

# Matthew Monahan: Folding Fun and Paper Masks



**Grades:** 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>

**Visual Arts**

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## **Lesson Description:**

Paper doesn't have to stay two dimensional. Just by making a few simple folds, a piece of paper can be transformed into a three dimensional sculpture.

Los Angeles based sculptor Matthew Monahan works with common materials like floral foam, drywall, paper, beeswax, tape, glass and glitter to create his monumental sculptures. Sculpture truly started as a form of drawing for Monahan;

he realized the crumples in the paper and the eraser tears could take a two dimensional work to three. In his discovery of sculpture through drawing, he started creating paper masks. He has been working on these masks for some time and they evolved out of folding paper. The masks are often large scale and show his interest in symmetry.

## **Objectives:**

- Students will learn about the work of Matthew Monahan
- Students will learn how to manipulate a two dimensional material into a three dimensional object
- Students will understand the transformative quality of the materials they use

## **Materials and Resources:**

Various sizes and colors of construction paper  
Pencils  
Tape

## **Critical Questions:**

- What materials validate artwork?
- How can we change the way a material is traditionally used?
- What other ways in that materials are transformed through artwork?



## **Activities:**

### **Folding Fun and Paper Masks**

- Before starting with making a mask, have students start with some paper folding exercises. Start with a piece of paper and draw a single line on it. Without using a pencil, turn that line into a triangle or square. This will give the students some idea on how to move and manipulate the paper into different shapes.
- Have students take another piece of paper and try folding it in a variety of ways so that the paper no longer lays flat on the table. You may even suggest to students that they try to get the paper as high up off the table as possible.
- After having students experiment with the paper, have them make their own sculptural mask. An easy way to start is to try and make a symmetrical by starting at the center and moving the folds outward.

## **Assessment:**

- Students have experimented with folding and manipulating paper into three dimensional shapes
- Students have created a mask made of folded paper



**National Standards:**

**Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes**

k-4.1 Students know the differences between materials, techniques, and processes

k-4.4 Students use art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner

5-8.2 Students intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques, and processes to enhance communication of their experiences and ideas

**Using knowledge of structures and functions**

k-4.3 Students use visual structures and functions of art to communicate ideas

5-8.1 Students generalize about the effects of visual structures and functions and reflect upon these effects in their own work

5-8.2 Students employ organizational structures and analyze what makes them effective or not effective in the communication of ideas

**Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others**

5-8.1 Students compare multiple purposes for creating works of art

