



Arctic Mask Design

Learn to create a mask in the Arctic style!

Arctic cultures

Native people from the Arctic Circle include the Inupiaq from the Northern area of Alaska, Aleut from the Aleutian Islands, Yup'ik, Netsilik, Copper Eskimo, Ingalik people and Caribou people.

Each people or group(s) believe animals have unique spiritual qualities and should be treated with respect. In order for a person to catch an animal, the animal needs to be encouraged or given permission to be killed. Once killed it is important to ask for the animal's understanding. When not asked, other living animals will not allow themselves to be caught.

How to make your mask!

- Step 1:** Print the Seal and Human Arctic mask design on page 2 (below).
- Step 2:** Use markers, colored pencils, or paint to decorate your mask.
- Step 3:** Cut out your mask with scissors.
- Step 4:** With glue or tape add faux craft materials such as feathers, felt, or popsicle sticks to add new Yup'ik (Yoo-pik) design elements to your mask.
- Step 5:** Attach string in order to wear your mask, or hang it on the wall for display.

Here are some ideas why Arctic masks are created!

- ◇ To honor an animal who gives food, such as a seal, walrus, caribou, or salmon.
- ◇ To honor an animal with qualities you admire. For example, the sharp eyes of an owl, the swiftness of a bird, or the cleverness of a fox.
- ◇ To acknowledge a kinship with an animal and, most importantly, express the relationship between animals and people in the Arctic region.
- ◇ To tell a story.

Learn more about this Arctic mask from the Burke Museum's Ethnology Collection!



Photos courtesy of the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, catalog number 4516.

Object name	Mask
Culture	Yup'ik, Kuskokwim Area
Made by	Yup'ik, Kuskokwim Area
Locale	Kuskokwim Area
Material/Technique	Wood, Carved, Pegged, Leather, Feathers, Painted, Black, Red
Motif	Double-faced, Seal (Sea Mammal), Human
Dimensions	Length: 14.5 cm, Width: 10.5 cm, Height: 5.5 cm
Date	1912
Source	Mr. E. M. Blackwell Allen, Ellis
Credit	Gift of Mr. E. M. Blackwell

Visit http://www.washington.edu/burkemuseum/ANWR/nie_lesson3.pdf for additional curriculum about Arctic masks.

