

**Class: Seminole Patchwork**

Marisol's 4-H group is doing quilting and patchwork. They are studying the culture and patchwork of the Seminole tribe of Florida. They will make some examples of Seminole designs and use some of the patchwork bands to decorate towels and tote bags.



Picture from: [www.turtle-tracks.org/issue40/patchwork1.gif](http://www.turtle-tracks.org/issue40/patchwork1.gif)

For Seminole patchwork projects, Marisol must have accurate  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seams to make it possible to match the seams and keep the measurements of the designs consistent with the instructions. Also, she will have to press the seams to one side. Marisol is making some samples for practice.

Help Marisol pick her best sample to show her leader. Which strip is the best for Marisol to use in her Seminole band?

**Samples:**

Each sample consisted of three strips of plain cotton fabric sewn together. Two were light colored and one was dark. The dark strip was positioned in the center. The strips were carefully cut with a rotary cutter,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide. A simple decorative Seminole band made from correctly sewn strips was constructed for illustration purposes. See site below for information on Seminole patchwork and a simple bookmark project:

<http://www.austincc.edu/hannigan/Presentations/NSFMar1398/MathofSP.html>

1. Sample has  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch seam allowances that have been trimmed with pinking shears. The seam allowance has been pressed toward the darker fabric. The strip is smaller than the rest with  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch seam allowances.
2. Sample has  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch seam allowances but they have been pressed open.
3. Sample has  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch seam allowances and they have been pressed toward the darker fabric.
4. Sample has  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch seam allowances and they have been pressed toward the lighter fabric.

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**Reasons: 3 4 2 1**

**Cuts: 1 5 9**

(Hornel scores, for online score calculations see:

<http://www.worldaccessnet.com/%7Enormans/hornel.html>)

3 This is Marisol's best sample. She followed instructions. This sample has  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seams and the seams have been pressed to one side. The seams will match easily without bulk in a Seminole band. The seams have been pressed toward the darker fabric so they don't show through the lighter fabric. This is the best choice.

4 This sample is the next best one. The only thing Marisol could have done better is to press the seams toward the darker fabrics to prevent them from showing through the lighter ones. (In some Seminole bands, this might not be possible to do in every strip if you are trying to prevent bulk where the seams meet and make the strips easy to match.)

2 This sample is the next to worst. Marisol has  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch seams but she has pressed them open. This will make it more difficult to match seams and it is not what she was supposed to do. It is important to follow instructions.

1 This is the worst sample. Marisol must have used a wider seam allowance because the Seminole strip is smaller than the others. If Marisol does not have accurate  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch seams, her patchwork will be smaller than it should be and in some cases, she will not be able to match points correctly. This is true of the band shown in the sample. Marisol had to trim the band to use it. It was trimmed  $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the points of the squares. To avoid sewing across the points, she will now have to change to a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Also, she finished the seams with pinking shears. This was not as she was instructed. A seam finish is not necessary or customary in patchwork because it is lined or put with batting and a backing. The seams will be protected from fraying. Marisol did press her seams to one side and she did press them toward the darker fabric.

References: The leaders' guide for **Clothing Capers** has an introduction to Seminole patchwork in Culture, Activity 5.