

# Make an African Mask

Masks are a very important part of African culture. Each mask has its own purpose. Some are worn as ornaments while others are used in religious ceremonies. Dancers wear them to communicate with spirits. The spirits express themselves through the masks. African masks are made of many different kinds of materials. They are decorated with simple, strong, and powerful shapes and designs. Doctors wear the masks to concentrate the healing powers of nature.

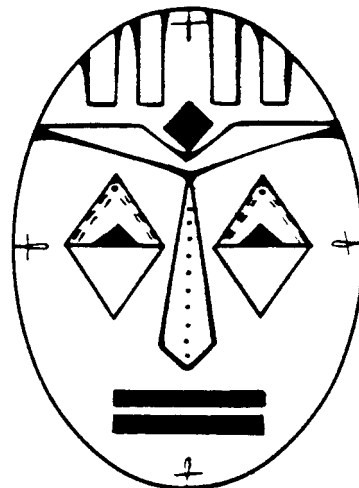
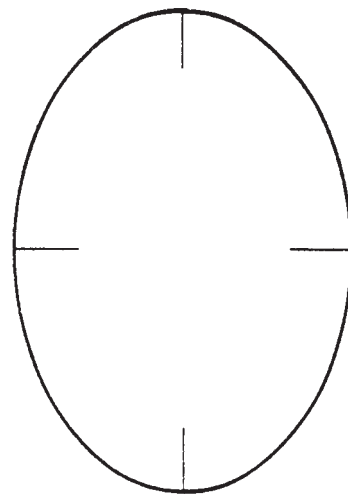
Have students make their own masks using the materials and directions below and on pages 141 and 142.

## Materials

- brown, gray, black, or beige construction paper (for decorating mask)
- two 8" x 11" (20 cm x 28 cm) sheets of white construction paper per student (for mask pattern)
- pencils
- scissors
- glue or stapler
- patterns on pages 141 and 142
- *optional*: raffia or shredded husks

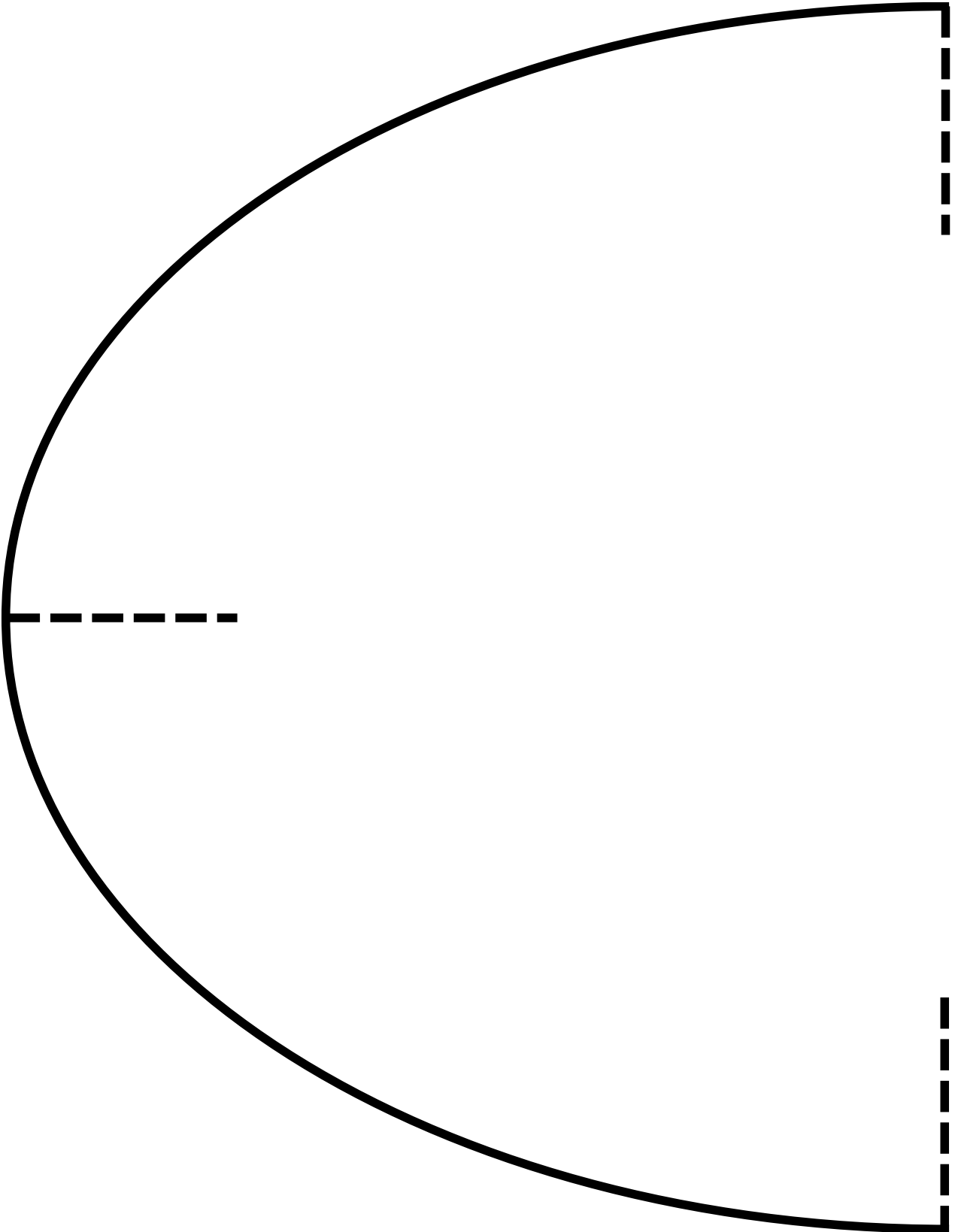
## Directions

1. Reproduce the patterns on pages 141 and 142 onto white construction paper.
2. Have students cut out the top and bottom patterns of the mask. Cut the slits for the forehead, chin, and cheeks.
3. Overlap the sides of each slit and staple or glue them back together to create a three-dimensional effect.
4. Have students cut out geometric shapes to create the facial features and other designs for the mask. The eyes, nose, and mouth should be exaggerated to show their importance.
5. If desired, use raffia fibers or shredded cornhusks for hair.



# Make an African Mask *(cont.)*

## Mask Pattern (Top)



# Make an African Mask (cont.)

Mask Pattern (Bottom)

