

Cycle 1, Week 4 – African Masks

Materials:

- Drawing paper
- Pencils
- Colored pencils or markers
- Images of traditional mask designs
(see <http://www.artfactory.com/africanmasks/information/african-mask-patterns.htm>, free African mask clip art PDF)
- **Optional for younger students:** print-out of mask shapes

1. Discuss the term “abstract”. Look at images of African masks. Do they have characteristics of a human face? Is it a realistic representation of a human face? What kind of stylization did the artists use (how did they change the features/shapes to reflect the style of their culture)?

NOTE: Throughout this lesson, have students continually look at the traditional mask designs for inspiration. The images can be placed around the table so students can see them and pass them around for a closer look.

2. Students draw their mask outline on their paper. Help students use the entire space and create a symmetrical shape.

3. Lightly draw a line horizontally in the center of the mask. Draw stylized eyes along this line.

5. Draw a nose and mouth below.

6. Choose a feature to emphasize. Ask students how we can emphasize something in a design.

Some options:

- Make it larger than surrounding parts
- Leave negative space around the emphasized part
- Use more detail or pattern in that area
- Use a bolder color to fill it in

7. Start by adding design to the emphasized feature. Move out from there, adding abstract design elements throughout the mask. Encourage students to study the traditional African mask designs and think about the OILS used.

8. Use colored pencils or markers to complete the artwork.





