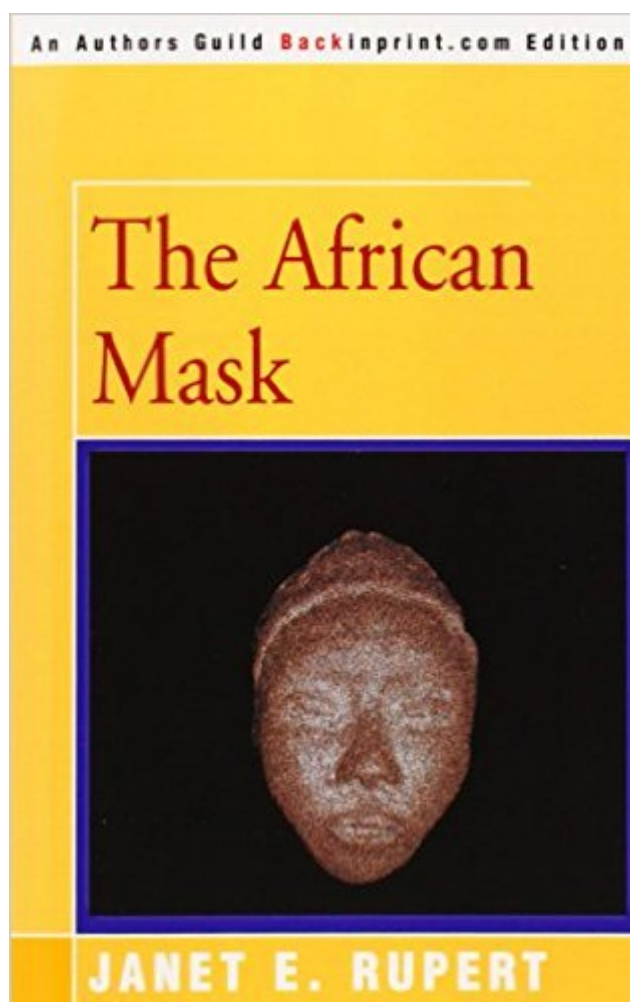


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# The African Mask



## Synopsis

Twelve-year-old Layo has no thoughts of marriage. Her joy lies in making pottery, and she greatly admires her grandmother's success in that art. When her parents demand that she leave her sleepy little village and visit the bustling city to meet her betrothed, she sees her dream slipping away. "Notable Book" of the 1995 African Studies Association Children's Book Award. "Vivid recreation of 11th century Africa." -Kirkus Review "The book contains delightful girlish secrets, friendships, romance, and mystery, as well as details of the customs of an ancient culture known for bronze and terra-cotta work." -The Horn Book Guide

## Book Information

Paperback: 146 pages

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Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.3 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.7 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.4 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (5 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #2,249,146 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #110 in Â Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Africa #2188 in Â Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Social Skills #3289 in Â Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Values

Age Range: 4 - 12 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 07

## Customer Reviews

African Mask features a talented 12-year-old Yourban girl, Layo, in a recreation of 11th century Africa. Layo as a young apprentice, already has strong skills and a great love for the craft of her mother, pottery. She is quickly coming to the age where she will be betrothed and as tribal custom dictates, she will take on the trade of her husbands' clan. Through her attempt to reject the man who has been chosen as her future husband, Layo learns about family love, tradition, and unity. The writing is clear, although readers have to pay close attention to the names of characters. The characters have the traditional Yoruba names derived from relationships, i.e. "Mother of..." "Wife of ..." and "Son of..." Some of the characters are not as fully developed as they could be, but the story

with its romance and mystery is enjoyable and informative. The strength of this book is the descriptive detail of the family structure, deep respect for crafts and crafts people, religious belief, complex system of slavery, and customs and traditions strictly followed by the Yoruba of Africa. This book is a useful addition where historical fiction from Africa is needed, such as the California seventh grade world history curriculum.

The book *The African Mask* by Janet E. Rupert is an excellent book. It is a very cordial and calm book, but at the same time it is very stimulating and mysterious. The book also talks a lot about the African culture. *The African Mask* is about a young girl named Layo, who has the wonderful talent of molding beautiful pots with clay. Layo's talent is very prized where she comes from and is forbidden for children like her to know how to make such a beautiful thing. When Layo's grandmother comes to town from Ife, Layo wants to go back to Ife with her, to help her grandmother make pots in Ife. Will she get to go? Read the outstanding book *The African Mask* and find out. I would recommend this book because the reader can learn a lot about another culture. *The African Mask* takes place in Africa so the reader will learn about the African culture. Some of the things she learns in the book is how African women spend their every day lives, cooking, molding pots, cleaning, fetching water, and finding a good husband are all talked about in the book. Another reason why I would recommend this book is because the events in the book are very thrilling and exiting. For example, Layo and her friends go to spy on a boy, but they have to be very quiet and try not to get caught, that whole part is very nerve racking and electrifying because the reader is waiting to see if they get caught or not. This book will fill the reader with excitement and suspense when reading about Layo and the adventures she has. One reason why I wouldn't recommend this book is because in the beginning of the book it's pretty hard to get into and hard to keep reading. For example the beginning just talks about Layo doing housework and other chores and that was really boring to read about. Although this one fluke that makes the book a bit harder to get into, once the reader keeps reading they won't want to put it down. This is a thrilling story that gives the reader great information on the African culture.

Layo is a young African girl who has a great talent in pottery. Like her grandmother, she wants to spend her life creating pottery that her people are known for, but the decision is not hers to make. When her parents let her travel to the city to be with her grandmother, she realizes that she is being sent to meet the man who will be chosen as her husband. She now is facing a future in which there is no room for her pottery dream. This story shares in great detail the African culture and history.

Young people are able to learn what life was like many hundreds of years ago in Africa. The book expresses the value of being true to one's talents and oneself. It also teaches young people to follow their dreams and to never give up. The African Mask sends a powerful message about life and how our attitudes can make a difference in the direction that our lives move. The book teaches us the importance of believing in oneself and with the right attitude, one will prosper.

The African Mask was a story full with an intricate plot. The plot of the story is magical, casting a spell on the reader to read more and more. However, although the plot maybe magical, the way the author doesn't have describe the characters and just provieds a list of characters in the beginning, so if you don't know a character you can just refer to the list. Also, I think the author's transitioning was really bad. At first I'm reading about a character, then suddenly the character dissapears from the story! However, although the transitioning and details may be lacking, however the plot is magical.

I thought it was an art book to identify masks. There are such books but this is not one of them. Useless to me for what I wanted.

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