



LESSON 16 LEVEL C GEOMETRIC SHAPES

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN:

using familiar geometric shapes to design a mask

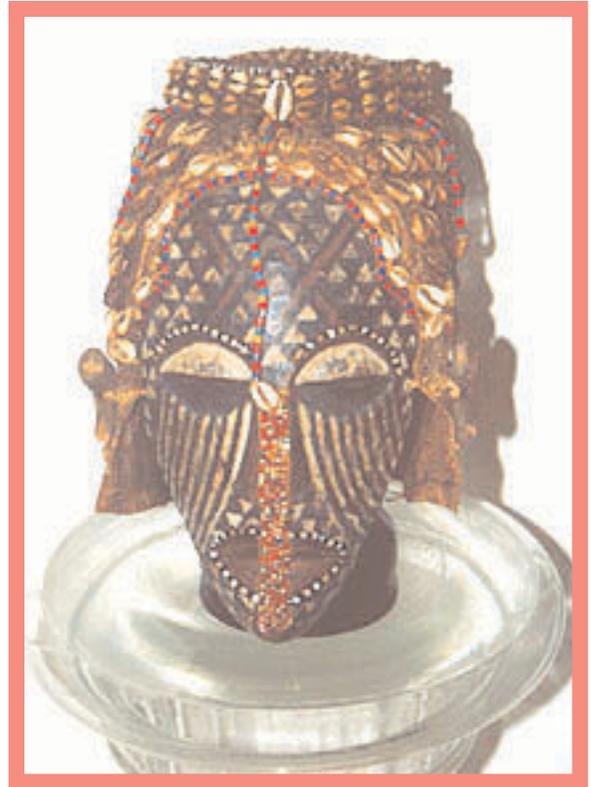
WHAT YOU WILL NEED: black construction paper 30 x 45.5 cm (12" x 18"); white chalk; oil pastels; scissors; glue or a stapler; yarn; paper punch; masking tape; (optional: feathers, raffia)

TIPS: : Look at several masks. The internet has many sites under African masks. Notice the distortions and exaggerations of the basic features. Look for some geometric shapes. . . rectangles, triangles, and circles. Look for facial decorations such as magic symbols and tattoos. You can stop with just the design, or you can actually make your mask to wear or to hang on the wall.

mask look more dramatic. The eyes are not necessary to see through. Sometimes the mask wearer must look through little slits in the cheeks or even through the mouth or nose! You will want to design a distorted face with an expression. . .a sneer, a snarl or a snicker. You might add magic symbols or decorative patterns of scars. You could use raffia, bright colored yarn, or feathers for trimmings. Try to make your mask symmetrical.

1. On black paper, make a drawing with white chalk of three overlapping geometrical shapes. . .a circle, a triangle, and a square or rectangle. Work as large as possible, to fill the entire width and height of the paper.

MASK DESIGN



African Mask
Suzy Keith Collection Woodside, California

GETTING STARTED: Did you find examples of geometric shapes in the masks you looked at? They usually serve to outline the form and to exaggerate the features, to make the



2. Draw exaggerated eyes and an unusual nose. Make a mouth that shows expression. Add some decorative patterns of tattoos, scars, or symbols.

3. Now, use bright oil pastels to color your design. Keep the design symmetrical by making the colors the same on both sides of the face.

4. To make the mask wearable, cut it out. Hold it against your face to find where to cut slits to see through. Mark where your eye slits will go with chalk or oil pastel. Then cut the holes. If you plan to wear the mask, check to see if you can see through the eyeslits.



Gian Carlo Age 11

5. Cut 25 mm (one inch) slashes at each corner to overlap and staple (or glue) to make the mask 3-D. Stick some masking tape on the back of the places where you will punch a hole, to strengthen the paper. Add some yarn or raffia to tie the mask on over your ears.

6. Add raffia, yarn, or curled paper strips and some feathers, if you wish. Put your mask on. Look at yourself in a mirror. What do you think?

CLEAN UP: Save usable scraps. Have you heard that before? Then you know what comes next: put away your materials.

TALK ABOUT IT: In what order did you draw your geometric shapes? What kind of design could you make by changing that original arrangement? What if you started with a color other than black?

MORE IDEAS: Look at pictures of masks from many different cultures. Find an inspiration to create another mask design. See how you can use geometric shapes to make facial features as well as the general design.

CONNECTIONS: Think of as many ways as you can why people all over the world make and use masks. What masks are used for practical, functional purposes, e.g. catcher's masks, bee-keeper's mask? Which ones are used in rituals or ceremonies? Which are used to disguise the wearers?

Read a book about masks, such as *Masks Tell Stories* by Carol Gelber.