

Art from an African Kingdom: Luba Masterworks from Central Africa

THE SPECIAL EXHIBITION *SHAPING POWER: LUBA Masterworks from the Royal Museum for Central Africa* (on view July 7, 2013–January 5, 2014) is the first offering in LACMA's newly dedicated gallery for the arts of Africa, and marks the creation of a permanent and prominent presence for African art at the museum. Over the next few years, temporary displays will feature the dynamic spectrum of African artistic production, from historical to contemporary times and from diverse regions of this vast continent and its diasporas. Situated next to the Egyptian gallery, this new space fosters an understanding of the relationships between sub-Saharan Africa and ancient Egypt as part of the shared continent of Africa, and signals LACMA's commitment to presenting Africa's innumerable artistic and cultural legacies.

Luba Art

The Luba Kingdom is an influential Central African state that has flourished for the past several centuries in what is now the Katanga Province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Sculpted thrones, elegant scepters, and commemorative figures played significant roles in shaping the powers of this sophisticated African culture. Royal emblems were vital to its formation and expansion.

While many Luba works appear to have utilitarian purposes, they were imbued with spiritual attributes and esoteric wisdom. As treasures of kings, chiefs, titleholders, and diviners, they also served as emissaries, creating affiliations that further extended the realm. Wide emulation of Luba aesthetics and political rituals further enlarged their reach. These same objects were, and continue to be, memory devices, encoding the histories and practices of Luba kingship. *Shaping Power* conveys the beauty and complexity of Luba art and culture, offering insight into a remarkable African sculptural and philosophical legacy. The exhibition considers the roles of sacred objects in the making of a ruler, why Luba emblems depict women, and how certain objects possess powers of healing and transformation. Also on view in this exhibition is a contemporary installation by Congolese artist Aimé Mpane, as well as a *lukasa*, a Luba memory board. In seminal works like these, the past is continually reimagined through eyes of the present.

Curriculum Connections

Included here are descriptions of several objects from the exhibition, as well as curriculum connections that can be adapted for use in the classroom for students of all ages. For many students, this information may be their first introduction to the richness and complexity of Luba—and African—art.

Mask

19th century, Luba, Katanga, Democratic Republic of the Congo

LUBA MASKS ARE QUITE RARE, AND LITTLE IS KNOWN of their use and iconography. This example is one of the largest and most imposing of Luba masks. It has become an iconic mask for Luba people, for whom it may evoke the remembrance of the great culture hero, Mbidi Kiluwe, who is often referred to as a man in the form of a majestic buffalo. Mbidi Kiluwe brought kingship to the Luba, as well as advanced hunting and blacksmithing technologies. The mask's regal eminence, hornlike coiffure, and bird on the back may allude to the powers of kingship that were celebrated through masquerade. The mask blends human and animal attributes, just as a Luba king transcends earthly categories, and its features bespeak the cool composure expected of a sacred ruler. The bird on the back of its head was broken off and separated from the mask long ago, but has since been reattached. It most likely represents an oxpecker. And the beard of the mask, which may have been held by the dancer, is shaped like a *lukasa* memory board, which holds the precepts and principles of Luba kingship.

Culture Heroes and Legends

Ask your students to think about the qualities and attributes of heroes from throughout history and literature. For example, in Luba tradition, Mbidi Kiluwe is often represented as a buffalo, an animal considered to be majestic and powerful. Other heroes, such as the Mesoamerican deity Quetzalcoatl and the Greek soldier Odysseus, are depicted in ways that similarly communicate heroic status. Choose a hero from a literary or nonfiction text, whether mythological or historical. What adjectives would you use to describe his/her traits? Chart a list of words that articulate your hero's character and values. Review the chart and brainstorm an animal that evokes two or three of these qualities. How will you represent your hero through the image of an animal? Sketch a design for a clay mask that incorporates relevant human and animal characteristics. Translate your sketch into a sculpture, using air-drying clay (such as Crayola® Model Magic®) and clay techniques (such as scoring, tearing, and pinching) to mold the mask in three dimensions. Share your work with classmates by writing your hero's story in words then reciting or performing the legend for others.



Luba, Katanga, Democratic Republic of the Congo
Mask, 19th century

Wood, 14 ¹⁵/₁₆ x 17 ¹¹/₁₆ x 15 ³/₄ in.

Royal Museum for Central Africa (RG 23470)

Collection RMCA Tervuren; photo R. Asselberghs, RMCA Tervuren ©.

Caryatid Stool

19th century, Luba, Katanga, Democratic Republic of the Congo

STOLS WERE AND CONTINUE TO BE POTENT EMBLEMS of Luba sacred kingship. A privilege of Luba rulers, they figured prominently in royal enthronement rites. Luba kings were semidivine, and their feet never touched the ground, so a ruler would sit upon a throne with his feet resting on a leopard pelt. The female figure supporting the stool attracted and contained the spirits of Luba kingship through marks of Luba identity and physical perfection, including scarification patterns, an elegant coiffure (hairstyle), gleaming skin, and a serene, composed attitude. She symbolized the powerful roles women played in Luba politics and as vessels of sacred authority. Because women bear and nurture children, Luba individuals say that only the body of a woman is strong enough to hold a spirit as powerful as that of a king.

Commemorative Paper Thrones

Who is an important woman in your life? How does she care for and support you? What women have impacted local, national, or international history? What did this person do to bring about social change? Choose a female mentor or historical figure to honor in a commemorative paper throne. How will you alter the essential elements of the throne (the backrest, seat, and legs) to customize or personalize the design according to your inspiration? What shapes, colors, or functions will you incorporate? Build your throne using paper (such as poster board or card stock) and paper-folding techniques (such as scoring, tearing, and cutting). Regardless of the scale, ensure that your maquette (or model) is structurally sound. Lastly, share your maquette with others in a classroom gallery display.



Luba, Katanga, Democratic Republic of the Congo
Caryatid Stool, 19th century
Wood, glass beads, 14 ³/₁₆ 7 ⁷/₈ 8 ¹/₄ in.
Royal Museum for Central Africa (RG 22725)
Collection RMCA Tervuren; photo R. Asselberghs, RMCA Tervuren ©.

Anthropomorphic Headrests

19th century, Luba, Katanga, Democratic Republic of the Congo

WOODEN HEADRESTS, WHICH PRESERVE ELABORATE hairstyles and keep the head comfortable in sleep, were popular among high-ranking Luba people of earlier generations. Intimately valued by Luba, headrests sometimes were used in burials, accompanying their owners to the world beyond. The figures in these headrests don a hairstyle popular in the Shankadi region of the royal Luba Heartland called the "step coiffure," which was created through hours of meticulous work. Headrests were sometimes conduits for messages from the ancestors, conveyed through the prophecy of dreams.

Hairstyling was and still is important to Luba people, and women continue to wear dramatic and labor-intensive hairdos. The coiffures can identify one's marital status or indicate one's cultural role; however, the primary purpose of hairstyling is to beautify the wearer. As a Luba woman named Ngoi Ilunga has said, "An elegant hairstyle makes a woman radiant." Like scarification, a beautiful hairstyle is a sign of civilization and of a person's status and self-esteem.

Journey to the Afterlife

In many cultures around the world, artisans craft objects for use during and *after* life. These objects take many forms and are often believed to ensure a safe voyage to, and stay within, the afterlife. Do you have an ancestor who might need a helping hand? A headrest, a table, or a backpack? Interview members of your family and talk about the memories that they hold about parents, grandparents, or great grandparents, aunts, and uncles. What were their favorite objects and treasures? What might they need in this next stage of life? What object will you design to fulfill a specific need? Draw the object that you would create, incorporating tips for use and special functions. Address the drawing to your ancestor and display it in a special location at home or gift it to the family member who helped provide inspiration.



Luba, Katanga, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Anthropomorphic Headrest, 19th century

Wood, 6 ¹¹/₁₆ x 4 ³/₄ x 2 ³/₈ in.

Royal Museum for Central Africa (RG 23473)

Collection RMCA Tervuren; photo R. Asselberghs, RMCA Tervuren ©.



Luba, Katanga, Democratic Republic of the Congo
Anthropomorphic Headrest, 19th century
Wood, beads, 5 1/2 x 4 1/2 x 2 7/8 in.
Royal Museum for Central Africa (RG 1954.77.5)
Collection RMCA Tervuren; photo R. Asselberghs, RMCA Tervuren ©.

Memory Board (*Lukasa*)

19th century, Luba, Katanga, Democratic Republic of the Congo

A LUKASA MEMORY BOARD IS A LIBRARY OF LUBA historical knowledge with encoded memories of the past to retell in the present. Luba people invented *lukasa* memory boards to protect, transmit, and sanctify the esoteric royal knowledge undergirding this great Central African kingdom. Luba describe memory as a string of beads documenting events, people, and places that can be restrung and reorganized in a myriad of ways. A *lukasa* fixes the beads in dynamic juxtapositions, and memories are then associated with their forms, colors, sizes, and configurations. A "man of memory" touches the surface of the wooden tablet and recalls information as he presents a narrative to a rapt audience. No two recitations are alike, for these court historians always perform memory in the present to meet the needs of a given audience in a particular moment. A *lukasa's* beads are like a code that can be read only by a few who know its secrets.

Visualizing History

What important story will you record for future generations, such as the history of your school, community, or family? Write a narrative version of this history in words, including important people, places, and events. How will you translate the written story into a visual representation? Create your own *lukasa* using recycled materials and clay. First, draft a list of source materials that you can appropriate from home, such as bottle caps, buttons, and thread. Gather the household materials and bring them to the classroom. Next, roll a lump of clay into a long rectangle (about one inch thick) to serve as the *lukasa* board. Play with the household items to create different configurations or sequences of your story, assigning a special meaning to each material. For example, bottle caps can symbolize people, buttons might symbolize places, while thread can represent the action that brings a person and place together. When you have reached a desired composition, firmly press each object into the clay and allow for drying time. When finished, share your unique history with a classmate by reciting the story depicted in your *lukasa*. Then, recount the same story to a friend in a different grade level, either older or younger. How do stories change with each retelling and according to a different audience?



Luba Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo
Memory Board (Lukasa), 19th century
Wood, beads, and metal, H. 13 ³/₈ in.
Private Collection (EX250772), Photo © 2013 Museum Associates/LACMA.

Shaping Power: Luba Masterworks from the Royal Museum for Central Africa marks the inauguration of a gallery and educational program dedicated to the arts of Africa at LACMA. This exhibition was co-organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Royal Museum for Central Africa and was supported in part by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium.

This essay was adapted by Mary Lenihan from the book *Luba* (1997) by Mary Nooter Roberts. Curriculum materials were prepared by Jennifer Reid and Holly Gillette, and designed by Jenifer Shell. © 2013 Museum Associates/LACMA. All rights reserved.

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Classroom Activity

Shaping Sacred Animal Masks

Essential Questions	How do artists evoke animal characteristics in human masks? How are masks used in ceremonial art and dance?
Grades	K–6
Time	One class period
Visual Art Concepts	Symbol, storytelling, mood
Materials	Air drying clay (such as Crayola® Model Magic®), markers, pencil, paper. Optional: cardboard (pre-circles), clay tools, mixed-media materials (such as beads, buttons, or fibers).
Talking about Art	<p>View and discuss the image of the <i>Mask</i> (19th century) included in the printed and digital curriculum.</p> <p>What do you see? Describe the face that you see and the qualities that you notice. What animal might it represent? What might the animal be feeling? How might the mask have been used or worn? What do you notice that makes you that?</p> <p>This mask depicts a buffalo, a sacred animal for the Luba culture of Central Africa. The buffalo is also a symbol for Mbidi Kiluwe, an important Luba hero. In the epic of Mbidi Kiluwe, the hero battles a rainbow-breathing serpent named Nkongolo Mwamba. Kiluwe defeats the "red"-skinned snake to become a "black" majestic buffalo, and introduces the Luba people to the sacred kingship, the way of life that defines their civilization. The battle between "red" and "black" is a cultural dichotomy similar to the concept of yin and yang, or complementary and contrasting forces. The buffalo is also a symbol of this dichotomy. It is, at the same time, docile and aggressive, visible and invisible, in and out of water, and active at night's beginning and end.</p> <p>Luba masks are rare and little is known about this 19th-century mask's origin or use. It was likely created and performed to recount the epic of Mbidi Kiluwe for spiritual ceremonies that incorporated both art and dance.</p>

Making Art

What kind of animal do you feel like today? Do you feel sluggish like an ox or active like a cheetah? Choose an animal that describes your mood and think about the qualities of this animal. How does it move, act, and think? Does it prance, run, or jump? Create a dance that portrays this animal, using your body to express the feeling and mood of this creature.

Translate your dance into a drawing, by sketching two faces of your animal. The two faces should represent two different qualities of your animal, or two different actions or moods. You will use these sketches to create a miniature double-sided mask of your animal.

Use a small circular piece of cardboard to serve as the dividing line between the faces. Place the piece of cardboard on the table then mold a small sphere of clay on top. Use your fingers to pinch and push the clay to form the shape of the animal's head. Use clay tools or a pencil to add facial details and expression. Next, flip the cardboard and sculpt the second head and face on the reverse. Be careful to keep both faces intact while you work.

Lastly, add color on top of the clay with markers. If you have mixed-media materials, try pushing beads, buttons, or threads into the clay for a tactile touch. When finished, let the double-faced mask dry overnight, leaning on a large circular piece of cardboard as a base.

Reflection

Perform your dance for fellow students, incorporating the miniature mask into your steps and movement. Ask students to guess what animal your mask and dance evoke. Ask a volunteer to take your mask and invent a new dance based on his or her interpretation of the animal.

Curriculum Connection

For a literary connection, compare this mask of Mbidi Kiluwe with the story of another culture hero, such as the Mesoamerican deity Quetzacoatl or the Greek soldier Odysseus. How do art, dance, and literature record culture and pass on collective knowledge?

Classroom Activity

Storytelling with Memory Boards

Essential Questions	How do artists translate memories into sculptures? How do they tell stories using line, color, and rhythm?
Grades	3–8
Time	Two class periods
Visual Art Concepts	Line, color, composition, rhythm
Materials	Corkboard or bulletin board (pre-cut rectangles or circles), spools of yarn in various colors, pushpins, and scissors
Talking about Art	View and discuss the image of the <i>Memory Board (Lukasa)</i> (19 th century) included in the printed and digital curriculum.

What do you see? What materials do you recognize? How did the artist arrange the materials? Describe the configuration of the individual pieces and the lines that they create. How would you describe the overall composition, or arrangement of visual elements?

This sculpture, made of wood, beads, and metals, is a mnemonic device, a tool that helps people convey information and commit information to memory. This particular device is called a *lukasa* board and the Luba people of central Africa used the *lukasa* to recall collective memories and cultural stories. It is a handheld library of Luba historical knowledge that encodes memories of the past to retell in the present.

The unique arrangement of materials documents narrative events. Different parts of the story are communicated by the forms, colors, and sizes of the individual pieces. For instance, one bead represents an individual person and circles of beads represent a place. Significant relationships between people and places are indicated by a line of beads that describes the trajectory of the story. The *lukasa* configuration was not set in stone and was often restrung and reorganized in a myriad of ways. A "man of memory" would touch the surface of the tablet, recall specific information, and present the information as a narrative to an audience. As with any performance, no two recitations were alike because Luba historians performed the story for different listeners at different moments. The making and reading of the *lukasa* formed an important practice for indoctrination into the Mbudye Association, the Luba's spiritual society, and is a tradition that is still practiced today.

Making Art

What mnemonic devices do you use to record and remember information? A mnemonic device can take many forms, such as a saying, song, or dance. Create your own mnemonic *lukasa* board to document a special event from your life.

What story will you record? Write your story in words, including important people, places, and actions. Using colored pushpins and colored string, how will you assign meaning to each material? Use pushpins to represent people and places. Differentiate between individual people and places by assigning each person and site a specific color. For instance, blue pins could represent people while red pins represent places. Then, choose a color palette of various colored yarn to represent the elements of your story. Primary colors of yellow, blue, and red can distinguish the beginning, middle, and end of the narrative. Perhaps warm colors convey dramatic moments in the story, while cool colors represent calm and harmonious scenes.

Before you begin stringing the story, choose either a circular or rectangular piece of corkboard to serve as your base. The shape of your base will dictate the rhythm, or movement, of your story, as you experiment by laying different configurations of pins and string on the base. Start by placing your "people" and "place" pushpins, then weave and tie the yarn around the pushpins to connect the people and places with the trajectory of your narrative. Try many different arrangements until you have reached a composition that best tells your story.

Reflection

Pair up and perform your story for a partner. Use your *lukasa* as a storytelling device, touching each pushpin as you describe a person or place and following the lines of string as you progress through the story. Next, switch partners and retell your story to another friend. How did the story unfold as you performed it? How did the story change as you retold it? How would you tell the story differently if you performed it for your parents, grandparents, a sibling, or a teacher?

Curriculum Connection

As an added literacy connection, ask students to continue writing their stories in words. Perhaps they can extend the stories to recall different actions or later events. Using the second writing as inspiration, have students restring their *lukasas* to tell new parts of the same story.

Classroom Activity

African Headrests: Ancient to Modern

Essential Question	How do art objects help people navigate life and the world beyond?
Grades	6–12
Time	One class period
Visual Art Concepts	Line, shape, symbol, form, function, motif
Materials	Pencil, colored pencils, paper
Talking about Art	View and discuss the image of the <i>Anthropomorphic Headrest</i> (19 th century) included in the printed and digital curriculum. Compare and contrast with the <i>Funerary Headrest</i> (c. 2513–2374 BC) featured on the reverse. For a digital image of the <i>Funerary Headrest</i> , visit LACMA online at http://collections.lacma.org/node/244880 .

What do you see? Describe the lines, shapes, and three-dimensional forms that you notice. Which forms are recognizable and what might they represent? What material did the artist use to make this? What steps might the artist have taken? What do you see that makes you say that?

How might think this object have been used? The curved platform on top identifies it as a utilitarian headrest. Wooden headrests such as these were popular among the Luba people of Central Africa, especially among high-ranking officials. They served the everyday function of keeping elaborate hairstyles intact during sleep—hairstyles that described one’s marital status or cultural role. Headrests were also believed to be conduits for messages from Luba ancestors, conveyed in the present through the prophecy of dreams.

Compare and contrast the 19th century Luba headrest with an ancient Egyptian headrest. What similarities do you notice? What differences do you find? How did the artist customize this headrest? The lines and shapes are hieroglyphs, or symbols that convey meaning in the ancient Egyptian’s formal writing system. The hieroglyphs are carved within a cartouche (a long oval shape or frame with a horizontal line at one end), which typically displays the name of a king or royal official.

More than 4,400 years separate these two headrests, but they both tell us about the time and place in which they were created. Ancient Egyptian headrests were often made of wood, but this stone example was likely made for the afterlife. It would have been placed inside the tomb, close to the head of the mummy within or on top of the coffin. It served as protection against the unknown in the afterlife. While the Egyptian headrest served a commemorative function, the modern Luba headrest was an everyday object. Intimately valued by

the Luba, they were also used in burials, accompanying the owner to the world beyond. The importance of the headrest is shared by many African cultures, supporting the idea of continued use from antiquity to today.

Making Art

What might these headrests tell us about the ancient Egyptian cosmology and modern Luba culture? What do the everyday objects that you use say about you?

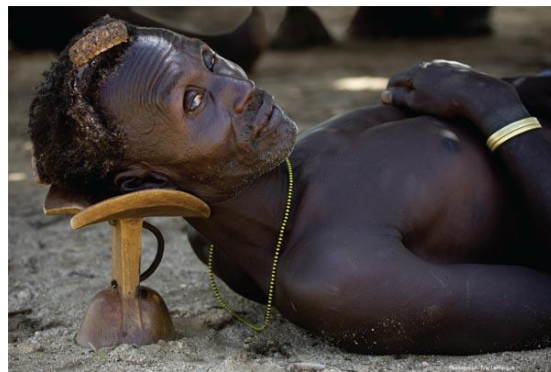
Sketch a design for your own headrest. How will you change the basic elements of the headrest (platform, shaft, and base) to create a 21st-century look? How will you customize the design to describe you? Incorporate favorite shapes, symbols, colors, and motifs (or themes) to communicate a message about you.

Reflection

Share your sketch with a partner then make a word bank of adjectives that describe you. Where does your partner see evidence of these attributes in your design? If your partner could summarize a message about you, what would he or she say? How would your partner change or alter the design to enhance the message that you are trying to send? Switch and answer the same questions about your partner. Record your findings and present them to the rest of the class.

Curriculum Connection

Extend the lesson by transforming the headrest design into a miniature model. What material will you use to translate the design in three dimensions? How will you engineer the structure and adhere the materials to ensure balance and support? If you were to take this design to scale in a functional material, how much material would you need and at what cost?



Left: *Funerary Headrest*
Egypt, 5th Dynasty, circa 2513–2374 BC
Furnishings; furniture, Granite, 7⁷/₁₆ x 6⁵/₈ in.
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Gift of Robert Miller and Marilyn Miller Deluca (M.80.199.107)
Photo © 2013 Museum Associates/LACMA

Classroom Activity

Sculpting Your Familial Lineage

Essential Question How do artists honor important people through the design of everyday objects?

Grades 9–12

Time Two to three class periods

Visual Art Concepts Line, shape, form, pattern (organic and geometric), texture, symmetry, sculpting techniques (reductive and additive process), function

Materials Soft density Balsa-Foam®, clay carving tools, clay wire cutter, Tacky Glue®, glue brushes, paper towels, pencil, paper. Optional: tempera paint, paint brushes, assorted beads, string, and scissors.

Talking about Art View and discuss the image of the *Caryatid Stool* (19th century) included in the printed and digital curriculum.

What do you see? Describe the lines, shapes, and patterns that you notice. Are they organic (curvy) or geometric (angular)? What recognizable figure do you see? How is this figure integrated into the overall form of the object? What do you think this object might have been used for? What do you see that makes you say that?

This object was designed with a function, or use, in mind. It was used as a stool for seating and was designed for a Luba king. The Luba of Central Africa used seating to distinguish members of the royal court. The Luba spiritual society, called the Mbudye Association, also incorporated seating into initiation rites. Seats ranged from simple woven mats, to animal skins and furs, to modeled clay thrones adorned with geometric and figurative representations. Sculptured wooden stools such as the *Caryatid Stool* were reserved specifically for kings and spiritual mediums.

The stool served an important function for the Luba people. It was (and still is) a metaphorical symbol for the seat of power. "Men of memory" who have been initiated into the Luba royal court can actually "read" a Luba stool as a text. The motif that adorns the platforms (the circular, disk-like seat and base) represents a particular capital or site of kingship, while the female figure speaks to the role of women as political agents who hold up the seats of power. Artists specialized in stools such as these and kings commissioned different stools from different workshops according to the sculptor's unique strengths. Many details were added to adorn the stool, such as scarification patterns and stylized hairstyles for the female figure (cultural signifiers of beauty for the Luba people) as well as the colored glass beads.

Making Art

Create a model stool out of balsa foam that honors your unique familial lineage. First, think about a culture that you and your family identify with. This could be your family's country of origin or a people with which you identify. Are there lines, shapes, or colors that speak to this culture? Make a quick sketch of a pattern (lines, shapes, or colors that repeat in a particular order) that speaks to your family's heritage. This pattern will adorn the platforms of your stool.

Next, think about important people in your family and the qualities that they evoke. This could be a family member who displayed heroism or overcame hardship in order to better your life or the lives of others. How will you incorporate their image and attributes into the form of your stool? Make a quick sketch of the figure, including identifying details such as props, dress, or a hairstyle. Make sure that the form of the figure is symmetrical (identical on both sides) to provide structural support for your functional design.

Finally, translate your sketches into three separate sculptural parts, using soft density balsa foam and clay sculpting tools. You may think about pre-cutting the foam into disks (for the platforms) and tall rectangular prisms (for the shaft) using a clay wire cutter. Sculpt two identical platforms and a symmetrical figure to serve as the shaft. For the figure, sculpt by taking material away from the solid prism. This is referred to as the reductive process, while sculpting a form by adhering smaller pieces together is called the additive process. Focus on sculpting simple forms (head, torso, arms) as opposed to fine detail. Be careful not to take away too much material, as this can hinder the structural integrity of the shaft. For the platform, consider using the side of the clay tool to create readymade impressions on the rims. Experiment with different techniques to create unique marks and cuts.

Lastly, the three pieces of the stool together using Elmer's Glue and a glue brush. The platform on top will serve as the seat while the platform on bottom will serve as the base. Remember, this is a miniature version of your stool and will not be used by a life-size sitter, but it should stand on its own without assistance.

If you have more time to allot to the project, use tempera paint and paint brushes to approximate the patina of wood. For added adornment, string necklaces or bracelets out of beads and tie them onto the central figure featured in your stool.

Reflection

Take your model stool home and share it with your family. How did you integrate your family's culture into the design? Who did you honor in your sculpture and why?

Curriculum Connection

For a math connection, have each student start with two identical cones and a cylinder. Before sculpting, ask students to calculate the volume or space occupied by three parts. After sculpting, ask students to estimate the volume of the final sculpture.

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Selected Resources

LACMA Curriculum Materials

Evenings for Educators resources include an illustrated essay, color images, classroom activities, and related resources. Printed curriculum is available through LACMA's Education Department.

Art from Zaire

October 1995

African Art

October 1997

Ancestors: Art and the Afterlife

November 1998

Music for the Eyes: The Fine Art of African Musical Instruments

February 2000

Online Resources

Luba Art and Culture

A Home for African Art

Los Angeles County Museum of Art
<http://lacma.wordpress.com/2013/07/03/a-home-for-african-art/>

Read about the inauguration of LACMA's African Art galleries on *Unframed: The LACMA Blog*, featuring the exhibition *Shaping Power: Luba Masterworks from the Royal Museum for Central Africa*.

Kingdoms of the Savanna: The Luba and Lunda Empires

The Metropolitan Museum of Art
www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/luba/hd_luba.htm
Explore the emergence of the Luba empire through essays and maps from the Metropolitan Museum of Art's *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*.

African Art

The Museum for African Art

<http://www.africanart.org/education/resources.php>
The Museum for African Art's teacher guides include images, sample lesson plans, and bibliographies related to African art and current issues in Africa.

The Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art

<http://africa.si.edu/exhibits/resources.html>
View artist interviews and installations from the National Museum of African Art. Stream *Radio Africa*, a free radio station featuring African rhythms from the collections of Smithsonian Global Sound.

PBS TeacherSource

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/africa/tools/index.html>
Explore Africa, from its diverse eco-systems to its kaleidoscope of cultures, through interactive lessons.

UCLA African Studies Center

<http://www.international.ucla.edu/africa/outreach/>
Learn about professional development opportunities for classroom teachers and online multimedia curriculum.

Harvard University Committee on African Studies

<http://africa.harvard.edu/for-educators/bring-africa-to-the-classroom/>
Bring Africa to the classroom using modules designed for K–12 classrooms. Topics include "Introduction to Africa: Geography and Culture" and "South African Apartheid and the Transition to Democracy."

Books for Teachers

Clarke, Christa. *The Art of Africa: A Resource for Educators*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2007.

A collection of lesson plans, classroom activities, maps, and more, inspired by forty works of African Art from the Metropolitan.

Roberts, Mary Nooter, and Allen F. Roberts, eds. *Memory: Luba Art and the Making of History*. Munich: Prestel for the Museum for African Art, New York, 1996.

An exploration of the relationship between memory and history through mnemonic devices, wooden figures, ornamented staffs, and axes from the Luba kingdom.

Roberts, Mary Nooter and Allen F. Roberts. *Luba (Visions of Africa)*. Milan: 5 Continents Editions, 2007.

An examination of the role of visual and performance arts in Luba traditional politics and the transmission of historical knowledge through art objects.

Willett, Frank. *African Art*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2003.

A survey of art from the distinct peoples and cultures that comprise the African continent.

Books for Students

Fredericks, Anthony D. *African Legends, Myths, and Folktales for Readers Theatre*. Santa Barbara: Libraries Unlimited, 2008.

Plays based on traditional African folklore to enhance literacy instruction.

Mooney, Carla and Megan Stearns. *Amazing Africa Projects You can Build Yourself*. White River Junction, VT: Nomad Press, 2010.

A journey through the vast continent of Africa through 25 projects tied to ancient civilizations and tribes, cultural traditions, and unique wildlife.

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