

Source: Gibbs, Virginia G. *Latin America: Curriculum Materials for the Middle Grades*. Center for Latin America, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. 1985. 1999.

CATEGORY: BRAZIL: NOW

CONCEPTS: HOLIDAYS, folklore

ACTIVITY: CARNIVAL AND SAMBA PROCESSION. Carnival is an integral part of Brazilian urban life. Thousands of people in cities like Rio de Janeiro and Bahia belong to "samba schools," close-knit clubs which spend the year preparing ornate costumes, floats and complex dance routines for Carnival. Students will enjoy re-creating the Carnival atmosphere.

OBJECTIVES: Students will learn to dance the samba and will recreate their own Carnival.

MATERIALS: See materials for each separate Carnival activity.

PROCEDURE: Following are instructions for dancing the samba, making Carnival masks, and preparing a wisdom wand.

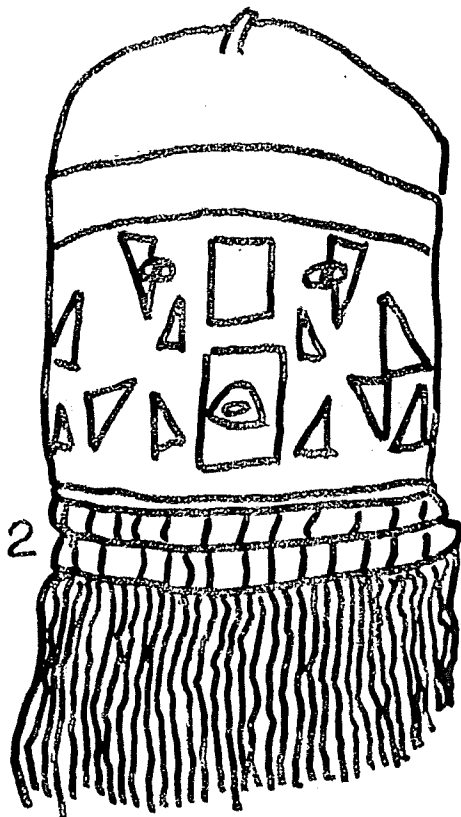
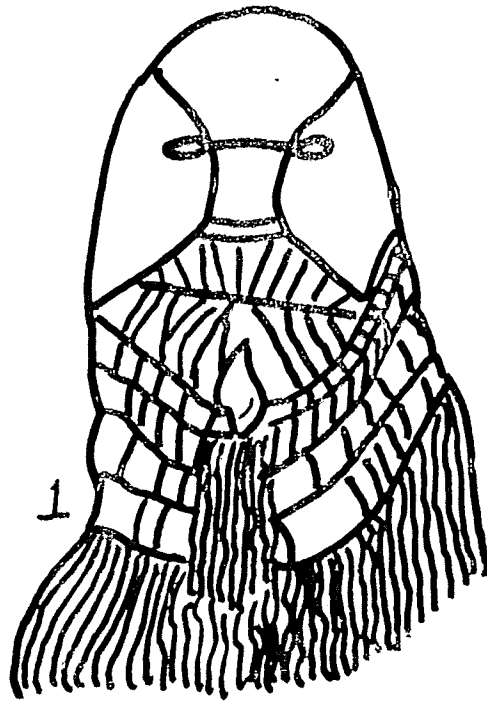
The Brazilian Samba

The basic samba step is both easy and lots of fun. It is often a line dance used to parade through streets.

1. Step forward with right foot, keeping knees bent; shift weight back to left toe, straightening knees; shift weight back to right foot, bending knees again; shift weight back again to left toe, straightening legs.
2. Step forward with left foot; repeat back and forward shifting as in #1.
3. Arms are carried loosely, often held upwards or over the head. Swaying, etc. of hands is improvised.
4. NOTE: The samba is basically a rhythmic style of walking. The bending and unbending of the knees produces forward and backward hip thrusts. Flexible knees are a must! Almost all Latin American dances in which the hips seem to move so rhythmically actually rely on knee movements.

Masks

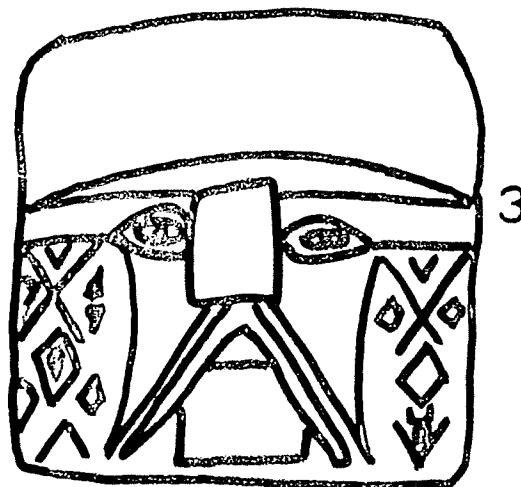
Masks, which often combine the African, Amerindian and European heritages of the Americas, are an important and colorful part of Carnival and other festivals. Following are ideas for several different kinds of masks from Brazil.

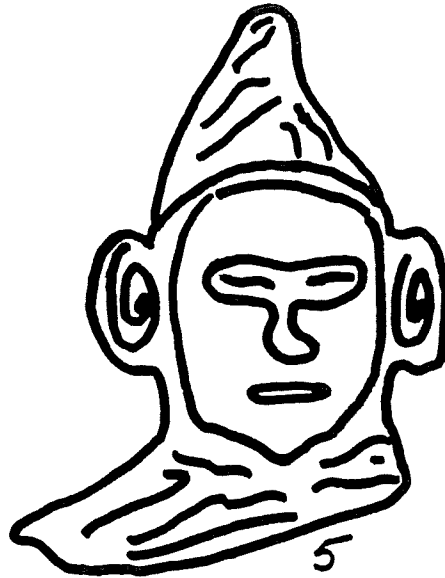


1. Masks #1, #2, #3

Materials: grocery bag, colored yarn, colored paint and brushes, scissors, pencils, glue

Procedure: Sketch the design on the paper bag, cut out holes for eyes, and cut yarn to desired length. Then paint the design and glue on the yarn to simulate hair. (Note: the paper bag may have to be cut down depending on the desired mask size and style.)





2. Masks #4, #5

Materials: white cotton (old sheet or pillow case, dark wool or terry cloth, paint and brushes, pencils, scissors, sewing materials.)

Procedure: Make a hood with the wool or terry cloth (ask for help from the home economics teacher). Then cut an oval out of the white cotton to fit the student's face. Draw the desired design on the oval and cut out circles for the eyes. Paint the design in bright colors, let it dry, and sew the oval onto the hood.

3. Masks #6, #7, #8

Materials: colored paper (large 18x24), colored yarn, scissors, glue, elastic or string

Procedure: Make paper cone hats to fit each student's head. Cut colored paper streamers and glue them to the point of the cone. Next, cut a paper oval slightly larger than the student's face and cut out eye, nose and mouth holes. Attach elastic or string to each side of the oval (to secure mask when worn). Cut the yarn for facial hair (beard, mustache, eyebrows) and glue onto oval. Finally, glue the oval to the cone hat.



Brazilian Wisdom Wand

In some of the smaller villages of Brazil, a procession calls for the appearance of the wisdom wand. The masked paraders tap certain individuals on the head with the wand and grant them the gift of wisdom which they may have lost or misplaced for a time! The wand adds color and fun to a samba parade. Follow the instructions to make a wand for granting wisdom to your students.

Materials: old broom handle, long strip of crepe paper, thick yarn or streamers, glue, wire, pipe cleaners, regular crepe paper or kleenex, or plastic or cotton dove (common in Christmas decorations).

Procedure: Cut streamers and glue them to the top of the broom handle. Make flowers out of crepe paper or kleenex. Form a circle with wire and attach to the top of the broom handle. Glue the paper flowers to the circle or tie them on with pipe cleaners. Also attach the dove to the top of the broom handle.

