

Weaving: An Exploration of Texture and Natural Materials

Lesson Plan

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Educator Resources and Lesson Plans

Fall 2019

Manimar Mask, Indonesia, Papua, Asmat peoples



Unidentified artist
Indonesia, Papua, Asmat peoples
Manimar Mask, 20th Century
Wood, plant fiber, pigment, and raffia
Gift of Steven C. Chiaramonte
UMFA2015.1.2

Body Mask “Doroe”, Indonesia, Papua, Asmat peoples



These masks are part of sacred ceremonies for the Asmat peoples in Papua, Indonesia. They are used in the ceremony to represent a community member who passed away that year and are used in the transference of the responsibilities of that individual to another, ensuring that their family members are taken care of. Even before beginning the creation of the masks there are weeks of conversation. Weaving specialists are used in the creation but the people help gather the materials. Weaving of the masks can take several weeks or even months. There are two seen here, a Manimar, which is used for a more playful part of the ritual, and a Doroe which is the

mask that represents the deceased and are very sacredly used and disposed of.

Unidentified artist
Indonesia, Papua, Asmat peoples
Body Mask “Doroe”, 20th Century
Plant fiber, pigment, paper mulberry bark, and raffia
Gift of Steven C. Chiaramonte
UMFA1998.57.5

Weaving: An Exploration of Texture and Natural Materials

Linda Bergstrom

Overview

Woven raffia and twine wall hangings or small table mats based on the materials used in Papua New Guinea tribal masks.

Objectives

Using tribal masks from Papua New Guinea as a study in textures and materials, students will:

1. Explore and learn about the sacred nature of New Guinea masks and how they were used.
2. Discuss the natural materials used for masks, including grasses, jute, twine, and raffia, and what these materials are made of.
3. Students will learn definitions of “warp” and “weft” and learn how to warp their looms.
4. Students will learn how to add on weft pieces to each other with 3 ways of attaching it.
5. Students will learn how to remove the weaving from the loom.
6. Create a weaving that may be all natural colored, or natural and mixed colors. They may use a combination of materials for the weft, and use twine for the warp.

Intended Audiences/Grade Levels 4th, 5th and 6th grades

State Core Links (see State Core Links at the end of this lesson plan)

Duration 60-90 minutes

Materials

1. Image of *Manimar Mask*, Indonesia, Papua, Asmat peoples, UMFA2015.1.2
2. Image of *Body Mask “Doroe”*, Indonesia, Papua, Asmat peoples, UMFA1998.57.5
3. Plastic or cardboard lap looms. Can use upcycled yard signs as they are more sturdy. See pictures at end for example.
4. Twine or jute
5. Raffia: a combination of neutral and dyed
6. Small twigs for the top of the weaving
7. Masking tape
8. Scissors

Vocabulary/Key Terms

Weaving	The process of interlacing fiber, in this case natural fibers such as raffia and twine, to form fabric or material.
Raffia	A palm tree native to Africa with a short trunk and large leaves. The fiber from the raffia leaves is used to make baskets and mats.
Twine	A strong thread or string made from two or more strands of hemp, cotton or nylon twisted together.
Warp	The threads on a loom, which are vertical, under which the other threads (the weft) are passed to make cloth or weavings.
Weft	The threads on a loom which are horizontal or crosswise, which other threads (the warp) are passed to make cloth or weavings.
Lap Loom or Table Top Loom	A device used to weave cloth. The loom is used to hold the warp threads under tension to enable the weft threads to interweave. The lap loom or table top loom is small and portable and can be used in the lap or sitting on the table top.
Add On	The process of switching colors while weaving, and attaching one color to the other, sometimes with a knot, or other techniques

Activity

Part 1: Introduction and Discussion

- Display pictures of the tribal masks of Papua New Guinea and guide a discussion about the sacred ceremonies the masks are used in, and about the rare nature of the masks.
- Discuss the materials used for the masks, such as raffia, bark, and twine. Why might those be used?
- The teacher may also tell the students that weaving the masks took time, sometimes up to a week. And this lesson will take time also, so patience is needed.
- Students will create a weaving that can either be used as a wall hanging, or a small table mat. They will create an organic, natural piece of art by weaving various fibers from nature, such as twine and raffia. These are similar to the grasses and raffia used in the sacred masks of Papua New Guinea.

Part 2: Art Making

- As a note: there are picture examples of a warped loom and a finished product at the end of this lesson plan.
- Prep work: Each student will need a small loom, scissors, masking tape, roughly 2 per every 4 students, raffia pieces and twine.
- Students will warp their loom by wrapping twine vertically from the bottom of the loom to the top. This needs to be done in an even number of wraps, 8 or 10 being the most commonly used for classroom table looms. They will then tape the ends to the back to keep it in place.

- Students will decide which colors of raffia to use for their weft. They may also use pieces of twine for their weft, and create patterns of alternating textures and colors.
- Students will weave the raffia into the warp, working from the bottom to the top of the loom. They may add on new types of raffia, or twine, utilizing the add-on techniques. Students who are able to tie a knot will use the knot as an add on technique, though they will have 2 other techniques to choose from.
- Students will cut the warp off of the loom, tying the top and bottom strings in a series of knots. They will then add on extra twine or raffia for length and embellishment on the bottom of the weaving, or leave it as it is. They may also add their twig to the top if it is going to be a wall hanging.

Method(s) for Assessment

Summative assessment: The weaving will act as a summative assessment. Also, the students understanding of warping the loom, interweaving a weft into it, removing it from the loom, and creating a functional piece of art will be used for assessment.

Formative assessment: The student will show that they understand the vocabulary, the process of intertwining fibers and making a weaving, and the similarities between materials that are used in the ceremonial masks of Papua New Guinea.

State Core Links

Fine Arts - Visual Arts

Strand: CREATE – Students will generate artistic work by conceptualizing, organizing, and completing their artistic ideas. They will refine original work through persistence, reflection, and evaluation

Strand: RESPOND – Students will understand, evaluate, and articulate how works of art convey meaning for the observer, as well as the creator

Strand: CONNECT – Students will relate artistic skills, ideas and work with personal meaning and external context

Social Studies (6th Grade)

Standard 1: Students will understand how ancient civilizations developed and how they contributed to the current state of the world.

Objective 2 Evaluate how religion has played a central role in human history from ancient times to today.

Objective 4 Analyze how the earliest civilizations created technologies and systems to meet community and personal needs.

Example Pictures of Finished Product:



Example Pictures of Loom:

