



## Paper Mache Giant Head

*This project uses almost all recycled material, works great with large groups, and is sure to draw attention and new participants to your Maker program.*

**Project Type:** Creative Tactile

**Group/Individual:** Collaborative

**Lesson Plan Audience:** Maker Mentor

**Time:** at least 3 hrs over 2 days, you can also draw this out over a week or more

**Hard Skills:** Building

**Soft Skills:** Design concepts, Collaboration, Patience, Resourcefulness, Mathematics, Experimentation

**Ideal # of Participants:** 10-15

**Age Group:** 5 and up

**Ideas for Taking it Further:**

Use your paper mache creations as costumes or props in a movie.

**Difficulties/Tips:**

This is a long term project and children can get bored. It is also a messy project and may not be appropriate for all spaces. Participants don't always like to get gooey. This project requires the mentor to prepare prior to the session by making the paper mache. It may also be good to rip up strips of paper in advance or assign this task to a participant so that whole pieces of newspaper aren't being added.

Smaller pieces of paper work best for areas with more detail in the shape but it's easiest to add detail at the decorating stage. Think basic shape when making the original form.



## Materials

Cornstarch  
Recycled plastic bottles  
Recycled plastic bags  
Masking tape  
Packing tape  
Newspaper  
Brown paper bags  
Plastic wrap  
Duct tape



## Steps

1. Before the project begins make a batch of paper mache using this recipe:
  - 1 part cornstarch to 5 parts water. For a group of 10-15 use 1 cup cornstarch and 5 cups water.
  - Boil 4 parts (cups) water.
  - Mix remaining 1 part water and 1 part corn starch. Keep mixing so the mixture doesn't turn lumpy. Stir mixture into boiling water. Turn off heat as soon as mixture thickens.
2. Brainstorm: What kind of giant head will we make? Is it a mask? Is it a puppet?
3. Make the form. Tape together plastic bottles and trash. Use plastic bags to smooth out surfaces. It may be helpful to have some trash already taped together in a general head shape.
4. Cover the form in plastic wrap.
5. Dip newspaper or paper bag strips in paper mache mixture. Saturate but remove excess paper mache. Cover the form in a layer of strips.
6. Cover the head in at least 5 layers. Alternate paper bag and newspaper to help keep track of how many layers you have done.



7. Let dry overnight. If there are at least 5 layers dry then the paper mache is ready to be cut off the form. Use an utility knife to cut down the middle of the head. Different forms require different cuts. Once the paper mache shell is removed, tape it back together with duct tape or masking tape. Add one more layer of paper mache.
8. Paint , decorate, go crazy! Acrylic paint works best. Adding detail is most easily done with hot glue.