
Art Masterpiece: *Mask of Tutankhamen, 1352 B.C., 18th Dynasty, Egypt*

Keywords: Line, Pattern, Color, Contrast

Grade: 4 – 6*

Activity: Design your own sarcophagus mask

* At CUSD, 6th grade students study ancient Egypt. This is a nice complement to their curriculum



About the Work:

Tutankhamen's name meant "The living image of the sun god." He became the king in Egypt when he was just nine years old, and he ruled from 1361 – 1352 BC, which was over 3,000 years ago. Modern-day people have nicknamed him "King Tut." King Tut was 18 years old when he died. It was originally believed that he was killed but findings now show that he may have died of gangrene (a type of often fatal infection) caused by a broken leg.

Ancient Egyptians believed in the afterlife and they made careful preparations for it. Work began for King Tut's death the day he was made

king. His image was carved out of stone and wood and shaped out of gold sheets. His tomb was built with a burial chamber and extra rooms to house the things that Egyptians thought he would need in the next life – clothing, jewelry, furniture and objects for protection.

King Tut's tomb was discovered in 1922 – the first in modern times that has not been vandalized. (Most of the kings' tombs had long since been broken into and the expensive, precious objects inside stolen, leaving nothing but an empty stone chamber.) The most spectacular discovery in King Tut's tomb was the funeral mask, which bore an exact likeness of the king. It is made of solid gold and weighs about 22 pounds. Just above the eyebrows on the headpiece is a gold serpent on the left and a gold vulture on the right, representing sacred goddesses. It is decorated with semi-precious stones and colored glass. The eyes are made of quartz and obsidian. The color is encrusted with various kinds of semi-precious jewels and bordered with a lotus bud design. A gold vulture sits on each of his shoulders.

Possible Questions:

This mask was created by a craftsman over 3,000 years ago. Think about whether art created that long ago can be judged by the same rules as the art of today.

PATTERNS are important in the composition of this mask. A pattern is a repeated element or design.

1. What patterns can you see in this mask? (Alternating stripes of gold and blue glass, bands of gold and colored stones and glass on the collar, repeated designs on the vulture, serpent and beard.)
2. What other elements of art are prevalent in the mask? The patterns all over the mask are created by LINES. Some of the Lines are wide (on the headpiece) while some are thin (the space between the stones on the collar).

COLOR is a strong component in the bright and luminous gold, the vivid blue and the various colors of gemstones.

CONTRAST is a principle of art. It is the arrangement of opposite elements (light vs. dark colors, rough vs. smooth textures, large vs. small shapes, etc.) in a piece so as to create visual interest, excitement and drama.

3. Do you see areas of contrast in this mask? (The blue and gold stripes on the headpiece, the smooth gold bands between the rows of stones on the collar, the dark eyes and the light face.

Activity: Design your own sarcophagus mask

Materials needed:

- King Tut mask templates, one per 1 - 2 students
- Pencils
- Oil pastels
- Elmer's glue. One bottle per 3 or 4 students.
- Gold metallic acrylic paint (alternate: metallic gold "Sharpie" markers)
- 9" X 12" black construction paper, one per student
- Paint brushes, one per student
- Paint palettes (or paper plates, or plastic cups), one per 2 – 4 students
- "Metal Mosaics" small metallic paper squares, a small amount per student Roylco makes these. (Alternate: large-size sequins.)

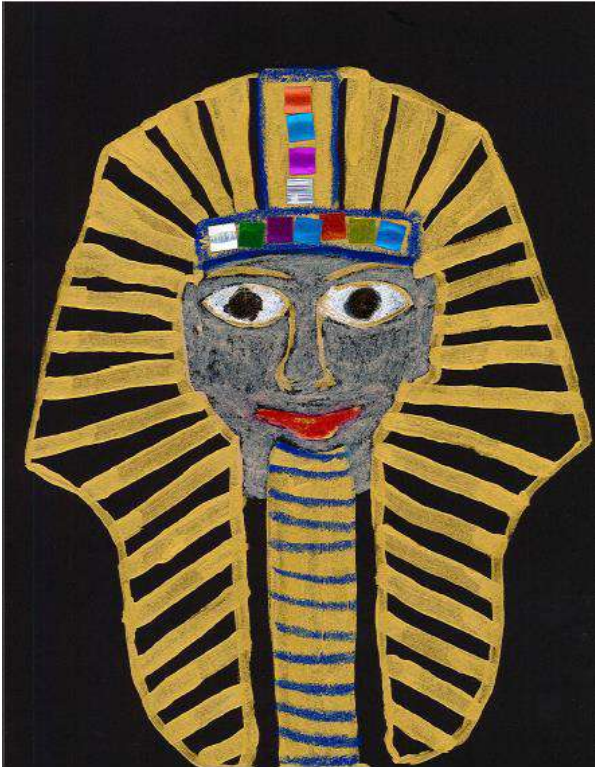
Process:

Before the lesson, photocopy the page at the end of this lesson that has the parent information on what was presented today. Cut each "blurb" apart. You can pre-glue each parent paragraph to back of the black construction paper before you do the lesson, or ask each student to do it themselves right before they start.

1. Using a pencil, have each student trace the basic mask shape on their black construction paper. Have them sketch in other features – eyes, nose, mouth, and ears. It is their own mask so it should have similar features as they do (i.e. eye glasses, braces, pierced ears, etc.) When the students are done, *collect the templates so they can be re-used.*

2. Still using their pencils have the students design patterns into the headdress. King Tut's headdress had alternating bands of gold and black. They can do this too, or they can use stars, swirls, dots, etc. (The thing to emphasize here is that the headdress should have a pattern.)
3. Pass out the oil pastels. Have the students color in the facial features with oil pastels. Remind them that this is supposed to be their face so the eye color should be their eye color, etc.
4. Pass out the palettes (or plates or cups) with a blob of gold metallic paint. (Students can share.)
5. Pass out paint brushes.
6. Have the students embellish their sarcophagus mask with gold paint. King Tut's mask was entirely made of gold, so they can be generous with this.
7. Pass out a small amount (about 12) of the metal mosaic paper squares. Using Elmer's Glue, have each student embellish their mask as if the squares are jewels.) Remind the students that they are just *embellishing*...not bedazzling!
8. Remind students to sign their names. Collect and display artwork.

Examples:



Today in Art Masterpiece, you child learned about King Tut's sarcophagus mask. King Tut lived and ruled Egypt over 3,000 years ago. The mask on King Tut's sarcophagus is made of gold and embellished with gemstones.

Art terms discussed today were: line, pattern, color, and contrast.

Using pattern and color, each student then designed their own mask.



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