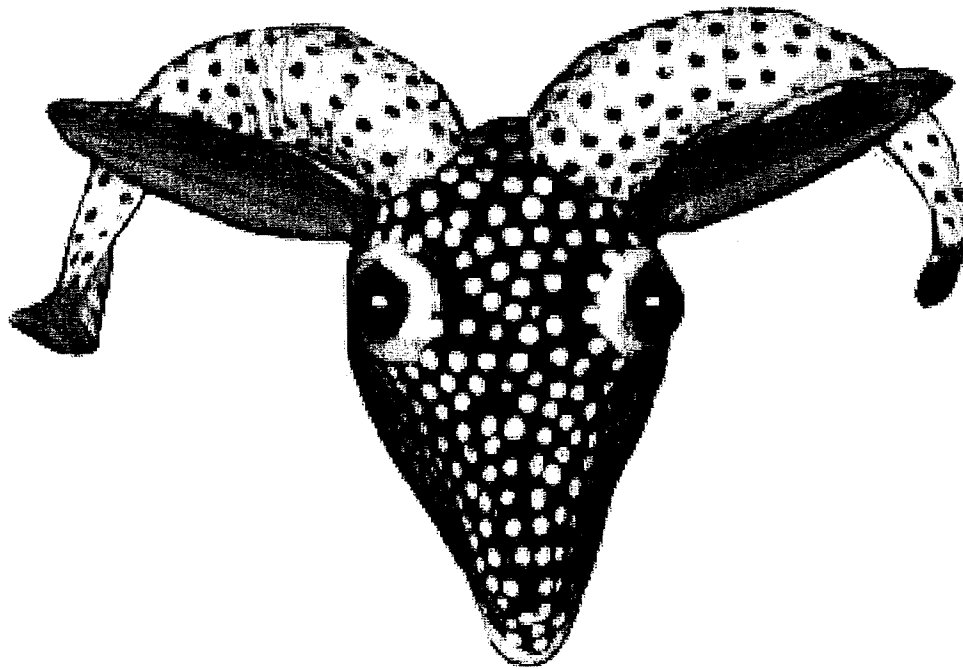


Grades 4-8

Note: Text reading level not uniform throughout. Teacher may need to do some age-adjusting.  
• Word-find puzzle left out

# Treasures of the Palice Pavilion



## Kid's Learning & Activities Packet

This packet made possible by the  
**Foundation for Indigenous Art**

# MEXICAN MASKS

In the United States, once a year, at Halloween, we wear costumes and try to frighten people with scary masks. In our neighbor country, Mexico, people dress up and wear masks far more often.

Mexico has a great tradition of mask making. Masks are used in various rituals and ceremonial dances. Mexican masks are most times made out of wood and nearly all of them are richly painted but many other materials are used. They are carved and designed with a lot of creativity and either can be extremely realistic or more abstract.

Mexico is a country that has many different states. Each state has its own villages and these villages have their own traditions and ceremonies often including costumed dances. These traditions and ceremonies are links to the culture. They tell about ancient history and about what is important to the people for holidays and rites of passage instructions. The ceremonies are also held for good fortune like rain in dry periods or getting a good harvest.

Because of this diversity in traditions and dances there are many varieties in masks. A mask gives a new character to the persons who wears it. They can represent a particular person from history, an animal, a religious person or a fantasy that only exists in our imagination. Together they can form a group that tells a story.



1. This mask is worn during the tigre (jaguar) dance. The dance differs, in different parts of Mexico. Most times the dance is about the hunt, capture and death of a wild cat that has been terrorizing the community. By dancing they try to change the negative power from the animal into a positive fertility power. The tigre can also appear as a bringer of the harvest. In Atzacoyaloya, Guerrero, the tigre goes from house to house collecting the first corn of the year. After blessing the corn in church, it is ready to be eaten.



2. There are two different kinds of devil masks. The traditional European-type devil is complete with two horns atop his head, a red face and pointed ears. The indigenous devil mask is decorated with more Indian and animalistic symbols in combination with the traditional style. Most times you think of the devil as a bad person, but in Mexico the devil acts more as a prankster in dances, telling jokes and gossiping about local scandals. They are very playful, theatrical and have a fascinating appearance.



3. Death masks are worn by the Mexicans during the celebration called *The Day of the Dead*. On this joyful day, in late October and early November, people believe that the souls of loved ones who have died return to earth to visit their families. A way of honoring them is by wearing a death mask. The dead character acts like the devil character but is not as much a clown. In a lot of dances the devil and dead character often dance together.





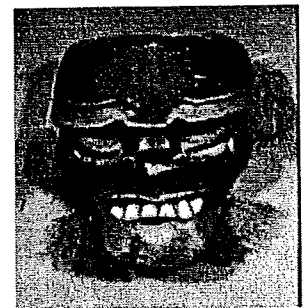
4. This mask is called a Viejo, Spanish for old man. These masks are worn by young men from the local community. These young men imitate the mannerisms and movements of the Viejos for the entertainment of the spectators.

5. This mask is worn during Carnival which is sometimes called Mardi Gras. Mardi Gras coincides with an Aztec ceremony to celebrate the beginning of the year. The Aztec year starts on February 2<sup>nd</sup> with the start of the agricultural cycle, when land is prepared for planting. After the Spanish conquest, these ceremonies transformed into Carnival. Today Mardi Gras is a request for rain and other symbolic practices relating to the fertility of the earth. However it also serves another important purpose; it enables dancers to mock and parody their ancestral oppressors. In other parts of Mexico Mardi Gras is the beginning of lent. It is enjoyed each year as an occasion for partying, disguise, dancing and satire.



6. The dance of the Moors and Christians is one of the most widespread in Mexico. There are many varieties with different names, but the theme is mostly identical. It is based on the war between the Moslems from Morocco and the Christian Spaniards. After seven centuries, the war ended and the Moors were driven out of Spain. Enacted as a war between good (The Christians) and bad (The Moors) made it easier to convert the Indians to Christianity.

7. The origin of the Negritos mask dates back from the Colonial period. During this period black people had a wide range of occupations, what is reflected in the dances. The Negritos character functions also as a clown, they make jokes, ribald comments and gestures. Another function is to keep order in the crowd, so that the other dancers can perform properly. The dance is most popular in coastal states where the slaves were settled. However, no racial discrimination was intended. Another possible source for the Negritos mask is Tezcatlipoca, the Aztec god of the shadows and night. His mask is black and has fangs.



## QUESTIONS ABOUT MEXICAN MASKS

1. Why do Mexican people wear masks in celebrations?

---

---

---

2. What is the theme of the tigre dance?

---

---

---

3. How do you recognize the traditional European-type devil mask?

---

---

---

4. Why do Mexican people celebrate The Day of the Dead?

---

---

---

5. What did the Aztecs celebrate during carnival?

---

---

---

6. What is the story behind the dance of the Moors and Christians?

---

---

---

7. Name three functions of the Negrito character.

---

---

---

8. Which mask from these pictures would you like to wear yourself? Why?

---

---

---

## **ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS ABOUT MEXICAN MASKS**

### **1. Why do Mexican people wear masks in celebrations?**

A mask gives a new character to the persons who wears it during a dance. It can represent a particular person from history, an animal, a religious person or a fantasy that only exists in our imagination. Together they can form a group that tells a story.

### **2. What is the theme of the Tigre dance?**

The dance can differ, depending on what area of Mexico you are in. Most times the dance is about hunt, capture and death of a wild cat that has been terrorizing the community. The tiger can also appear as a bringer of harvest.

### **3. How do you recognize the traditional European-type devil mask?**

You recognize a European-type mask by the two horns atop his head, a red face and pointed ears.

### **4. Why do Mexican people celebrate The Day of Dead?**

Because they believe that on this day, the souls of loved ones who died can return to earth to visit their families. They honor them by wearing a death mask, clearing a grave and preparing special foods

### **5. What did the Aztecs celebrate during carnival?**

The Aztecs celebrated the beginning of the year which starts on February 2nd. In this month they start the agricultural cycle, by preparing the land for planting.

### **6. What is the story behind the dance of the Moors and Christians?**

The story is based on the war between the Muslims from Morocco and the Christians in Spain. After seven centuries the war ended and the Moors were driven out of Spain.

### **7. Name three functions of the Negrito character**

Three functions of the Negrito character are:

1. The clown, who make jokes, ribald comments and gestures.
2. To keep order in the crowd, so that other dancers can perform properly.
3. To represent Tezcatlipoca, the Aztec god of shadows and night.

### **8. Which mask from these pictures would you like to wear yourself?**

The answer to this question depends on the taste of the individual.

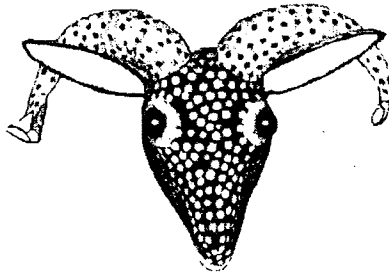
# MAKE YOUR OWN PAPIER MACHE MASK

## Materials Needed

- *flour*
- *water*
- *old newspapers*
- *large balloon*
- *needle*
- *scissor*
- *paint*
- *brushes*

## Procedure

1. Mix up flour and water to make papier mache paste.
2. Soak strips of newspaper in the paste and layer them over the balloon or mask. When that layer has dried completely add two more layers.
3. When the paper is dry, pop the balloon with a needle and cut the shape in half lengthwise. Cut out holes for the eyes.
4. Paint the mask.



# MAKE YOUR OWN PAPER PLATE MASK

## Materials Needed

- *1 white paper plate*
- *2 strings*
- *scissor*
- *paint, ribbons, sequins, glitter and feathers*

## Procedure

This is a very easy way to make a mask. Take the white paper plate and cut out the eyes and mouth. Punch holes for strings, tie the strings on and your mask is ready to wear.

It's more fun to decorate your mask with paint, ribbons, sequins, glitter and feathers to make it look fancier.

Wear your mask and have fun!

# MAKE YOUR OWN PLASTER MASK

## Materials Needed

- *petroleum jelly (Vaseline)*
- *plaster bandage, fast setting (4" wide are good; "fast setting" is about 4 minutes)*
- *water (and containers for water)*
- *scissors*
- *comfortable and safe environment*

## Before you start

If you are planning to make a mask you have to make sure that the person is comfortable. Put them on a comfortable chair or lay them down.

Make a decision if you want to cover the eyes, mouth and nose. Cover the person with a blanket and have some cloth towels or paper towels nearby to use during the process. When you are working with the plaster it can start dripping water. It is good to wipe/catch the drips of water so it won't irritate the person receiving the mask.

## Procedure

1. Before you begin, cut the plaster bandages into strips that are proportionate to the size of the face of the person receiving the mask. Cut strips in various lengths and sizes as you will be overlapping them to form a sturdy surface.
2. Spread an large amount of Vaseline over the entire face from the mask person. Make sure that you cover the eye lids, lips and especially the eyebrows.
3. Dip the strips of plaster bandages into warm water to wet thoroughly. Begin putting the strips on the persons face, starting with areas that do not cover eyes, nostrils and mouth. Overlap and smooth plaster as you work. Let the person receiving the mask make the decision if he/ she wants the eyes, nostrils and mouth to be covered. Notice the difference between the sides of the tape. One side has more plaster on it. Apply the tape with this side out, and rub the tape until all extra plaster is spread around.
4. When the face is covered with plaster and there is a nice firm covered surface, let it dry for about four minutes or until it is firm enough to pull off without the mask falling apart.
5. Pull the mask off the face by having the person under it make faces. This is so that the mask simply pulls away from the face.
6. The mask can be further smoothed out, added to, patched etc. before letting it dry completely. Add plaster bandages around edges for a nice finished look. This also strengthens the mask so it will not fall apart.
7. When the mask is completely dry you can add extraordinary noses, beaks and ears. Dozens of materials can be used to make these features. The most accurate features are made by using a template or pattern. Using a piece of scrap paper, cut a piece for the beaks, nose or ear. Don't forget to leave tabs for attaching the piece to the mask. Now test fit this piece to the mask. When you make a design you like, cut a final version from heavy paper or screen wire. You can use a stapler or a new layer of cast tape to bind the new parts to the mask. Paint
8. Wear the mask or hang it on the wall and enjoy!

## PRECOLUMBIAN ART IN THE TMA

Precolumbian art existed before the Spanish discovered the New World in the sixteenth century. It is the work of the advanced civilization of the American natives whose complex knowledge, art, architecture, astronomy and science astound us even today.

The Tucson Museum of Art owns Precolumbian art from Mesoamerica, Central America and the Andean area. Mesoamerica is the area now called Mexico and Central America where great cultures developed before the Spanish conquest. Since monumental stone sculptures and architecture were major Precolumbian expressions, the collection of the Tucson Museum of Art (TMA) is not totally representative of the art of Mesoamerica. The collection includes clay sculptures and vessels, textiles, carvings in stone, marble and jade, ornaments of shell, gold and copper, tools and gourd vessels. Many of the pieces in the TMA were produced for use in tombs.

The Mayas and Aztecs were the empire builders of Mesoamerica. These cultures are known for their mythology, mathematics, picture-writing, development of a calendar system, and, of course, their art and architecture. Like many other cultures throughout the world they believed in life after death. They placed objects in tombs to accompany the deceased to the underworld. Offerings of food, textiles and wood have long vanished, but magnificent ceramic figures, which were the prime gifts for the dead, still survive.

These ceramic figures are a representation of everyday life. Each individual had its own place in society. A person's clothing, hairstyle, and accessories indicated their social status. Jewelry, for example, gave individuals a higher status and brought them power. If a person of lesser status wore the garments of those with greater status it was considered as a serious crime. Clay figures placed in tombs were representations of the person while they were living.

**UNESCO** (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization.)

The Tucson Museum of Art has agreed to observe the 1970 UNESCO draft treaty. This treaty prevents the import of and trade in archaeological and ethnographic materials and in stolen cultural collections. This includes the Precolumbian objects. The Tucson Museum of Art no longer buys archaeological objects unless it is known that they were exported before 1972 .



## CLAY FIGURES OF THE PRECOLUMBIAN COLLECTION



Object 73.26  
Seated woman holding female child  
Colima, 100 B.C. - 300 A.D.

This woman is taking care of her baby. She supports her child by holding it carefully in her arms and raising her knees. Intimate activities like this gives us more insight into Mesoamerica's daily life. The woman has exaggerated features like extremely long arms and a large nose. This characterizes the Colima style. Figurines were intended as death offerings and were buried in deep shaft-chamber tombs



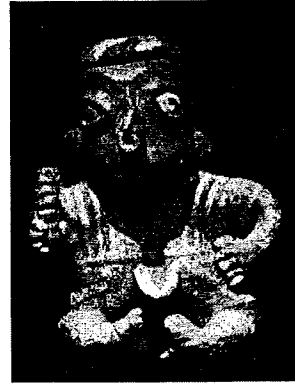
Object 90.8.47 Colima  
"Seated drummer" whistle  
Colima, 300 B.C. - 800 A.D.

An interesting fact is that this clay figure with his large nose has a small hole in the top of his hat. He may look like a drummer but he is actually a whistle. Music played an important role in social and ceremonial life.



Object 77.171  
Colima dog  
Colima, 200 BC.- 300 A.D.

Like today, people all over Mesoamerica raised dogs as pets. However, dogs were also used for food. That's the reason why this dog is so fat. This clay dog was used to hold liquid. They gave it to the dead, as a lunch box for the journey into the afterlife.



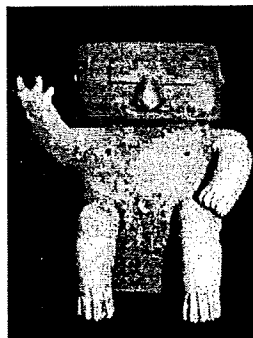
Object 90.8.39 and 90.8.40  
Seated male and female  
Nayarit, 100 B.C. - 300 A.D.

These two clay figures form a pair. Many times figures like these hold things. Female figures hold women's things (a child or a food utensil), and men hold objects like clubs and musical instruments. The textile designs on these figures tell us about the kind of fabric that was made and the kind of clothes people wore. Most of these type of figures have wide open eyes and their teeth are shown.



Object 93.15  
Ceremonial Dancer  
Nayarit, 100 B.C. -250 A.D.

This standing male dancer is holding a rattle in his right hand, meanwhile the other hand is at his mouth. He is eating something and we don't know exactly what it is, but it must be some kind of ceremonial food.



Object 90.6.01  
Seated male  
Quimbaya culture, 1000 - 1500 A.D.

This figure looks like a gingerbread-man. However, this very flat figure is probably a representation of a chief. Normally, these kind of figures wear a gold nose ring. The bands on the arms and legs represent fiber bindings still used by Indian people in the area today.

## THE PRECOLUMBIAN SEARCH PUZZLE

Listed below are some difficult words from the text about the Precolumbian art. See if you can locate all the words in the search puzzle. **Hint:** You will find the words across, diagonal, or down.

ARCHITECTURE	The art or science of building or constructing.
AZTEC	A member of a nation that had a complex empire in Central Mexico that was conquered in 1519.
CERAMIC	Clay fired in a kiln.
CIVILIZATION	An advanced state of human society, in which a high level of culture, science, industry, and government has been reached.
CLAY	Natural earthy material.
COLIMA	A state in Mexico, on the Pacific Coast.
JEWELRY	Any ornament for personal adornment.
MAYA	A member of the American Indian people of Yucatan who had attained a relatively high Precolumbian civilization.
MESOAMERICA	Area of Mexico and Central America where great cultures developed before the Spanish conquest.
MEXICO	Republic in the south of North America.
NATIVE	Original inhabitant of a place or country.
NAYARIT	A State in West Mexico.
OFFERING	Something given in worship to a greater spirit.
PRECOLUMBIAN	The time before the Spanish came to America.
QUIMBAYA	Extinct culture in Colombia, circa 500 - 1500 A.D.
TOMB	Grave or a burial place.
UNDERWORLD	The place where the spirits of the dead are believed to live.
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization.
VESSEL	Container for liquid or other contents.

# HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN PRECOLUMBIAN CLAY FIGURE

## Materials needed

- *Potters sculpting clay or self hardening clay*

*Note: if it is not possible to do a fired clay project, miniatures could be made the same way with self hardening clay that can be baked in a oven.*

- *rolling pin*

- *modeling tools (popsicle sticks, fingers, plastic forks, spoons etc.)*

## Before you start

Make sure that your clay is moist enough. If you aren't using all the clay at the same time, make sure that you cover it with plastic to prevent it from drying out.

## Procedure

1. First of all you need an idea to begin with. Take a look at our Precolumbian collection for some ideas and inspiration. Take a close look at their function, this makes the difference between the clothes and ornaments they wear. Draw your idea on a piece of paper so that you get a better view of how it is going to look.

2. Get enough clay for the size of the figure. Knead the moist clay for about 10 minutes to remove air bubbles and produce a smooth texture.

3. Begin forming the figure by making the body first. How you form the body depends on what kind of figure you want to make. The following parts describes three ways of sculpting.

### Small, simple figures

The small figures can simply be made by forming the balls and coils in the shape that you like. The entire figure, with the exception of the legs and arms, should be shaped from the single piece of clay. Join loose parts of clay together by scoring (marking) with a pencil, and adding clay thinned to the consistency of cream (slip) to act as glue.

### Flat, easy figures

An easier option is to flatten the clay using a rolling pin to about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick. After this, you can cut out any shape you would like.

### Hollow, advanced figures

The best way to make a hollow figure is to build it up with coils. Join coils together by cutting a slanted end one way on one coil, and the opposite way on the other before joining. Each time two coils are joined, the two surfaces should be scored and slip-coated. Add three coils at a time, then smooth them inside and outside. You can use a flat wooden stick to smooth it on the outside. When your figure is leather-hard, you may polish it on the outside with the back of a spoon.

4. Features like the nose, eyes and mouth can be added by using your fingers, popsicle sticks, plastic forks etc. After the rough figure is done you can add texture to suggest design motives and feeling of fabric with pointy objects like nails and toothpicks.

5. When the clay is leather-hard, you can begin painting designs with slip in contrasting color. Notice: Important colors were turquoise, red, white and earth tones.

6. Let your clay figure dry for a couple of days .

7. Display your art piece and enjoy!

# SPANISH COLONIAL ART

The Spanish Colonial Period began in 1519 when Spain conquered Mesoamerica. After a long period of war that lasted until 1536, Spain took over the total empire of South America. Once this new land was conquered, Spain introduced new ways of living. They imposed a new way of government wherein they reconstructed a class system similar to that in Spain. Viceroy, who were the king's assistants, helped to manage the government and carry out orders from the king. An important social change to the new world was the introduction of a new religion. The goal of the Spaniards was to convert these people, who they mistakenly called Indians, into Christians. They built churches and missions throughout the country where the natives had to learn the word of God. Spanish became their primary language. Spain also brought new technologies like the wheel and the plough. They were useful for growing new produce such as sugar cane, rice, wheat and many varieties of fruit. Horses, cattle, sheep and pigs were introduced as new livestock.

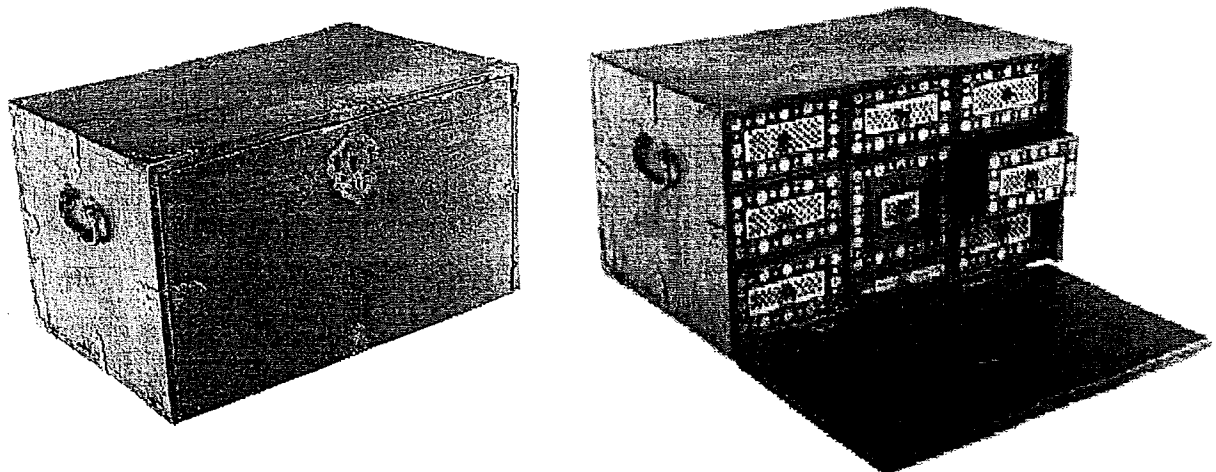
In the beginning the native people didn't like these new changes. However, after a period of time the new ideas were accepted and people felt ready for the changes. Eventually, the ideas were totally integrated and became rooted in Spanish colonial life. Due to the integration of the Spaniards among the Mexican people a new society and a new nation was established.

## The Bargeño

Spaniards, who settled down in the New World, brought their own kind of furniture with them. A popular item among rich people was the bargeño. The purpose of this traveling box, which had several rows of drawers inside, held jewels, documents, and other valuables. It was also used as a writing-desk. This small trunk was especially designed with handles for carrying and a drop front.

The outside of the bargeño is often simply painted. However, the inside is colorful and richly decorated. Inlaid applications were used on the surface. The most common materials used for such inlay were gold, silver, pearl, ivory (elephant tusks) and bones. Inlay means the process of piecing small sections of different materials together.

The exact origin of the bargeño is unknown. This type of furniture first appeared in Europe in the late fifteenth century. The name can be written with either a *b* (*bargeño*) or a *v* (*vargeño*).



After you have read the background information in this activity, complete this puzzle by filling in the blanks or answering the questions to increase your knowledge about Spanish Colonial Art. If you are done you can find out what the highlighted word is.

## SPANISH COLONIAL ART PUZZLE

1. What empire did Spain conquer?.....
2. The special opening of the bargueño is called a .....
3. The natives were mistakenly called ..... by the Spanish people, because they thought they had landed in India when they first discovered the New World.
4. Catholicism was the new ..... that Spain introduced to the New World.
5. The men who were the king's assistants and helped to manage the new government were called .....
6. .... are the people who conquered South America.
7. The wheel and the plough were new ..... useful for agriculture.
8. Which country lies in the south of North America?.....
9. What is the name of an important piece of written paper that the Spaniards sometimes had in their bargueño?.....
10. Decorative objects (sometimes with valuable stones) and important papers that were kept in the bargueño are called.....
11. To.....is to take control of land by attacking the people or winning it by fighting a war.
12. The process of laying together small sections of different materials into the surface of furniture is called .....
13. The tusk of an elephant consists of a white material called .....
14. A ..... is a small travel trunk used by many Spaniards who settled in the New World.
15. ....is the valuable yellow metal which is sometimes used to decorate bargueños.
16. A person who has always lived in the place where he was born is known as a .....
17. Chairs, tables and beds are pieces of .....
18. People used the bargueño to hold valuable items but also as a.....

# HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN BARGUEÑO

## Materials needed

- A shoe-box with lid
- Scissors
- Tape measure or ruler
- Glue
- Cardboard to make the drawers
- Paint for the drawers
- Tape
- Decoration materials like silver paper to imitate iron,
- Paper for the drawers
- Velcro tape
- Creativity

Before you start expect the unexpected:

### **Safety always comes first!**

Use water based paints; do not use oil paints, spray paints or turpentine. Either use white glue or library paste and not rubber cement, or other glues with solvents.

## Procedure

### Step 1

Get your shoe-box and make the lid into a drop front. It is easier to decorate your bargueño without the drop front, so you might want to wait to glue it to the bottom after you're done decorating the bargueño.

### Step 2

The second step is to make the skeleton frame that holds the drawers. Each drawer needs its own space, so decide how many spaces you want. Make sure that the space for the drawers is not too small. Below is an explanation of how to make the skeleton frame for a six-drawer bargueño.

Select a piece of cardboard that fits inside the middle of the box horizontally. Make two incisions in the cardboard, as you can see in the example. When you are finished get two pieces of cardboard that fit vertically inside the bargueño. Make one incision in each piece of cardboard and slide them into the horizontal piece. This will give you a sturdy skeleton frame to slide your drawers into.

### Step 3

This step is where you make the drawers. Measure the sides and the bottom of the spaces where you want to put the drawers. Make the drawers from cardboard and fit them into these spaces by cutting them out with your scissors. After you cut them out you can glue or tape them together. An important thing to remember when making the drawers is that you want to leave enough room between the drawers and the lid for a knob to open the drawer. This way you can close the bargueño nicely.

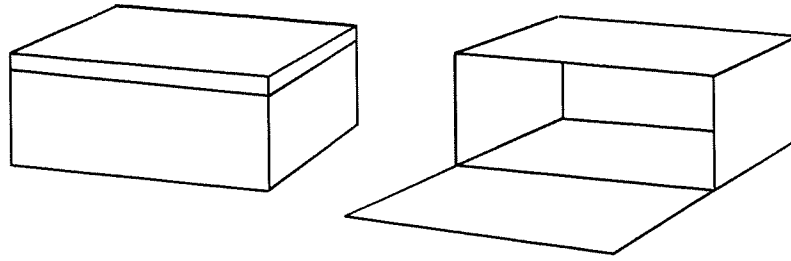
### Step 4

How you decorate your bargueño is all up to you. But if you look at the bargueño you can see that most of the times the inside is very colorful and well decorated. The outside is simpler and less decorative. In some cases the corners of the bargueño are reinforced with iron plates. A good way to create the same effect is using silver colored paper. Don't forget the handles to carry it with. One on the top might be the best placement. Just like a lunch box.

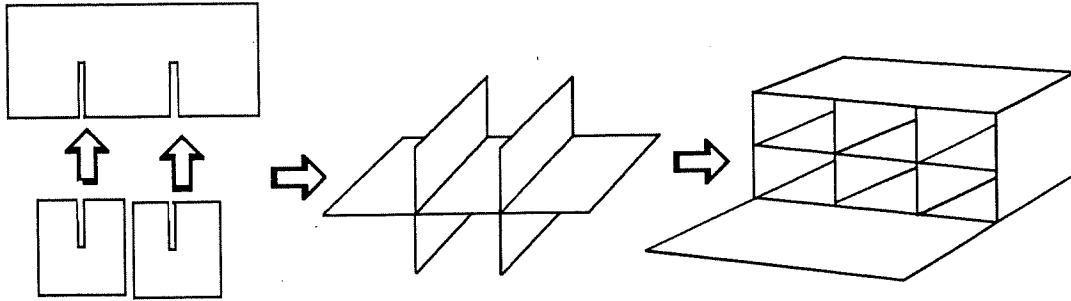
### Step 5

Use Velcro tape to make a nice lock on your bargueño. Design a lock and cut out the keyhole. Inside the keyhole you can put a piece of Velcro tape. Put another piece of Velcro on the hasp to finish your lock. Don't forget to glue your lid on the bottom of your box. Now the box is finished and you can put all your personal belongings there, just like the Spaniards did back in the colonial period.

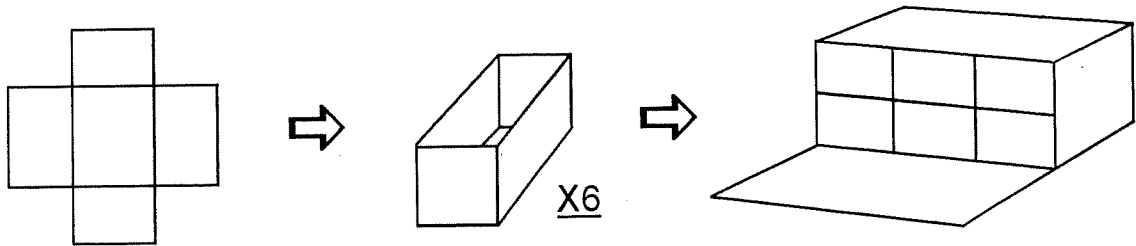
Step 1



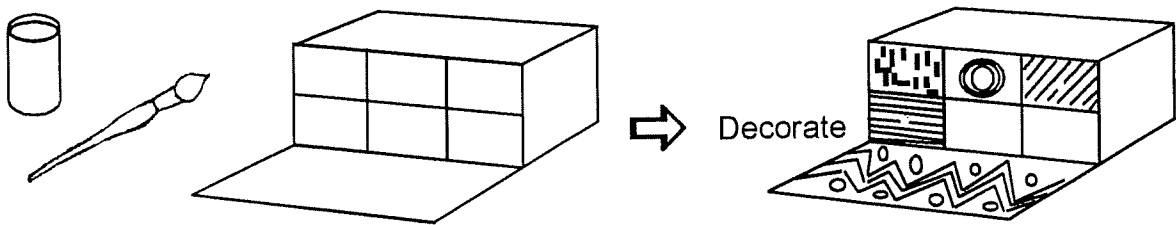
Step 2



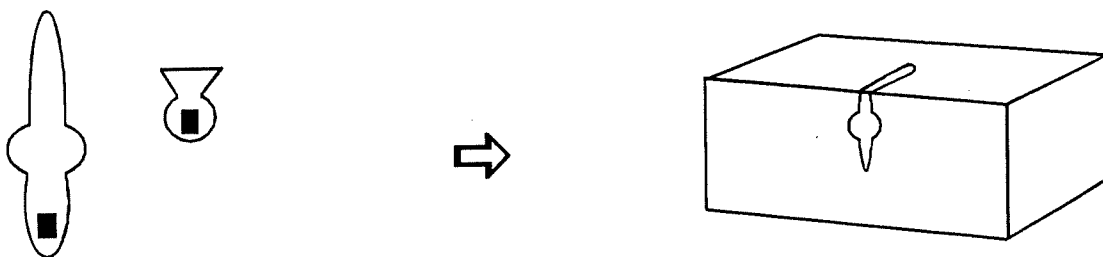
Step 3



Step 4



Step 5



■ = Velcro