

Make a Feather Headdress

National Curriculum Aims:

History: To study a non-European society that provides a contrast with British history.
To explore Aztec society and make a feather headdress.

Art: Improve mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture, with a range of materials.

The king was the most important person in Aztec society. He was leader of religion, war and government. The most important people in Aztec society would show their status by wearing decorated clothes and headdresses.

Animal skin and feathers were used to cover warriors and over their shields. Craftsmen could also create magnificent feather crowns, taking inspiration from tropical birds.



You will need:

- A strip of strong paper or card, long enough to fit around your head.
- Craft feathers, coloured paper, scissors, tape, glue.

What to do:

1. Cut a long strip of strong paper or card measuring about 5cm wide. Hold it up around your head so you can measure how long it needs to be. Cut it to length but don't tape it together just yet.
2. Next, take the coloured card and draw the outline of a feather. It should be about 30cm long and 5cm wide but varying the measurements slightly will give a realistic effect. For each feather, make small triangular cuts at random intervals on the edge to make a realistic effect. Vary the colour and size of the feathers you cut.
3. You could also use craft feathers to build up layers of real and paper for an interesting effect.
4. Stick your feathers to the strip of paper you cut at the start. Try to overlap them, putting longer ones to the back.



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5. Feathered headdress details could be intricate. Specific size and colour would be used in layers, with details added for interest.
6. Geometric patterns were also popular. Use squared paper to create Aztec-inspired patterns. You could use the squares, combine them to make rectangles or halve them to make triangles. Remember to vary the sizes.
7. Once dry, place the strip of paper around your head and secure the ends with tape.
8. Wear your feather headdress and be an Aztec king or queen for a day!



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