

Faces of Civilization

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Intermediate Lessons



 San Antonio Museum of Art

San Antonio Museum of Art

Faces of Civilization

Intermediate Section – Mask, Magic, & Mirrors



Overview

The purpose of the materials contained here is to help the students develop the skills and knowledge they need to make cross-cultural comparisons in art and life, drawing on the museum's collections. The lessons provide connected learning for diverse audiences. Throughout this unit students will be engaged in

- exploring different kinds of symmetry and mirror images
- connecting with the masks as a concept and how they relate to and reflect or distort facial proportions
- understanding cultural implications in expression and countenance
- recognizing metaphysical content and mythological context as portrayed across time and cultures with non-verbal messages through objects of art such as masks and portraits

Suggested activities and materials support educators before, during, and after a museum visit. The intermediate section is designed for middle school students. It encourages an examination of the philosophical implications of the works of art. By examining a variety of masks and objects, students experience ways that artists communicate. Students also have an opportunity to personalize information through self-examination and reflection.

Key Questions

What can we learn about ourselves and other people, cultures, and times from the way faces in art objects are presented or disguised?

Objective/Goals/Learning Outcomes

- Throughout this unit students should be able to:
- Understand and name different forms of the symmetries
- Create and/or perform symmetrical patterns and mirror images
- Think about the transformational aspects of masks as examples of symmetrical art forms
- Create simple symmetrical mask forms
- Anticipate the idea of hidden messages behind the masks of diverse cultures
- Identify a particular artwork and describe it using meaningful vocabulary
- Recognize how aspects of the artist's culture influence the materials and construction of the artwork, including its symmetrical connections
- Experience the creation of original artworks based on their museum observations
- Understand the symbolic symmetrical connection between masks and the creator or wearer
- Make informed judgments on the part the artworks played in the practical and spiritual aspects of the culture

Vocabulary

bark cloth
clay pigments
disguise
helmet masks
motif
rattan
representation
static
symbol
symmetrical
taboo

Quotes

"Art takes nature as its model."

— **Aristotle**

"The sculptor, and the painter also, should be trained in these liberal arts: grammar, geometry, philosophy, medicine, astronomy, perspective, history, anatomy, theory of design, arithmetic."

— **Lorenzo Ghiberti**

"I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way...things I had no words for."

— **Georgia O'Keeffe**

"Culture is something that evolves out of the simple, enduring elements of everyday life; elements most truthfully expressed in the folk arts and crafts of a nation."

— **Thor Hansen**

"Every great work of art has two faces, one toward its own time and one toward the future, toward eternity."

— **Daniel Barenboim**

"I want to make high art that is funny, outrageous and also reveals the human condition, which is not always high."

— **Robert Arneson**

"The aim off art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance."

— **Aristotle**

Student Worksheet
Pre-Visit Activity #1: What's in a Face?

Name: _____

Date: _____



Face One

"There are quantities of human faces, but there are many more faces, for each person has several." — **Rainer Maria Rilke**



Face Two

The **San Antonio Museum of Art** is more than a collection of paintings, sculptures, and objects. It is a collection of stories told by people from all over the world across time. But because these stories are without words, many of them must be read in the faces we see there. Sometimes the faces are mysterious or strange. Look at the two faces above. You will learn more about them when you can see them in person, but for right now, study them and write ten words for each one that help describe them.

Face ONE:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Face TWO:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Student Worksheet: page 2
Pre-Visit Activity #1: What's in a Face?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Can you guess two things that the faces/figures have in common, that make them alike?

Which face do you like best? Why?

Study the two faces below:



Face Three



Face Four

Name three ways they are different:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

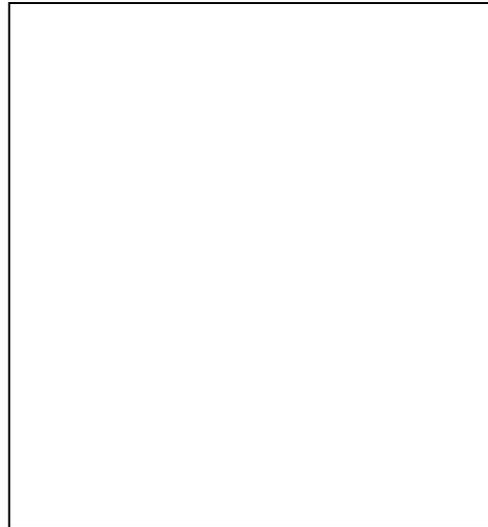
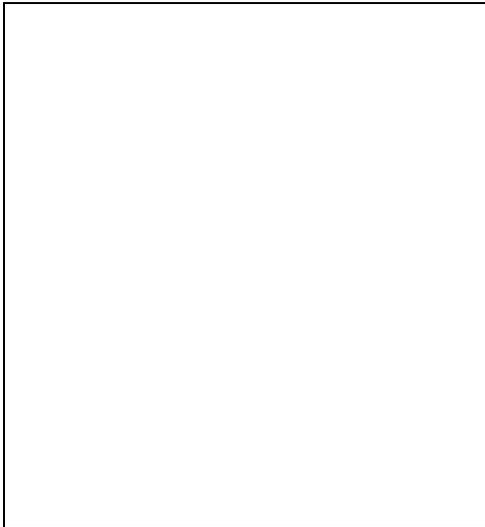
Name three ways they are alike:

4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Student Worksheet – pg. 3
Pre-Visit Activity #1

Name: _____

Date: _____



In the spaces above, draw two self-portraits. The one on the left should reflect how you feel on a very good day. The one on the right should show how you feel on a very bad day. Is either face your "real" face? Using those drawings as examples, explain what the quote at the beginning of this worksheets means.

"There are quantities of human faces, but there are many more faces, for each person has several." — **Rainer Maria Rilke**

You will see masks at the museum, as well. Think of three reasons why people of all cultures might have made and worn masks. Have you ever worn a mask? Why? How did it make you feel?

What's in a face? You'll find some surprising answers at the San Antonio Museum of Art.

Student Worksheet
Pre-Visit Activity #2: Museum Journal

Name: _____

Date: _____

Materials - Journal

Activity - A journal helps us anticipate, experience, remember and reflect on our experiences. Each of you will keep a museum journal before, during, and after your visit to the San Antonio Museum of Art. In it, you will write ideas, make drawings and anything else that you wish to save for yourself or others. Here are some of the questions you should think about as you make your museum journal entries:

- What was the most interesting thing to me?
- What ideas did I get from what I saw?
- What did I already know about?
- What things were new to me?
- What did I do best?
- What do I need to work on?
- What would I like to know more about at the Museum?

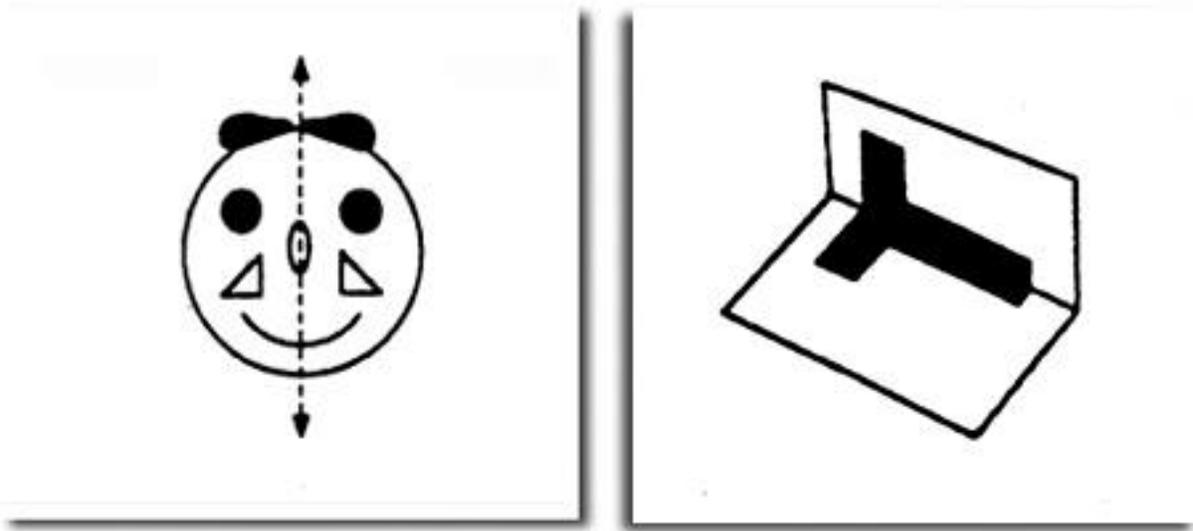
Student Worksheet
Pre-Visit Activity #3: Reflectional Symmetry

Name: _____

Date: _____

Materials - Student Worksheet

Activity - Sometimes reflectional symmetry is also called mirror symmetry because half a figure with reflectional symmetry is a mirror image of its other half. If a figure can be reflected along some line in such a way that the resulting image coincides with the original, then the figure has reflectional symmetry. Reflectional symmetry is also called line symmetry. The dividing line is called the axis of symmetry or the line of symmetry.



Think of two examples of reflective symmetry in nature.

Student Worksheet

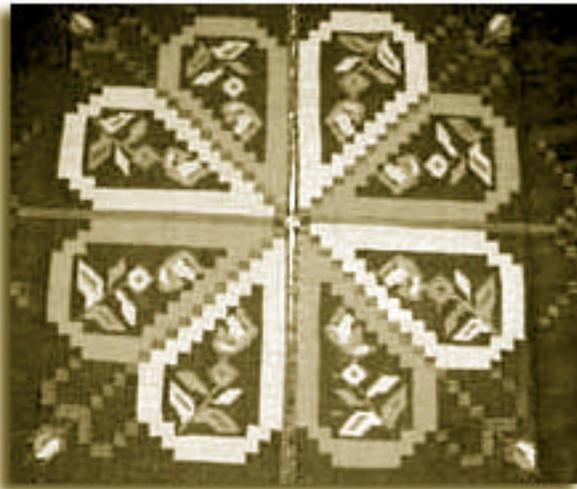
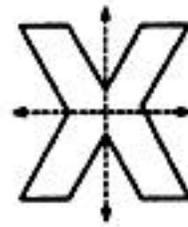
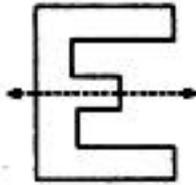
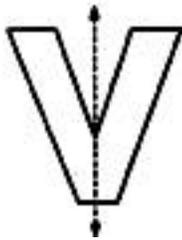
Pre-Activity #4: Vertical, Horizontal, and Horizontal/Vertical Symmetry

Name: _____

Date: _____

Materials: Student Worksheet

Activity: If a figure's line of symmetry is vertical, the figure has vertical symmetry. The letter **V** has a vertical axis of symmetry. Likewise, if the line of symmetry is horizontal, the figure has a horizontal symmetry. The letter **E** has horizontal symmetry. Some figures, like the letter **X**, have both horizontal and vertical symmetry.



Look at this textile design from the Latin American Wing at the San Antonio Museum of Art.

Does it have symmetry? If so, what kind?

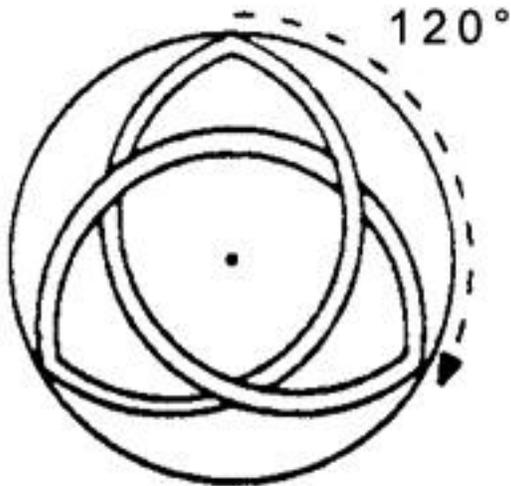
Student Worksheet
Pre-Visit Activity #5: Rotational Symmetry

Name: _____

Date: _____

Materials - Student Worksheet

Activity – If a figure can be rotated in degrees around a point in such a way that the resulting image coincides with the original figure, then the figure has rotational symmetry.



You can trace a figure and test it for rotational symmetry. Place the copy exactly over the original, put your pen or pencil point on the center to hold it down, rotate the copy, and try to make the copy and the original coincide. The letter Z has a rotational symmetry of 180 degrees because when it is rotated 180 degrees around a point, the image coincides with the original figure. A figure can have more than one type of rotational symmetry. The figure on the left has rotational symmetries of 120° and 240°. The figure on the right has rotational symmetries of 90°, 180°, and 270°.

Can you think of examples of rotational symmetry in nature?

Student Worksheet
Pre-Visit Activity #6: Symmetry Notebook

Name: _____

Date: _____

Materials - Student Worksheet

Activity - Start a Symmetry Notebook. Look through magazines and collect 20 pictures that show the five main kinds of symmetry. Label each kind.

- Reflectional
- Vertical
- Horizontal
- Horizontal and Vertical
- Rotational

Examples to look for - flowers, butterflies, and, of course, faces.



Student Worksheet
Pre-Visit Activity #7: Scott Kim's Web Site

Name: _____

Date: _____

Materials - Computer with Internet access

Activity - A Visit to Scott Kim's Web site
(<http://www.scottkim.com/>)



Scott Kim, author of the book *Inversions*, has a wonderful interactive and educational web site all about reflections and symmetry in objects and movement. Visit his web site at www.scottkim.com and try out some of the symmetry worksheets and games.

Student Worksheet
Museum-Visit Activity #1: Malanggan (Malagan) Mask

Name: _____

Date: _____

Materials - Student Worksheet or Journal

Activity - Based on these cultural clues, write the outline of a short story about a fictional day on one of the islands of New Ireland, and a ceremony during which this mask was worn. You will finish and illustrate the story after your museum visit. Make good guesses from both knowledge and observations. Include other objects from this gallery if you think they would fit into your story.



Malanggan Mask
20th Century
New Ireland,
Melanesia
Painted Wood
Gift of Gilbert M.



What do we know?

While the artists of New Ireland continue to execute the designs handed down to them by their ancestors, their artistic expressions are not merely the product of a static tradition. Each generation includes motifs relevant to its own experience. The creator of this mask included representations of two figures in European dress. The mask is wood. It was made since 1900. It is from the country of New Ireland in Melanesia.

Student Worksheet: page 2

Museum-Visit Activity #1: Malanggan (Malagan) Mask

What can we guess?

- Did a man or woman build the mask?
- What was it used for?
- Why are the eyes filled in - why are there no eye holes?
- Why are the two European figures included on the spires?
- What do the colors symbolize?

What cultural clues can help us make better guesses?

- The People of New Ireland have three distinct cultural practices, the Malagan, the Kabai, and the Tumbuan.
- There are still areas in New Ireland that still observe the rules of Malagannan carving in their cultural feasts.
- The term Malagan refers to both the various carving forms and the complex ceremonies in which they are used.
- All ceremonial life is somehow tied to Malagan ritual in New Ireland. A man is involved with these ceremonies starting with his birth initiation, continuing throughout life's important passages, and terminating with a Malagan feast of honor at his death.
- Aspects of Malagan traditions were sacred and confined to a clan or a family and were not given to anybody who was not entitled to them, nor would they be given to someone from outside the clan without a genuine reason or an agreement.
- When a part of the clan's Malagan heritage (such as a specific art pattern) was transferred, traditional shell money was offered in exchange
- A Malagan feast is often staged to remember and honor a death in the family.
- A Malagan feast usually include: carvings, shell money and locally grown tobacco, pigs, garden food, and vegetables, seafoods, traditional dances

What Malagan ceremonies use mask?

- Burial or funeral masks made with bark cloth and feathers
- Heavy carved wood masks which are carried or worn but not danced - they remove major taboos
- Lighter carved wood or bark cloth masks which remove lesser taboos or represent requests for payments or donations
- Helmet masks, which are worn by dancers - only the strongest can wear these masks
- Malagan objects of art are is specially commissioned for a particular, one-time ceremony such as a funeral feast, and then deliberately left to perish in the elements. Therefore, few examples are found in museums.

Student Worksheet
Museum-Visit Activity #2: Basketry Yam Mask

Name: _____

Date: _____

Materials - Student Worksheet or Journal

Activity - Based on these cultural clues, write the outline of a poem or song celebrating the yam, sacred crop of the Maprik people. Use vivid words. You will finish and perform the poem or song after your museum visit. Make good guesses from both knowledge and observations. Include other objects from this gallery if you think they would fit into your song or poem.

What do we know?

Basket masks, made of rattan, are regarded as female representations despite the fact that in the Maprik district they are woven exclusively by men. The men take a large blade of grass and, using their teeth, strip out the center, using the outer edges to be used as weft to cover the foundation coils of the mask. Most masks are painted with local clay pigments and natural dyes. Yam masks are also connected with clan initiations and yam cultivation. This mask is made from plant material. It was made in the early 1900's. It was made by the Maprik people of Papua, New Guinea.



Basketry Yam Mask

Numbungai people,
Early 20th Century
Southern Maprik District
Papua New Guinea
Rattan
Gift of Gilbert M. Denman, Jr.

What can we observe?

- Is this mask totally symmetrical?
- Would it fit on someone's head?
- Are the colors bright or subdued?
- Could you see out of this mask?
- Is it life-sized?
- Approximately how tall and wide is the mask?
- What is the expression...good?...evil?...neither?

What can we guess?

- Did a man or woman build the mask?
- What was it used for?
- What do the colors symbolize?
- What does the object on top of the mask represent?

Student Worksheet: page 2
Museum-Visit Activity #2: Basketry Yam Mask

Here are some cultural clues that can help us make better guesses:

- Basket yam masks are an essential part of these people's yam harvest.
- They cultivate yams as their main staple crop.
- Rituals associated with yams are a major part of their spiritual life.
- Digging sticks and special yam shovels with clan figures on top are used to prepare the deep, soft soil to grow the yams.
- A man's status is judged by his ability to grow ceremonial long yams which can reach 9-12 feet.
- At the harvest festival, the best yams are displayed. If they are straight, they are considered to be male. If they have protuberances, they are considered female.
- The best yams are dressed with masks and named as ancestral figures. Feathers, bright flowers, fruits, and colorful leaves are added to the display. A man does not keep his own long yams, but exchanges them with his traditional partner from another village.

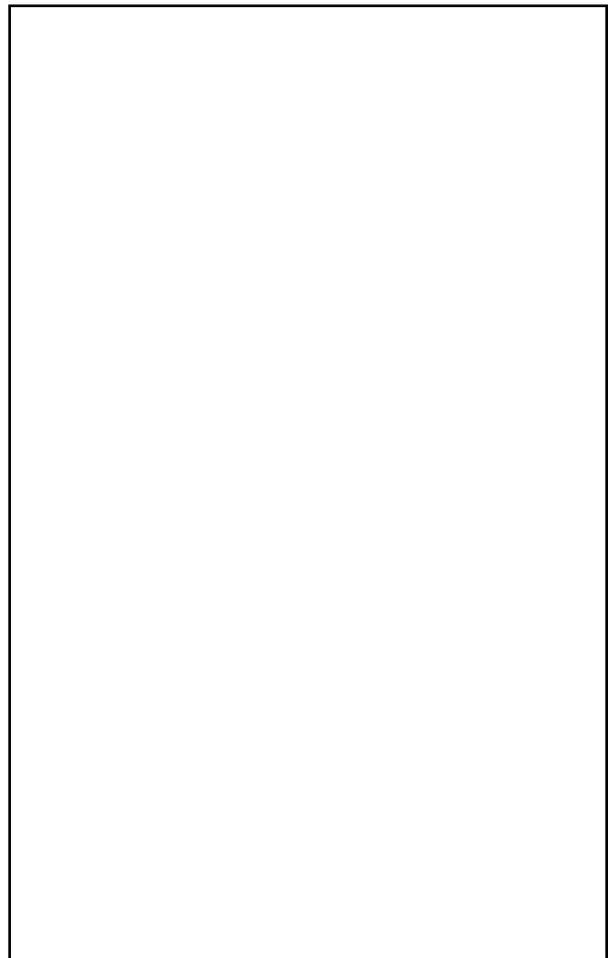
Student Worksheet
Museum-Visit Activity #3: Mexican Mask

Name: _____ Date: _____

Materials: Student worksheet or sketchbook, pencils, colored pencils, crayons

Activity - Now that you have examined and analyzed two masks in Oceanic Gallery, it's time to make your own observations on a mask of your choosing. Spend some time looking at the masks from Mexico in the Latin American Wing. Masks are widely used for all kinds of ceremonies and celebrations in Mexico. Find a mask that appeals to you visually and do a detailed sketch of it in the box below or in your sketchbook. Then answer the following questions.

1. What do you like about this particular mask?
2. What was its purpose?
3. What is it made of?
4. How is it decorated?
5. Is it symmetrical?
6. What is the predominant emotion shown in the face?
7. What kind of person might wear this mask?



Student Worksheet

Post-Visit Activity #1: Symmetrical Name Collage

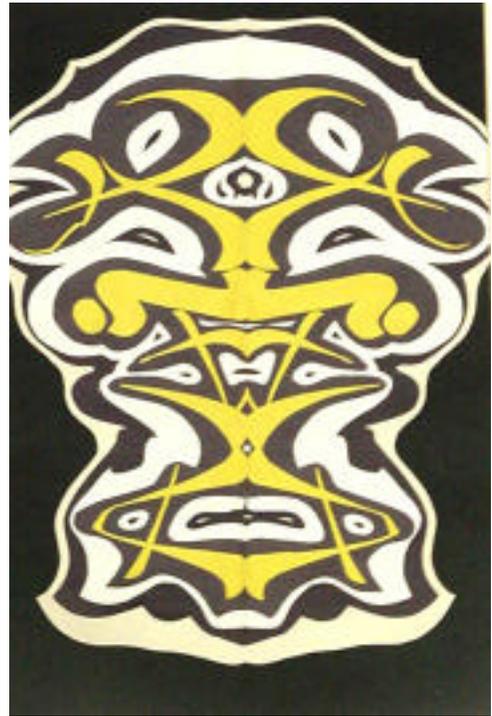
Name: _____

Date: _____

Materials

construction paper (fadeless paper will preserve the students' artwork)
markers, map colors, or crayons
glue
scissors

Activity - This is a project which results in a beautiful design not unlike some of the masks you saw at the Museum. **The example is the name Lisa.**



1. Begin by selecting five sheets of 12" x18" construction paper in different, coordinating colors. Think of the colors that were used on some of the masks at the museum: reds, oranges, black, golds – colors like those made from natural pigments.
2. Take the first piece of construction paper and fold it in half (lengthwise) (it should be 6" x18" when folded). Write your name in cursive along the fold with the top of the letters pointing away from the fold. Try to make large, interesting loops or angles, and also leave about two inches of room at the ends for future layers (see following directions).
3. Trace around the original writing, outlining it about 1/4" outside the letters and 1/4" inside the letters that have interior loops, such as "e" and "a".
4. Now, cut out your name with scissors along the second wider outlines. You may need to use the point of the scissors to get inside letters such as "b" and "p" that have narrow loops. Keep the paper folded as you cut.
5. Unfold the paper and see the attractive design you have made. What kind of symmetry does it represent? Turn it pencil-side down and glue it to the center of the second piece of paper.
6. Again, cut about 1/4" outside the outlines. Get inside the loops if you have space. You are building layered complexity in your symmetrical collage. Continue cutting through four pieces of construction paper, leaving the final piece as the background.
7. Mat and display your collage vertically – it is an intriguing study in symmetry that also shows a layered technique similar to the Mola embroideries of South America. To find out more about Molas, visit <http://thorup.com/makeamola.html>.

Student Worksheet
Post-Visit Activity #2: Story Reading

Name: _____

Date: _____

Materials - Journal

Activity - When you visited the Oceania Gallery at the Museum, you wrote the outline of a short story about a fictional day on one of the islands of New Ireland, and a ceremony during which this mask was worn. Using your notes, finish and illustrate your story. Make good guesses from both knowledge and observations.

You may choose to collect these stories in a classroom book or you may read them out loud as a group (or both).

Student Worksheet
Post-Visit Activity #3: Poem or Song Performance

Name: _____ Date: _____

Materials - Journal

Activity - When you visited the Oceania gallery at the museum, you made notes about the people who made the Yam Masks - present your poem or song to your class. Collect these songs and poems in a book. This is the way traditions are handed down from generation to generation, sometimes by the written word and sometimes by the retelling of songs and stories.

Student Worksheet

Post-Visit Activity #4: Constructing a Mask

Name: _____

Date: _____

Materials

- Round balloon
- Shoe box
- Petroleum jelly
- Materials for papier mache: Tissue paper, Newspaper, White glue
- Gesso
- Poster paint or acrylic paint
- Varnish

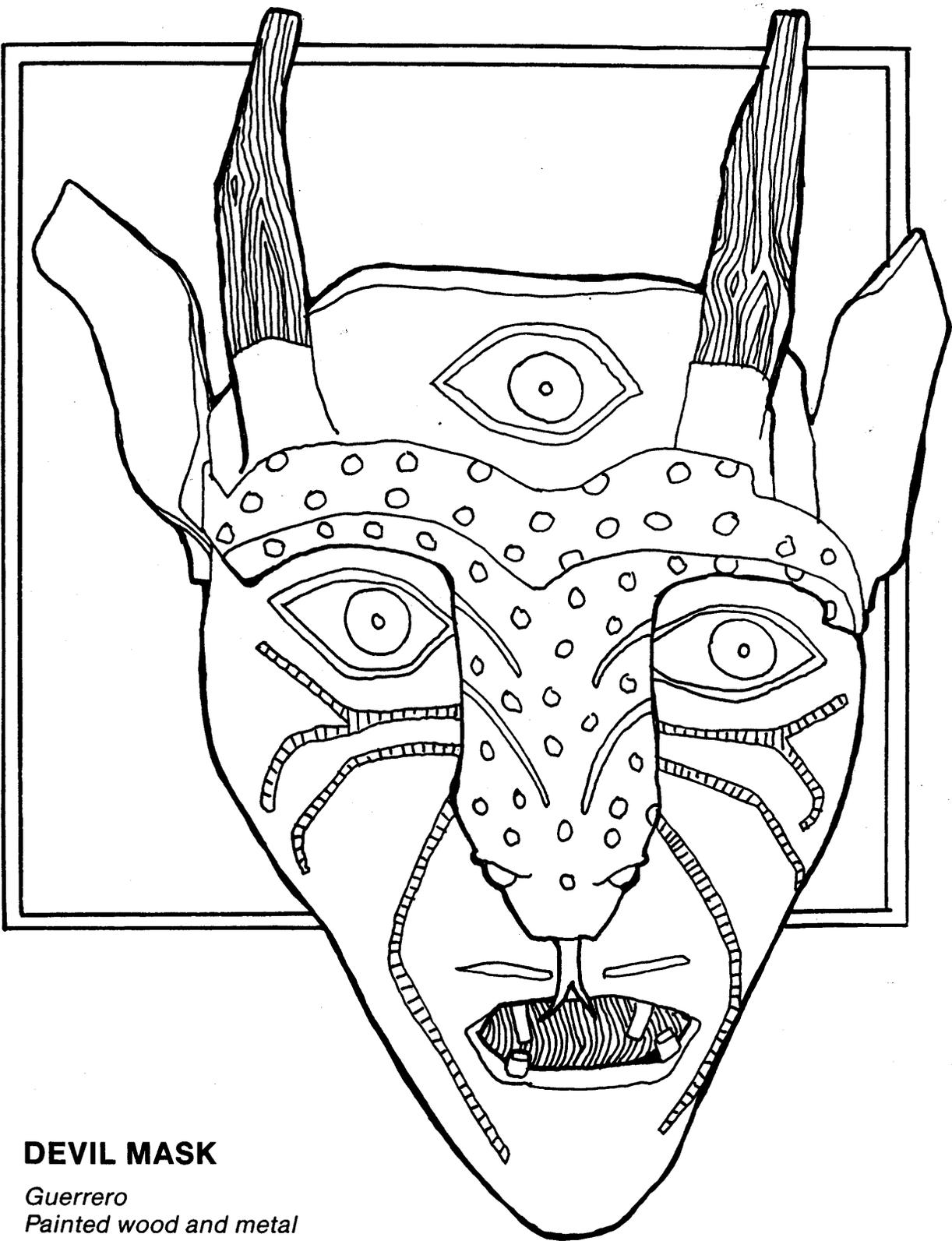
Activity - Masks are a traditional part of celebrations in many parts of Mexico. They may be used to honor the dead, to drive away a taboo, to honor a legendary character, or to "become" an animal or another creature. While you were at the museum, you looked at many masks from Mexico and Latin America and chose one that appealed to you visually. Now you will get the chance to construct a mask based on your sketches and observations.

- Blow up the balloon to face size and tie it off.
- Wedge it into the shoe box to form an oval shape.
- Cover the top surface with petroleum jelly.
- Add three layers of papier mache (strips of newspaper and tissue paper dipped in white glue diluted with 50 percent water).
- Allow to dry.
- Draw the face on the shape (see your notes or the masks in the next section for ideas).
- Build up the features with folded and glued papier mache. Add three more layers over the raised features and allow to dry.
- When dry, ease the mask off the balloon and neaten the edges with more papier mache.
- Paint the mask with Gesso for a clean white surface.
- Re-draw the designs and paint with poster paint or acrylics.
- Varnish.

Display of Mask

- Hang them all on a wall in a museum-like display
- Wear them when you sing your song or recite your poem
- Write a short lesson about your mask, including a picture, that will teach an elementary student about the masks of Mexico.

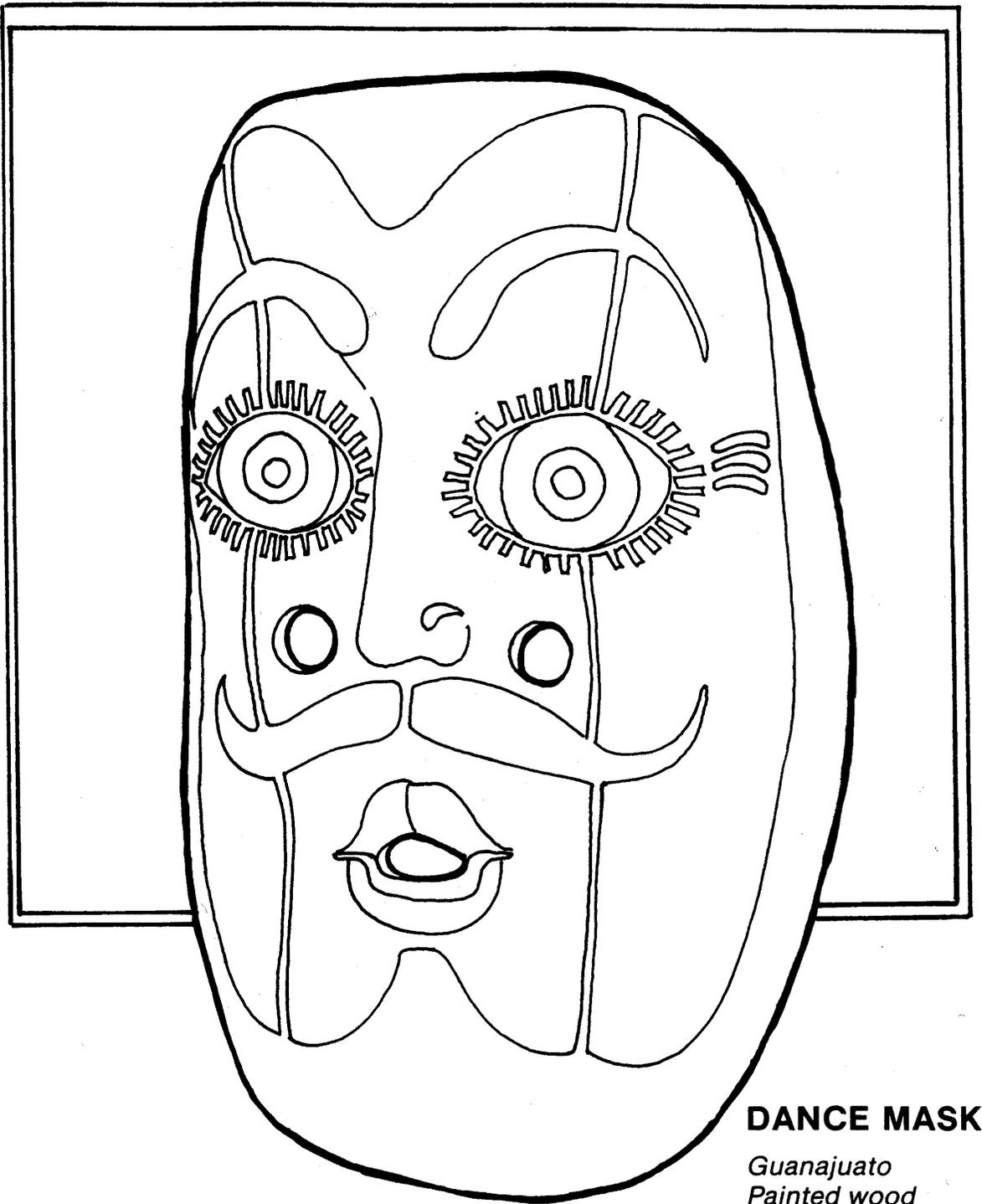
Sample Masks



DEVIL MASK

Guerrero

Painted wood and metal



DANCE MASK

*Guanajuato
Painted wood*

Intermediate: Mask, Magic, and Mirrors
Assessment: Pre-Visit

	Outstanding	Met Criteria	Minimum
Activity #1	Worksheet is carefully complete and student is highly involved in examining and comparing the faces.	Worksheet is complete and student is involved in comparing the faces.	Worksheet is mostly complete and student gives only cursory comparisons.
Activity #2	Student has prepared an attractive journal with the preview questions and is anticipating its use during visit.	Student has prepared a journal for use at the museum and has written the visit questions	Student has a blank journal to take to the museum.
Activity #3	Worksheet is carefully complete and student is highly involved in examining and comparing the faces.	Worksheet is complete and student is involved in comparing the faces.	Worksheet is mostly complete and student gives only cursory comparisons.
Activity #4	Student has examined the museum example and given at least one correct answer regarding its symmetry.	Student has given one correct answer about the type of symmetry.	Student has completed worksheet.
Activity #5	Student has listed at least five examples of rotational symmetry in nature.	Student has listed at least three examples of rotational symmetry in nature.	Student has given one example of rotational symmetry in nature.
Activity #6	Notebook is carefully complete with more than 20 examples of symmetry and student is engaged in discussing examples.	Notebook is complete with 20 examples of symmetry and student can discuss contents.	Notebook is mostly complete.
Activity #7	Student has visited the web site, accessed at least six of the activities and worksheets, completed at least four, and is completely engaged with the concepts.	Student has visited the web site and has completed at least three of the activities and worksheets.	Student has visited the web site.

Intermediate: Mask, Magic, and Mirrors
Assessment: Museum-Visit

	Outstanding	Met Criteria	Minimum
Activity #1	Student has answered the six observation questions completely and thoughtfully in museum journal. Students has answered the five speculative questions completely based on the cultural clues and his or her own observation. Complete story outline has been written in museum journal with illustrations and diagrams.	Student has answered the six observation questions and the five speculative questions completely based on thoughtful observation. Story outline is complete and includes some drawings	Students has answered most of the observation and speculative questions in the museum journal. Student has an outline for a story which will be completed as a post-visit activity.
Activity #2	Student has answered the seven observation questions completely and thoughtfully in museum journal. Students has answered the four speculative questions completely based on the cultural clues and his or her own observation. Complete poem or song outline has been written in museum journal with illustrations and diagrams.	Student has answered the seven observation questions and the four speculative questions completely based on thoughtful observation. Poem or song outline is complete and includes some drawings	Students has answered most of the observation and speculative questions in the museum journal. Student has an outline for a poem or song which will be completed as a post-visit activity.
Activity #3	. Student's drawing of the mask is complete and detailed. Student has answered the seven analytical questions thoughtfully based on both opinion and museum information.	Student has drawn mask with some detail and has answered all of the questions using opinion and museum information	Student has sketched mask and has answered most of the seven analytical questions

Intermediate: Mask, Magic, and Mirrors
Assessment: Post-Visit

	Outstanding	Met Criteria	Minimum
Activity #1	Paper colors are selected skillfully and reflect museum experience. Collage evidences careful craftsmanship in cutting and gluing. Collage is displayed to advantage with well-constructed coordinating mat.	Paper colors are appropriate to the design. Cutting is done accurately according to basic directions. Collage is neatly matted.	Five different colors are used. Cutting on each layer is acceptable. Collage is matted for display.
Activity #2	Short story is thoughtful, complete, and reflects many details about the culture that objects in the Oceania Gallery represent.	Short story is complete and includes several details about the culture that objects in the Oceania Gallery represent.	. Short story is mostly complete and contains some references to the culture reflected in the Oceania Gallery.
Activity #3	Song or poem is complete in theme and content and has rich details that accurately reflect the culture shown through objects in the Oceania Gallery.	Song or poem is complete and has many details about the culture shown through objects in the Oceania Gallery.	Song or poem is fairly complete and has some details about the culture shown through objects in the Oceania Gallery.
Activity #4	he finished mask shows excellence in design and craftsmanship and reflects the form and detail of those found in the Latin American Gallery.	The finished mask is well-constructed and shows designs that are culturally accurate.	The finished mask is well-constructed and shows designs that are culturally accurate.

Intermediate: Mask, Magic, and Mirrors Extensions

Language Arts

- Make a list of all of the words you can think of that have mirror symmetry. Words like **MOM**, **WOW**, and **TOOT** all look like their images when seen in a mirror. Draw the words in the space below.
- This is a mummy mask from the Egyptian Gallery at the San Antonio Museum of Art. It is from the Ptolemaic Period, 304-330 B.C. Look at the gilt face and the lively expression. Write a short biography about this person from the "clues" you can read in the face of the mask. Here are some ideas to get you started.



- *How old is this person?*
 - *Is it male or female?*
 - *What is its name?*
 - *What was its occupation?*
 - *What was its favorite color?*
 - *Did it have a pet?*
 - *What did it have for breakfast?*
 - *Did it have a job?*
- Share your story with others in class and see how many of your answers agree based on the facial clues found in this mask.

Social Studies

- For discussion: Are masks important today? We might not think so, but masks are still being used in many ways. For example:
 - *In the operating room to prevent the spread of germs*
 - *As protection for painters and builders*
 - *During burglaries*
 - *In the theatre*
 - *Where else do you see masks being used, and for what purposes?*
- For discussion: Can your expression be considered a mask of sorts? What expression do you wear in a strange city? Is it different from the expression you wear with a friend? With a parent?
- In your journal, document new and old ideas about masks and expressions and the way they are used.

Intermediate: Mask, Magic, and Mirrors

Extensions: page 2

Math

- Make a paper mask by folding a sheet of typing paper in half and cutting out a **half face**, then unfolding it. What kind of symmetry is this? Look at the proportions. Hold your mask up to your face. Can you see through the eye holes? Most people do not realize that the eyes are just about halfway down the face. How long is your face? Most people can put the heel of their hand on their chin and their middle finger will touch their hairline. Try it.
- **Symmetry Safari** - You are on a search for different kinds of symmetry shown in the artworks at the San Antonio Museum of Art. As you walk from the Oceania Gallery to your next stop, the Latin American Wing, write down the names of pieces that show the following kinds of symmetry:

Reflectional

Vertical

Horizontal

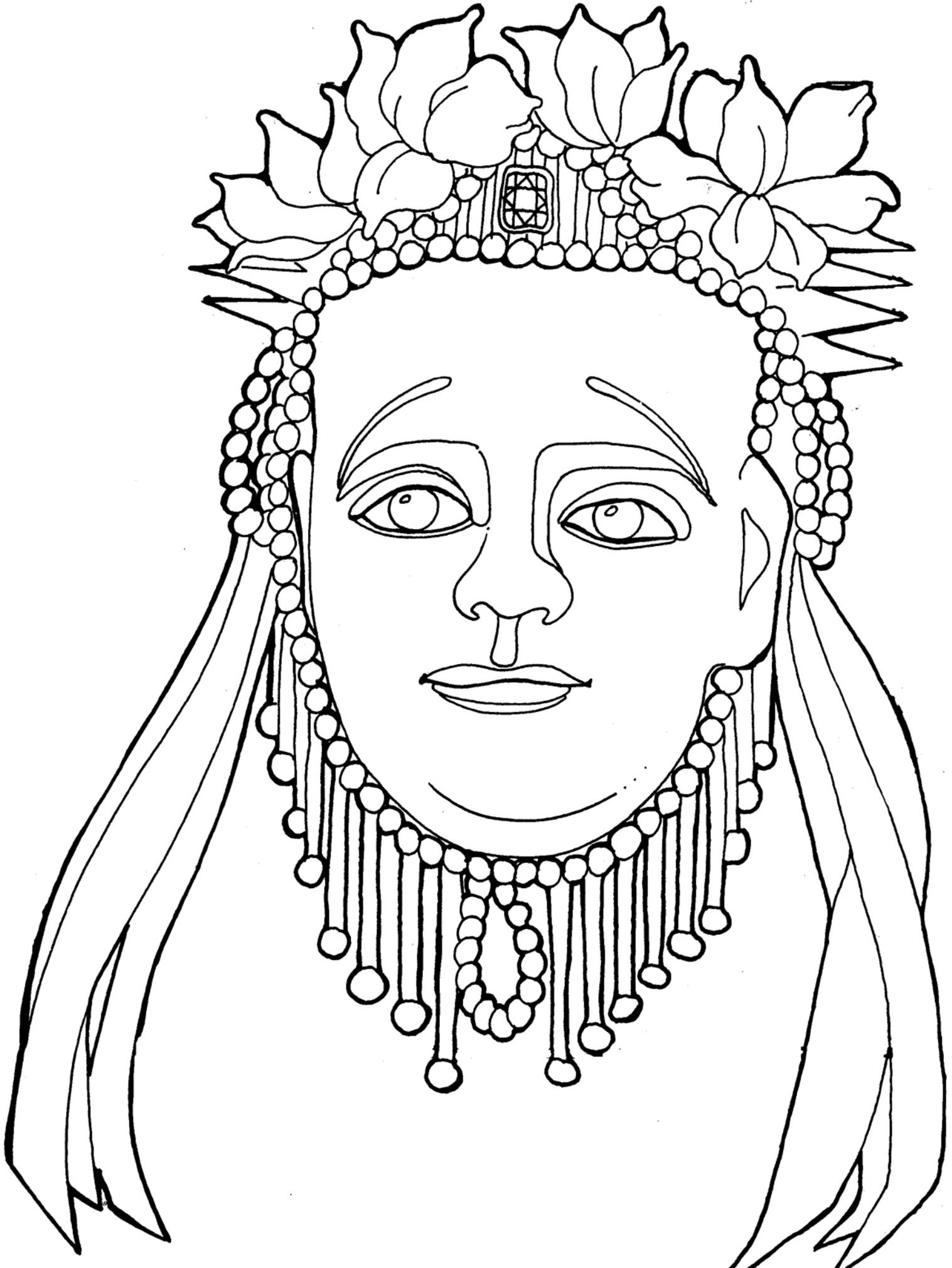
Horizontal and Vertical

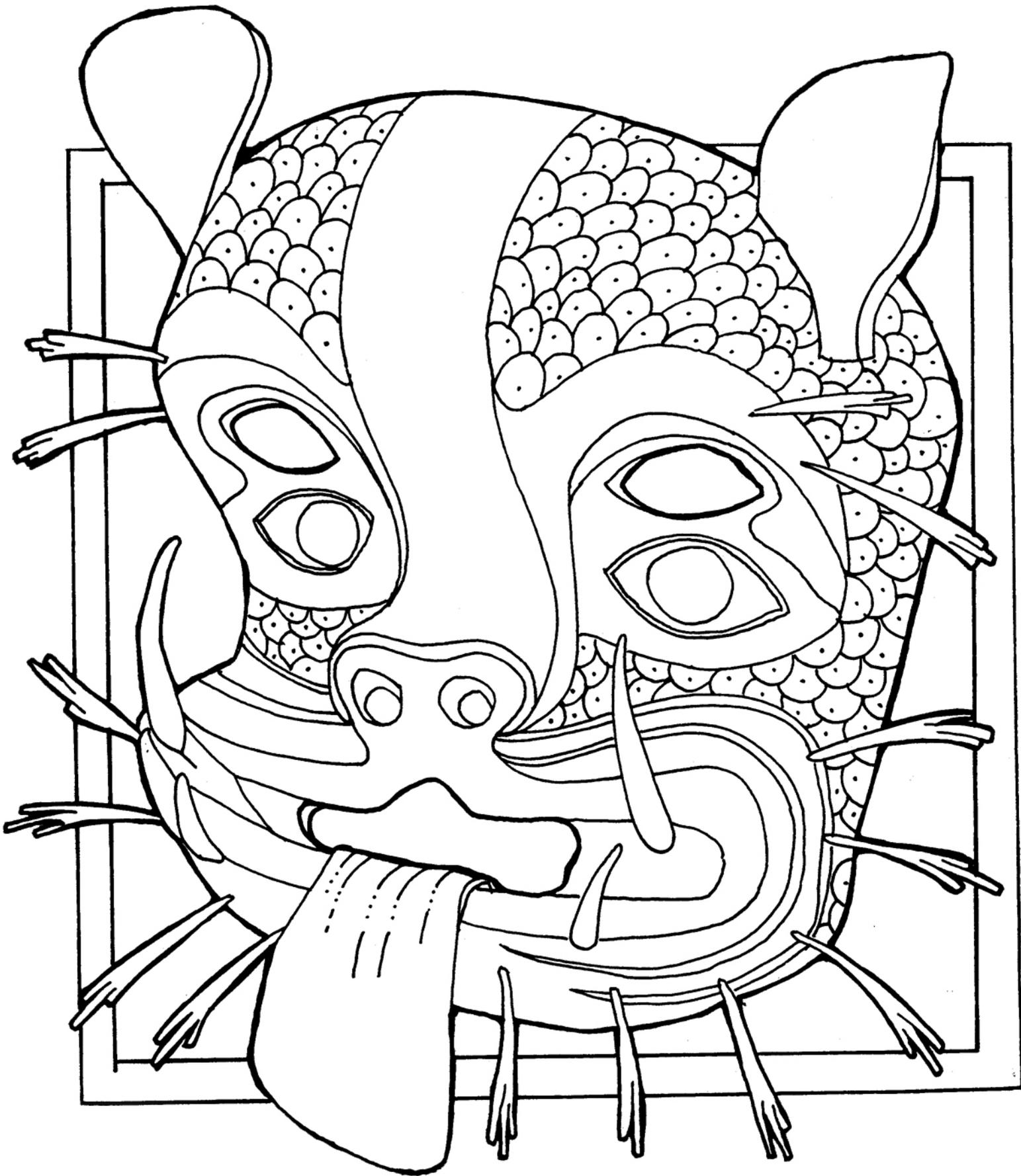
Rotational (Hint: look in the Gallery that contains the Art of Islam)

Art

- In the Latin American collection at the San Antonio Museum of Art, you will see the **Black Man mask** (PDF) and the **Tiger mask** (PDF) from Mexico. Pretend you are a mask-maker getting ready for a big celebration in a village in Mexico. You have made your masks, and now they need to be painted. Choose colors for the masks that you think would suit your particular celebration, and color them with crayons or markers. Add designs and symbols. Make one of your masks symmetrical in color, and make the other one different, or asymmetrical. When your masks are finished, cut them out. Write or describe a short scene from the celebration in which your masks will be used.

Sample Masks





TIGER MASK

Guerro

Painter wood, leather,
boar bristles

Intermediate: Mask, Magic, and Mirrors Resources

Key search words – masks, symmetry, reflection

<http://www.mathforum.org/geometry/rugs/symmetry/>

This resource from Math forum discusses the concepts of symmetry, grids, and tessellations using traditional carpet designs as its starting point. There are many connections to the same sorts of textiles that are found in the San Antonio Museum of Art. This site has connections to traditional cultures and their use of pattern and symmetry.

<http://askeric.org/Virtual/Lessons/Interdisciplinary/INT0069.html>

AskERIC is always a wonderful resource and this particular lesson is no exception. Its aims are to teach symmetry and asymmetry to special education, art, and math portfolio students. in grades 5-8.

http://www.uh.edu/hti/curriculum_units/symmetry_patterns_n_design/Myers_Unit.htm

From the Houston Teachers Institute come this great resource on symmetry across time and cultures, including activities such as mask-making in this particular lesson. There are links to other activities and investigations about the symmetry connections.

<http://www.mpm.edu/collect/mask.html>

A comprehensive, user-friendly article on the history and use of masks from the Milwaukee Public Museum's magazine.

http://www.janbrett.com/activities_pages_masks.htm

Children's author Jan Brett's animal mask pages – fun and decorative.

<http://ccins.camosun.bc.ca/~jbritton/jbsymteslk.htm>

Many activity suggestions that relate to symmetry, math, and art.

http://www.masks.org/galleries/youth_gallery/

Nice examples of student-crafted masks on masks.org's site.

<http://mathforum.org/sum95/suzanne/symsusan.html>

Some slightly more advanced ideas about creating symmetrical designs from The Math Forum.

<http://www.graphicmaps.com/aatlas/world.htm>

Source for maps.

Intermediate: Mask, Magic, and Mirrors Resources

Britton, Jill, and Walter Britton. Teaching Tessellating Art. Palo Alto, California: Dale Seymore Publications, 1992

Hargittai, Istvan, and Magdalena Hargittai. Symmetry A Unifying Concept. Bolinas, California: Shelton Publications, Inc., 1994.

Kim, Scott. Inversions. Berkeley, California: Key Curriculum Press, 1996.

Museum Etiquette

Most students will know these guidelines, but avoid having them be embarrassed by a guard speaking to them or asking them to leave.

1. Backpacks and large bags are checked at the front desk. It is better to leave them on the bus. A clipboard or binder may be carried and used to lean on for activities.
2. There is no eating or drinking in the galleries.
3. Use pencil in the galleries. Pens can be used for writing in the Hops House only.
4. Often people come to the museum and spend time thinking and reflecting in front of a piece of artwork. This creates a quiet atmosphere. It is permissible to speak in soft voices.
5. School tours require that students remain with the teacher/parent leader.
6. It is OK to sit on the floor with legs close to the body. It is not acceptable to lie on the floor or to block an area where people may pass. Often times in museums there are collapsible stools for sitting.
7. Because of the damaging oil and salt in fingertips, do not touch artwork, pedestals, or walls. Also be aware and do not lean on the walls.
8. Stay at least 12 inches from any piece of artwork. Besides the safety aspects to the artwork, over time the humidity of the breath can be damaging.
9. Nudes – Artists have always used the human body as subject matter because they believe the body to be an example of beauty. Viewing a nude makes some people feel uncomfortable. This can be for many reasons, many of them cultural. The artists in no way intended to offend anyone. Just as we do not feel that a baby without clothing is in any way dirty or bad, artists present the human body. Please note the difference in the words “naked” and “nude”. The correct art term is “nude” and implies the natural state of the body. “Naked” refers to someone who is without clothing. If you find nude artwork offensive, please understand the perspective of the artist. Prepare students for this experience.

Vocabulary List

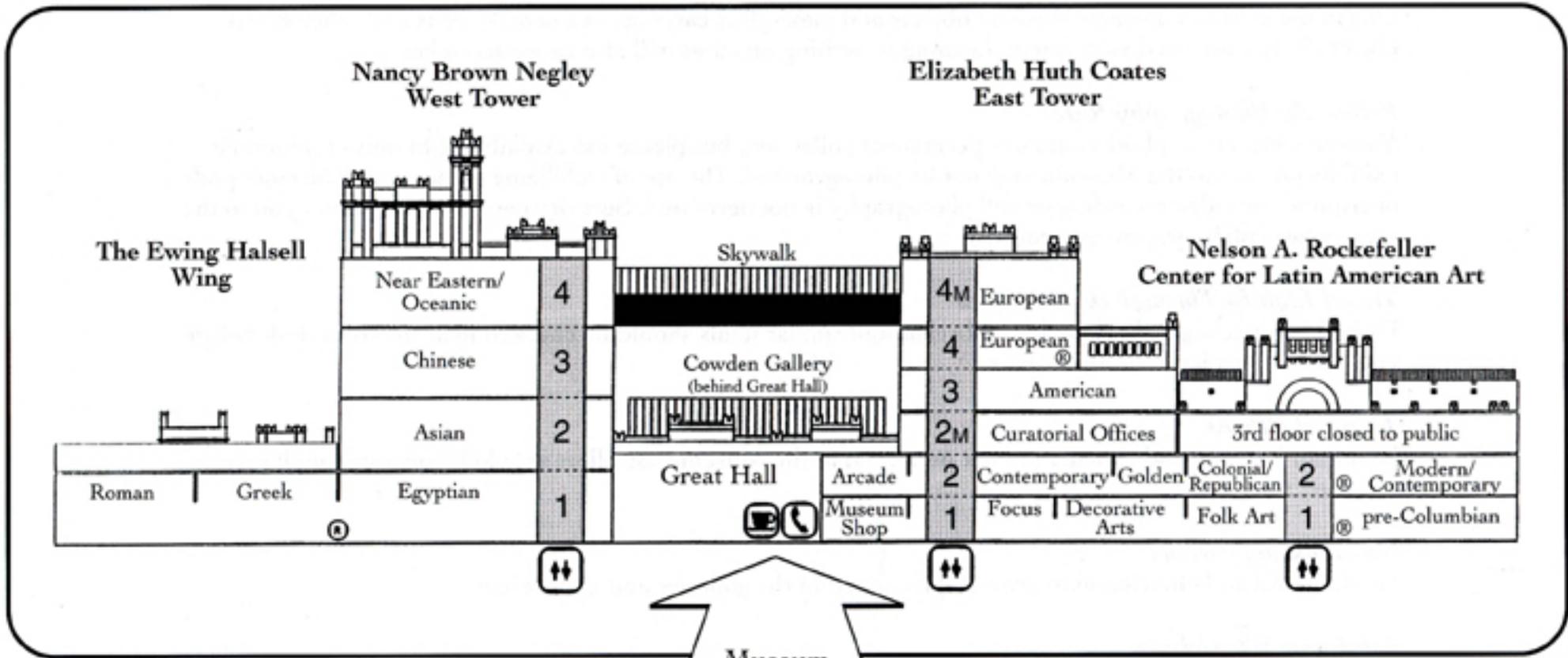
1. Attribute - characteristic of a person or thing
2. Background - the part of an artwork that is away or in back
3. Bark cloth - heavy fabric made from beaten plant fibers
4. Bas relief - sculpture which comes out slightly from a flat surface
5. Clay pigments - materials from the earth which can be used to stain or paint objects
6. Color - the quality or effect of light on objects
7. Disguise - to make recognition difficult through altering the appearance
8. Estimate - guess at a proximate amount
9. Foreground - the part of an artwork nearest the viewer
10. Form - a shape that has height, width, and depth
11. Free-standing - stands without an attachment or by itself
12. Frontal - as seen from a straight on view
13. Gesture - the position of the limbs and of the body
14. Half-profile - part profile
15. Helmet masks - a mask which covers the entire head rather than just the face
16. Landscape - a genre of art dealing with the depiction of natural scenery
17. Line - a mark that goes from one point and moves over a surface. A line may be 2-d or 3-d and straight, curved, long, short, thick or thin
18. Leonardo da Vinci - Italian born in 1452, artist, architect, musician, scientist who embodies the idea of a "Renaissance man"
19. Medium - any material used to create a work of art (pencil, paint, clay, etc.)
20. Mind map - a graphic representation of information, usually with words and images
21. Motif - distinctive, usually repeated, figure, design, or color
22. Papier-mâché - an ancient art consisting of paper and a binder, such as wallpaper paste or glue

23. Portrait - the likeness of a person or animal
24. Portraiture - paintings, sculptures or other artwork that creates the likeness of a person or animal
25. Profile - seen from the side
26. Proportion - the relationship between the size of part of an object to another part or whole
27. Rattan - long, thin plant stems used for baskets, mats, masks and other objects
28. reflectional symmetry - when one side of something balances out the other side in a mirror-like manner
29. Representation - a symbol, sign, or picture which stands for something or symbolizes it
30. Rotational symmetry - when a design is repeated at intervals around the center point of a circle
31. Sculpture - a three dimensional artwork
32. Shape - a two dimensional object that is enclosed by real or implied line
33. Space - the area below, above, or between objects
34. Static - showing little growth, change, or progress
35. Still life - a painting of inanimate objects such as fruit or flowers
36. Subject matter - what a piece of artwork is about (still life, portrait, landscape, non-objective, interior, etc.)
37. Symbol - a picture or image that tells a story of what it is without using words
38. Symmetrical - having similarity in size, shape, and relative position of corresponding parts
39. Taboo - a prohibition or ban imposed by social custom
40. Thumbnail - a small, quick sketch
41. Utilitarian art - art created to be used. Examples - quilts, lamps, and bowls
42. Value - That property of a color by which it is distinguished as bright or dark; luminosity.
43. Vessel - an object used as a container (especially for liquids)



San Antonio Museum of Art

Gallery Guide



KEY

- Restrooms
- Refreshments
- Elevators
- Telephone
- Mezzanine