

Art Project

Paper Mache Face Mask

This project is best done with intermediate (4-7) students. Younger students may have trouble with the instructions. For an easy mask project you can do with them please see the bottom of page 3.

Materials ~ large pieces of cardboard, newspaper, white tissue paper (the dye from coloured tissue will stain the students hands), brown craft paper or brown paper bags, glue (from recipe), masking tape, painting and decorating supplies, sewing elastic, stapler.

Glue Recipe

1. Whisk together 1 cup of cold water with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of white flour in a sauce pan until there are no lumps.
2. Add 4 cups of water.
3. Bring mixture to a boil, stirring regularly
4. Cool (lukewarm is okay).
5. Add a couple of tablespoons of white glue. While this step is optional, it will help to strengthen the final mask.

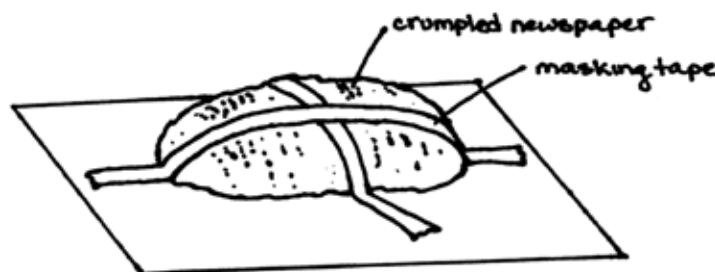
* This glue will keep in the fridge for a week. If left out, it will go mouldy in a couple of days.

Advance Preparation ~

1. Make glue
2. Tear (don't cut) the brown paper into pieces, roughly 12" x 12".
3. Cut tissue into squares, roughly 6" x 6"
4. For the optional layer: tear newspaper into 2" pieces

Instructions ~

1. Crumple two or three pieces of newspaper.
2. Wrap them with another piece of newspaper to create a round or oval shape.
3. Secure this newspaper ball onto a large piece of cardboard with masking tape.



Art Project

Paper Mache Face Mask

4. Wet the brown paper pieces. Wring out excess water. This helps break down the fibers in the paper making it more pliable.
5. Tear the damp brown paper into smaller pieces, roughly 2" x 2"
6. One piece at a time, apply a thin coating of glue to the damp brown paper and place on the newspaper form. Completely cover the newspaper with one layer of brown paper.
7. During this next step students will create the features for their mask. Features they can create are a nose, eyes, eyebrows, mouth, cheeks, chin, warts ... the possibilities are endless! To create the features for your mask lightly apply glue to the tissue paper (a little glue on your fingers is enough). The glue will turn the tissue into a molding medium similar to clay that can be manipulated and shaped. Repeat this step, building and shaping the tissue until satisfied with the features on the mask.
8. Optional Layer: This layer is not absolutely necessary. However, it will make the mask stronger and last longer. One piece at a time, apply a thin coating of glue to the newspaper strips. Completely cover the mask with one layer of newspaper.
9. Apply a layer of brown paper over the mask in the same manner as before.
10. Take a look at the mask. Are you happy with the mask features? If it needs something else (bigger eyebrows, longer nose...) add more tissue paper in the same manner as before and re-cover with brown paper, as before.
11. Allow to dry completely. This usually takes 24 - 48 hours depending on the warmth of the room.
12. Remove the dried mask from the cardboard backing.
13. Remove the newspaper form from the inside of the mask. Some newspaper will now be attached to the mask.
14. Trim the edge of the mask.
15. Cut eyeholes in the mask. As everyone is different, the location for the holes will need to be gauged for each individual student. The best way to locate eyeholes on these types of masks is to hold them up to the student's face and have the student point to where they feel their eyes are.
16. Apply a layer of brown paper (lightly coated with glue) around the edge of the mask. This will prevent the layers from separating.
17. Allow to dry.
18. Allow the students to paint and decorate their mask. Encourage them to use embellishments to make their mask unique (eg: sparkles, feathers, leaves, yarn ...).

cont'd...

Art Project

Paper Mache Face Mask

19. To wear, staple a piece of sewing elastic on the inside edge on either side of the mask
The elastic will need to be measured and cut based on the students head size.

Making Masks with Younger Students

This is a fun and easy project to do with young children. Using a pre-made mask as the base means that the mask comes ready to wear – it just needs decorating!

Materials ~

- Masks – you can use either full masks or ½ size masks (like the Lone Ranger). These are usually easily (and inexpensively!) found at dollar stores.
- Decorating supplies (feathers, sparkles, rhinestones, sequins, leaves...).
- Fast drying white glue suitable for crafting (Aleene's Fast Grab Tacky Glue is a good choice and is available at Michael's).