

GP1273

Tribal Masks (Pk/24)

Name _____ Date _____

Tribal Masks

Fill the sentences.

1. Masks were used by ancient tribes in many different ways. Tell how some of the masks were used.

2. Tribal Masks could not be worn by "just anybody." Some tribes limited the wearing of masks to _____

3. The ceremonies where the masks were worn usually involved dancing and _____

4. Both Native American tribes and _____ tribes used masks in their ceremonies.

Draw your ideas.

Many ancient tribes made masks and each mask looked somewhat different, depending on the artist or craftsman who made it. Practice drawing a mask here, and include the patterns or images you'll include in your larger mask.

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Tribal Masks (Pk/24)

PLEASE READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE STARTING

**YOUR KIT CONTAINS:**

- Craft Board Masks
- Washable Markers
- Colorful Raffia
- Leather/Suede Piece
- Elastic Cord
- Feathers

YOU WILL NEED:

- Scissors

AGE GROUP: 8 and up
PROJECT TIME: 30 minutes

OBJECTIVE:

Students will create masks using information about ancient customs and images that would have adorned ceremonial masks of African or Native American tribes.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Provide students with reference materials, borrowed from the library, with visual images and ceremonial practices associated with masks in African and/or Native American tribes.
2. Have the students plan the patterns and images that they will use to adorn the masks they are making, combining their own interpretive style and classic elements from African or Native American tribes.
3. Provide each student with a craft board mask, markers and raffia. Have students remove the masks from the frames and tie the raffia through the holes around the masks. To make the African Masks, each student should decorate his or her mask in an individual way, using the markers to draw patterns and images that reflect what has been learned about ancient masks and the student's personal sense of aesthetics.

Teaching Activities Inside

SOCIAL STUDIES/ MULTICULTURAL INFORMATION

OBJECTIVE: Students will learn how masks were made and used by ancient African or Native American tribes, including ceremonial restrictions, gender prohibitions, indigenous materials and beliefs surrounding the masks and ceremonies.

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: Several hours, spread over several days, depending on the amount of reference materials provided to the students.

PROCEDURE: Provide reference materials to students that describe not only the way the ancient masks of Africa and Native American tribes looked, but how they were used, the beliefs surrounding the masks and the ceremonies where they were used, the ceremonial restrictions, gender prohibitions and indigenous materials from which the masks were made.

Some information you might share with students to begin their search for information includes: Eastern masks which have been excavated at Key Marco, Florida were false faces used in healing rituals. They were carved from a living tree and had a divided image, split down the center of the face, often with the two sides of the face colored differently. Often these masks depicted the face of "The Great One" with a broken nose. Northwest Indians wore ceremonial masks during dances to recount legends and celebrate their rituals. Often the masks had long strings or woven cords draping down, like long hair on the face-like masks. Most masks of Africa belonged to secret societies, and only members of those societies were allowed to wear them. Masked dancers are nearly always men, although they may play the part of women in the dance. The "Forest-Spirit" masks of the Pygmies, Cameroon, have long strands of raffia streaming down like hair, from the masks which are often shaped like the craft board masks in this kit. Many mask dances in Africa were done to celebrate a good harvest or to ask for life to be rich and good and for men to be at peace together. The mask dances were usually associated with festivals, festivities that involved a lot of food and celebration. What else can your students discover about masks and the ceremonies during which they were used? Have the students compare and contrast various tribes and their use of masks, as well as contrasting how their masks looked and what they were made from (wood, clay, turtle shells).

DRAMA AND DANCE

OBJECTIVE: Students will simulate a ceremony or dance in which masks were used.

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: Several hours to study, choreograph and perform the dance.

PROCEDURE: After students have read about the ceremonies in which masks were used by ancient tribes, to celebrate, send thanks, or ask for blessings, have the students create a simulated mask dance. Remind the students that authentic mask dances were religious or ritual in nature and they would probably not be allowed to wear the tribes' real masks or participate in the real ceremony. Masks were thought to have mysterious powers. Village festivals were celebrated with sacred dramas, in which masked figures were the actors. Even the people watching the dance were part of the ceremonies, involved in the prayers and the praise, the blessings and the songs. Have students select authentic sounding music or have students chant rhythmic hymns, play drums, rattle maracas, or play flute-like instruments. Have students choreograph a dance and plan and perform a simulated ceremony, based on the information they have collected from their research. They might determine which of the masks made by the classmates would be the "Mask of the Healer," the "Bringer of Rain," the "Curer of Sickness," the "Healer of Pain," the "Bringer of Crops" or the "Maker of Peace." What kinds of dances reflect those honors or wishes? How do the students feel a rain dance would be different from a medicine or peace dance?

ARTS AND SOCIAL STUDIES

OBJECTIVE: Students will display their creations in an organized, aesthetically appealing way, creating a Mask Museum that reflects the information they have learned and their imagination.

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: 1 hour

PROCEDURE: Students will organize a museum-like display for the masks they have created. The museum could be historically based or rely more on students' imaginations for its information and presentation. Students could imagine how each mask might have been used by an ancient tribe and describe that tribe and the ceremony in which it was used. Students should set up the displays featuring finished masks in gallery-like settings, hung with cards that provide the student artist's name and any other information that might be known or imagined about the piece.

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