

CELEBRATIONS: PAPIER MACHE MASKS GR: 3-5 (LESSONS 5-6)

Elder Quote/Belief: “Masks were worn on several occasions, for instance at certain feasts and shamanistic performances. They were carved in wood, sometimes in animal shape, and painted. Some had a queer or comical look, with only one eye and a crooked mouth, while others had a knife or a bone carved in the mouth. Eagle down (or feathers?) might be glued around the edge.”ⁱ

Grade Level: 3-5

Overview: Traditionally, masks were made and used as a way to show respect and connect the spirit worlds along with their stories. The masks were believed to connect the ‘suk’ with both those who wear them and those who are observing and listening.

Standards:

<i>AK Cultural:</i>	<i>AK Science Content:</i>	<i>CRCC:</i>
E1: Recognize and build upon the interrelationships that exist among the spiritual, natural, and human realms in the world around them, as reflected in their own cultural traditions and beliefs as well as those of others.	F2: develop an understanding that some individuals, cultures, and societies use other beliefs and methods in addition to scientific methods to describe and understand the world:	CE 4: Students should have knowledge of traditional dance attire: masks.

Lesson Goal: To carry on the Sugpiaq mask making tradition and investigate its storytelling and spiritual properties.

Lesson Objectives: Students will:

- Research the use, meaning, and artistic style of Chugach Region masks
- Design and create a papier mache’ mask

Vocabulary Words: Sugt’stun Dialects

English:	Prince William Sound:	Lower Cook Inlet:	Eyak:
masking	Maskalataq	Maskalataq	
mask	<i>máskaq</i>	<i>máskaq</i>	

Materials/Resources Needed:

- Chugach Region Mask posters
- Mask display
- Flour (or Elmer’s glue)
- Water and containers to mix the paste
- Newspapers in strips
- White copy paper or white paper towels in strips

- Drop cloth to protect clothing and floor
- Tinfoil
- Scissors
- Sharpie markers
- Pencils
- Tape
- Masking tape
- White paper-based modeling clay (useful for mask detail additions)
- If do not want to form mask on own face...other options:
 - Gallon milk jugs washed and dried, cut in half- one per student
 - Balloons
- Acrylic paints
- Paint brushes
- Feathers, beads, monofilament wire, twigs, etc. to decorate masks
- Head bands to hold hair off face during mask making
- Optional: If want quick and easy mask making....Paper Face Forms (Can be purchased from art supply places or Oriental Trading at https://www.orientaltrading.com/diy-masks-48-pcs-a2-13607527.fltr?keyword=paperboard+masks&filter=Cj0KCQjwyerpBRD9ARIsAH-ITn-odeltVuhx5zlgMuSNywiIoYq9LZX8kLaNCAw5208sJwXg2e5qvkaAiI_EALw_wcB students can add features and decorate mask as wish)

Books:

- *Chugach Eskimo*, Pg. 111
- *Looking Both Ways: Heritage and Identity of the Alutiiq People*
- *Giinaquq: Like a Face – Sugpiaq Masks of the Kodiak Archipelago*
- *Two Journeys: A Companion to the Giinaquq: Like a Face Exhibition*

Websites:

- <http://alutiiqmuseum.org/exhibits/electronic-exhibits/278-like-a-face.html> *Giinaquq : Like A Face - Sugpiaq Masks of the Kodiak Archipelago*
- <http://alutiiqmuseum.org/exhibits/electronic-exhibits/272-ancient-faces.html> Sugpiaq spirit carvings
- <http://alutiiqmuseum.org/exhibits/electronic-exhibits/278-like-a-face.html> Sugpiaq mask photos
- How to Make a Paper Mache Mask <https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/how-to-paper-mache-mask-1106527>
- Make a Paper Mache Mask Out of Nothing <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-pVIs4hVc7E>
- Aluminum Foil Mold for Papier Mache
 - Step One- tinfoil mold https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dxm4S_2WwI4
 - Step Two- Paper Mache <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=41tVWPLJwpQ>
- How to make a Paper Mache Mask using a milk jug https://www.google.com/search?q=how+to+make+paper+mache+masks+step+by+step&rlz=1C1CHBD_enUS797US797&oq=How+to+&aqs=chrome.0.69i59j69i57j35i39j0l3.3670j0j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#kpvalbx=_7Vo7XfGYLpPs9APrzIvgAw25

- How to make a papier mache mask using a balloon [https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Papier-M%C3%A2ch%C3%A9-Mask-\(for-Kids\)](https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Papier-M%C3%A2ch%C3%A9-Mask-(for-Kids))

Teacher Preparation:

- Invite an Elder or Recognized Expert to share knowledge of traditional masks and how they were made and what they were used for.
- Review with students how to show respect to the guests in classroom.
- Review the activity plan and decide which papier mache mask lesson the class is going to make depending on time frame.
- Depending on the lesson plan, gather or order supplies needed well before lesson. Such as order the face molds, or have students/community save milk jugs.
- Locate all the necessary supplies for lesson whether it is ordering face molds, using milk jugs or balloons, newspapers, etc.



- Face molds



- Milk jug



- Balloons

- Prior to activity, make a mask with traditional features to use an example.
- Practice the Sugt'stun/Eyak vocabulary words

Opening: Different designs of masks had various meanings such as; a mask with pursed lips symbolized whistling, the way that spirits spoke to humans. Masks with pointy heads represented devils or evil spirits (kala'aq). A mask with hoops signified one or more of the five sky worlds and thus the mask's spirit the ability to see and travel between them. Some masks refer to specific legends.

The Sugpiaq universe has both physical and spiritual dimensions. Shamans used masks to foretell the future and to communicate with spirits. Masks were also worn by male dancers during ceremonial dances to dramatize the story and dances.

Most of the Chugach masks were burned after ceremonies because the ancestors believed that by burning the masks, the smoke would allow their messages to be sent to those who have passed on.

For this lesson, we will be creating papier mache masks similar to the traditional Chugach masks.

Activities:

Class I:

1. If available, introduce Elder.
2. Share some mask images in the books, posters or any photo collection from community.
3. Ask students to research and design the mask they want to make, and invite student comments regarding their designs.
4. Inform students they will be making plaster masks using their own faces as a mold and as they go through the mask-making steps, they are to adapt the basic shape by using traditional Chugach designs, features, and coloration.

Class II:

1. Review the mask making steps. Divide the class into pairs and distribute the mask making supplies.
2. Lay down newspapers or a drop cloth to protect the workspace and floor.
3. Ask students to cut newspaper strips for their masks.
4. If making their own face molds, have pieces of tin foil already cut in squares and have them get 6 pieces. Follow the directions from one or the other tutorials:
 - a. **Make a papier mache mask out of nothing** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-pVIs4hVc7E>
 - b. **Aluminum Foil Mold for Papier Mache**
 - i. Step One- tinfoil mold https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dxm4S_2WwI4
 - ii. Step Two- Paper Mache <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=41tVWPLJwpQ>
5. If using **milk jug** or **balloons** follow the corresponding instructions:
 - a. How to make a paper mache mask using a milk jug https://www.google.com/search?q=how+to+make+paper+mache+masks+step+by+step&rlz=1C1CHBD_enUS797US797&oq=How+to+&aqs=chrome.0.69i59j69i57j35i39j0l3.3670j0j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#kpvalbx=_7Vo7XfGYLpPs9APrzIvgAw25
 - b. How to make a papier mache mask using a balloon [https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Papier-M%3%A2ch%3%A9-Mask-\(for-Kids\)](https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Papier-M%3%A2ch%3%A9-Mask-(for-Kids))

6. When ready for putting strips on mold, hand out paste mixture already prepared in bowls, or have the students mix their own, depending on age group.
7. Begin the first layer of the mask. Dampen one newspaper strips at a time and lay it horizontally. Larger strips are on the bigger areas of the mask. Smoothing out as you go.
8. Dry thoroughly.
9. Begin the second layer by focusing first on the weak areas. Use the 2” x 3” inch strips to create a uniform layer.
 - a. Dampen and place strips now vertically. Smoothing out as you go.
10. Dry thoroughly.
11. Examine base layers for any weaknesses. Check to see if any skin, (mold, milk jug, or balloon) shows through, that the pieces overlap sufficiently, and are not too spread out. Fill with more strips as needed.
12. Take a break and let the mask set. Cut strips or clean up a bit before applying the third layer. The mask should ‘set’, but not start drying.
13. Begin the third layer. Start at the edges, and fold the tails of the strips down around the edges of the mask to smooth them out. This eliminates the sharp corners left by the initial layers.
 - a. Add the third layer horizontally. Cut any strip to size as needed. Making sure to cover all over, avoiding eyes and mouth.
14. Dry thoroughly.
15. Build any prominent features such as a bigger nose, eyebrow ridges, etc.
 - a. Do this by adding narrow pieces in layers and smoothing them into shape.
 - b. Emphasize this is time to incorporate traditional Sugpiaq/Alutiiq mask features.
16. Place the masks on a rack to dry overnight, if need, place fans to speed up the drying process. Clean up workspace.

Class III:

1. Attach additional elements with more strips.
2. If want to add large components, it is best to attach and coat them with additional plaster strips. Use the same overlapping techniques used for the base.
3. Note that features you may wish to attach include such appendages, be creative, like for a beak, fold a paper plate in half) or big bumps like big nose, cheekbones or chin use scrunched up newspaper or paper based modeling clay. Spread a base layer of the paste onto the mask, and then add pieces strategically until the mask feels and looks right. Can use masking tape to hold down the pieces and layer over pasted strips.
4. Allow the mask to dry thoroughly overnight again before painting or sanding.

Class IV:

1. Paint the mask white all over for a good base.
2. Dry thoroughly.
3. Sand down rough spots and brush off any debris.
4. Use a 1/4" drill bit to [drill holes](#) or carefully work a hole into the sides of the mask by hand with a sharp object for ties. (If making hoops around the mask, drill more holes as needed to be able to tie the hoops down.)
5. Paint masks as desired.
6. Dry thoroughly.

Class VI:

1. Thread wire, yarn, or elastic through holes to support mask for wearing.
2. Decorate as desired, with feathers, twigs, beads, filament wire, etc.
3. Invite students to describe their masks noting which traditional elements were incorporated in their masks.
4. *Optional:* Have students write the story told by their masks and using Sugpiaq/Eyak vocabulary words.

Assessments:

- Students can explain the meaning and artistic style of Chugach Region masks.
- Students successfully designed and created a papier mache mask.
- Students can correctly pronounce Sugt'stun/Eyak vocabulary words.

ⁱ Birket-Smith, Kaj. *The Chugach Eskimo*. Nationalmuseets Publikationsfond, Kobenhavn, 1953. Pp.109.

How to Make a Paper Mache Mask Out of a Milk Jug

Step One- Cover your workspace with an old tablecloth or sheets of newspaper, and wear something to protect your clothes.

Step Two- With strong scissors, cut the cleaned and dry plastic jug in half lengthwise. Turn the jug upside-down: the handle serves as the mask's nose.

Step Three- Cut the desired shape of eyes and mouth out.

Step Four- Tear newspaper and white computer paper into strips about one inch by six inches. Ripping the paper strips by hand works better than cutting it. You will need enough pieces to cover your mask with three layers of newspaper and one layer of white copy paper, plus extra paper for molding facial features as desired.

Step Five- Whisk two cups of flour and one cup of water into a paste, adding a bit more of either, if needed, to reach a gluey consistency. (You can also use Elmer's glue thinned out with water.)

Step Six- Layering strips:

1. One by one, dip a newspaper strip into the paste, shake off the excess, and lay it flat against the mask horizontally, taking care not to cover the holes. Overlap each strip with a new one.
2. When finished with the first layer, let it dry completely.
3. Second layer, apply strips vertically. Dry completely.
4. If you are putting away your project for the night, store the unused paste in the refrigerator and microwave it for a minute before using.
5. Apply the strips for the third layer horizontally.
6. After applied three layers, mold some of the newspaper strips into desired features like cheekbones, chin, eyebrows, etc.
7. Make last layer out of the torn computer paper, applying the strips vertically.

Step Seven- When the mask is completely dry, paint and decorate as desired.

Video: How to make a Paper Mache Mask using a milk jug

https://www.google.com/search?q=how+to+make+paper+mache+masks+step+by+step&rlz=1C1CHBD_enUS797US797&oq=How+to+&aqs=chrome.69i59j69i57j35i39j0l3.3670j0j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#kpvalbx=_7Vo7XfGYLpPs9APrzIvgAw25