



NEEDLE FELTED MOLA

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Grades 5-12

Molas are an exquisite handmade design that forms part of a traditional outfit of the Guna, an indigenous people from Panama and Colombia. Molas are traditionally made in a reverse appliqué process that involves several layers of fabric, cutting, and hand stitching. Needle felting is a process of working with wool and a barbed felting needle to create felted designs. When wool fibers are locked together, felt is created. Designs can be felted on by adding wool to the top and pushing it with a felting needle to lock it in place.



OBJECTIVES

Students will...

- Be introduced to Molas and their significance to the Guna people.
- Learn how to create a Mola-inspired design.
- Learn how to needle felt a design.

INSTRUCTIONS

Begin your lesson by introducing your students to the Guna people and show examples of their traditional clothing, then introduce needle felting and go over safety procedures. Students should always felt on their foam work surface and keep their needles away from their fingers when stabbing the wool in an up-and-down motion.

1. Preparation. Cut smaller sizes of felt sheets in a variety of colors. The sheets should be 3" x 5", 4" x 7", or larger. Smaller pieces will help encourage more detailed designs.
2. Have students look at examples of Molas and create a sketch for their own Mola-inspired design.
3. Have students collect the following materials: precut felt sheet, foam block, felting needle, and several small strands of colored wool.
4. Have students recreate designs on the felt by rolling small strands of wool. Push the needle through to tack down the wool to create lines.
5. Switch colors of wool as needed to create colorful designs. Save all wool fiber scrap for other felting projects.

STANDARDS

VA:Cr2.1.5a — Experiment and make skills in multiple art-making techniques and approaches through practice.

VA:Cr2.2.5a — Demonstrate quality craftsmanship through care for and use of materials, tools, and equipment.

VA:Re.7.2.5a — Identify and analyze cultural associations suggested by visual imagery.

RESOURCES

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mola_\(art_form\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mola_(art_form))

<https://www.wikihow.com/Needle-Felt>





MATERIALS LIST

- Foam Work Surface, 5" x 8" x 2", for 1 block — 9732781 or for 12 blocks — 9732782
- PacaFluff Wool Roving
 - 2 oz. — 9732786(A) Multicolored or 9732786(B) Natural colors
 - 8 oz. — 9732785(A) Multicolored or 9732785(B) Natural colors
- Needle Felting Needles — 9732789
- Polyester Felt — 9719066

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