get a little bit wavy or warped because they're in a more vulnerable state right now that they're a little bit hot. Once it's cooled off, you can pick it up and peel the foil off. And we get to have a fun reveal. See how pretty and smooth that is? So we can just pop the form out. And you've already got a nice crease to needle turn into place on your final piece. Now ideally you have all of them creased and ready to go. I've only got one right now. You can sort of generally lay in the others to know where about you're gonna want it to go. Keep in mind your seam allowance edges on your block shapes. You wanna keep things at least about a half inch away from there. These are bigger right now simply because they're not tucked under yet, but let me show you how I glue it. So I let the glue stick do two different things for me. I let it keep the fold in place by putting the glue against the wrong side of the fabric here, and kind of pressing against it there. So we've already got the crease, and that's important to have our outer edge nice, but we wanna make sure that crease stays in place. Humidity conditions and taking a lot time to finally getting this to this block, all sorts of things in time can allow those creases to fall out, and then I put a few extra little bits of glue, not too much, on top of the seam allowance and that's really gonna be what helps it stick down onto that ground. So once you've got that, just give it a nice little tap. If you're more comfortable using pins, go ahead and use pins. The thing about pins

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though is you're working and putting your hands up against this to sew, you will get poked. So let me show you this one, it's all just glued down. You can see some of the edges are a little rough in terms of not glued down all the way, but in general it's gonna stay in place for me, and then you can always add another little dab of glue underneath, so this one is actually ready to sew and the nice thing about having it prepped like this and all creased is we don't have to clip out the stitches as we were when we prepped with machine basting first. We can just get straight to the sewing. I've got the needle double threaded again and knotted at the bottom, and I'm gonna start from the underside. Just to enter my needle, I'm gonna come up just on the bottom edge of this pedal and I actually wanna pass my needle out that fold. And then I sew exactly the same way as I do if I'm clipping out basting stitches as I go. Only the beauty is I don't have to stop to clip and turn, it's all turned and ready to go. So again, it's just that blind stitch sort of meandering the thread through the background and the fold continuously. I would say the length of each of my stitches might be about an eighth of an inch. So you can continue prepping, gluing, or pinning and stitching all your applique blocks. So take your time referring to my designs of applique for each of the blocks, and playing with the templates to find something that you wanna do with these and you can just prep it all today, do the applique over the course of a couple of days. Try a few different methods or just focus on your favorite.

Day 29 - AppliquÃ© Block day 2
- As you continue your adventures in applique, I want to show you one more trick of how I cut my bias from a piece of fabric to create a stem that curves. So I want to show you my method for cutting it, as well as what I do at the ironing board to get it ready to be this pretty, curvy piece. And you might want to include bias strips in all applique blocks. I've only got it in one or two. I have a simple piece of quilting cotton here. And all woven material has warp threads and weft threads. And those happen on a grid, straight up and down and side to side. Bias is on a 45-degree angle. And it allows the fabric to stretch and move, because if you tug at it this way, it's taut because of the warp threads. If we tug at the fabric this way, it's almost as taut because the weft threads are running this way. But when you tug the fabric in this direction, it really stretches. So that's the angle that we wanna cut on, because that's gonna allow our bias strip to curve. A lot of quilting grids will have this 45-degree line across them, and that can really help you in cutting some bias. I've got a straight edge cut at the bottom of my material here. And I'm gonna line the 45-degree line up with it so that I can create an angled cut. Just gonna slide it up a little bit. Now we're gonna cut the strip now that I have a bias angle. And I'm gonna go ahead and fold this over to make it easier. So how wide do you make it is really up to you. I have a tendency on big quilts to want a finished one-inch strip, which means that I cut it at 1 1/2 because I'm gonna turn back an edge. But this block over here is a little bit smaller, and so I want a skinnier finished half inch. So I'm actually only gonna cut one inch wide and turn back a quarter inch on each side. And that's gonna create a one-inch finished strip. Now the nice thing is you can just throw those bias scraps into a bias basket. Any time you want a little piece, they already have the angle ready to cut from. So I'm gonna take this to the ironing board, and I'm just gonna fold back each side. You could put it through a bias maker if you want to. I tend to lose those little gadgets and gizmos, so I just use my fingers and the iron. I'm really just eyeballing this quarter-inch turn. If you've turned each side back a quarter of an inch, they should actually have their raw edges meeting in the middle. All right, so now we've got this nice and turned under and looking pretty. I'm gonna press it a little bit from this side as well. The next step is gonna be to kind of stretch this bias underneath the iron to help encourage some curves. And I'm gonna

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put the black piece of fabric underneath it so you can see it a little bit better. I already know that I want this straight piece right now to take a curve, a little bit of a subtle S. And so what I'm gonna do is I'm gonna start tugging at it under the iron and stretching it. And don't worry that it's longer than you might want right now. But I'm gonna show you how much you can manipulate this material, and the heat sets it in place. You can see the iron is kind of my anchor and my weight against this as I tug against it. So that's a lot better than just taking bias and just kind of stretching it and pinning it in place. If you want even more severe curves, just do another round and keep stretching and turning. But it's amazing how much you can manipulate these fibers when they're cut on the bias. So once you have it about the way you want it, you can glue it in place or pin it in place, trim off the ends, and add other applique shapes to it to get ready for our stitching. If you look at this finished one here, you can see that there's some layering up. And that becomes a pretty important element of applique, what pieces go underneath others. When you're working with shapes that have all been turned under, you can put them down in the order you want them to finally appear, because you don't have to worry about clipping any seams or tucking in and underneath other pieces. So I would just trim this one to about the length that you want it. Prep your other pieces. Glue them on top, pin them on top. And then you'll be ready to stitch all your applique blocks.

Day 30 - Setting Pieces and Assembly
- We have come such a long way with this Dear Diary Quilt, and it's finally time to start making some sense of all those blocks that you've been working on. And we're gonna do that first by creating the setting pieces. And let me describe what the setting pieces are. The quilt basically breaks down into six different sections that we are gonna create before we do a final assembly that's gonna give us our whole top. Within each of the six sections, there are various pieces that we don't wanna call blocks. They're just strips, they're squares. They're sort of what make a lot of different size blocks come together succinctly and completely. And you're gonna have a list of all the dimensions of the setting pieces in your PDF, so refer to that for each section's group of them. And let me show you on the map here how a couple of them actually provide some design details that were really fun to play with in the final layout of the quilt. You can see over on the side of the quilt here that these star blocks that we made with the extension pieces, they have this sort of pink snake that wraps around them. So that helped fit everything together without having to create another block to make this section as tall as this section, but it really is just as simple as cutting some strips and cutting some squares. And again, all the dimensions of every setting piece for each of the six sections is gonna be described in detail in your PDF. So today is the day to get those cut. And you can refer to your PDF for the piecing order in setting them into your quilt. This is section two of the quilt. It's in the lower left hand corner. And you can see that pink snake that I was referring to. This is just the lower portion of it wrapping around the two blocks. And it really provides an additional sort of design and graphic detail for the whole quilt, but it's meant to sort of visually and then functionally hold all the blocks together. So today you can just go section by section one through six. Cut all necessary setting pieces that are included in it. Assemble them based on your guide, and then you'll have your six sections ready to go. And if you have the luxury of a design wall, now's a great time to get the Dear Diary sections up on the wall and sit back and enjoy the splendor of it. And then we'll be ready for final assembly tomorrow.

Day 31 - Setting Pieces and Assembly continued
- We have reached the final day of the Dear Diary quilt, and I'm so excited to see this all come

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together. So by now you should have assembled all six of your sections. And let me show you on the color map the fun with scissors I had to create how they come together. We have section one and two. Three is this long, skinny one. Four, five, and six. You're gonna have an assembly guide for all of this different sections. But in general, you're gonna put one and two together first along this seam. You're then gonna put four together with five. Three will then go up along that. And six will go underneath this whole area here. And then the final seam is gonna be between this left side and right side of the quilt. And that's where I've gotten to in my section joining, too. I'm gonna sew that long seam now. Keep an eye on the map of the design of the quilt, where the blocks come together, which block seams intersect others. And that's gonna give you further reference points on that really long pass that you'll wanna pin together along the length of the quilt to help everything line up and match. So I've got these two big sections here. I already have them laid out, just need to flip one so that their right sides are together. And I'm gonna start looking for where my blocks need to match up. First one is right here. You may wanna place a couple extra pins if your matchup points are really far apart, just to keep everything in line. Because once you get to the machine, even if you're not used to pinning small pieces, it can get tricky to manage the big weight and bulk of this quilt. So having it pinned together never hurts anything. You can see here, too, how I'm not bothered by these little inconsistencies of these tiny patchworks popping out. These final seams are what clean everything up and absolve all your patchwork sense. As you're sewing these big long passes between sections, just try to be conscious of which direction your seam allowances were pressed originally and let them stay flat in that direction. Which really just means take your time. Yay, we have a quilt! Once you've got your top complete, give it a final pressing and start making plans for how you're gonna quilt sandwich this guy together. I love doing hand quilting. And in fact, I've got another class on Creativebug called Whole Cloth Quilting. And if you're gonna do that, it's just a matter of planning what your backing is gonna be, making sure that you piece your fabric on the backing, that it's gonna be large enough, deciding on the batting. And that class has recommendations for prepping the whole thing. If you choose to have it machine quilted, just get a good resource or a reference from another quilting friend to find a reputable machine quilter. And oftentimes, they will do the backing for you, as long as you've decided on what fabric you wanna use and what type of batting. And then once that's complete, you can find your beautiful Dear Diary quilt and enjoy. I know for me, creating the Dear Diary quilt little by little, day after day, has really been not just a beautiful process of kind of collecting what I know how to do as a quilter and putting it together in one finished piece, but it's also been a record of time. And I think that that's what's really beautiful about quilting. I hope that you've enjoyed it in all the same ways, challenged yourself, and made something that you'll love forever.

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