

MASK MAKING ORIGINS

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Masks have been used by countless cultures over the course of history. Some of the first masks originated during prehistoric periods, often they were used for spiritual and ceremonial purposes. Masks have since developed into cultural icons that have many different functions. In our studies, we will be looking at masks used by three different distinct groups; African, North American Indian, Central and South American Indian.

Read page 247 in the textbook ART IN FOCUS (new edition).

Read the section on Masks in the textbook ART IN FOCUS (new edition) on pages 278-279

Look at the masks in Figures 11.1 (p.244), 11.4 (p. 247), 11.5 (p.248), 11.15 (p. 255), 12.6 (p.276),12.19 (p.278), 12.20 (p.278) 12.21 &12.22 (p.279).

1. List four different purposes of masks.
2. What feelings do you think these masks evoked in viewers? (11.4, 12.9, 12.22)

3. What characteristics do these masks have that evoke these feelings?

4. Select one (1) mask from the North American Indian and Central / South American culture and two (2) masks from the African culture. Make a detailed drawing in your sketchbook of your chosen masks. (4 in total)

5. Use the internet to research masks on the following cultures:
 - A) Japan
 - B) African
 - C) North American Aboriginal
 - D) Greek

In your IWB make a list of all the similarities between the cultural masks
Then make a list of all the differences.

Choose 2 masks you like the best and print out a picture of them. Write a paragraph explaining their purpose, their cultural significance and the medium used to create them. Why did you choose that particular mask?

6. You are now going to design your own mask in your IWB. You will need to do this in full colour. Draw a front view and a profile view of your mask - one per page. Make sure that you also list all of the materials you will be using to create your mask and what supplies you will need to bring in to make it.
Discuss the symbolism you are using in your mask. Is there significance to your choice of colour or material?