Spring Fling Embroidery Sampler with Rebecca Ringquist

Chapter 1 - Spring Fling Embroidery Sampler

Overview

(gentle upbeat music) - I love the promise of a garden in the spring, and I often get really excited to buy seeds and think about what's gonna go where in my garden, but I'm actually a lackluster gardener and kind of have a black thumb. But I was super inspired by other people's gardens to design this embroidery sampler. The Spring Fling sampler combines really colorful flowers and butterflies into a coloring book page style embroidery sampler that can be customized with whatever colors and whatever textures and embroidery stitches you want. I'm Rebecca Ringquist. I'm an artist and the designer behind Dropcloth Samplers based in Portland, Oregon. I've been designing samplers for about 12 years now, and many of them are tutorial samplers that teach specific stitches with specific threads, but this one is more like a coloring book page, but for embroidery, and I'm gonna show you how to work on it with lots of variations and lots of different colors. (gentle upbeat music)

Materials

- The Spring Fling Sampler is sort of like a coloring book page. There aren't set stitches that you'll need to do and there aren't set colors that you need to use. I'm using a whole rainbow of colors. You can see here I've got lots of colors of mostly perle cotton. I've also got some wool tapestry threads and some yarn. This is knitting yarn. Just a little scrap from the end of a project works really well. If you know someone who knits, you could ask them for their castoffs. Embroidery floss would also work really well for this. I've got tons of thread 'cause I embroider all the time. But if you don't have a bunch of colors, you could get one of these boxes of threads that's got nine colors already in it that are perfectly curated to look great together. I like to pre-thread my needles, so I've got this little strawberry needle case. You can see I've got lots of needles in here that are already threaded with a bunch of different colors. If you don't have a little needle case, you could also use a little scrap of fabric or even paper works really well as a way to get everything ready to go. It's so nice to sit down to embroider and not have to thread your needles. For needles, you can use embroidery needles. That's what these are, or milliners needles. Milliners needles were originally meant for hat making and they're still used in hat making, but they're great for embroidery. They have a nice, straight shaft, which means the eye of the needle doesn't bulge out. So they make it great for knotted stitches. But I like them so much that I actually use them for all stitches. These are my top embroidery needles. They're called milliners needles, and this brand is called Tulip. I like to use these rubber paper sorters to protect my fingers. Sometimes when you're having a hard time threading your needle, it can be helpful to have a little bit of beeswax. And that's what this is. This is a scented beeswax that I designed with Sew Fine. To keep your fabric in your hoop organized, sometimes I like to use these binding clips. These are meant for quilting and sewing, but they're great for embroidery. You could also use paper binder clip and you'll need a pair of scissors. I have a couple different kinds. These little thread snips from Fisker are my favorite. They're so great and they really reduce hand strain 'cause they're spring loaded. And then I also have these very cute little blue and white polka dot scissors, which are really sharp, so it's nice to have a pair of scissors that has a sharp point like both of these do. Lastly, you'll need an embroidery hoop. This one is a size five and this one is size six. It doesn't really matter what size hoop you have because you can move the hoop

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around the fabric. Best to get one that just feels good in your hands. You could use wood or plastic. I like wooden or bamboo the best. And then I also have a backing fabric. You can see here, this is a piece of flannel, could also use a piece of linen. And the backing fabric should be an inch or two bigger than your printed sampler on each side, because that way you can move your hoop all the way to the edge of the design without going off the edge of your fabric. You can also use this product called Shape Flex, which is a woven interfacing that you can iron onto the back of your fabric. And that's nice 'cause it doesn't move around a lot. Some people ask, do they need to sew their sampler down to the backing fabric? And you don't need to do that 'cause the embroidery will hold it in place eventually and the hoop holds it in place while you're stitching. The Spring Fling sampler is available in my online shop and it's linked in the materials list.

Garden background

- Just like in an actual garden, I'm gonna start with the background and sort of plant the seeds and then we'll move on to the butterflies later. So, I'm gonna focus on the leaves and the flowers and these little seed pods. And I think I'm gonna work with sort of a green palette to fill those in. I like to start with a back stitch, that's my favorite stitch, so definitely the one I use the most. And then I'm gonna fill it in with other stitches to make texture and more color. And as usual, I tend to take a maximalist approach. So, let's start with some back stitch to get some of these lines filled in. Get a green needle out. And I'm gonna start at the very center and sort of see where this takes me up from the middle. It's really dense in the middle. I've been planning my own garden this year and I tend to over plant, just like I tend to draw things in a really dense way. I'm actually not a very good gardener and I usually just throw tons of seeds in and see what happens and end up having to thin it out. But there's no thinning out in embroidery. I'm just gonna keep stitching and adding more and more color, at least with this design. So, there's so many great stitch demos in some of my other classes, like the original embroidery sampler class here on Creativebug. So, I'm demonstrating the back stitch. And in some of those classes they were filmed a while ago and I used to do the back stitch slightly differently. I think this is an easier way of doing the back stitch where I'm always skipping forward a step. So, you can see I'm coming down there and then I'm skipping ahead one, and I'm going back to fill it in. So, that's why it's called the back stitch, 'cause you're always going back. You can see here when I pull my thread through, I'm gonna put this down for a second. You can see that there are actually two strands of perle cotton in my needle here. And that means that my stitches are gonna be two strands thick. And the way that I did that is I put the thread through the needle and I tied the ends together to make a thicker line. If you wanted to have a thinner line, you could just use one, you put the thread through the same way and just tie a knot at one end. I almost always tie the two ends together to make a two-strand thick stitch. It covers these designs really well and it makes a really bold line. So, that's usually my preference, unless I'm doing something in the background. Let's say in here I might go in later and fill in some of this white area. In that case, it's kind of nice to have a variety of line quality and so you might wanna have some thinner ones and some thicker ones. But in general, to cover the prints on these drop cloth samplers, I almost always use a doubled up perle cotton. Or if you were using embroidery floss, I would use two strands through the needle that are tied back together to make four. I'm just gonna go up to the top where this seed pod is. One summer I planted a whole bunch of calendula just in one pot and it grew and grew and grew. And every time the seed pods would come up when the flowers would die, at the end of that summer there were calendula flowers all over my garden 'cause I kept scattering the seeds all over the place, so fun. I love calendula. Okay, so you can see I've gotten to

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the top of where the seed pod starts. I don't want that to be green, although you could have it be green, but I don't wanna have to tie this thread off and cut the thread. So, I'm just gonna move over to a different area to use up the rest of this thread. I wanted to say that it doesn't really matter if your colors are accurate. So, what color is a seed pod? Probably kind of brownish and sort of a dead color, and maybe a straw color. But I don't really like neutral colors very much. I like bright, bold colors as you can tell by what I'm wearing. So I'm taking sort of a Lisa Frank, bright, bold, rainbow approach to this design. And I'm not at all worried about whether or not they're accurate to how these plants would look in the real world. It's a good chance to use your creative license. I'm going back down here, and I'm not even worried, you know, I might come back later and finish that green line with another color of green. Now I'm gonna skip over here and do the center of this kind of jagged looking leaf. As I'm skipping around, it's good to note that you don't wanna skip too far. So, I'm skipping around from motif to motif, but I'm not really skipping more than about a quarter or a half an inch. And that's because if you skip too far, let's say I'm stitching over here on this leaf and then I think, "Well, I really want to do this leaf next." You don't wanna leave a big piece of thread on the back, because it'll be easy to get your finger stuck in there as you're working on it. And it will also make so that your threads don't have great tension. So, after a while, the threads might start to be kind of droopy and sad. So, I think a good rule of thumb is to not carry the threads on the back more than a half of an inch. Okay, I am getting almost to the end of this thread, got a few more stitches that I think I can eke out. I like to wait till the very end, because I don't like to waste the thread. One of the things that I love the most about embroidery is that it is really portable. So, you could put all your materials in a small little zipper bag and take them with you and sit outside. Maybe you could sit outside in a garden and work on this particular design. Okay, I'm gonna go back down underneath and tie it off here. So, flip this over. And the way that I like to do it is just to kind of weave the needle in and out of the threads in the back. And then the last time I do that, I'm just going under here and you can see it creates a little loop. I'm just gonna go through that loop to tie a knot. And now with my scissors, I'm gonna cut it really close to where that knot was. You don't wanna leave big, long ends on your knots, because they'll eventually get tangled up when you're stitching again with another color and it can actually bring the threads up to the front where you might not want them. I have an example that I've been working on for a while where I've filled in a bunch of these stems and leaves, and I wanna show you that now and start to work back into it. So, here's one. You can see these leaves are filled in. This stem here I did in blue. I don't know very many plants that have a blue stem, but that's okay, I really love this thread. This variegated thread is so cool. So, I used that on the stem there. I've got a leaf here that I started in green, a dark green, and now I'm gonna go back into it to create sort of a variegated effect in the outline. I'm just gonna pick up where I left off. And this is kind of a purple, it's a variegated green and purple thread. I do have a plant that has purple leaves. As I'm going around these corners, it's important to make tinier stitches as you go around the corner, or else your corners will look like points. So, let's say you're making on average a quarter of an inch stitch on a straight line. Then you might wanna switch it down to an eighth of an inch or even shorter so that you get a nice smooth curve if a curve is what you're after. If not, you could stick with the same stitch length. Getting up to the top of this leaf. One of the things that I love about embroidery is that there is so much room for creative expression. So, I like to think of embroidery as a way of drawing. And traditionally embroidery was thought of in, not as a way of drawing. And there are many people who learned how to embroider with really strict rules where embroidery was meant to be neat and tidy and precise and perfect, and on the front and on the back. And the back of my fabric is never perfect. The front doesn't need to be

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perfect, it's never perfect on my own. And so, I just like to liberate folks from the idea that embroidery needs to be something that's uptight and has to be perfect, because it's really just another form of creative expression, just like drawing is and painting. And in that way you can really do it however you like. So, I'm saying here that you should use a small stitch when you go around a corner, 'cause you want your curves to be round, but maybe you don't want your corners to be round. Maybe even though I've drawn this leaf with a smooth curve, you want it to really be more of a sharp looking leaf, because you want it to reflect the type of leaf that grows in your own garden, and that's totally fine. Just like in a coloring book page you can color with whatever colors you want and you can stay in the lines or not. Same is true with embroidery. Let's see here, I'm getting towards the end of this little purple accent on this green leaf. Sometimes with back stitch, I like to go back and do two rows of back stitch right next to each other. And that's what I'm gonna do here with the purple. I'm gonna go and fill in down on this green area, right next to the green with this purple thread to start to fill in this leaf with a solid color. I'm just wiggling my needle in here to fill up that white space. I'm gonna go over here. I love it when embroidery starts to get really dense. You know, is it rows of back stitch or is it satin stitch? Those are kind of the same thing. So, I'm just doing parallel rows of back stitch, which you could also call the satin stitch. And I'm working on filling in this shape. I have one that is finished over here that I wanna show you, you can see on this leaf, instead of using back stitch in parallel rows, Renee, who stitched this one used satin stitch to fill in this leaf and then went back over the top with back stitch in pink to show the veins of the leaf. I think that looks really cool. Here's another example. This one's stitched by my friend Carrie and also satin stitch and then used a lighter color of green to make those veins pop off in the center of the leaf. Next I wanna work on these little flowers, the pinks. And I have an example of one of those that I've already started in back stitch. So, I wanna show you that and show you how you can work back into it to fill it in. I'm gonna move my hoop around. So, this is a vintage hoop that the tension is controlled on the top. So, I have one of these flowers here that I've already outlined in this navy blue. Here you can see one that I've finished already. This one's outlined in this variegated pink. But let's work on this navy one together. So, I'm moving the hoop over here, and then I'm gonna put the outer piece of the hoop on. Here you can see just why the backing fabric is so helpful. This is the printed sampler. The edge of it ends here, but the backing fabric allows you to put the hoop in and get all the way over to this edge without being crammed really close to the edge of the hoop. Here is this blue flower. I did this stem in a nice green, and now I'm gonna fill it back in maybe with some yellow so you can see some contrast. I'm gonna add a little yellow stripe to the center of each one for a little splash of color. And then I'll go back in and do the center of the flower in another color. And this is just one up and down stitch in each of the petals. I think an orange center is gonna look so good with this blue, it's really gonna pop off the background. So in this case I don't have anything else I wanna do with this yellow at the moment, so I am gonna tie it off back here. Can see the back of this one is kind of a mess. It's thick and dense and a bit sloppy at times. And here you can see where I did carry the thread more than a half an inch. So you know, rules are meant to be broken. If you're embroidering something that is gonna be part of a garment. If you're embroidering a shirt for example, I would definitely follow that rule really carefully of not going more than a half an inch. But on something like this that's not gonna get worn, it's actually okay to carry it a little farther at times. I'm gonna grab this orange color and go back in. I like to start in the center of this circle. I'm gonna trim this thread so it's a little shorter. And now I'm gonna work my way out on either side. I love the way that dark blue looks with the orange. Sometimes when you're doing satin stitch you can go over the top in the other direction once you do one way. So, I'm gonna do that

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here. It's called the padded satin stitch. So, I did a whole bunch of stitches going this way and now I'm gonna go back perpendicular stitches going right over the top of the first ones and it's gonna make it pop off the background fabric a little more and be more three dimensional. I think a big clump of french knots would also look really great in this instance. There we go. I dunno if you can see the three dimensionality of that, but I think it looks really good. You could keep going back and forth this way and then that way until it's the height that you like. All right, there's a little loose thread back here. That's okay, I'm not gonna worry about it, but I'm gonna secure it down over here. See how there's this little loop of thread. So, I'm gonna go under here and kind of tuck that thread in so it doesn't get caught on anything. There we go. I'm gonna trim this original thread, that one's tucked in. Let's look at a couple other examples of these little flowers. In this example there's one long stitch going from the outside to the inside all the way around in this variegated thread to make up the same printed pattern, but it looks totally different. Here's another example of those same flowers stitched in a similar way, but with different colors and a little more dense. This is a cool example. This one was stitched by my friend Jackie, and it's stitched all the way around the edge with these tiny little parallel stitches. And then she did a few long stitches to delineate the different petals. So, there's lots of different ways that you could do that particular flower and can't wait to see how you do it. You can definitely upload a picture of your project into the gallery. Now we're gonna move on to these seed pods. You can see I've got one started here with one little line. I'm gonna add a few more lines, and what I think I'm gonna do is go every other line is gonna be a different color using just two colors. So, I did that first one in this peach, and I'm gonna continue that peach over here with an orange. So I'm gonna do oranges and peaches and greens as a contrasting color. And I'm just using back stitch still, And I'm thinking it would be cool to fill it in. Oops, so see how my thread just caught on that backing fabric. Sometimes what I like to do is fold the backing fabric up and fold the edge of the sampler up and just clip it with a binder clip like that so that it stays out of the way and doesn't do that. It's really helpful. You can also, if you have a pin, you could put a pin through there like that. But I tend to, I use pins sometimes, but when I do, I end up poking myself and that is really unpleasant. So, I think these binder clips are so great. So, here we go. I'm going all the way up to the top with this to follow that printed line. Sometimes your thread does catch on the binder clips, but it's easier than the fabric. So now every other one I'm gonna do this one over here. And you could do them all in oranges and then go back in with light yellow French knots maybe, or light blue French knots. Again, keep in mind that under no circumstance does this have to be realistic. Most seed pods are dark brown, but this one is sort of a made up fantastical seed pod. Incidentally, we're filming this workshop here in Berkeley and there's so many interesting plants that are not familiar to me. I'm from, I grew up in Michigan and whenever I'm in California I always feel like I'm walking through some kind of Dr. Seuss landscape, 'cause there's so many strange plants that are new to me, which is so fun and lemons growing all over the place. This is not normal for my Midwestern self. Although, I live in Portland now, so there's lots of cool plants there too that are also different from where I grew up in Michigan. Last stitch of this orange. And then I'm gonna add a couple of these little spiky things at the top just to fill those in. Okay, I've got a tiny bit of thread left, but I wanna leave these for the other color that I'm gonna use. You can see how I made this little Algerian eye with blue thread and I'm just gonna fill in between those blue stitches with orange to make it a little more vibrant and make the color really pop. So, I'm just going in, both to use up this orange thread and to add a lot of cool color to this, otherwise kind of drab blue Algerian eye. More, more, more, more, more color is better. That's my opinion. But this is a choose your own adventure sampler and you could totally use all neutrals if you like. And I think

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that would also look great. It's totally up to you what colors you choose. I like a bold palette, but I support everybody choosing their own colors. So, I've got this kind of light green, this is this variegated green and yellow, sort of yellows and chartreuse. So, I'm gonna use that to fill in the rest of the line. Actually, think I'm gonna start up here. And just like before we're going around those curves, you wanna be conscious of not making your stitches too long as you go around the curves on this little seed pod, 'cause it'll start to look sort of octagonal, instead of round. And this one I think actually looks kind of great just with these back stitches. But you could also go back and fill it in. Like I said, you might wanna fill it in with some French knots. You could fill it in with all back stitch and do sort of a satin stitch back stitch to make this solidly colored in. Or you could add some French knots. So, just for some texture, let's switch to French knots just to see how that would start to look. So, I'm coming up here. I've got this Milliner's needle, which has a straight shaft. It's perfect for French knots. And I like to put my fabric down on the table. So, I'm holding my thread off to one side and up at about a 45-degree angle and I bring my needle from behind and wrap it three times. Then I'm gonna poke my needle back down, bring the thread down to meet the fabric, and pull it through. I think that looks cool, starts to give it some texture. Sort of looks like a thistle. I am wrapping it three times. You could just wrap it twice if you wanted to get a slightly smaller knot. Let's add one over here. I put one all the way up at the top, and I've got a little bit of this thread left, so I'm gonna finish these two little spiky things at the top. As you can see, I'm a real professional gardener, so we're calling those spiky things. Okay, I'm out of that thread, so I'm gonna get another color and go back and fill in this little seed pod. Just gonna weave this business through here and I'm not even gonna knot it off 'cause it's getting so dense back here that just weaving the ends in is totally fine. I think it could use some more green. So, I think I have another green thread here. This one's a little darker, and I like that it's gonna be lighter on this side and darker on this side, sort of like this side is in the shadow. One of the things that I like about these samplers that are sort of choose your own adventure style or it's not prescripted where stitches are supposed to be and where colors are gonna be, is that you can really just start and not have a plan. And that's what I usually do. I start out and I have, you know, I grab a few colors. I usually grab really bright, bold colors and just kind of start in, and they seem to turn out. If you've got all colors that you like, they somehow end up working together. This one last line and then I'm gonna add some more French knots, I think. Sort of like the French knots are the seeds in the seed pod. And you can make these French knots as dense and plentiful as you like. I'm gonna stop at this one, probably go in later and add more, but I wanna show you some of the other ways that we've finished the seed pods. Here's this one. This is two different colors of chain stitch, a light blue and a darker blue. And then Jackie used these pink at the top to make this kind of spray of pink. This one is also chain stitch. It's a yellow chain stitch with this mint green in the background, just a back stitch of mint. And I love the contrast between the chain stitch and the back stitch because it adds a lot of dimensionality. The yellow really pops to the surface. I also love the way that Renee added this pink at the bottom, that sort of cupping the seed pod. I think that looks so beautiful. Here is another one with lots of French knots in the seed pod. And then she used threads that are loose at the top, which are actually super three dimensional. I think that looks really great. There's lots of different ways to add color and texture with these leaves and the seed pods and the flowers. The last thing that I wanna add are these little berries. And you can see here how I've done that. I used satin stitch. I think French knots would also look really great. I have been really into satin stitch lately. I'm kind of on a satin stitch kick. So, I'm gonna show how I did that with satin stitch for the berry area. And I've got one over here ready to demonstrate for you. I'm gonna pick this kind of orangey red color, and I'm just

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making these teeny tiny little parallel lines to cover those little printed black dots. And just like we did before, once you've got it covered, you can keep going to make it more three dimensional. You can go in different directions even if you like. There we go. So, that's how I did these here with satin stitch. In this example, these are French knots. These are also French knots, and they're the same color as the greenery that leads up to those little dot shapes. And in this case, I think it ends up looking more just like the greens on the flower, and that's great. Here you can see Renee used French knots as well.

Butterflies

- We're moving on to the butterflies on the spring fling sampler. And these have already been outlined. You can see I outlined these in back stitch and this one in couching. And now I'm gonna go back in and kind of fill them in. With this one, I wanna fill it back in with a filled running stitch to make it more dense and add some cool texture. So let me get my finger protector on. And I'm gonna use yellow so it really pops off. I'm gonna start here at the body of the butterfly, and I'm just gonna weave in and out underneath these back stitches. So now I'm not going through the fabric. I'm just going sort of, like, under the bridge of each one of these back stitches. And I'm going under each one. You could also go under, over, under, over, like that, and have a different effect. I love the way this makes kind of a twisted, wrapped line. If you've watched some of my other classes, you've probably seen me do the filled running stitch, like in the original sampler class. But actually, any stitch could be a filled stitch. I think filled chain stitch looks really beautiful. And it's a great way to make something that looks really complex, I mean, it sort of looks like there's this floating rope on top of the fabric, but it's actually so easy. It's one of the easiest stitches. I love in the spring when the butterflies start to come out and the pollinators are getting active. This year I planted a whole bunch of pollinator-friendly seeds in my garden. That's part of the inspiration behind this design. I think bees get a lot of credit, but butterflies are also really important for pollinating flowers and plants. I especially love monarch butterflies. The drawing for this little butterfly here was inspired by a monarch butterfly. I have a collection of these golden books. And this is the one that's all about butterflies. You can see my copy of it is starting to fall apart. But you might look at a butterfly book yourself when you're trying to pick out what colors you're gonna use. Although, you can see I chose a monarch butterfly when I made this drawing, but I'm not at all sticking to the color that would be true to how monarchs look in nature. And that's totally okay. Just going through here. The yellow. I'm gonna follow this line all the way back to the body of the butterfly and then go back and do the upper part of the wing. So I'm gonna skip back over here. I'm gonna go, same thing. Just under, under, under. For the rest of this butterfly, I'm probably gonna go back in and fill the spotted areas in with satin stitch. You could fill them in with other things too, like French knots. In a second I wanna show you how my friend Jackie did her version of this in all French knots. And it looks so cool. It was a real labor of love. It took her a long time, but the result is really fantastic. So really changes the color of this butterfly. I think, you know, the dominant color was pink, and the yellow kind of overtakes that red color, the pinkish color. The yellow really ends up popping off the page. Or the fabric, I mean. Sometimes when you're doing this running stitch and going around in the same way over and over, the thread gets kind of twisted and can be a little frustrating to work with. So I like to just let it hang and pull that twist out or rub the twist out. Same thing when you're doing French knots. The thread gets kind of twisted after a bit. So it's good to just let it hang and work itself out. I've gotten all the way to the end. Now I'm gonna go back down underneath. And you can see back here there's this other wing, the wing that's behind this one. And I'm just gonna go back in

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there and add some running stitch to fill that area in. It's not printed on there, but I wanna add a little color and a little nod to the yellow that's on that front wing. So I'm just gonna go up and down here. And I'm just rocking my needle in and out to make a running stitch. And you're barely gonna be able to see it 'cause it's such a light yellow. But I like the way it's gonna fill in that area and not just leave that back wing hanging. See how I'm kind of twisting the fabric around to make it less in my way? You could also clip it to keep it out of the way. If you're having trouble doing that sort of rocking motion with your needle, you can also just stab your needle straight up and down, and it looks the same. It's the same effect. It's just two different ways of doing the same stitch of the running stitch. A subtle little texture in the background there. Let's add one more over here. Okay. Gonna weave that under. I wanna show you a finished version. So this one's been outlined, and then I filled it with the filled running stitch. For this butterfly, I outlined it with back stitch, and then I went back in with lots of satin stitch. So these little dots are all satin stitch. The only thing left to do is this part, the long body. And you can see I did the antennas. I put these little satin stitch blobs at the end. They're a lot like the berries on the end of these little stems. They sort of blend in. Maybe it's a type of camouflage. Let's switch gears. I think what I would like to do is couching. I'm gonna use this really thick thread and couch it down. We haven't done any couching yet on this sampler. So I've got this nice thick yarn. I'm gonna cut a piece of it. I'm gonna put it in a big needle. I've got another needle here. It's got another color in it, but I'm gonna take it out and save this thread for another project and use this for the body of this butterfly. This is gonna look so cool. And this is a great time. See how this thread is kind of fluffy at the end? It might be kind of hard to get through the needle. It's a good chance to use some beeswax to kind of tame it and make it a little stiffer to get through the needle easier. It just sort of holds all those fibers together so that you can easily thread it right through your needle. And I am gonna double this up even though this yarn is already quite thick. Because since I'm couching it, it's only gonna go up and down through the fabric twice. Once at the beginning and once at the very end. So I'm gonna tie those two ends together. Man, that smells good. This smells like maple syrup. So I'm gonna start right down here at the base of this little body. Wouldn't you like to know what was inside a chrysalis and be able to like, see what was happening when a caterpillar turns into a butterfly? So now I've got another thread that I'm gonna attach this down with. So just pulling those a little bit off to the left. So I bring my other needle up over here. And this is just a perle cotton that's gonna kind of blend in. And now I pull it to the other side and go up and over. Sometimes I've seen these moths that do have kind of fuzzy bodies. So maybe this isn't a butterfly, maybe it's a moth. This kind of fuzzy business on its abdomen. Oh yeah, I think this looks cool for the body. And it's certainly faster than doing satin stitch. And I don't think faster is necessarily better. If I did, I wouldn't be into embroidery, 'cause it's a very slow thing to do. So I think I love satin stitch, and I think satin stitch would look really great for the body of this butterfly as well. And you can choose, you know, how fluffy you make this yarn. After you've gone down, you could go back with this needle and kind of fluff out those threads like this to make it a sort of like glowworm effect. You can really puff it out. That's cool. I like the way that looks. So I'm coming back with my needle and just going back down underneath there and just pulling a little bit of it up. Wasn't planning to do that, but I love the effect of it. This yarn is so beautiful. Reminds me of that 1980s toy the Glo Worm. I'm gonna go back down with this thread. You have to kind of yank it. And I'm gonna go to this side and just cut it. To finish this one off, I'm just gonna tie an overhand knot since this thread is so big. And then with the remaining thread that's left, attaching those couching threads, I'm gonna stitch these antenna. I think I'll go back in and make the ends of the antenna a darker color. I'm gonna stitch this other antenna while I'm at it. There we go. This example

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stitched by Renee is, you can see these are long threads. This long green is also couched, but she used all different colors to attach it down. So that looks really cool, I think. The sort of rainbow. This one is chain stitched here. The body of this guy will show all the same butterflies stitched a bunch of different ways. And this one is satin stitched. The wings of this butterfly are chain stitched and then a little bit of French knots added in over the top. And here in this example, there's lots of French knots. I think that one looks so cool. There's tons of different ways to do this. And yours will look different from all of these, and I can't wait to see it. Let's move on to this little butterfly. So I've outlined this one in couching. You can see this one is also outlined in couching. And then she went around the couching with back stitch. So let's do that in another color. So I'm just going in to add kind of a shadow. A colored shadow or a highlight. Does it make sense in terms of how light works? No, it doesn't, but it's gonna look really cool. I'm just doing a back stitch right along the edge of that couching to make that couching color pop off a little more. That's looking cool. So let's look at some of the other examples of this same butterfly. So this one is all chain stitched. Chain stitched around the outside. And then on the main lines I added chain stitch. And then I went back in and filled in the white areas, most of the white area, anyway, with light pink. This example is outlined with couching and then back stitch, like I'm showing here, and then filled in the back with satin stitch. And that looks really cool 'cause she used two different colors of blue. So it's sort of a navy that fades to this teal color. This one's a little more delicate. This outlined in back stitch, and then the center is all chain stitched. And then this one in the center, the abdomen or the middle part of the butterfly, is couched down with little cross stitches or Xs. I think that looks really cool. This one is couched as well. And this is couched wool tapestry thread. So the perle cotton that I've mainly been using today has a really nice shiny finish. And that's part of the reason why I like it, is because I like that shiny finish. And it also makes it very unlikely to tangle, which is really different from embroidery floss. But the shininess looks really great in contrast with this really dull, kind of matte finish of the wool tapestry thread. So that I think looks really cool. Let's look at these last butterflies here. I wanna highlight this one that my very best friend Jackie made. And she did this entire butterfly in French knots. So look at how she outlined it in French knots and then filled it in. The center is satin stitched, but the whole entire butterfly, all its wings, are French knot. And the French knot is so dense. This thing is almost a quarter of an inch thick. And it looks so beautiful. I love that. I did mine in all back stitch. I haven't stitched the middle part yet, but I'll probably go back in and stitch that one with satin stitch. This one's all satin stitch. I like that it's solid. And again, this middle part is stitched down with a little zigzag. That looks really cool. And I like how she stopped at the end to make the, sort of like it has a little head. This one is outlined in blanket stitch, which looks really cool. I like those sort of teeth marks that come in around the edges. And then this is filled running stitch in the middle and a chain stitched body of the butterfly. If you're interested in learning some of these other stitches, you can find them in some of my other Creativebug classes.

Border and finishing

- Let's work on the border. I am gonna stitch the border all in running stitch. And as you can see on this example, I worked on the border as I was going along. So whenever I had extra thread, a lot of times I would use it on the border. So this particular running stitch border is all different colors and this one is gonna end up being the same way. So, but there are some areas that I haven't stitched yet, so I'm gonna do those here. And sometimes I like to do the running stitch in like a two-tone. Here I'm adding the running stitch in this kind of rusty orange color. And then I'm gonna go back and do like a double decker running stitch with a second color on top to add some more color. I can

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do a few of these so I can show you what I mean by the double decker. It's not complicated but it's fun to show you. Okay, I'm gonna leave that thread off to the side for a moment and come back with this minty green, sea foamy minty green. And I'm just going right on top. Not over the top, but like stacked up, like the mayonnaise on top of the orange bread. So I'm just gonna do that all the way around in all different colors, running stitch. Running stitch forever. And you can see here on this example, I've just about finished it. There's a couple other little areas over here. So I'm actually gonna pop the hoop off of this one and finished that little last bit of running stitch on this example. I believe that these are the last to go. Sometimes when I have extra thread and I added the running stitch around the edge, I purposely did every other stitch so I could go back in with another color. So I liked the way that variation looks. Move this out of the way. These are green and yellow. How about magenta? That'll look cool. Twist that around. So I'm gonna do just these last few little stitches. You could fill this in too with a filled running stitch if you wanted to like I did with the back stitch earlier. I think that would look really great. I'm gonna leave mine as this dashed line running stitch. Weave these through. Sort of a filled running stitch on the back. As I'm knotting it off, I'm gonna go do one more and then go through the loop to create a knot. Cut that. And now I wanna show you how I'm gonna finish the edges utilizing my backing fabric as a border. I'm gonna pop this out of the hoop and I'm gonna do a little bit of trimming. This sampler is not quite finished, but I'm gonna still add the border 'cause I can keep working on it with the hoop even after the border is done. So the first thing that I'm gonna do is kind of smooth this out and I'm gonna trim down these edges of the white fabric. I'm gonna trim those down a little bit. I could fold them under, but I think I better actually cut them. So I'm gonna bring in a cutting mat and I have a ruler and a rotary cutter. You could also use a ruler and draw a line and use scissors. That's totally fine. A pair of fabric scissors would work really well here. So what I'm gonna do is kind of separate out the backing from the top fabric so I don't accidentally cut through the back fabric. And I'm gonna trim this down. I can see that it's about on the shortest side, it's about an inch. So I'm gonna measure about an inch on both sides and trim it down so that the edge is the same on all sides. So that's about an inch. I'm gonna use my rotary cutter to cut that. The blade is really sharp. That's so nice. Reminds me that I need to change my blades at home. I think this one might already be about an inch, but might as well trim off these rough edges. This one's definitely way too long. I used striped linen on the back of this version and that's gonna create such a cool stripey border. You can see how it's kind of folding up there. And I don't wanna get my iron out right now, so I'm just using the ruler to kind of press that down. I'm using this cut edge as a guide to make sure that my lines are pretty straight. Okay. Now let's take a look at this. So I want the backing fabric to also be about the same amount all the way around. So I'm going to cut that down to about an inch away from the white fabric. It's a little shorter on this side because whoever lined this up, spoiler alert, it was me. Didn't line it up in a perfectly centered way, but that's okay. We're gonna fudge it and the border's gonna look fine. Everything's fine. Okay. So what I'm gonna do now is fold this over once and I'm just gonna finger press it down and now I'm gonna fold it over again and I'm gonna use my clips to hold it in place. You could also use pins, that would be totally fine. And I'm gonna stitch down one side at a time using sort of somewhat blind stitch. You could also use a sewing machine and that's how this example was stitched down with the sewing machine. I'm gonna sew mine by hand. Even though I said I'm gonna use a blind stitch, the stitching is still gonna show a little bit. So I'm gonna use this magenta thread and I'll probably change the colors as I go along just because this has got lots of colors in it too. So I've got my needle, it has a knot at one end and I'm gonna bring it up from underneath right there on the edge of that linen fabric. And now I'm gonna go down and then come

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up again in about a quarter of an inch. It's the same stitch I would use to apply at quilt binding. There's a little bit of the pink showing. I could do it much smaller and I could certainly use like a white sewing thread instead of a thick perle cotton. But I actually like those little pops of color so much and being really intentional about the thread choice. You could, of course, also do this whole step with the sewing machine or a running stitch, you could use blanket stitch, you could even use back stitch. Our old friend back stitch. I'm just with my fingers like smoothing it out and making sure that I'm not pulling too hard 'cause I don't wanna scrunch up the fabric. You just wanna keep nice even tension. Okay, getting up to this corner, the corner is where it gets a little tricky. So I'm gonna show you how to fold it over so you can have a mitered corner. Leave that needle aside now. Smooth this out. I'm gonna turn this so that the part of the fabric that I'm gonna fold over is on the right. Fold this down like that at a 90 degree angle, or this is a 45 degree angle I suppose. I'm just gonna finger press that in place and now fold this edge over again like this and then fold it again so it comes down to meet that other edge. And now you have a nice mitered 45 degree angle in that corner. So I'm gonna use the clips again, clip that right in place, fold this whole edge over. I love the way the stripes look in this direction like little teeth. These clips are such a game changer. I always used to use pins for something like this and now the clips are so much easier. And the best part is that they don't poke you, there's no poking. Come up there. Okay. So I'm just gonna keep stitching this all the way around until I'm finished to finish this border. I wanna pull this one in and show you how it might look if you used a sewing machine. And this one happened to use a butterfly themed fabric as the background and I folded over the edges to make a cool butterfly border. When you're laying out your fabric, it's a good idea if you're using a backing fabric to make sure that you have the right side facing out so that when you fold it over, the right side is facing out on the binding as well. This is a great way to finish this sampler. And if you're looking for other ways to finish your embroidery work, you can check out the Finishing Embroidery Projects class that's also here on Creativebug.

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