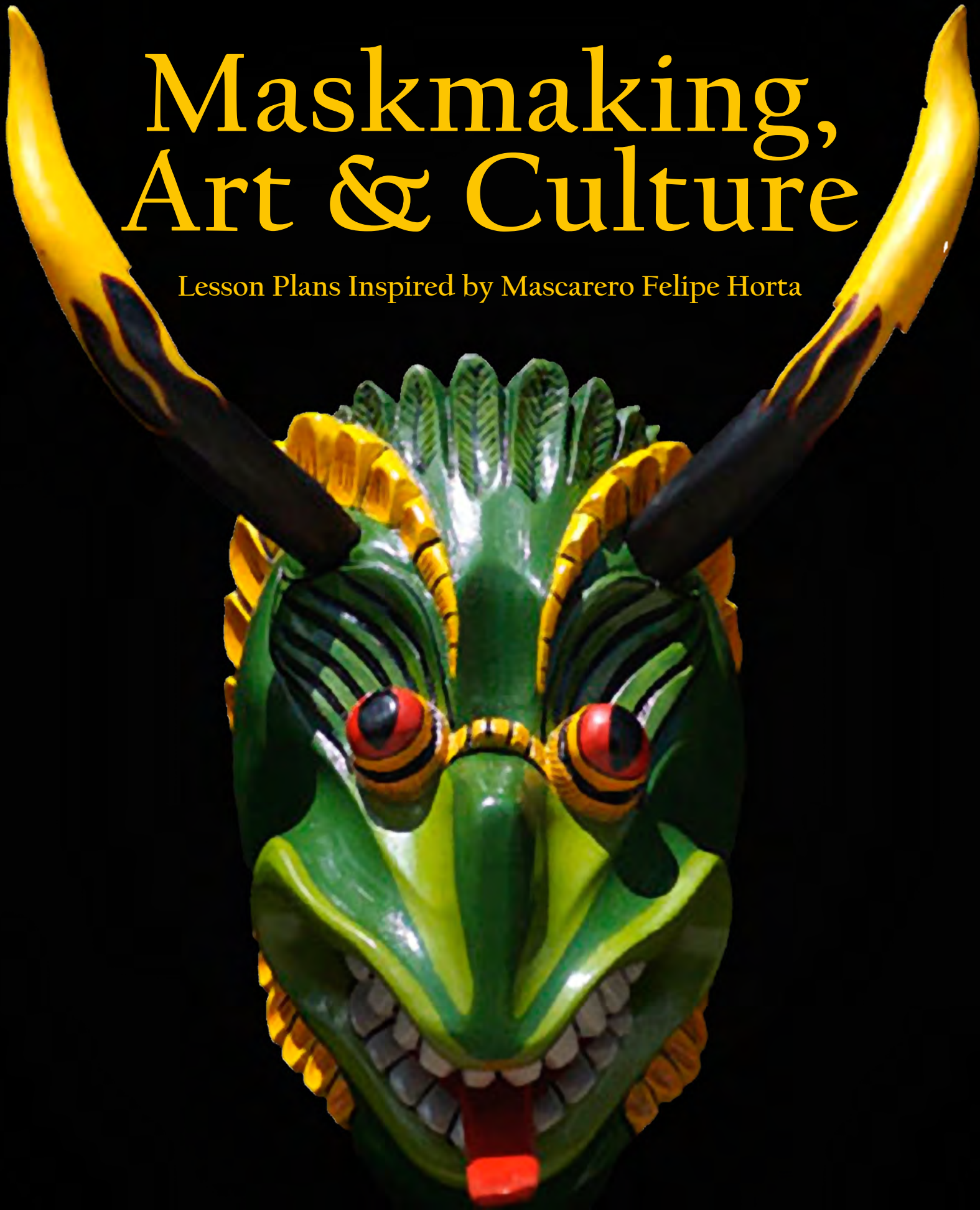


# Maskmaking, Art & Culture

Lesson Plans Inspired by Mascarero Felipe Horta



# LATIN AMERICAN & IBERIAN INSTITUTE

Because of the geographic location and unique cultural history of New Mexico, the University of New Mexico (UNM) has emphasized Latin American Studies since the early 1930s. In 1979, the Latin American & Iberian Institute (LAI) was founded to coordinate Latin American programs on campus. Designated a National Resource Center (NRC) by the U.S. Department of Education, the LAI offers academic degrees, supports research, provides development opportunities for faculty, and coordinates an outreach program that reaches diverse constituents. In addition to the Latin American Studies (LAS) degrees offered, the LAI supports Latin American studies in departments and professional schools across campus by awarding student fellowships and providing funds for faculty and curriculum development.

As part of the commitment to reaching diverse audiences, the LAI strives to create a stimulating and supportive environment for K-12 educators so that they can produce, enhance, and expand knowledge of Latin America within their classrooms. To this end we work with educators across grade levels and subject areas, providing them with professional development opportunities and curricular resources such as this guide.

For more information about the LAI and its K-12 programs, visit <http://laii.unm.edu/outreach>.

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# INTRODUCTION

This curriculum was created by the University of New Mexico Latin American & Iberian Institute (LAI) as part of a hands-on workshop on “Día de los Muertos and Maskmaking,” which was led by mascarero Felipe Horta in the fall of 2011. The inspiration came from the recognition that mask-making, particularly Mexican maskmaking, provides a natural and creative way for teachers to explore arts, culture, and literacy with their students.

This guide provides a range of uncomplicated ways for teachers to incorporate maskmaking art into their classrooms. The hope is that the ease of the activities will encourage teachers to integrate this art form with more traditional subject lesson plans, particularly Language Arts and Social Studies. This approach is particularly emphasized within the second and third sections. At times a teacher may need to simplify or expand on the content or the expectations of the activity so that it is relevant for his or her particular grade level.

The following materials are divided into four main parts:

1. **Maskmaking Lessons**  
Hands-on lesson plans to use in creating masks
2. **Felipe Horta and the Mexican Masks of La Pastorela**  
Suggestions for how to teach about Mexican masks, maskmaking, and cultural celebrations (particularly La Pastorela).
3. **Cultural- and Literacy-based Lessons with Maskmaking**  
Lesson plans that teach about maskmaking while achieving culture and literacy objectives.
4. **References and Resources**  
Online and text resources that can supplement the information we provide here, as well as the PPT descriptions described below - all intended to help introduce your students to the art and culture of maskmaking.

For the first and section sections, “Maskmaking Lessons” and “Felipe Horta...,” we have created two supplementary PowerPoint (PPT) presentations for you to use with your students. These are provided as static images at the end of this document, but are also available to download as actual PPTs from the LAII website (<http://laii.unm.edu/outreach>). The content of these presentations is as follows:

- \* **Masks of Latin America**  
Provides an introduction to masks from all over Latin America through a variety of images of masks grouped by Latin American country, and could be used if you are studying topics specific to Latin America or just as a means of introducing your students to the variety of art forms and interpretations within the field of maskmaking.
- \* **Masks & Celebrations in Mexico: The Art of Felipe Horta**  
Specific to Felipe Horta and Mexican maskmaking related to La Pastorela, this PPT presentation provides a simple student-oriented introduction to the cultural tradition of La Pastorela, tracing its history and role from the Middle Ages in Spain to its contemporary interpretations in Mexico.

# MASKMAKING LESSONS

This first section provides seven different maskmaking lessons ranging from simple activities to more complex projects that can be adapted for a variety of age groups. All of the mask activities here are paper-based and require simple and/or inexpensive materials. Where possible we have provided images of the various steps of the procedures of the activities, as well as examples of possible finished projects. A simple Google image search of the different types of masks will also provide a variety of examples that can be used to motivate, engage, and get your students started. While it may be hard for some students to visualize the possibilities of what they can do with these mask projects on their own, providing examples will help to spark more creative ideas and push them to expand upon the possibilities.

# PAPER BAG MASKS

This lesson is adapted from Carole Sivin's *Maskmaking*, pp. 24-25.

## Introduction

This is one of the more simple ways to introduce your students to mask-making. While it can be easily done with younger students, it can also be quite interesting and challenging for older students when they are encouraged to be creative—adding decorative details, appendages, making half masks or full masks. Please see the images below for examples of the different things people have done with paper bag masks. Remember these masks can be as simple or as elaborate as would be appropriate for your age group. The activity can be as straightforward as drawing the head of a favorite animal and painting or coloring it to finish. The examples below show how complex the masks can become. You will need one brown paper bag for each student, so you will need to provide these or ask each student to bring in their own.

## Materials

Pictures or images of examples of paperbag masks

Paper bags—enough for one for each student

Glue

Stapler

Tape

Crayons, Markers, and/or Paint

Decorating materials: construction paper, and perhaps other materials such as yarn, glitter, sequins, ribbon, pipe cleaners, etc.

## Procedure

1. Introduce the activity to students by explaining that they will be creating masks out of brown paper grocery bags. Show students various images of examples of paper bag masks. Some are provided below, more can be found in Sivin's book *Maskmaking* or by doing a simple Google search for paper bag masks. Point out the details, the embellishments, the different sizes (half or full masks) in the examples. It can be highly motivating for students to see the range in what they will be able to create.
2. Have students brainstorm ideas for their masks. Guide them to think about what they want to create—an animal, a famous person, a fantastical creature or being, their favorite tv or book character, etc.
3. Sketch out a plan for their mask. Decide what will be sketched on the bag and what will need to be created separately and glued on. Have students think about how they will create the nose, hair, eyes, etc. What colors and materials will they use?
4. Try on the paper bag. With the help of a partner lightly mark in pencil where the eye holes should be so that when finished the student will be able to see out of the mask. Note: these

holes don't necessarily need to be the eyes, but the student will need to design the mask so that the eye holes can be created.

If it is a half mask or the bag is too long mark where it needs to be cut with the help of a partner.

5. Create the mask using a variety of materials such as markers, paint, construction paper, yarn, shredded paper (can be painted and used as hair), ribbon, sequins.



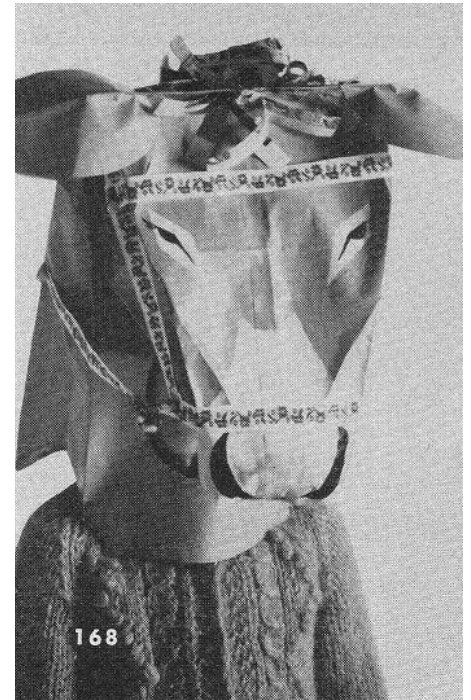
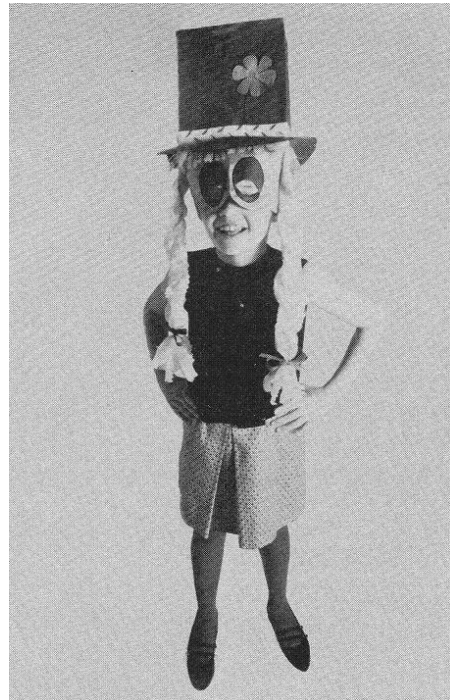
## Examples of Paper Bag Masks



Image taken from <http://www.larkcrafts.com/needlearts/the-de-stash-diaries-vol-14-%E2%80%93-halloween-2/>



Image taken from [http://bottlejarboxcan.blogspot.com/2011/08/paper-bag-mask\\_07.html](http://bottlejarboxcan.blogspot.com/2011/08/paper-bag-mask_07.html)



Images taken from <http://www.elizabethabernathy.com/2010/09/retro-paper-bag-and-newspaper-halloween.html>



# PAPER PLATE MASKS

This lesson is combined and adapted from Sivin's *Maskmaking* and Foreman's *Maskwork*.

## Introduction

This is another simple way to do maskmaking in the classroom. Again it can be done in as simple or complex a way as is appropriate for your age group. Given here are two separate lesson plans for Paper Plate Masks. The first follows Sivin's activity. It is appropriate for all age levels. She writes, "A paper plate can provide an excellent base for a mask. Most paper plates are strong enough to support any number of appendages. It is fun to see how many ways they can be altered so that they no longer resemble paper plates" (p. 27). These masks can be created to represent anything—animals, fantastical beings, people, etc. See examples below.

In Foreman's lesson plan (pp. 61-65) she uses paper plate masks as a way to encourage students to think about the ways in which our facial expressions and features portray emotion. While this activity can be adapted for all age groups it may be easier to implement with older children, from upper elementary on. She guides students to create masks that show happiness, sadness, anger, contemplation, etc. Foreman compares the communication of emotion in masks to the stylization of features, much like what we do with cartoon drawings. She writes, "When we experience emotions the muscles in our face move and our features alter. Although we sometimes say that we can read someone's face 'like a book', it is doubtful whether this is ever actually true. Research does not suggest that there is a simple, direct relationship between appearance and emotion. In mask-making we are, therefore, less concerned with real emotion than with caricature and stereotype. This is the first stage in understanding the expressive power of the character mask" (p. 61).

## Materials

Paper plates

Scissors

Construction paper

Crayons, markers, and/or paint

Glue

Decorating materials: pipe cleaners, yarn, shredded paper, felt, sequins, ribbon, cotton balls, string or sticks (depending upon how students will wear the mask), etc.

## Procedure for Sivin's Activity

1. Guide students to brainstorm and sketch out the plan for their mask.
2. Once students have a plan, with the help of a partner, have them position the mask and mark the appropriate place for the eyes and mouth. Students can then cut out the eye and mouth holes.
3. Decorate the mask using construction paper, felt, paint, etc. Students can use other paper plates to extend the mask if necessary. Yarn or shredded paper can be used for hair or fur.

4. When the mask is completed students can thread string through holes in order to tie it on or they can glue some sort of stick or wooden dowel to hold the mask up.

### Procedure for Foreman's Activity

1. Introduce the idea of how we show emotions on our faces to students.
2. Have student practice making faces that show different emotions. If mirrors are available, allow students to make different faces while looking a mirror, making note of the different parts of the face that change and how they change. If mirrors are not available, have students do this activity with a partner. While one student makes the face, the other student sketches the changes in the face they observe. Students then switch roles.
3. Have students begin making their mask. First, they need to mark the appropriate place for the eyes, nose and mouth. One student can hold the paper plate on while their partner marks the plate.
4. Next, decide on the expression of the plate mask and draw the features on the mask.
5. Cut out the eyes, mouth and nostrils so the wearer and can and breath.
6. Make holes in the mask and tie string or elastic through the holes so the mask can be worn.

### Example of Paper Plate Masks

The scanned visual below is taken from Foreman's *Maskwork* (p. 60). In addition, see the following page for more examples of how colorful and original paper plate masks can be.



## Examples of Paper Plate Masks



Image taken from <http://artandcreativity.blogspot.com/2007/02/paper-plate-art-share-share-your-ideas.html>



Image taken from <http://spinsandneedles.com/stuff/2009/10/31/diy-last-minute-where-the-wild-things-are-mask-tutorial/>



Image taken from <http://howsb.info/1805-how-to-make-a-mask-from-a-paper-plate.html>

This lesson is adapted from Foreman's *Maskwork*.

## Introduction

This is another activity that can be adapted for any grade level or age group. It is supposed to be a quick and somewhat spontaneous process, so if you are short on time, this is one of the fastest maskmaking projects.

## Materials

Construction paper

Cardstock (if available, will make the 'headband' more durable)

Masking tape

Stapler

Paint

String or yarn

Crayons and markers

Scissors

Materials for decoration: pipe cleaners, yarn, shredded paper, felt, sequins, ribbon, cotton balls, string or sticks (depending upon how students will wear the mask), etc.

Optional: crepe paper, tissue paper, patterned paper

## Procedure

1. **Make a headband:** Working in partners have students measure the circumference of their head using string. Then, using precut strips of cardstock or construction paper, have them create headbands that will go around their head. They can tape or staple this together. They can then add a strip going across the top of their head (as if making an arc) to make the headband stronger. Make sure to have students write their names on their headbands.
2. **Draw the face shape:** Discuss the different possibilities of shapes with your students. Is the face a geometric shape or a shape taken from nature, like a cloud, star or blob? Encourage the students to make the face shape as large as the piece of construction paper or card stock available to them. Once students have drawn on their face shape they can cut or tear it out (tearing it out will give it rougher, more textured edges).
3. **Position the features:** Working with a partner, have students mark the correct location of their facial features like mouth, nose, eyes, and ears. One person holds their face shape up, while another marks where the features are. Then, students decide on the shapes they want these features to be on their mask and draw these around the premade marks and cut them out of the face shape. Once they have cut them out, have students make sure that openings they've created are large enough to see and breathe through.
4. **Construct the features:** Create all of the facial features by tearing, twisting and rolling construction paper, or other paper or materials. Use making tape to hold the created features in

their shape and attach them to the face shape. Encourage students to think about these features—should the nose be a 3 dimensional shape? Are the eyes large and smiling? Small and piercing? Cone or spiral? What does the mouth look like is it smiling? Frowning? Think about the shape of the teeth? Do the teeth show? How about the ears? Are they pointed? Floppy? How could you cut out two ears that are the exact same shape and size? Think of additions—horns, hair, antennae, feathers, a crown, a hat

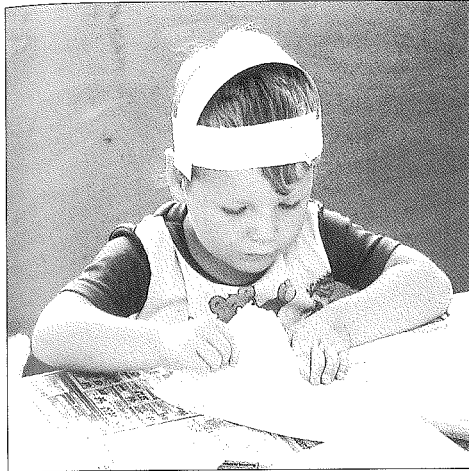
5. **Join the mask to the head band:** Once the features and the mask are completed, attach it to the headband. Make sure the mask fits and it comfortable enough to wear before the last step of painting and finishing.
6. **Painting and finishing:** Paint or color the mask using whatever materials you wish to provide. Students can add embellishments they would like to finish the mask. Too much paint will make the mask lose its shape, so remind students to use paint sparingly. Crepe, tissue, and patterned paper can also be used. Once the mask is completed and dried. P.V.A can be painted on to give it a more durable finish.



## Examples of Shape Masks

The scanned visuals below and on the following pages are taken from Foreman's *Maskwork* (pp. 53-55).

*Making the Mask*



**Fig. 64 (left).** Controlled tearing. Pupils at Grange First School, Grimsby, North Lincolnshire. 1989.

**Fig. 65 (above).** Positioning the eyes, nose and mouth. Pupils at Grange First School, Grimsby, North Lincolnshire. 1989.

shape taken from nature, for example, a cloud, a star, or quite simply a blob?

Young children should be encouraged to make the face shape large enough to fill the card by first experimenting drawing large shapes in the air.

Draw the large 2-dimensional face shape onto the card.

Hold the card and follow the drawn line in order to cut or tear out the shape (torn shapes can be very expressive) (fig. 64).

### iii) Position the features

First observe the position of the features on a real face. Partners can mark the position of the eyes, nose and mouth for each other (fig. 65).

Decide on the shape of the features; draw these round the marks and cut them out.

Are the cut-out shapes, for example, the eyes, nose and mouth, large enough to see and breathe through?

### iv) Construct the features

Fashion all the features by tearing, twisting and rolling the rest of the card and additional paper. Use masking-tape to hold the paper in shape and fix it to the face.

Nose – A three-dimensional structure? (fig. 66).

Eyes – Large and smiling, small and piercing, cone or spiral; are they large enough to see out of?

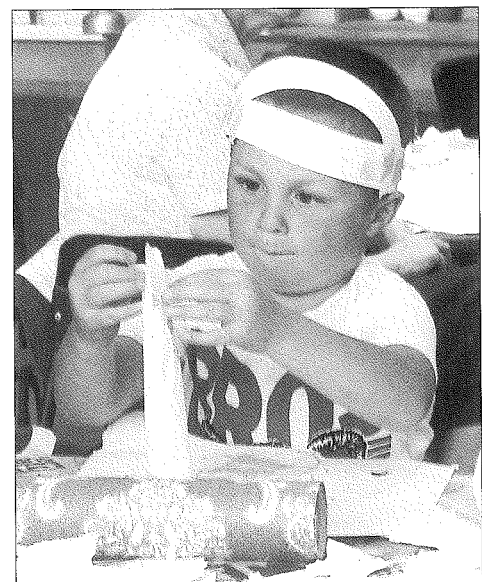
Mouth – Smiling or downcast, happy or aggressive, bowed or arched?

Teeth – Large and irregular, small and sharp or curved like fangs?

Ears – Pointed or floppy, small or wide? Devise a way to

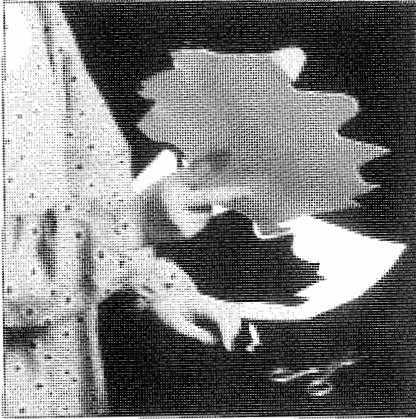
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**Fig. 66 (below).** Constructing a nose. Pupils at Grange First School, Grimsby, North Lincolnshire. 1989.



Project 2 – Shape-masks

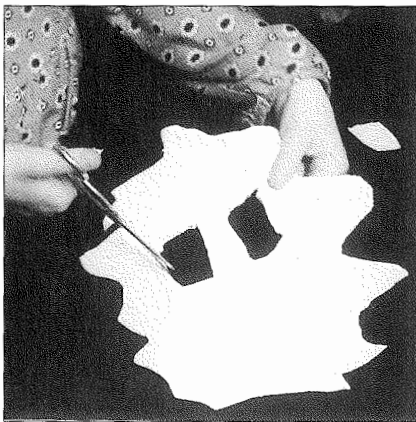
Figs. 69-74. Mask-making sequence.



Cut out the face shape . . .



position the eyes, nose and mouth . . .



cut out the eyeholes . . .

cut out two ears which are the same size and shape. Experiment with ways to make the ears concave or convex.

Additions – Horns, antennae, feathers, a crown or a hat? Use more card to construct whatever is wanted, even paper shoulders, arms, wings, or whole costumes! (fig. 67).

v) **Join the mask to the headband**

Once the headband and mask are fixed together, ensure that the wearer can still see and breathe easily.

Compile a checklist to test how comfortably each mask fits. These masks are only meant to be worn for a short time, but they must be comfortable: can the wearer see, breathe and hear? Alter the mask and enlarge the eyeholes, nose and mouth as desired. Partners can help each other to try out their masks.

vi) **Painting and finishing**

Talk about the masks before finishing. What expressions do they have? What creatures do they represent? What shapes can be seen?

How can the mask be painted or coloured so as to bring out its expression?

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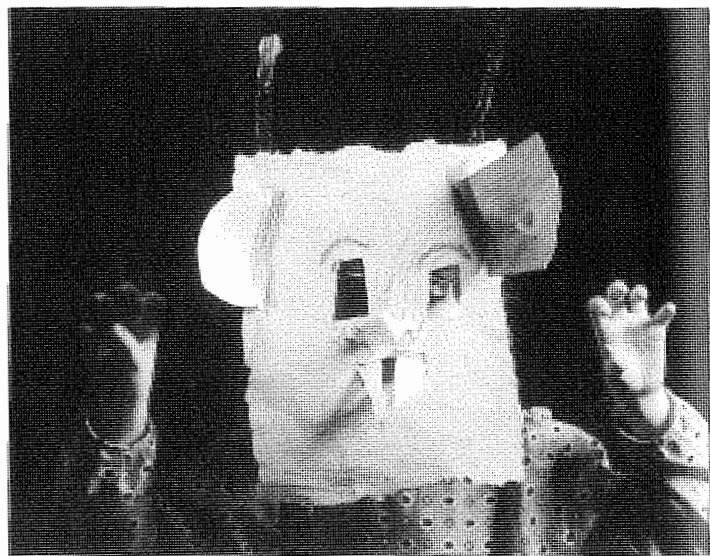


Fig. 67 (left). 'Square and Scary Monster'. Hilda Anne, Hull. 1986.



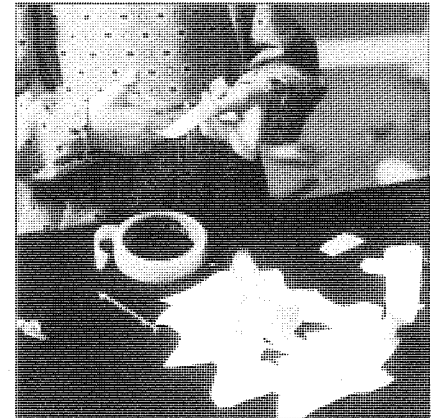


Fig. 68 (above). 'A wicked witch casting her spells'. Eleanor Hull, 1986.

Colour can symbolize the character of the mask, whether human or animal. Use the primary colours together with black and white. Cloth, coloured papers and patterned papers can all be added and the mask finished in any way. Too much paint makes the masks lose their shape; younger groups might use coloured paper; cloth or felt-tips to colour their masks. Once dry the masks can be painted with P.V.A. to give them a durable finish (figs. 69–74).



are the holes big enough to see through?



eyelids and nose can be stuck on with masking-tape . . .



the mask is ready for additional features.

# SYMMETRY MASKS

This lesson is adapted from Foreman's *Maskwork* (pp. 67-73).

## Introduction

Symmetry masks are another simple way to introduce your students to maskmaking while reinforcing geometric concepts like symmetry and shape. Here students will create half-masks. These could be a great way to create costumes for class plays or other activities.

## Materials

Construction paper or card stock pre-cut into half sheets (ready for students to fold and cut)

Various types of paper for embellishments, additional parts of mask

Felt

Elastic or string

Masking tape

Yarn

Paint, markers, and/or crayons

Embellishments and decorations

## Procedure

1. **How to make a symmetrical mask:** Here you have the option of allowing students to experiment or play, first trying to figure out how to create a symmetrical mask. If you are short on time, skip the experimentation, and begin to guide students through the process. Be sure to explain how and why the process here creates a symmetrical shape.
  - a. **Process:** Instruct students to fold the half sheet of paper in half. Then, they sketch out the side view of the face down to the upper lip. Include a space for the nose and draw an eye shape shown. Cat or butterfly masks can be very striking. Birds, rats and mice can also be fun for students to make.
2. **Cut out the face shape:** Keep the mask folded and cut out the mask shape. Remind students not to cut on the fold.
3. **Draw the eyes and cut them out:** If the eyes aren't drawn in yet, have students do that now. Remind them that the eyes can't be on the fold or too close to the opposite edge. Young students may need help with this step.
4. **Construct the features:** Students now have the base of their mask, and can add on features like a nose, whiskers, ears, eyes, eyebrows, feathers, fur and hair. All of these things can be constructed out of extra paper or other materials. Encourage students to experiment with folding, twisting, curling and shaping the paper into three-dimensional shapes. Use masking tape to join the created features to the mask.
5. **Supports for the mask:** Decide how the mask will be worn? Tied on to the head with elastic or string or held up using a stick. If a stick is going to be used, it should be glued onto the mask before the surface of the mask is finished. If you are going to use elastic to hold the mask on,

you can create loops that will go around the ears or create one band to go around the back of the head.

6. **Test the mask:** Have the students try on their mask. Does it fit? Can they see through the eyes? Does it fit around their nose comfortably? Does it stay in place?
7. **Finishing:** Students can add symmetrical patterns with markers or other materials like sequins, feathers, buttons, etc.



## Examples of Symmetrical Masks



All images taken from <http://artolazzi.blogspot.com/2010/12/symmetrical-masks.html>

This lesson is adapted from Foreman's *Maskwork*.

## Introduction

This is an easy way to make an asymmetrical full face mask by using the collage technique. It could be a nice counter to the above symmetry masks to reinforce these geometric concepts and how we create objects that represent them. You may want to show students an example so they have a visual picture of what they are going to create.

## Materials

Magazines

Construction paper or card stock for the base of the mask (this should be at least large enough to cover the student's face)

Glue

Scissors

Elastic or string

## Procedure

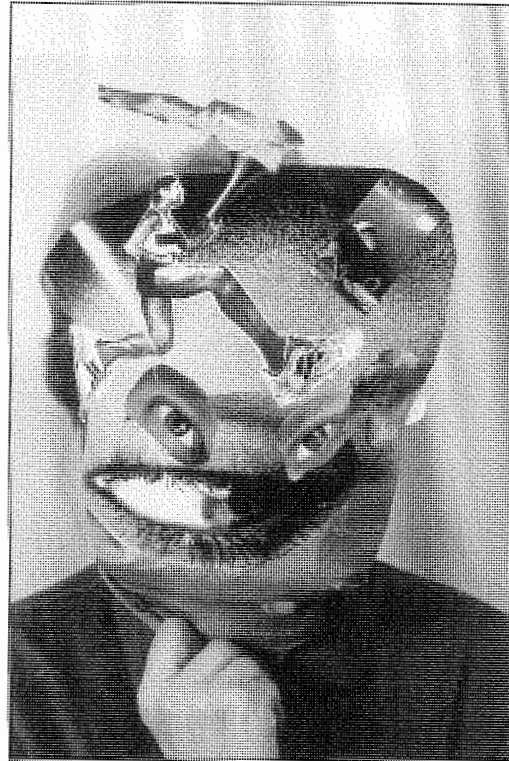
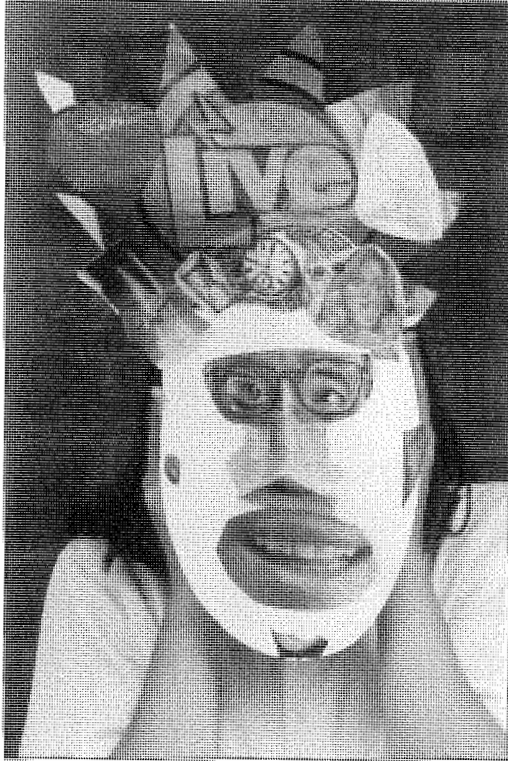
1. **Draw the face shape:** Draw a large face onto the card. Make sure the face takes up the entire card. Cut out the face. This will be the base of the mask.
2. **Add the feature:** Have students go through magazines and cut out all of the photographs with large faces or facial features.
3. **Create the mask collage:** Then, have students begin to create their mask by placing the cut out features onto the face. Tell students not to glue anything on until they are sure that is how they want the pictures placed. Students can create a more 'traditional' face or they can use different facial parts to represent different things—for example, eyes could become the nose. Students can also use other images to create things like hair, a hat, a crown see examples below. This is a great opportunity for students to 'think outside the box' and exercise their creativity.
4. **Seeing and breathing:** Cut slits in the mask through which the wearer can see and breathe. These can be cut underneath the eyes and nose they've created.
5. **Wearing:** Attach the elastic or string to the mask so that it can be worn. Students could also glue a wooden stick to the mask and hold it up to wear it.



## Examples of Collage Masks

The following scanned visuals are taken from Foreman's *Maskwork* (pp. 73)

*Arts Activities*



# HEADBAND MASKS

This lesson is combined and adapted from Silva's *Maskmaking* (pp. 30-37) and Foreman's *Maskwork* (pp. 84-92).

## Introduction

This is an inexpensive and simple way to make a full-face mask with your students. It is much less messy than making papier mâché or plaster masks, but can have the same visual effect. It is created so that it fits over the head much like a hat or baseball cap.

## Version One: Adapted from Sivin's Activity

### Materials

Brown paper bags torn into long strips (½ wide) to create head bands and smaller strips to add shape and support to the mask OR Kraft paper

Glue

Decorative materials: paper, felt, buttons, yarn, etc.

Scissors

Brushes

### Procedure

1. **Make a headband:** Working in partners have students measure the circumference of their head using string. Then, using precut strips of brown paper bags, have them create headbands that will go around their head. They can tape or staple this together. They can then add a strip going across the top of their head (as if making an arc) to make the headband stronger. Attach two other strips to the headband on either side and join them under the chin. Then add one more vertical strip going over the bridge of the nose, from top of the head to the chin. Now the basic framework of the headband mask is created.
2. **Create the base of the mask:** This can be done individually (mirrors would be useful) or with a partner. Using the wearer's head as a mold, attach strips of torn paper to this framework using small amounts of glue. Students want to use gentle pressure so that the pieces of paper follow the elevations and depressions of the wearer's face (See images below). The wearer can assist by holding the glued piece into place while it dries. Gradually interlace more strips of paper, strengthening the framework until a beginning form has been made that fits the wearer.
3. **Strengthen the mask:** At this point, the wearer can take the mask off and stuff it with newspaper so that it continues to hold the shape of the face. Continue to add more paper. Sivin suggests using laminated Kraft paper. If this is not available, use other strong paper such as construction paper that will help the mask to become rigid and hold its shape. It should be strong enough at this point to hold the weight of any added decorations or exaggerations.
4. **Eyes and Mouth:** Once the mask has been strengthened with additional layers of strong paper. The student should decide on the desired shape and size of the eyes and mouth, and then cut these out of the mask.



5. **Finish the mask:** Add embellishments, decorations, and exaggerations. Using a variety of materials students can add to their mask. A good way to do this is by using various paper sculpture techniques like curling, twisting, folding, or bending to create extensions, add volume or height. Any created appendages can be taped onto the mask. Depending on the size and weight of the appendage, another layer of strips of paper may need to be glued over the area of the appendage to strengthen the mask.

## Version Two: Adapted from Foreman's Activity

### Materials

Cardstock or other heavy paper  
Brown wrapping paper or brown paper bags  
Glue  
Paint  
Construction paper  
Markers  
Scissors  
Stapler  
Decorative items

### Procedure

There are two ways to create Foreman's version of a headband mask or helmet mask. The first mask has a separate headband that the mask is later glued onto. The second mask incorporates the headband into the face shape design.

### Example One: Separate Headband

1. **Make a separate headband:** Working in partners have students measure the circumference of their head using string. Then, using precut strips of cardstock or construction paper, have them create headbands that will go around their head. They can tape or staple this together. They can then add a strip going across the top of their head (as if making an arc) to make the headband stronger. Make sure to have students write their names on their headbands.
2. **Make the face shape:** Fold a piece of cardstock in half. Have students brainstorm the idea for their mask. Then, sketch out a side view of the face onto the folded card. Be sure to remind the students that the eyeholes cannot be too close to the folded edge or the outside edge. Students must keep the folded edge as the center line of the face. (The ears, nose, mouth, beak, etc. are all added later). When the drawing is completed, cut out the face shape. Do not cut on the folded edge. Cut out the eye holes.
3. **Glue the face shape to the headband:** Open up the face shape and attach it to the headband. Make sure it is positioned so the wearer can see out of the eyes. From this point on, both masks are the same



## Example Two: Included Headband

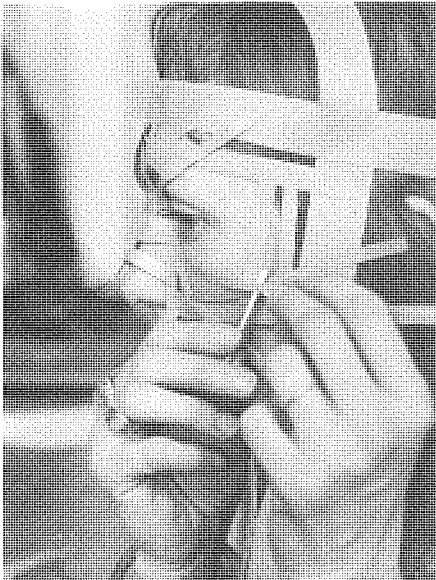
1. **Make the face shape with a headband:**
  - a. Fold a piece of cardstock in half.
  - b. Have students brainstorm the idea for their mask.
  - c. Then, sketch out a side view of the face onto the folded card. The students must sketch in a headband that goes around the sides of the head into the face shape design. Be sure to remind the students that the eyeholes cannot be too close to the folded edge or the outside edge. Students must keep the folded edge as the center line of the face. (The ears, nose, mouth, beak, etc. are all added later).
  - d. When the drawing is completed, cut out the face shape. Do not cut on the folded edge. Cut out the eye holes. From this point on both masks are the same.

## Complete the Mask

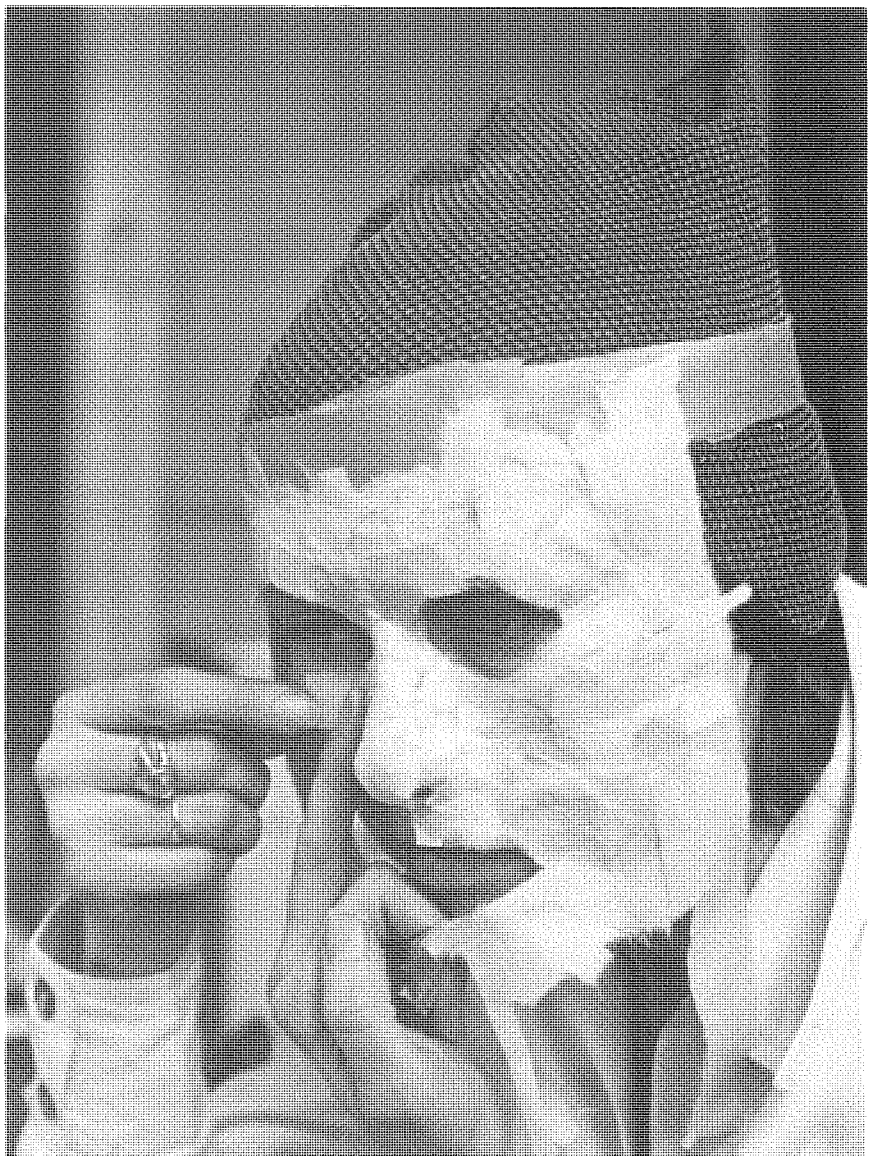
1. **Add the features:** Use paper to create other features such as the mouth, ears, eyes, beak, etc. Tape these onto the mask.
2. **Strengthen the mask:** As the mask takes shape students will need to strengthen it. They can overlap small torn pieces of brown paper, gluing them over the cardstock mask. Be sure not to add more than two layers of brown paper though.
3. **Add hair, teeth, etc.:** Using any materials available, students can create hair, teeth or any other addition they can imagine to their mask. Students can also experiment with sewing materials on to the mask rather than gluing things on.
4. **Check the fit of the mask:** Have students try on the mask to make sure that it fits and is comfortable. Make any necessary changes.
5. **Finish the mask:** Choose from a variety of ways to finish the mask. Students can paint, use fabric or felt pieces, other materials, objects or textures to complete the mask. When the mask is completely done, a thin coating of clear glue can be used to give the mask a protective varnish. Let dry completely.

## Examples of Headband Masks (Version 1)

The following scanned visuals are taken from Silva's *Maskmaking* (pp. 31-2).



A drop of glue on a toothpick is sufficient for joining one strip to another.



By guiding the paper with gentle but constant pressure into the depressions and elevations of the face, an accurate mask can be created.





Students can begin the headband form on one another.



Remove the headband to work carefully toward a finished product.

### *Materials*

*Kraft paper*

*Clear glue*

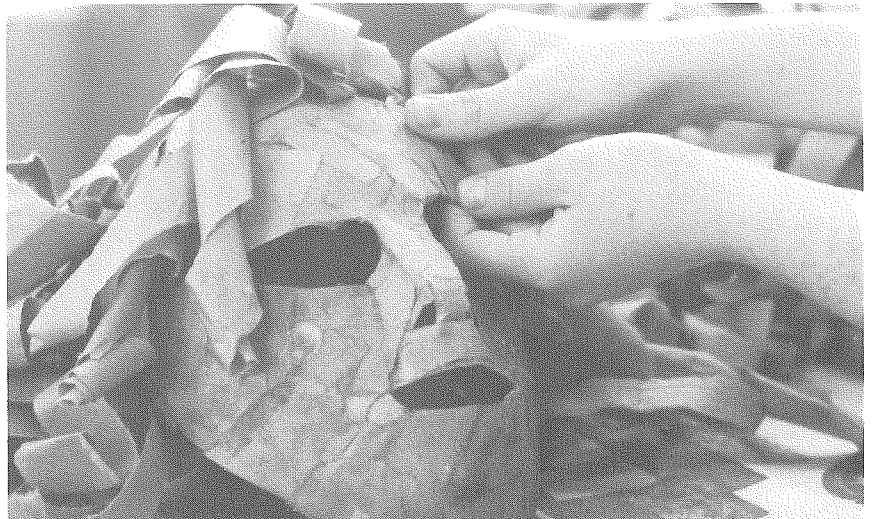
*Paper, felt, buttons, yarn, etc., for decoration*

*Scissors*

*Brushes*

Start with torn strips of Kraft paper or paper torn from heavy brown paper bags. These strips should be ½" wide and long enough to go around the forehead to be joined (with a drop of glue) at the back, like a headband. A toothpick is good for applying the glue. The next strip of paper is attached to either side of the band and goes over the head like the top of a close-fitting hat.

Curling paper and attaching the pieces to the form creates a strong structure.





## Examples of Headband Masks (Version 2)

The following scanned visuals are taken from Foreman's *Maskwork* (pp. 73)

### Project 5 – Theatre, Mask & Myth



#### ii) Make the face shape

First, fold the remaining sheet of card in half. Try to imagine and then draw a side view of the face onto the folded card. (When drawing the eyeholes care should be taken not to position them too near the folded edge or too near the cut edge.) Keep the folded edge as the centre line of the face. (Ears, nose, mouth, beak, etc., are all added later) (Diagram 4). Ensure that the face shape is cut out without cutting the folded edge. Remember to cut out the eyeholes safely.

#### iii) Fix the face shape to the headband

Open out the face shape and attach it to the headband. Make sure that it is positioned to enable the wearer to see out of the eyes. Use card to fill in the back of the head.

>

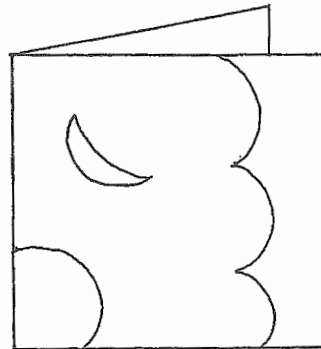


Diagram 4.

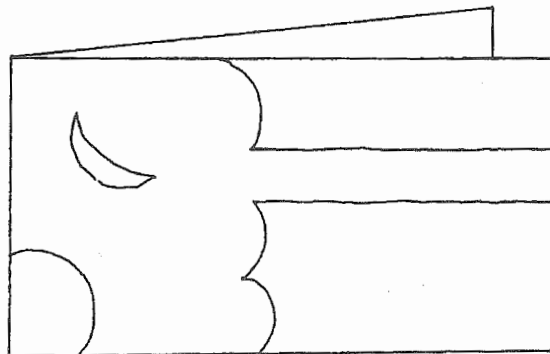


Diagram 5.

**Figs. 98-101.** Four stages in making a 'Water Monster' mask showing a mask with the headband included in the design. *Raven mask-making workshop, Winifred Holtby School, Hull. 1989.*



Example Two

*i) Include the headband in the face shape design*  
(Diagram 5)

Figs. 98–101 show a watermonster mask being made. The headband is incorporated into the design for the face. Whichever method is chosen, once headband and the basic mask form have been made then the features can be added.

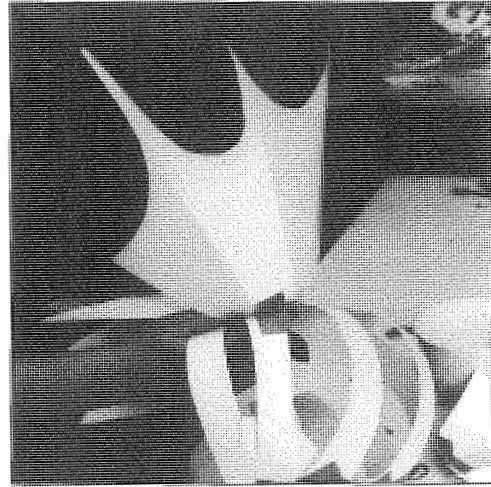
*ii) Add the features*

The card can be folded, cut, scored and manipulated in any way in order to make the mouth, ears, eyes, beak, etc. (fig. 102).

Use the design sketch as an indicator of the shapes to be formed when constructing the features.

*iii) Strengthening*

As the mask takes shape it will be necessary to strengthen it. Try overlapping small torn pieces of brown paper gum- >



**Fig. 102 (below).** Water monster mask. Mask paper-sculpture base as seen before painting. 'Raven' mask-making workshop, Winifred Holtby School, Hull. 1989.





# PAPIER MÂCHÉ MASKS

## Introduction

This is a really fun, but really messy way to create a variety of masks. Various things can be used as the base of the mask depending upon the final product you want and the time you have available. You could make this mask almost entirely out of recycled materials, so it can be a very inexpensive project if you have access to your local recycling center. Often mismatched or mis-mixed paint can be found for a very minimal cost from paint stores. As it takes time for the papier mâché to dry, this is a project that will take multiple days.

You have at least two options for the base layer of the mask: milk jugs or the plastic full-face or half-masks found at craft stores. While the former are an easy and inexpensive base for papier mâché, the latter will create a more human-like face shape. If you decide to use the milk jug approach, you would cut the milk jug in half (from top to bottom) creating two 'faces'. Either side can be used depending upon the preference of the student. The handle can become the nose and give a predetermined shape to the face. The other side can be built up to resemble any face shape, although some jugs have two large circles on that side, that seem to resemble large eyes—making it perfect for a bug mask.

## Materials

A large bowl (disposable is easiest)

Plastic table cloth or drop cloth (disposable)

Flour

Water

Glue

Strips of newspaper

Strips of brown paper towels

Sand paper (optional)

Brown shoe polish (optional)

Paint and paint brushes—if painting masks

Scissors

Materials to decorate and embellish—felt, construction paper, tissue paper, glitter, feathers, buttons, pipe cleaners, cookie cutters, leaves, flowers etc.

Shredded paper (which can be painted and used for hair)

## Procedure

1. Tear or cut a large quantity of newspapers into strips to be dunked in the paste mixture. The second layer can be done in brown paper towels to give a smoother appearance than the newspaper, but either will work. If using the paper towels, tear or cut those into strips as well. The strips should be approximately 1 inch wide.
2. Prepare the paste mixture: In a large plastic bowl pour about a 1/3 of a 5 lb. bag of flour (or about 1.5 pounds). Pour enough water (warm is best) to mix the flour so that it dissolves and is more liquid than paste like. Mix well, getting rid of as many clumps as possible, although you will still have some. Then, add one bottle of glue (7.6 oz) to the mixture and stir well.

3. Cover the work space with a plastic table cloth or drop cloth. Some of the mixture will likely get on the floor as you work, so either work on tile or place some sort of protective covering on the floor space.
4. Dip one strip of newspaper at a time into the paste mixture. Hold the strip at the top with your thumb and index finger of one hand, while you slide your index and middle fingers of your other hand down the strip to remove the excess paste mixture. Then place this strip onto the base of your mask. Pick a direction—either horizontally or vertically to place the strips. Press the strip down gently to make sure it is adhered and to create as smooth a finished surface as possible. Continue doing this until the entire base is covered. You can do just the front or the front and the back, that is up to you. Allow the mask to dry at least over night. Depending upon the climate it may take longer. If time allows, complete a second layer of papier mâché after the first layer is dry. Here is where you may want to use brown paper towels instead of newspaper. Alternate the direction you place the strips for the second layer—for example, if you placed the strips vertically the first time, place them horizontally across the mask for the second layer. If students want to add extensions—horns or ears for example. These can be built up with aluminum foil taped on and then covered with papier mâché. Allow the mask to dry completely, 24 to 48 hours.
5. If time allows and students want a smooth look, they can gently sand down their mask with sand paper.
6. Finish the mask with paint (tempera or acrylic works well), construction paper, tissue paper, etc. Decoupage with tissue paper can be an effective finishing technique. If the mask is painted with tempera paint, they can be rubbed down with brown shoe polish and buffed to provide a patina look. Acrylic glaze can also be used with any of the finish techniques as a final treatment.
7. Embellish the mask with any additional materials—like feathers, glitter, beads, sequins, leaves, flowers, yarn or painted shredded paper (which works great for hair).

## Examples of Papier Mâché Masks



Image taken from [http://summwrites.blogspot.com/2010/11/african-masks\\_22.html](http://summwrites.blogspot.com/2010/11/african-masks_22.html)



Image taken from <http://madalene-everythingart.blogspot.com/2011/04/milk-jug-mask.html>



Image taken from <http://www.designboom.com/weblog/cat/10/view/6992/vincent-hall-masks-made-of-plastic-milk-jugs.html>



Image taken from <http://www.cutoutandkeep.net/projects/paper-mache-mask-3>

# FELIPE HORTA AND THE MEXICAN MASKS OF LA PASTORELA

As stated in the introduction to this curriculum project, Horta is a mascarero from Michoacán, Mexico. He's famous for the masks he creates for the danzantes (dancers) in La Pastorela. La Pastorela is a traditional celebration that takes place in December. It is the story of the Shepherds' journey to find the baby Jesus. La Pastorela is a traditional play dating back to the Middle Ages in Spain. It made its way to Mexico with the Spanish priests who came during the periods of Spanish exploration and colonization in the Americas. While it began as a very traditional retelling of the Christmas story, today it is a striking example of cultural exchange and cultural adaptation. It can be found in parts of Mexico and Southwestern United States.

The lessons provided here do not necessarily correlate to full days—some lessons may only take one day, while others may take multiple days. The time frame will depend on how much time you can devote to teaching the topic and how much your students want to discuss and explore it.

# INTRODUCTION TO LA PASTORELA

## Introduction

There are a number of ways to introduce your students to this topic of study. We have created a Power Point presentation that discusses the history of La Pastorela, Felipe Horta's maskmaking tradition, and the ways in which the tradition of La Pastorela has changed and adapted to become what it is today that can be used with your students. We have provided a hard copy of the presentation with the curriculum project, and will also provide a link to the digital copy on the LAII website. A video-recording of Horta's presentation discussing the history, cultural significance, and changing role within Mexico will also be available online through the LAII website and can be used to teach your students about this topic.

## Materials

PowerPoint (PPT) Presentation

Visual media to show PPT presentation and video

## Procedure

1. Ask your students if any of them have heard of La Pastorela. If any of them are familiar with it, ask them to share what they know about it with the class.
2. Present the Power Point slide show to your students. As you read through each slide, allow time for students to ask questions, make comments, and discuss the visual images (if provided).
3. When you have reached the end of the presentation, ell students that they are going to create their own mask for La Pastorela. Go back to the slides that show the different masks, and discuss these images. What do the masks show? How are they made? Is there anything that they all have in common? What is different about them?



# LA PASTORELA AND EL MASCARERO

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## Introduction

In this lesson students will learn more about Felipe Horta and the art of maskmaking, as well as how La Pastorela has changed and become what it is today. Students will watch a video of Horta (in Spanish with English translation) discussing how he makes his masks and the cultural significance of La Pastorela in different parts of Mexico. There is another video of Felipe Horta available in Spanish on You Tube (at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-YaLYpZjxU>). Even if your students don't speak Spanish, this can still be useful as it shows Horta in his workshop discussing the masks he makes. There are also two videos of La Pastorela available on You Tube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNOF5GUMldQ> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RaS964m0Cz0>. Here students see how the performers dance in the middle of crowds wearing masks and costumes.

## Materials

Video of Felipe Horta

Visual Media to show power point presentation and video

## Procedure

1. Review the material covered with your students in the previous lesson.
2. Introduce the video of Felipe Horta and show it to your students.
3. Discuss what students learned in the video. How has La Pastorela changed over the years? Are there parts of La Pastorela that have remained the same? What is the significance of the masks according to Horta? How has popular culture come to be part of this Christmas story tradition?

## Introduction

In this lesson students will brainstorm and begin to sketch their own mask that they will create as part of the final project. Numerous maskmaking lessons are provided in the first section of this curriculum guide. Before introducing this lesson to students, be sure to choose which project you will be doing as that will determine the kinds of masks your students can create. You may want to have images of masks available (either from online or books) to help students get started.

## Materials

Images of masks

White sketch paper

Pencils

Crayons, colored pencils, or markers

## Procedure

1. Introduce the details of the maskmaking project to the students—how it will be created, materials available, etc.
2. Provide paper and pencils and instruct students to begin brainstorming and then sketching their idea for the mask. Remind students to be as detailed as possible in their sketch, as this will be their guide for actually creating their mask. It will help them plan the order in which they need to create the different parts of the mask (for example, the face base before the nose, or the horns before the hair, etc.). Allow students to browse through examples and talk quietly with peers to generate ideas.
3. When students finish their sketches, have them color them so that their color scheme is already created when they get to the final finishing stage of creating their mask.
4. Follow the instructions in a maskmaking lesson chosen from the first section of this curriculum project.

# THE STORY BEHIND THE MASK

## Introduction

This lesson provides the opportunity for the integration of maskmaking and language arts. Here, students will have the opportunity to write the story of their mask. This may be fictional or non-fictional depending upon the preferences of the student.

## Materials

Finished mask  
Pencils, pens  
Writing Paper

## Procedure

1. Introduce to students the idea of writing the story of their mask. Provide the following questions to help them begin to brainstorm what their mask's story might be:
  - \* Who does your mask portray?
  - \* Is your mask a fictional being? Is your mask something that exists in the world today?
  - \* What emotions does your mask represent or portray? Is it happy? Is it sad? Is it angry? Is it lost or confused?
  - \* Does your mask represent good, evil or both?
  - \* How would your mask change the person who wears it? What effect would it have on that person? What would the wearer turn it into?
2. Now that students have begun to think about what their mask represents, guide them to begin writing the story of their mask. Tell students that the story can be fictional or non-fictional. If their mask represents a real person in their life, they may want to write the true story. Perhaps their mask represents how the cultural tradition of La Pastorela has changed today. They may want to write more of a report-style story of how and why La Pastorela has changed, and the significance of their mask in light of this change. Students can also write a purely fictional story of their mask.
3. Take students through the writing process—drafting, editing, revising, and final copy.
4. Allow student volunteers to share their writing with the class, displaying their mask as they read (they may even want to wear it as they read).
5. Display student masks and stories for all to see.

## Introduction

This lesson is another way to extend the maskmaking activity, and connect it to Language Arts. Here students will form groups, write a play that incorporates all of their mask characters, and perform their play for the class.

## Materials

Finished masks

Paper

Pencils or pens

## Procedure

1. Tell students they will be writing plays that incorporate their mask characters. Determine a way to divide the class into groups—student selected, random count off, teacher selected, etc.
2. When groups have been formed, guide students to brainstorm various premises for their play. What characters do they have? Do they have an obvious good versus evil storyline? Could they do a spin-off or spoof of a famous story or fairy tale?
3. Students write their play. Depending upon the time available, you may not want students to write every line of the play. Instead, they can write a ‘framework’ for the story, with some lines, but then plan to do some improvisation when they perform the play. This would require less time in both the writing and the memorization of the lines.
4. Allow time for students to practice performing their plays.
5. Students perform their plays for the class.



# CULTURAL- AND LITERACY-BASED LESSONS WITH MASKMAKING

There are a variety of ways that maskmaking can be used to reinforce ideas, skills, or content information that teachers are already presenting to their students. This section provides various ways to integrate maskmaking activities with other subjects or thematic areas of study. As the integration of maskmaking with content area curriculum is quite specific to individual teachers and grade levels, this section does not provide complete or specific lesson plans. Instead, this section is a collection of ideas to get teachers started.

# COUNTRY OR CONTINENT STUDIES

## Overview

Maskmaking can easily be incorporated in any thematic unit focusing on countries or continents. The stylistic elements of maskmaking and the purposes for creating masks are quite specific to individual countries. A study of a country's masks could add significant depth to a student's understanding of the history of that country. A simple Google search for "(country) masks" will provide numerous images and information to get your students started. There are a number of great websites that provide images of country specific masks—[www.indigoarts.com](http://www.indigoarts.com) is just one example.

# DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

## Overview

Maskmaking can be incorporated into a unit on Día de los Muertos. Students could decorate masks in the same manner that they would decorate a sugar skull. In fact, the same frosting (cement-like Royal frosting) could be used to decorate a paper, plastic or papier mâché masks. They could also create masks to represent the Calavera or Katrina images so prevalent in Día de los Muertos art. A papier mache or paper bag mask could work quite well here. For those teachers in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the Marigold Parade is an excellent opportunity to connect classroom studies with community cultural events. Students could create masks that they could then wear to the Marigold Parade.

# POETRY AND FICTIONAL WRITING

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## Overview

There are numerous ways that maskmaking can be included in the teaching of writing. In fact, maskmaking may be a way to help those students who struggle to write. Often times, one of the hardest parts of writing for many students is coming up with the story or topic. A mask could provide that. Once a student has taken the time to create such a detailed piece as a mask, they have already begun to create the background for the story that the mask represents. With the mask as the impetus, the students should be able to transition into the writing process with more ease.

Descriptive writing is often an area that students struggle a great deal with. Learning how to write so as to paint a picture in the mind of the reader is often not something that many students do without prompting and practice. In the second lesson on Paper Plate Masks, students learn how emotions can be translated into facial expressions, or how our facial expressions communicate our emotions. The same lesson can be applied to writing and maskmaking. There are multiple ways this could be done. You could start with examples of masks and have students write how they would describe the feelings or state of that mask, encouraging them to use as many descriptive words as possible, perhaps requiring that they offer at least one adjective for each of the five senses. You could also start with a piece of descriptive writing and have students create a mask (or even drawing of a mask) that would portray in a visual image what the writing was communicating. Very descriptive, symbolic or metaphorical poetry would lend itself to a project like this. You may even have students create a poem about an image of a mask or a mask that they have created.



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