

A as a form of
entertainment,
protection, and,



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

A mask has been used since 6000 BCE as a form of entertainment, protection, and, in an addition to this, an element of disguise. The people of the African tribes have altered and worn these symbolic artifacts since the beginning of their dynasty. The numerous amount of masks are like puzzle pieces to its culture. African masks are a valuable asset to the African tradition. Its History The earliest history of the African masks can be traced back to before the Paleolithic era. Since before the Paleolithic era, the “prehistoric period of human history distinguished by the development of the most primitive stone tools...”, masks have been used by the Africans for ceremonial purposes.

While representing spirits of animals, ancestors, and human values, they were used in many different ceremonies such as; funerals, “good harvest”, weddings, “coming of age”, and “agricultural year”. In addition to being used in ceremonies, they were also used in a form of honoring a specific, valuable person, such as a former mask maker and a fallen warrior. The

Decor African masks were made out of and decorated with all natural, raw materials. The mask foundation, which was usually shaped like a human face or animal snout, was made out of wood, pottery, textiles, copper, or bronze.

Before a tree is cut down to construct a wooden mask foundation a sacrifice is performed for permission from the spirit of tree to be cut down. According to Artyfactory, “When tools are passed down through different generations, they sometimes inherit the spirit and skills of their previous owners.” Also according to Artyfactory, “Wooden masks are often colored with natural dyes and pigments created from vegetables, plants, seeds, tree bark, soil, and insects.

” The details were made out of material such as; animal teeth, seashells, hair, and bones. One of the most popular animal mask made was the antelope, who symbolized agriculture to enable better crops. The different features of the mask varies to each of the represented elements. For an example, an extended chin represents power and strength, and a tiny mouth represents calmness and patience. The Spiritual Connection African masks are also known to have a spiritual meaning and connection. They represent passed ancestors, good and evil spirits, and animal spirits.

By those who were, as well as, are a part of the African culture, “...

it is strongly believed that the spirit of the ancestors possesses the wearer.”

The maker of masks has a high rank and reputation because he is believed to have a connection with the spirit world. The art of mask making, along the high rank and the “ knowledge of the symbolic meanings conveyed by the masks,” is passed down from father to son. Conclusion Compared to a puzzle, While individually representing different things, as a union, African masks are an important part of African history and culture.

Although there were many diverse African tribes, each individual one contributed to their African culture. To this day, the remarkable works of art known as “ African masks,” can be seen in museums and art galleries almost anywhere