

Disclaimer

Some materials used might cause allergic reactions or health problems. You should ensure that you are fully aware of the allergies and health conditions of those taking part. If you have any concerns about your own or somebody else's health or wellbeing, always speak to a qualified health professional. Activities listed within the resource should always be supervised by an appropriate adult. Children should be supervised when using sharp items, such as scissors or other tools. Please make sure you are aware that children may put craft items into their mouths and that they should wash their hands afterwards. By using this resource, you acknowledge that it is the responsibility of supervising adults to ensure the safety of children in their care and that we will accept no liability as a result of the activity.

Masks from Africa Art Activity



Masks are part of African tribal life. They have been used for thousands of years. The masks are symmetrical (the same on both sides) with repeated patterns. They can also have animal features.

In many African tribes, dancers wear masks. The dancers perform in special ceremonies that include songs and prayers. Some ceremonies are to celebrate children's coming of age. This means when children become adults. Other special ceremonies include harvest and funerals.

The wooden masks are coloured with natural dyes and pigments made from plants, vegetables, seeds or soil.

To make your own mask, you will need:

- paper plate
- scissors
- sticky tack
- brown paint and a lighter colour for detail, e.g. white, yellow, red
- strips of tissue paper/feathers, e.g. yellow, red, orange, green
- white glue
- sticky tape
- pencil
- lolly sticks
- horn template
- paintbrush
- water pot
- art apron
- table covering
- elastic (optional)

Instructions:

1. Look at some examples of African masks. Decide what shape you would like for your eyes and then draw the outline of the eyes on your plate. Don't make them too small or they will be tricky to cut out and you won't be able to see out of the holes.
2. Place the sticky tack under the plate (where you've drawn the eyes). Keeping your fingers out of the way, and with the help of an adult, use the scissors to poke through the eye hole spaces and cut them out.
3. Turn your plate upside down and paint it brown. (This will be the front of your mask.)
4. Decide which horns you'd like to use or draw your own. Cut them out and paint them brown.
5. Once the paint is dry, attach the horns to the back of your mask with sticky tape.
6. Decide on the shape of the nose and mouth and then draw these details on your mask with a pencil.
7. Use a pencil to decorate your mask with a bold, repeated shape pattern, e.g. zigzags or lines.
8. Once you are happy with the design, use the lighter paint colour to paint the outline of the nose, mouth and repeated pattern. You could also add some dotted detail around the eyes. Leave to dry.
9. Take different coloured strips of tissue paper (or feathers) and glue them around the top half of the mask.



Other ideas:

Use sticky tape to attach two lolly sticks to the back of the mask (at the bottom) to use as handles. Or ask an adult to add an elastic strap to the mask.





