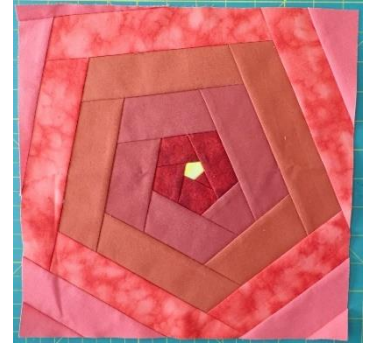


Light at the End of the Tunnel

Block basics:

- Light at the End of the Tunnel is the result of my experiments with value. It is somewhat similar to a Log Cabin block, but it is improvisational and much more forgiving.
- Completed block size is 11 ½" square. (This is the size when you turn it in before it is sewn into a quilt.)
- Use a neutral thread color, a bit darker than usual.
- All seams are scant 1/4" seams unless otherwise indicated.



Choose your fabric:

For this block you need seven to ten fabrics: one pale or bright yellow, and six to nine fabrics of a single color or two adjacent colors on the color wheel, with values ranging gradually from very dark to fairly light.

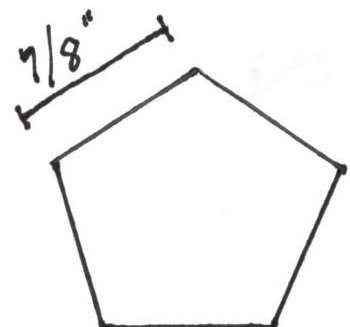
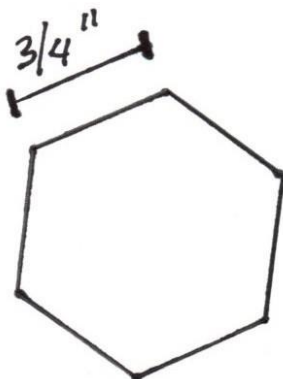
Arrange the following fabrics:

Choose your fabrics and lay them out in sequence by value. In the photo, I have already prepared my yellow piece and placed it on my darkest fabric of a series of rusty reds, oranges, and pink. I did not cut all my fabrics before beginning the block.

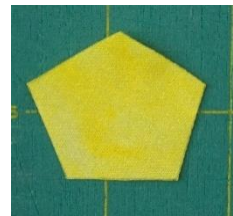


Construct the block:

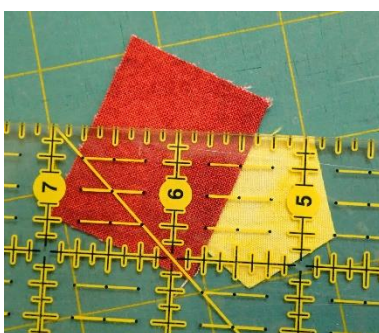
1. Cut the center yellow piece. Either draw your own five- or six-sided shape about 1 to 1 ½ inches across on paper, or trace or cut out one of the the shapes below. Don't worry if the shape isn't exactly the right size, as long as it is fairly close. Glue your template to cardboard or cardstock. Cut out the shape.



Lay the resulting template on your yellow fabric and draw around the edges with a pencil, then cut out the piece with scissors.

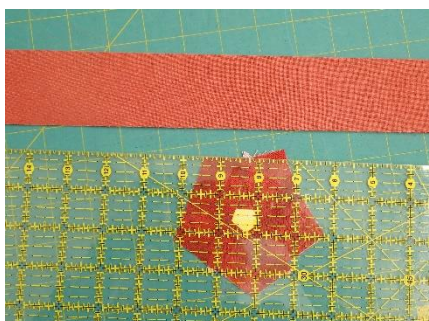


2. Cut and stitch the first “round” of pieces to the center. Cut a strip of your darkest fabric 1 ½” wide. Subcut a section just a bit longer than one edge of the center piece, and stitch that piece to that edge the center, right sides together. Press toward the strip you just added. Trim the piece you just added even with the next side of the center piece, to the right. Cut another section of the darkest strip; stitch it to the trimmed edge; press toward the added strip.



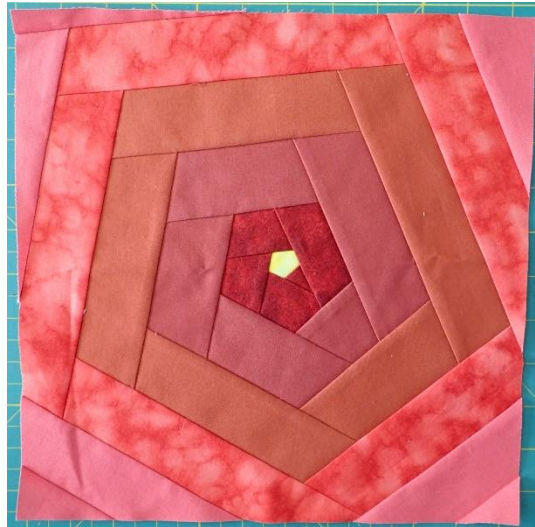
Continue cutting sections of the darkest strip and adding them to the block until the first round of five (or six) pieces has been completed. I like to stitch from the “back side” so that I can see that the seams are not “flipped.”

3. Continue assembling your block by rounds. For the remaining rounds, if you have lots of different fabrics (say 9), continue to work with 1 ½” strips. If you have fewer fabrics, switch to cutting 2” strips. For each round, cut one or more strips of the next darkest fabric. Trim the block, sub-cut the strips, and add sections to complete the round. If you thought you had enough fabric for a round and you fall short, just move on to the next round. If you are using 2” strips, but you have fabric scraps you want to use for a round that are just the right value but not quite 2” wide, use 1 ½” or 1 ¾” strips for that round. Improvise!

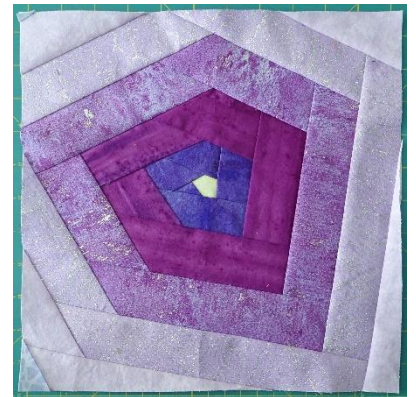
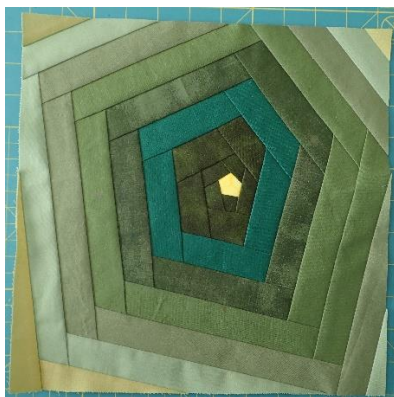


4. When your block grows about big enough, check with a large square ruler to see if you can trim it to 11 ½” yet, or if you need to add more fabrics. If you are close, you may wish to add a partial round, or just short strips to one or two sides. Note that I decided not to use my light pink fabric, instead repeating strips from the last round on just two more sides. When your block really is big enough, trim it to 11 ½” square.

Here is the final block.



Here are a few more examples.



To participate in the drawing, bring your finished blocks to the meeting May 20, 2024, or send them to Kate Allen by May 13.

Questions? Suggestions for future blocks? Feel free to email me, Jody Gray, at uteparkjody@zoho.com.