

Welcome to my favorite sewing time of the year!

There is nothing like the first snowfall of the season, hot chocolate and our all time favorite holiday movie Elf, to help us jump start the celebrations!

Elizabeth Hartman's Frances Firefly pattern is a joy to work with and lent itself to the oversized reading pillow my young, voracious reader requested months ago. Any project that helps to encourage and foster a love of reading, it's ok in my book no matter the season. The pillow is also the perfect size for road trips and beginner friendly.



About the Project:

For this oversized reading pillow, I chose the small pet bed insert from Pellon for its size and surprising strength; it's easy to clean, super fluffy and showcased the firefly beautifully. The finished firefly panel and pillow form are the same size and that is a bonus!

With a little bit of planning and labeling of all your pieces, the firefly construction should be a breeze. Can you spot the free spirited background triangle that does not match the background color? Yep, make sure you have enough of your favorite print BEFORE you start working on your firefly!

Oversized Reading Pillow Supply List:

Janome Skyline 9

1/4" piecing foot, walking foot

Elizabeth Hartman's Frances Firefly Pattern (See pattern for specific firefly fabric requirements)

Pellon Small Pet Bed Insert 20"x 30"

Batting: 21 1/4 x 30"

Envelope pillow fabric: Cut 2 - 21" 1/4 x 38"

Firefly panel fabric borders: lower border 3 3/4" x 30", upper border, 5 1/2" x 30"

Iron/seam ripper/scissors

Aurifil cotton Thread - Gray



Steps:

1. Construct your Frances Firefly per Elizabeth Hartman's pattern. To keep myself organized I placed a folding table next to my Janome S9 machine, laid out all of my pieces, sewed each section and then returned to the lineup.

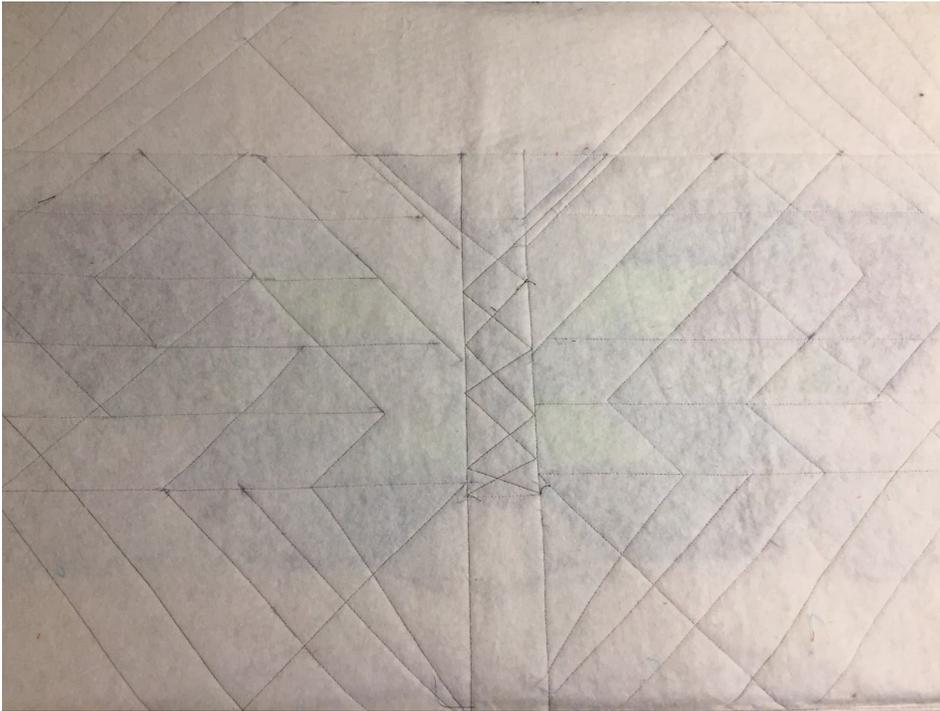


2. Add borders to the firefly panel, 5 ½" x 30" top, 3 ¾" x 30" bottom.



You might like the borders to match your background fabric. Add your own flare by selecting your favorite color combination (s).

3. Quilt your block using your favorite technique



I quilted the block directly onto my batting piece using the walking foot and gray Aurifil thread.

4. Create the pillow envelope

The envelope format saves time and can easily be removed for washing. There are always a few yards of fabrics around the studio that I save for this purpose. I love mismatched fabrics because to me there is no such thing as fabrics “that don’t go together.” Besides, children will love almost anything you make for them so go for it, use what you have, make do and surprise yourself!

- Fold the envelope pieces in half, wrong sides together and place on the right side of the firefly panel. Match the raw edges of your folded envelope pieces with the raw edges of the quilted panel. Sew all the way around and reinforce the seams by backstitching over the area where the panels overlap. If you have a serger this would be a great time to add that beautiful finishing touch or add zigzag to prevent fraying.



You can expect a 3 ½" overlap between the pieces and I find it to be a nice alternative to adding velcro or buttons :)

Below - Inside and outside view of finished pillow envelope panels





I had a lot of fun working on this project and am thrilled to have one unique christmas gift completed for my young reader. If you love Elizabeth Hartman's pattern but are pressed for time, this pillow is a great alternative and you will want to make more than one!

I wish you all Happy New beginnings. Try something new, spread cheer and find the time to re-energize what makes you, you. Cheers!

Maday