

Name _____ Date _____

Teaching Masks

Draw a mask that would fit what the person is saying in each speech bubble.

You will soon be an adult. Use your strength to help others.

I have the power and the beauty of a lion.

Listen to others and you will learn.

Remember your ancestors.

African Mask Plaques (Pk/24)

PLEASE READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE STARTING



YOUR KIT CONTAINS:

- Styrofoam Mask Shapes
- Gummed Hangers
- Paint
- Brushes

YOU WILL NEED:

- Water
- Paper Towels

AGE GROUP: 6 and up
PROJECT TIME: 30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Decide what paint colors you will use to paint the masks.
2. Paint the large background areas of the mask first. Let dry.
3. Paint detailed areas of facial features last. Let dry.
4. Moisten a gummed hanger (water works best) and press the sticky part onto the center back of the painted mask.

More Ideas: Use other craft materials, such as yarn, natural reed or grasses, beads, etc. to embellish the mask.

SOCIAL STUDIES

OBJECTIVE: Think about family history and create something uniquely matched to a family event.
SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: One night's homework to discuss special events in student's family, several hour blocks in school or continuing homework for the week.
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS: A wide variety of materials should be available to the children, such as paper, cloth, cans, boxes, etc.
PROCEDURE: Explain to the class that masks were used to dramatize family history and honor ancestors during special festivals every year. The stories were made more exciting and colorful through the use of songs, dances, costumes and musical instruments. After students discuss special family events for homework, have some children share family stories. Brainstorm as a group what could be created to make each story even more exciting for the listener, i.e. a song, a drum beating, a dance, etc. Provide time for each child to create the story enhancer, practice telling it and share it with others.

SOCIAL STUDIES

OBJECTIVE: Familiarity with the map of Africa and regional masks.
SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: 30-45 minutes per mask, ongoing for a couple of weeks.
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS: Outline map of Africa, books and posters of Africa, white drawing paper.
PROCEDURE: Post a large outline map of Africa on the bulletin board. Have a variety of books, posters and computer sources available to students. Let students browse, looking at pictures and photographs of masks. When a child finds a mask that particularly interests him or her, s/he should draw the mask on a piece of drawing paper. Hang the mask drawing by the map with a piece of yarn connecting it to its country or region of origin.

MATH

OBJECTIVE: Introduction to the meaning of the term "symmetry."
SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: 10 minutes per activity.
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS: Outline map of Africa, books and posters of Africa, white drawing paper.
PROCEDURE: Explain to students that the African Mask Plaques are symmetrical. This means that if a line were drawn down the middle of the face dividing it into two equal pieces, everything on the left side would be a mirror image of everything on the right. If you have an extra Styrofoam plaque, draw a line vertically down the face to demonstrate your definition. Students should prepare to experiment with this concept by folding white drawing paper in half, matching corners so the fold is exactly in the middle. Call a few students at a time to a table and put one or two small blobs of paint on one side of the line of symmetry. Each child will then fold the paper and gently rub it. Open it carefully and discover a symmetrical piece of art. Have students try another where they put paint on only one side to form half a face or mask. When the paper is folded and pressed, a complete face is formed. Another way students can experience symmetry is by experimenting with small, unbreakable mirrors. When a child holds the mirror vertically on a picture or card, the symmetrical half of the image on the card appears in the mirror.

MATH

OBJECTIVE: Use geometric shapes to create an original mask design.
TIME FRAME: 45 minutes.
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS: A variety of geometric shapes in an assortment of colors, plus glue.
PROCEDURES: Introduce students to the basic shapes and names used to form the African Mask Plaques they painted. Show that a large parallelogram formed the face and that triangles, rectangles and ovals were added for the features. Post the shapes and terms where students can refer to them along with a square, circle, hexagon and any other shape provided for the project. Then give each student a large parallelogram and a variety of smaller shapes. Allow time to experiment with possible mask arrangements before students glue.

LANGUAGE ARTS

OBJECTIVE: Write a conversation using speech bubbles.
TIME FRAME: 30-45 minutes.
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS: Paper, pencils and crayons or markers.
PROCEDURE: Working in groups of four or more, students should examine masks and discuss what conversations the people wearing them could be having. Share background information on uses of masks in different African cultures from a book such as Eyewitness Books – Africa by Yvonne Ayo (Alfred A. Knopf). After the group has had time to discuss ideas and each person knows what his/her mask person will be saying, have students write that dialogue out in sentences. Students should read the writing aloud, peer edit, then see a teacher for corrections. A final copy will be made and cut out to form a speech bubble. Color over the final writing in crayon or marker. Hang the masks and speech bubble conversations in the classroom for display.

ART

OBJECTIVE: Experience the art form of carving a mask plaque.
SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: 30-60 minutes.
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS: Each student should bring one bar of soap. "Carving tools" can be craftsticks, tongue depressors, toothpicks, old pencils, etc.
PROCEDURE: Demonstrate the different tools by showing how the soap can be scraped away using the edge of a craftstick or tongue depressor. Grooves can be dug with the pencil and narrow grooves and holes can be made with the toothpick. Students will develop their own techniques with the tools provided. Display the carvings in a mini-museum.

LANGUAGE ARTS

OBJECTIVE: Write clues using geometry vocabulary to describe the mask created.
SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: 30-45 minutes to write the clues and another 30 minutes to read clues and match that person's mask.
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS: Paper and pencil.
PROCEDURE: Using color words and shape words, each child writes a description of his/her original mask. The masks should be numbered and displayed for all to see. The teacher or students should read the descriptions while others try to guess which number goes with each piece of writing. Students should give explanations for why that mask was chosen. For example, "That was the only mask with yellow eyes shaped like circles."

SCIENCE

OBJECTIVE: Develop an understanding of plants and their use as natural dyes by people who desire a variety of colors for art projects, such as masks.
SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: 30-45 minutes.
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS: Onion skins, a large pan, water, hot plate or stove, white wool or cotton yarn or string.
PROCEDURE: Several days before doing the dyeing project, ask students to bring onion skins to school. You may want to demonstrate how the golden brown, papery skin peels off an onion. That is the only part needed. On the day for dyeing, allow the children to put the skins into a pot with water. Boil until the water is a dark golden brown. Meanwhile, have students measure and cut yarn. Strain the liquid into a bowl and let students add the pieces of yarn. Let sit overnight. Fish out the yarn and dry.
EXTENSION: Other dyeing liquids can be made from tea, coffee or pokeweed berries (if they grow in your area). Follow the same procedure. It is also fun to collect pokeweed berries and create ink for writing and drawing by crushing the berries with a mortar and pestle. Students may draw by dipping a feather or stick into the purple juice.

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