

BRAZILIAN CARNIVAL MASKS

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The world-renowned carnival in Rio de Janeiro was first celebrated in 1840. Carnival is the traditional Christian period of feasting and merrymaking immediately preceding Lent, a time for penance. The citizens of Rio begin preparing for carnival months in advance. Though competition for best costume and mask is keen, even the poorest people put together some type of costume and make their own stunning masks.

Below are the instructions for making both a simple (A) and a more complex (B) mask. (A) is better suited to younger children.

Here are some other suggestions:

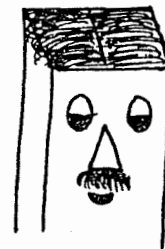
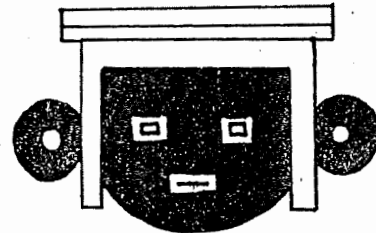
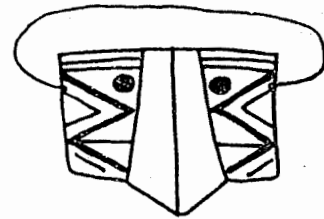
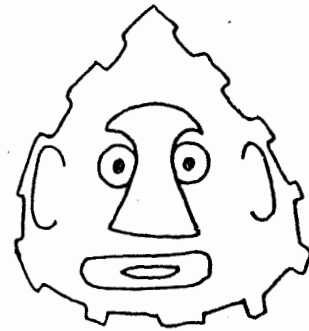
1. Have your students research and discuss the carnival
2. Is there anything similar in the United States?
3. Explain what Lent is and why it is preceded by festivities.
4. Plan a minicarnival for your classes and have every student express his or her creativity by making a mask.

Materials Needed

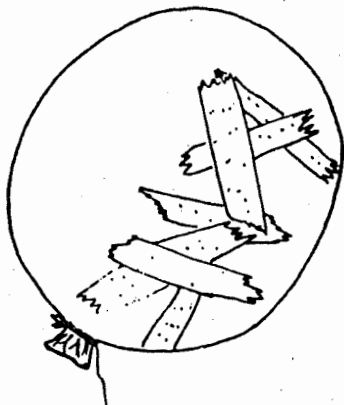
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|--------------------------|----------------------|
| A. paper bags | B. round balloons |
| colors | newspapers |
| construction paper | wheat or flour paste |
| glue | scissors |
| scissors | tempera paints |
| magic markers (optional) | cardboard |
| string | string |

Instructions

1. Every student is given a paper bag or construction paper with which to make a mask.
2. Provide colors, construction paper, glue, scissors, and felt pens and have the students create their own mask personalities. See examples.
3. If mask is not placed over the head, cut two small holes on either side of the face and attach string to hold it in place.



- B. 1. Blow up balloons (the round type).
2. Tear strips of newspaper and use either wheat or flour paste and place the strips over *half* of the balloon. Put at least 5 layers on the balloon.



3. Wad a piece of newspaper into a small ball and shape a nose for the mask.



4. Let the mask dry *completely* (overnight would be best). Pop the balloon and then with scissors cut eyes and smooth over the edges of the mask.

5. Paint the masks using tempera paints. If you wish, use glue to attach fake fur, yarn, cotton, etc., to make hair and eyebrows. See examples.

LEVEL: HIGH SCHOOL

Source: Contreras, Gloria, *Latin American Cultural Studies: Information and Materials For Teaching Latin America*, 2nd Revised Edition, Institute of Latin American Studies, The University of Texas at Austin.