

Ṫhoxélets, the Basket woman – Cedar Weaving Lesson

Patterns, Measurement & ADST

Materials

- Imitation Cedar weaving strips (2 per student, matched to chosen design pattern)
- Cedar Basket/Mat Design Options sheets (alternating or solid)
- Scissors for each student (pre-cut for younger students)
- Masking tape
- 1 or more of the Basket woman stories (on NLPS Learns):
 - [Wild Woman : Ttho xe'luts'](#) By Mabel Mitchel
 - [Oral telling of Ṫhoxélets: The Basket Woman](#) by George Sqtuxulenuhw Seymour
- Weaving videos:
 - Toni Frank:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zMSl6kqUA7w>
 - Harvesting Cedar with Fanny Nelson: <https://vimeo.com/128505634>



Lesson

Share the story of *Ṫhoxélets: The Basket Woman*, with the students. Permission has been given to retell the story and an oral telling of the story is encouraged if you feel comfortable doing so.

In the story, the basket woman has a large basket woven out of cedar that she used to carry the children that she captured. She also wears woven cedar clothing. In this activity, students will design their own cedar baskets or a mat.

Part 1: Learning how to weave the patterns

Provide pattern options for students to weave. Choose patterns that are appropriate for your students' abilities. Younger students or students with less experience weaving may benefit from a demonstration of how to weave the patterns. For more experienced weavers or students who would benefit from extra challenges, provide options, and let them explore and discover ways to create the patterns through experimentation.

Questions to encourage mathematical thinking:

Patterns: How can you describe the patterns that you see?

- How many elements are there in the pattern?
- Does the pattern have repeating elements?
- What kind of symmetry do you see? (rotational, reflection, translation, glide)
- What will come next in the pattern along this row or column?
- Where do you see a change in the pattern?

Part 2: Designing a Basket or Mat.

In the second part of this activity, students will design a large mat or basket together. Explain that in many Indigenous communities, when large projects require more people to complete a project than just one artist, a master artist may employ apprentices to work under the master to complete a project.

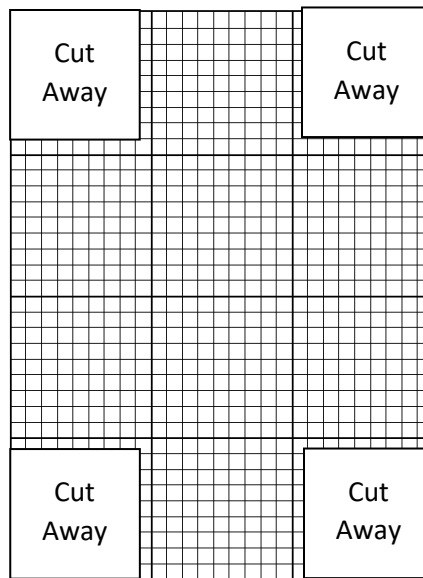
If you are able, see if a master Indigenous weaver is able to come into your class to plan a large-scale weaving project. If this is not possible, the teacher may need to stand in this role. The master weaver, with guidance and suggestions from the class will design a mat using a number of squares (quilt style) that can later be woven or stitched together. Any of the patterns provided can be incorporated into the larger design.

Use the pattern options and the Mat/Basket Planning Sheet to plan your design using a smaller scale and then assign sections for students to work on.

If real cedar is not available, the paper weaving strips may be used. The paper mats can be glued or taped together on the back.

****Tip:** To turn a flat mat into a simple rectangular, open-top basket, create a flat **+** shape with the squares and then fold up the sides, top and bottom and secure the edges together (with tape).

Cedar Basket/Mat Design Plan



Questions to encourage mathematical thinking:

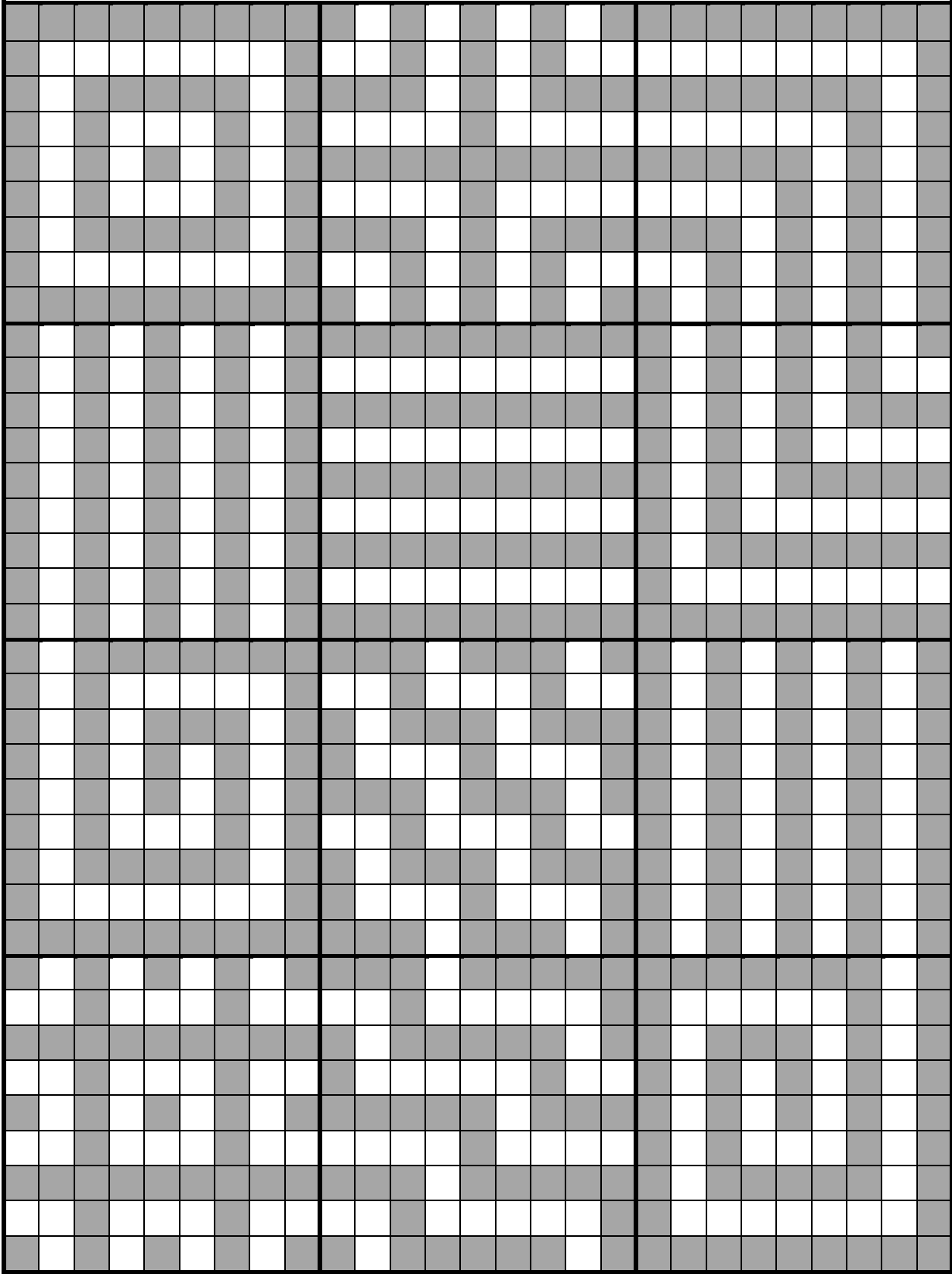
Measurement - How big does your mat need to be?

Using the squares as your unit:

- How many squares long and wide does it need to be to cover the table?... or to cover the floor?... or to make a strip the full length of the room?
- How many squares big does it need to make a basket to hold 1 child? What about 10 children?
- How much red cedar will you need?
- How much yellow cedar will you need?
- How much fastening material (tape or twining material) will you need to fasten the edges?

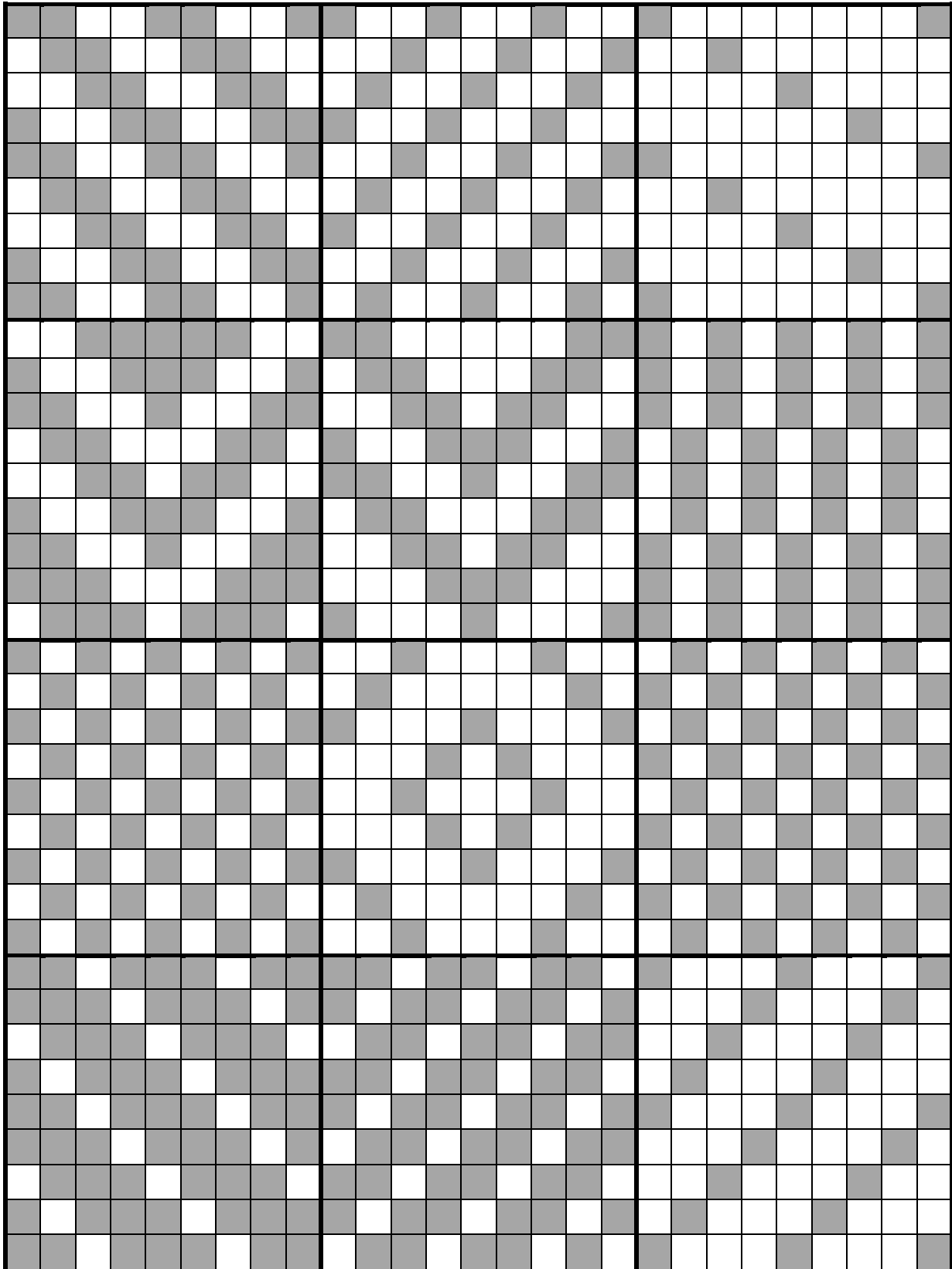
Cedar Basket/Mat Design Pattern Options (2 alternating strip sheets)

The following patterns can be woven with 2 sets of alternating cedar strips.

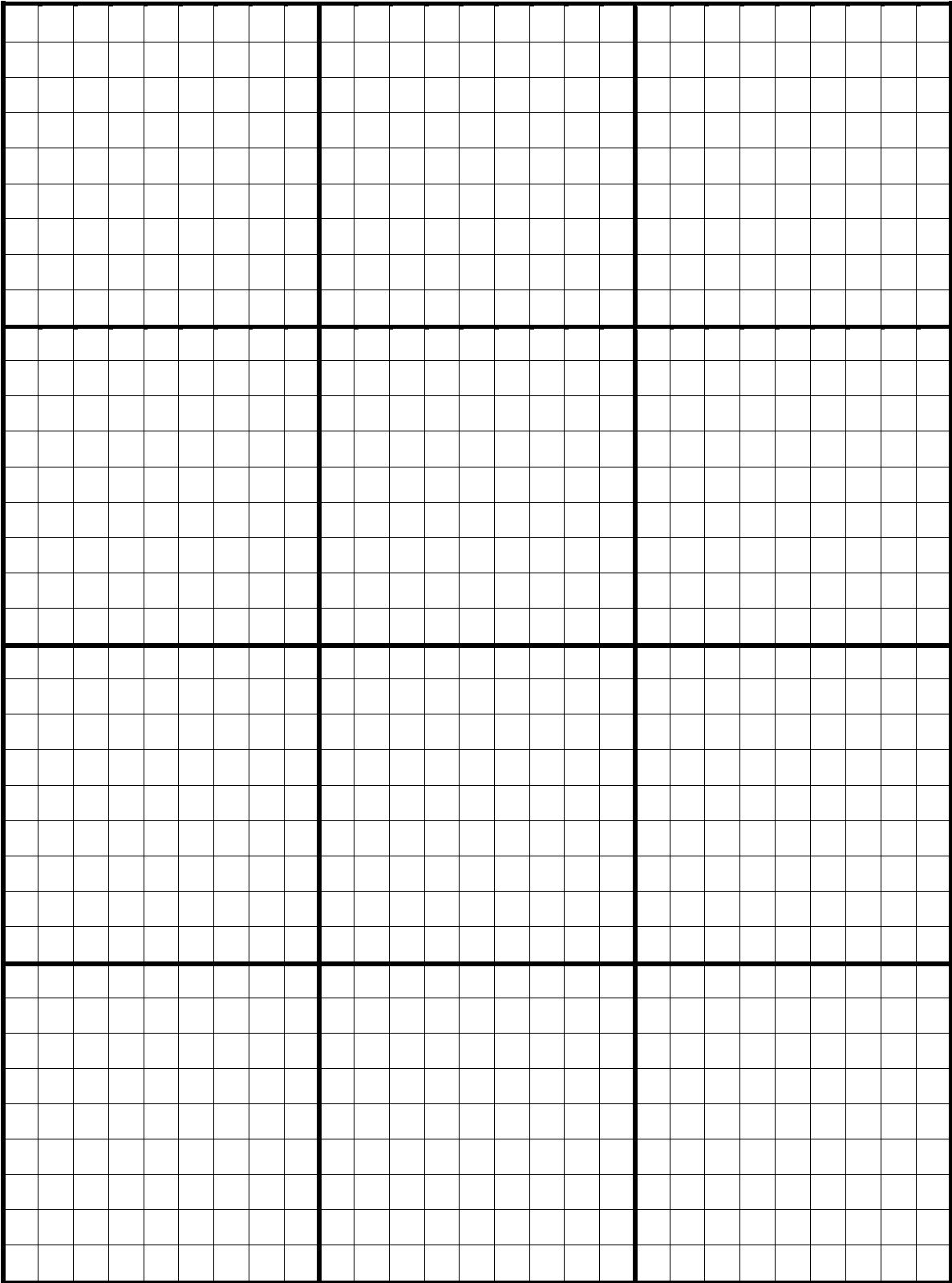


Cedar Basket/Mat Design Options (using solid yellow and red strips)

The following patterns can be woven with 2 sets of solid colour (one dark, one light) cedar strips.



Cedar Basket/Mat Design Plan



Imitation Cedar Weaving Strips



DO NOT CUT

- Instructions:**
- 1) Cut off the white on left side of strips (do NOT cut off the white on the right side).
 - 2) Cut off white area containing the title and instructions.
 - 3) Cut between the strips leaving the DO NOT CUT strip attached.

Imitation Cedar Weaving Strips



- Instructions:**
- 1) Cut off the white on left side of strips (do NOT cut off the white on the right side).
 - 2) Cut off white area containing the title and instructions.
 - 3) Cut between the strips leaving the DO NOT CUT strip attached.

Imitation Red Cedar Weaving Strips



- Instructions:**
- 1) Cut off the white on left side of strips (do NOT cut off the white on the right side).
 - 2) Cut off white area containing the title and instructions.
 - 3) Cut between the strips leaving the DO NOT CUT strip attached.