

My Cozy Village

From *My Cozy Village*

By Felicia T. Brenoe

You can teach this class as a hand-appliqué, raw-edge machine appliqué or turned-edge machine appliqué class. However, these directions are written for hand appliqué, as that is the technique used in the model quilt. Feel free to adapt the class plan to fit your preferred method of applique.

Class Description:

The class is most appropriate for those who already have some basic hand-appliqué experience—intermediate quilters and beyond. Students can pick their favorite block to work on in class.

Learning Objectives:

- Appliqué background pieces together to form hilly landscapes
- Trace the appliqué outlines to the background landscape
- Plan order of appliqué when working with several layered pieces
- Prepare and appliqué different shapes with invisible stitches (using a variety of possible techniques, including basting glue and wash-away appliqué sheets and reverse appliqué)
- Prepare and appliqué bias stems using Clover Bias Tape Maker
- Use Kurumi buttons to create raised dome-shaped flower centers
- Use basic embroidery stitches to create flowers, leaves, and details on houses

Class Length:

This class can be taught as a stand-alone 6-hour class where students learn the basic techniques by starting work on one block. It is unlikely that students will be able to complete the block in one class session. This project is also a great as a block-of-the-month quilt; the class would then extend over 10 months with the last month being the outer border.

Class Supply List:

- Required text: *My Cozy Village* by Felicia T. Brenoe
- Fabric:
 - Sky fabric (no smaller than 14" x 15")
 - Ground fabric (no smaller than 14" x 10")

- Block background fabric (no smaller than 20" x 20")
- Smaller cuts (fat-eighth yards are great) of a variety of different coordinating fabrics for trees, houses, etc.
- Applique thread: YLI and Kimono Silks are both great options.
- Kurumi buttons (21 mm)
- Applique needles: Clover Black Gold Needles (size 10-11) are fabulous.
- Thimble: Colonial Needle Thimble Pads make hand-sewing much more fun.
- Appliqué pins
- Basting glue: I am a huge fan of the narrow fabric glue pens now available from a variety of sources including Sewline, Fons & Porter, Karisma (Japanese), and Bohin.
- Apliquick tools (optional): these tools help you turn nice and precise edges in your applique, but are not absolutely necessary on this quilt where the pieces are relatively large.
- Wash-Away Appliqué Sheets/Apliquick sheets: using a fusible stabilizer like these in the appliqué process is a nice technique to introduce to students, especially those who get frustrated with traditional needle-turn appliqué. Can be used with or without Apliquick tools.
- Clover Bias Tape Maker (11 mm wide)
- Rotary cutter and mat (can be shared as cutting is light in this project)
- Small, pointy, sharp scissors for detail cutting
- Freezer paper for making appliqué templates (optional, and not necessary if using the fusible appliqué sheets mentioned above)
- Lightbox (or well-lighted windows in a pinch)
- Water-erasable marking pen (Clover's blue water-erasable pen is a great option.)
- Embroidery thread (I used Aurifil 12wt and 28wt, as well as embroidery floss from Weeks Dye Works in the model quilt, but there are lots of great options out there.)
- Sharp embroidery needles in a size that fits the students' choice of thread

Classroom Preparation:

Students need a table space and a chair to work. In my experience, you create the best environment for students in handwork classes if they are

able to sit together on a large table, as it facilitates communication and inspiration between students.

You will need a cutting station with mat, ruler, and rotary cutter that can be shared between students. You also will need a couple of ironing stations, especially if using the fusible appliqué sheets from C&T or Appliquick, or for freezer-paper templates.

Class Agenda:

1. Overview of the steps needed to build the block.
2. Demonstrate for students how to trace the main appliqué shapes onto their background sky and ground fabric.
3. Demonstrate how to appliqué the ground to the sky fabric.
4. Demonstrate how to trace appliqué shapes onto either freezer-paper or appliqué sheets. Demonstrate use of basting glue and Appliquick tools if you are using them.
5. Demonstrate reverse appliqué used in house windows and doors.
6. Demonstrate how to determine the order of appliqué for the block. All the pieces in this quilt are numbered on the appliqué templates, but it is useful for students to learn to plan the order of appliqué themselves.
7. Review with students the colors chosen for their block/quilt. This is a great time to encourage students who are insecure about their colors and fabric choices. I will usually try to find time to help the students supplement their fabric choices in the shop or get another shop employee to assist them.
8. Let students work individually until lunch.
9. Lunch.
10. Demonstrate how to cut and iron bias tape using the Clover Bias Tape Maker.
11. Demonstrate how to baste appliqué landscape onto background block.
12. Demonstrate how to appliqué the bias tape in place.
13. Demonstrate how to cover Kurumi buttons and finish the flowers.
14. Students work independently until last 30 minutes of class session.
15. Demonstrate basic embroidery stitches and threads to embellish the block.

Important Tips and Points:

- The demos can be prepared before class, and demos in class do not need to take up a lot of time. In general, actual group instruction does not need to exceed 45 minutes to one hour.
- Be flexible with your group of students. Poll what their actual needs are and don't be afraid to teach specific techniques to a subgroup if other students already have a good grasp on the techniques used.
- I have successfully taught the pattern in groups where I have had students do both hand and machine appliqué. This has made it easier to fill classes in shops, and as long as students have a foundation in their chosen technique, most of the initial steps are still the same.
- It doesn't matter much which block the students want to start with, but if they are inexperienced, I recommend starting with a block with fewer reverse-appliqué shapes (avoid blocks 1, 3, and 9). Build their confidence in their abilities by starting inexperienced students with a block with smaller buildings like block 2 or 6.

Considerations to Discuss with Students:

- Will the project need to be washed in the future? If so, are your embroidery thread and fabrics able to tolerate that? Are your threads water-fast? (Not all brands are water-fast.)
- Allow for work to be less than perfect when starting out. The only way to get really good at hand appliqué is to allow yourself to make mistakes and make less-than-perfect work.
- The days of strict needle-turn appliqué are over! It is perfectly okay to mix hand-appliqué techniques in a piece. The model quilt used appliqué sheets for complicated and organic shapes like the trees, leaves, flower petals, etc. However, the houses and other shapes with straight lines were generally finger-pressed and the folded edge secured with a dab of basting glue for ease. There is no quilting police who will show up!
- Students can simplify the quilt by cutting each landscape down to a 12" x 12" block and piecing them together with sashing like the four-block wallhanging. The quilt will be a bit smaller, and the flower border won't fit, but it makes the project less daunting and less technical for the less experienced students.
- If using the Kurumi buttons, consider the quilting of the quilt. A domestic sewing machine or longarm machine will not necessarily be able to outline the quilt along the raised buttons (this is especially true

for the large Kurumi buttons used in the border). In the model quilt, the small Kurumi buttons for the flower centers of each block were appliquéd in place before the blocks were assembled to form the quilt top. However, for the large flowers in the border, the Kurumi button centers were not appliquéd in place until after the quilt was quilted.

- Consider whether the block background behind the landscape needs to be cut away or not. In the model quilt, it was left in place. This added stability to the embroidery. However, if the quilt will be hand-quilted, it may be better to cut away the extra layer of fabric behind each landscape.