Create a Collaborative Strip Quilt

African-American quilts are characterized by textile design principles with roots in Africa. Africans wove brightly colored strips into a variety of asymmetrical and improvised patterns. Long, narrow strips of fabric, no more than three inches wide, woven on a horizontal loom, and sewn together to form a larger pattern are a hallmark of West African textile work.

When they arrived in the New World, African women were frequently required to assist white women in the slaveholding states with their quilt making. They combined their textile traditions with American quilting traditions, creating a unique creolized art, much like Gullah language and culture.

**Fabric Strip Quilting.**

This lesson provides students with an opportunity to design, construct and piece a beautiful strip quilt.

**Grade levels: 3-5**

**Objective:**

Design, construct and piece a collaborative strip quilt.

**Materials:**

- lightweight fabric; 1 yard per person
- needles, thread, scissors
- tape measures or meter sticks

**Process:**
Guide students to plan their designs on paper before sewing. Optional: Ask students to convert their measurements to units of measure within the metric system.

2. Cut strips. Invite students to measure and cut the yard of fabric into 3-inch by 6-inch rectangles.
4. Layout, design and sew. Invite students to assemble their individual quilt block and to join everyone’s block into a class quilt.
5. Piece it together. Follow directions in a basic quilting book to piece the quilt together.