People have made quilts for many centuries. You may even have one in your own home! After the Civil War, many people were poor, especially the formerly enslaved African Americans. People used whatever materials they could to keep themselves warm. Quilts were made using scraps, discarded clothing, and feed sacks. Small pieces of material were sewn together into a pattern to form squares. These quilt squares were assembled into blankets, rugs, wall coverings, and so much more.

Can you design your own quilt pattern? Follow along and learn how to make your own quilt square.

1. For this project, you will need 2 or 3 sheets of patterned paper, 1 sheet of solid colored paper, scissors, a ruler, a pencil, and a glue stick.

2. If you don’t have patterned paper, you can make your own! Just use markers or crayons to create your own pattern. You will need 2-3 sheets of patterned paper.

3. Cut your patterned paper into 2”X2” squares. Take about half of your squares and cut those into triangles.
Here are some ready to cut pieces to use if you'd like. Just print this page and cut the pieces.
4. Use a plain piece of paper to draw an 8"X8" square. Divide it into 16 squares, each 2"X2". It should look like this when you are done.

This is your base that you will build your quilt square upon.

5. Quilt squares often use a repeating pattern to form intricate designs. Try experimenting with different patterns to make your own. Here are some of the ones I came up with. Turn your triangle pieces to form a variety of shapes.

How many different quilt squares can you come up with?
Once you layout your favorite design, glue your squares and rectangles of paper down onto your base. Congratulations - you've made a quilt square!!

A real quilt would use fabric instead of paper. All of the fabric would be cut into shapes and would be sewn together. You would have to make many quilt squares and then sew those together too!