

# HEADBAND MASKS

This lesson is combined and adapted from Silva's *Maskmaking* (pp. 30-37) and Foreman's *Maskwork* (pp. 84-92).

## Introduction

This is an inexpensive and simple way to make a full-face mask with your students. It is much less messy than making papier mâché or plaster masks, but can have the same visual effect. It is created so that it fits over the head much like a hat or baseball cap.

## Version One: Adapted from Sivin's Activity

### Materials

Brown paper bags torn into long strips (½ wide) to create head bands and smaller strips to add shape and support to the mask OR Kraft paper

Glue

Decorative materials: paper, felt, buttons, yarn, etc.

Scissors

Brushes

### Procedure

1. **Make a headband:** Working in partners have students measure the circumference of their head using string. Then, using precut strips of brown paper bags, have them create headbands that will go around their head. They can tape or staple this together. They can then add a strip going across the top of their head (as if making an arc) to make the headband stronger. Attach two other strips to the headband on either side and join them under the chin. Then add one more vertical strip going over the bridge of the nose, from top of the head to the chin. Now the basic framework of the headband mask is created.
2. **Create the base of the mask:** This can be done individually (mirrors would be useful) or with a partner. Using the wearer's head as a mold, attach strips of torn paper to this framework using small amounts of glue. Students want to use gentle pressure so that the pieces of paper follow the elevations and depressions of the wearer's face (See images below). The wearer can assist by holding the glued piece into place while it dries. Gradually interlace more strips of paper, strengthening the framework until a beginning form has been made that fits the wearer.
3. **Strengthen the mask:** At this point, the wearer can take the mask off and stuff it with newspaper so that it continues to hold the shape of the face. Continue to add more paper. Sivin suggests using laminated Kraft paper. If this is not available, use other strong paper such as construction paper that will help the mask to become rigid and hold its shape. It should be strong enough at this point to hold the weight of any added decorations or exaggerations.
4. **Eyes and Mouth:** Once the mask has been strengthened with additional layers of strong paper. The student should decide on the desired shape and size of the eyes and mouth, and then cut these out of the mask.

5. **Finish the mask:** Add embellishments, decorations, and exaggerations. Using a variety of materials students can add to their mask. A good way to do this is by using various paper sculpture techniques like curling, twisting, folding, or bending to create extensions, add volume or height. Any created appendages can be taped onto the mask. Depending on the size and weight of the appendage, another layer of strips of paper may need to be glued over the area of the appendage to strengthen the mask.

## Version Two: Adapted from Foreman's Activity

### Materials

Cardstock or other heavy paper  
Brown wrapping paper or brown paper bags  
Glue  
Paint  
Construction paper  
Markers  
Scissors  
Stapler  
Decorative items

### Procedure

There are two ways to create Foreman's version of a headband mask or helmet mask. The first mask has a separate headband that the mask is later glued onto. The second mask incorporates the headband into the face shape design.

### Example One: Separate Headband

1. **Make a separate headband:** Working in partners have students measure the circumference of their head using string. Then, using precut strips of cardstock or construction paper, have them create headbands that will go around their head. They can tape or staple this together. They can then add a strip going across the top of their head (as if making an arc) to make the headband stronger. Make sure to have students write their names on their headbands.
2. **Make the face shape:** Fold a piece of cardstock in half. Have students brainstorm the idea for their mask. Then, sketch out a side view of the face onto the folded card. Be sure to remind the students that the eyeholes cannot be too close to the folded edge or the outside edge. Students must keep the folded edge as the center line of the face. (The ears, nose, mouth, beak, etc. are all added later). When the drawing is completed, cut out the face shape. Do not cut on the folded edge. Cut out the eye holes.
3. **Glue the face shape to the headband:** Open up the face shape and attach it to the headband. Make sure it is positioned so the wearer can see out of the eyes. From this point on, both masks are the same

## Example Two: Included Headband

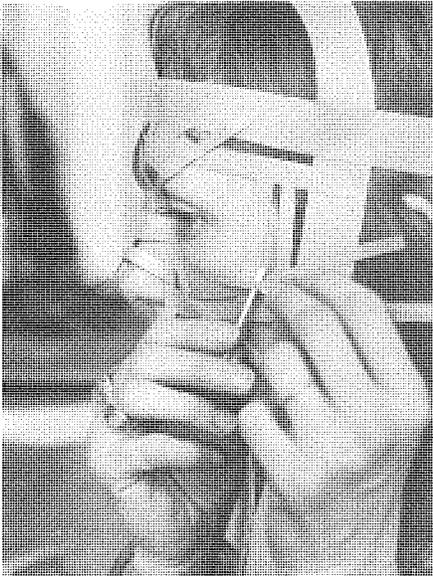
1. **Make the face shape with a headband:**
  - a. Fold a piece of cardstock in half.
  - b. Have students brainstorm the idea for their mask.
  - c. Then, sketch out a side view of the face onto the folded card. The students must sketch in a headband that goes around the sides of the head into the face shape design. Be sure to remind the students that the eyeholes cannot be too close to the folded edge or the outside edge. Students must keep the folded edge as the center line of the face. (The ears, nose, mouth, beak, etc. are all added later).
  - d. When the drawing is completed, cut out the face shape. Do not cut on the folded edge. Cut out the eye holes. From this point on both masks are the same.

## Complete the Mask

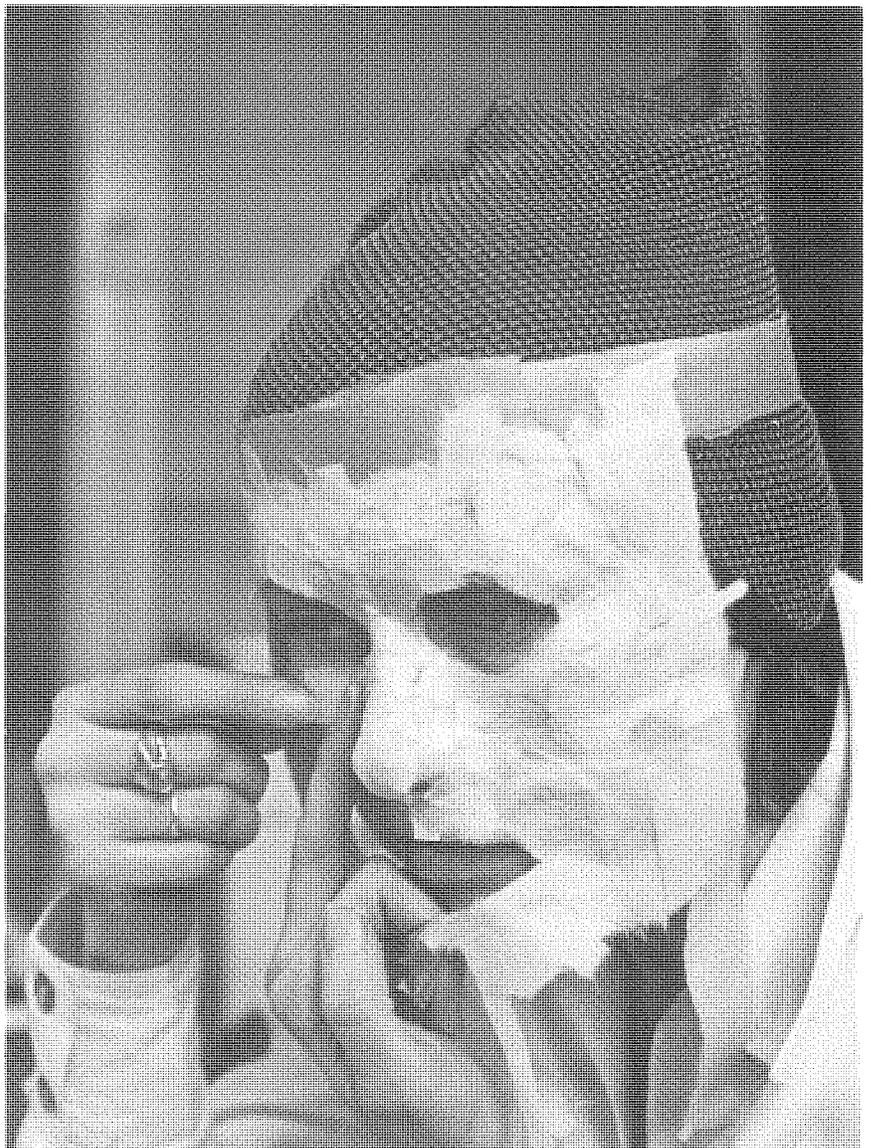
1. **Add the features:** Use paper to create other features such as the mouth, ears, eyes, beak, etc. Tape these onto the mask.
2. **Strengthen the mask:** As the mask takes shape students will need to strengthen it. They can overlap small torn pieces of brown paper, gluing them over the cardstock mask. Be sure not to add more than two layers of brown paper though.
3. **Add hair, teeth, etc.:** Using any materials available, students can create hair, teeth or any other addition they can imagine to their mask. Students can also experiment with sewing materials on to the mask rather than gluing things on.
4. **Check the fit of the mask:** Have students try on the mask to make sure that it fits and is comfortable. Make any necessary changes.
5. **Finish the mask:** Choose from a variety of ways to finish the mask. Students can paint, use fabric or felt pieces, other materials, objects or textures to complete the mask. When the mask is completely done, a thin coating of clear glue can be used to give the mask a protective varnish. Let dry completely.

## Examples of Headband Masks (Version 1)

The following scanned visuals are taken from Silva's *Maskmaking* (pp. 31-2).



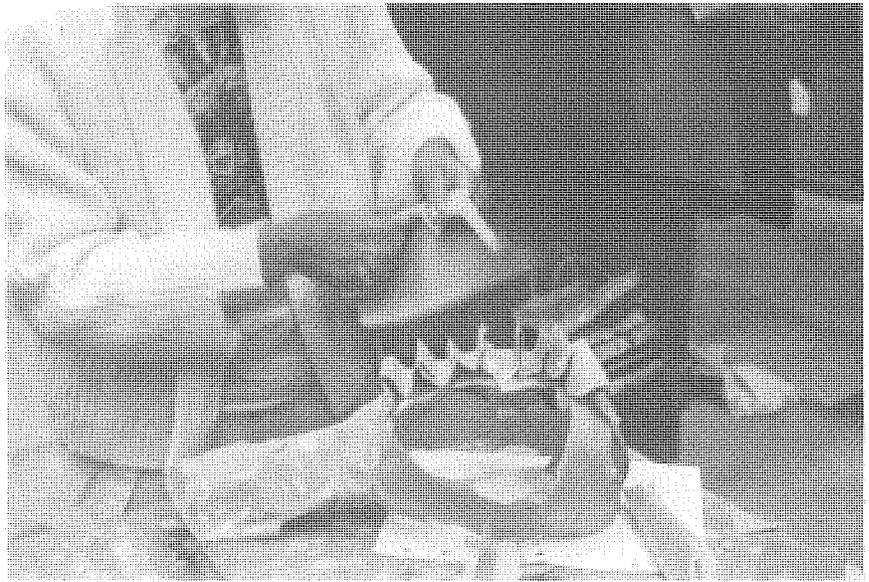
A drop of glue on a toothpick is sufficient for joining one strip to another.



By guiding the paper with gentle but constant pressure into the depressions and elevations of the face, an accurate mask can be created.



Students can begin the headband form on one another.



Remove the headband to work carefully toward a finished product.

### *Materials*

*Kraft paper*

*Clear glue*

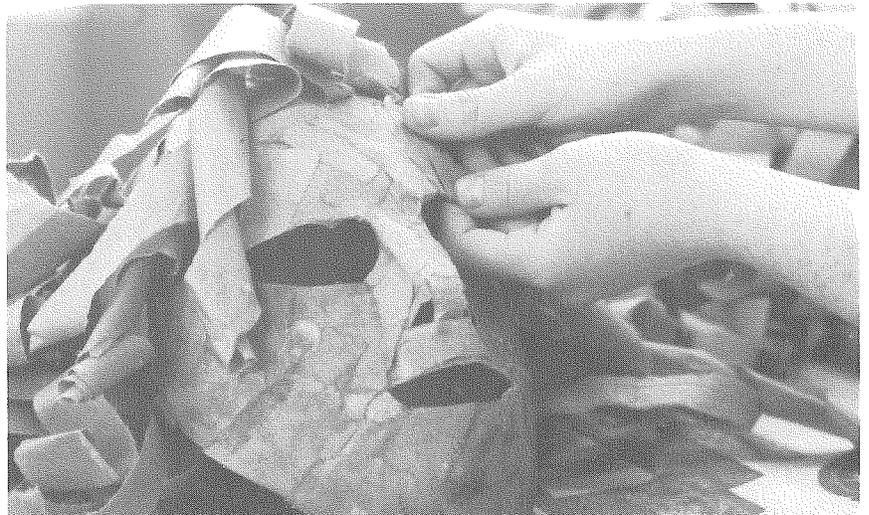
*Paper, felt, buttons, yarn, etc., for decoration*

*Scissors*

*Brushes*

Start with torn strips of Kraft paper or paper torn from heavy brown paper bags. These strips should be  $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide and long enough to go around the forehead to be joined (with a drop of glue) at the back, like a headband. A toothpick is good for applying the glue. The next strip of paper is attached to either side of the band and goes over the head like the top of a close-fitting hat.

Curling paper and attaching the pieces to the form creates a strong structure.



## Examples of Headband Masks (Version 2)

The following scanned visuals are taken from Foreman's *Maskwork* (pp. 73)

### Project 5 – Theatre, Mask & Myth



#### ii) Make the face shape

First, fold the remaining sheet of card in half. Try to imagine and then draw a side view of the face onto the folded card. (When drawing the eyeholes care should be taken not to position them too near the folded edge or too near the cut edge.) Keep the folded edge as the centre line of the face. (Ears, nose, mouth, beak, etc., are all added later) (Diagram 4). Ensure that the face shape is cut out without cutting the folded edge. Remember to cut out the eyeholes safely.

#### iii) Fix the face shape to the headband

Open out the face shape and attach it to the headband. Make sure that it is positioned to enable the wearer to see out of the eyes. Use card to fill in the back of the head.

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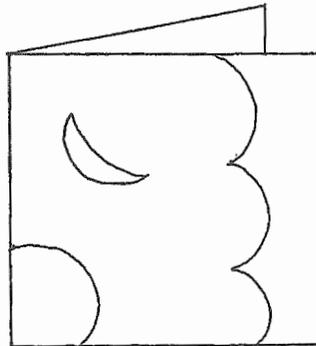


Diagram 4.

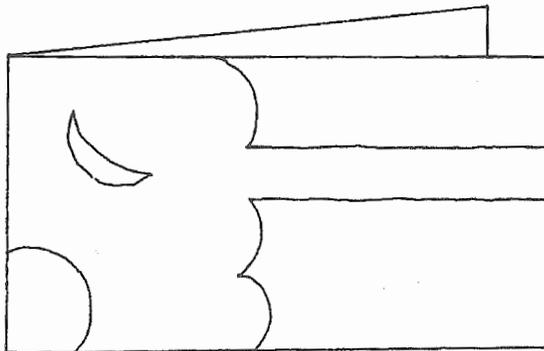


Diagram 5.



**Figs. 98-101.** Four stages in making a 'Water Monster' mask showing a mask with the headband included in the design. *Raven mask-making workshop, Winifred Holtby School, Hull. 1989.*

Example Two

**i) Include the headband in the face shape design**  
(Diagram 5)

Figs. 98–101 show a watermonster mask being made. The headband is incorporated into the design for the face. Whichever method is chosen, once headband and the basic mask form have been made then the features can be added.

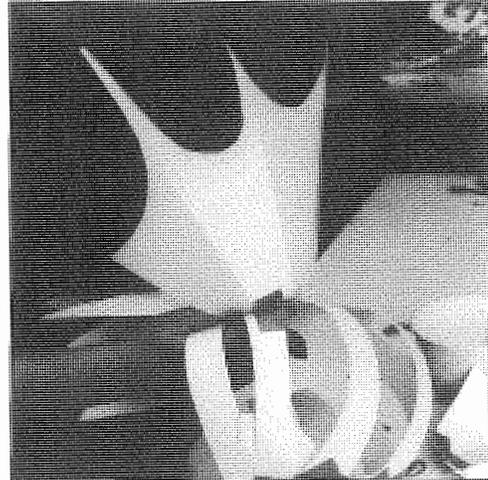
**ii) Add the features**

The card can be folded, cut, scored and manipulated in any way in order to make the mouth, ears, eyes, beak, etc. (fig. 102).

Use the design sketch as an indicator of the shapes to be formed when constructing the features.

**iii) Strengthening**

As the mask takes shape it will be necessary to strengthen it. Try overlapping small torn pieces of brown paper gum->



**Fig. 102 (below).** Water monster mask. Mask paper-sculpture base as seen before painting. 'Raven' mask-making workshop, Winifred Holtby School, Hull. 1989.

