Shark!

I was looking for inspiration for a gift to make for my five-year-old nephew, who has just started school, when I came across these hilarious shark pencil cases.
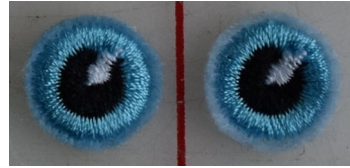
Turns out they're all the rage on line, and there are many sites where variations can be found, but this is the one I liked the best. If you decide you'd like to make one of your own, you can find a free pattern by searching "shark pencil case".

For my shark I chose this tie-dyed purple/blue cotton fabric -- it's perfect!! I had only a small remnant, which luckily was *just* enough to make the shark's body. I used a black lining fabric for the inside, which works fine, though I think if I make another I'll line it with a cotton fabric instead.

I stitched a pair of embroidered toy eyes to the body after the Shark was completed; next time, though, I will attach the eyes to the body top before the zipper mouth is stitched on.

I made a few slight modifications to the instructions. First, I chose a slightly longer zip and didn't detach the zipper pull during construction. The longer zip gives you some leeway to manoeuvre while you're adding the lining.

Second, I stitched the zipper on a bit of an angle at the corners of the mouth, to eliminate the bulge that some folks noted in the finished shark. Finally, I made sure to attach the lining to the body on the inside so it won't pull out when pencils are removed.

Should I make another of these, I have in mind a slight change to the shape of the pattern, but overall, I am pleased with how my shark turned out. I've filled him with coloured pencils, and a sharpener shaped like a fish. I'm sure this fun pencil case will be a hit at Christmas.