

Lesson 1 Instructional Materials:

Cultural Masks PowerPoint

Slide 1

Discussion Questions:

What is a mask?

What can masks tell us about the people who make them?

When might we wear a mask? For what purpose?

Why might people adorn masks?

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What is a mask?



- A physical object that hides the identity of the wearer and/or transforms the wearer into a different character
- A tool used to alter one's appearance
- A covering for all or part of the face, worn as a disguise, or to amuse or scare other people

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Types of Masks

Protection Masks:



- Protect the face from physical harm
 - Roman tournament soldiers
 - Doctor/ nurse face masks
 - Oxygen masks: firefighters, astronauts, scuba divers
 - Sports
- Protect against bad luck from supernatural spirits
 - figures of gods
 - supernatural & mythical beings
 - may be ugly or distorted to scare away evil spirits or enemies

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Transformation Masks:

- Mark important transitions in life cycle
 - Birth, coming of age, marriage, secret society, death
 - popular in West and Central Africa and North America

Medicinal Masks:



- Healing masks
 - Placed on a sick patient to represent a spirit guarding against illness and to help cure disease
- Shamans - Asia, Africa, and North America

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Entertainment Masks:

- **Theatrical masks**
- Actors portraying different moods or characters
- Mexican folk art masks
- Greek and Roman theatrical masks; Japanese, Chinese, Indian masked theater
- **Masquerade masks**
- **Halloween masks**



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Ritual Masks:

- **Initiation ceremonies**
 - young boys coming into adulthood and men joining secret societies
 - young women initiated into the traditions and rituals of their tribe
- **Planting and harvesting ceremonies**
 - dances to promote fertility and rainfall
 - Pueblo people of Southwest US and Africans of dry regions



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Funerary Masks:

- **Important to ancient times : Egyptians**
- Death masks placed over mummy's face to preserve the personality and allow the spirit to recognize its body
- Honors one of important social standing in society
- Preserves the appearance and body of the dead while it transitions to the afterworld



Mexican Folk Art Masks:

Masks in Mexico are used in a wide variety of dance, ceremony, festivals, and theater. The most common uses are with traditional dances and theater, that use characters, storyline and music. The purpose of the masks is to convert the wearer of the mask into other characters or beings.



The Pascola: the old man of the ceremony (above)

Monster masks: represent evil



Animal masks: cats, dogs, goats, coyotes, donkeys, roosters, and hawks (above)

Characteristics:

- Strictly human or animal features
- More realistic looking
- Texture: how things feel or look as if they might feel if touched (especially in the portrayal of hair and wrinkles in skin)
- Mask shape is usually circular or an oval to portray a more realistic face
- Teeth are designed in all different shapes and sizes
- Animal masks often have ears or horns sticking out as 3-D elements on the surface



Human face masks: usually made to resemble a Conquistador or a Pre-Hispanic warrior or King



Old men/ old woman masks: popular theater masks in Mexican culture

African Tribal Mask:

African masks have been worn by dancers in ceremonies including celebrations, initiations, crop harvesting, and war preparation. Ritual ceremonies generally use masks of spirits of ancestors, mythological beings, good and or evil, the dead, and animal spirits. Masks of human ancestors are seen as objects of family pride.



Characteristics:

- Bold pattern
- Lots of geometric shapes / abstraction
- Symmetrical arrangements of line, shape, and form
 - -symmetry: one side is a mirror image of the other side and balance is created
- Parallel, zigzag, curved, and spiral lines
- Texture: how things feel or look as if they might feel if touched
- Shape of mask: oval, circular, elongated, heart shaped
- Large/long foreheads with more pointed chins
- Thick eyelids

References:

<http://www.mexican-folk-art-guide.com/Mexican-masks.html#.VOTzw4BdVlg>

<http://www.contemporary-african-art.com/african-masks.html#sthash.0mevr8y2.dpbs>

<http://u.osu.edu/gordon.3/files/2012/06/Sui-Huang.pdf>

Lesson 2 Instructional Materials:

Project Description Handout



Masks Around the World: A Ceramics Unit

Unit Overview:

As a class we will discuss the characteristics and stylistic qualities of masks from the regions of Africa and Mexico, focusing on the different purposes masks serve in different cultures. You will then create your own masks out of clay, inspired by one of the two cultural styles of masks discussed in class (Mexican folk art mask or African tribal mask). You will alter your mask design to make it personal in some way so that it is not an exact replica of a mask from your chosen culture.

Materials:

- Paper and pencil for thumbnail sketches
- Clay
- Mask mold
- Rolling pins
- Clay tools set (in buckets on each table)
- Plastic plates and plastic bags to store your projects in over night
- Handout on Mexican folk art masks and African tribal masks. Refer to this handout when designing your masks!

Objectives:

Create a mask structure using a rolled slab of clay and a mask mold

Your mask **MUST** be inspired by either Mexican folk art or African tribal masks
(See characteristics of each on handout)

All masks **MUST** have cut out holes for eyes and mouth

Your mask **MUST** be a full face mask
(no masks that only cover eyes and nose)

Your mask **MUST** have some representation of self. It cannot be an exact copy of a mask from one of the two cultures. Use symbolism to make your design more personalized while still reflecting the culture you choose

Your mask **MUST** incorporate at least 3 stylistic elements of design in the surface decoration
(ex: texture, shape, line, pattern, etc.)



Above: example of a Mexican folk art mask

The 8 Golden Rules of Ceramics

- Clay must be thoroughly covered up with a plastic bag to keep it from drying out. This applies to works in progress and moist clay.
- Clay dust can be harmful if you are exposed to it for long periods of time, so keep your area clean, clay scraps off the floor and clean with water and a sponge.
- Clay should be no thicker than your thumb. Use the wooden sticks when rolling out your slabs in order to ensure the correct thickness. If clay is too thick it will blow up in the kiln!
- In order for clay to stick together it **MUST** be scored and slipped together while the clay is moist or leather hard.
- Wedge clay to remove air bubbles, achieve uniform consistency, and to line up the particles of clay.
- Trapped air can cause clay to explode. So hollow out sculptural forms and put needle holes from the bottom so air can escape. Do not poke random holes around your piece, it will not help. Only poke holes where you attach hollowed forms.
- Don't glaze the bottom of a piece.
- Always handle your project with two hands at all times, clay is very fragile. In other words **BE CAREFUL**, it's your hard work.

Cultural Mask Rubric

Cultural Mask Rubric

Name & Period _____

Feature	Novice (1) 10/11/12 pts	Developing (2) 13/14/15 pts	Developed (3) 16/17 pts	Exemplary (4) 18/19/20 pts
Commitment to concept: Degree to which cultural influence is used and the mask has a function.	Attempted to incorporate cultural aspects. Function of the mask is vague or unstated.	Limited incorporation of cultural aspects. Function of the mask could be clearer.	Incorporation of a culture. Function of the mask is clear.	Exemplary incorporation of a culture. Function of the mask is clear.
Originality: Degree to which personal expression displays imagination and inventiveness in sketches & mask.	Attempted to individualize, needs more thoughtful approach. Too much like mask replica of culture chosen. Little evidence of development of concept.	Limited personal expression. Mask form & imagery needs to be more distinct & relate to personal experience. More ideas could have been explored.	Adequately developed personal expression in an original manner. Concept and form fit together well & relate to personal experience.	Exemplary exploration of personal concepts. Expression is imaginative and innovative.
Structures and Functions: Degree to which design elements and principles are effectively used a functional mask.	Design of form attempted, but little regard for and ineffective use of surface design elements and/or size requirements.	Limited attention to effective use of 3-D design elements and of surface design.	Adequate attention to and effective use of 3-D design elements and surface design.	Exemplary use of 3-D design elements and surface design.
Process/Media: Degree to which understanding of media, tools, and processes. Surface decoration is demonstrated in the creation of a functional mask.	Attempted, needs more experience and commitment to better understand the clay building processes and decoration of surface.	Limited understanding of clay building processes and building of surface design. Surface could be richer and more developed.	Adequate understanding of clay building processes and building of surface design. Mask surface has been altered and decorated.	Exemplary understanding of clay building processes and building of surface design. Richly embellished surface decoration.
Technical Skills/ Presentation: Degree to which skillful, careful controlled use of media, tools, and processes is demonstrated.	Needs to spend more time on surface finishing techniques. Surface of mask is messy.	Limited control of surface finishing and decorative techniques. Surface of mask could be neater.	Adequate control of clay and finishing techniques. Surface decoration is good and neatly done.	Exemplary control of clay and finishing techniques. Surface decoration is excellent and neatly done.

Total points out of 100: _____

Image: Proof of Demonstration



3. Think about what colors you want to use when you glaze your mask. How can colors you use emphasize or deemphasize the symbols you chose? (**Do you want your symbols to be obvious or more subtle? How can you use colors to do so?**).

Elements and Principles Handout

Elements of Art

all art is literally made up of the elements of art, your composition is how you use the Principles of art to arrange the elements.

Line- path of a moving point through space.

vertical, horizontal, implied, diagonal,
contour, gesture, curved and zigzag

Color- what is perceived when the eye absorbs light reflected off an object

Hue, primary, secondary and complementary
color schemes- complementary, analogous,
monochromatic, triadic, split compliment
warm/cool/neutral- optical/local/arbitrary

Texture- how things feel or look as if they might feel if touched.

tactile- texture you feel
visual texture- simulated and invented

Value- darkness or lightness of a color

tint (light values) shades (dark values)
intensity- brightness or dullness of a color

Space- emptiness or area between, around, above, below, and within objects.

positive and negative space
perspective, overlap, details, position on page, and
color all can help show the illusion of space

Shape- two-dimensional area defined in some way

geometric and organic/free-form

Form- same as shape except is three-dimensional

Principles of art

Rhythm: indicates movement using repetition of elements or objects

Pattern: Something that is visually repeated

Types- Regular, Alternating, flowing, progressive, and random
motif is the unit repeated (module if 3-d)

types of rhythm and pattern: random., regular, alternating, flowing and progressive

Movement: creates action in a work to guide the viewer's eyes through an artwork

Variety: dealing with differences or contrasts between elements of art and their properties

Balance- concerned with equalizing visual forces in a work

symmetry, radial, informal (asymmetrical)

factors in balance: size, contour, color, value, texture,
and position

Unity: quality of wholeness or oneness that is achieved by effective use of the elements of art. It helps see the work as one versus having random things scattered all around.

simplicity, repetition, proximity

Emphasis: having one part of an artwork dominant over the other parts

-Dominant: part that is noticed first

-subordinate: elements noticed later

-focal point: a part of the work to attract the viewers attention, or meant by the artist to stand out over the other parts.

Proportion: principle concerned with the size relationship of one part to another scale, foreshortening, exaggeration and distortion, golden mean
facial proportions, human head to body height/with ratios

Harmony: stressing similarities of separate but related parts