



## Perfectly Personal Word Art Artistic Big Letter Mask Homework – Photoshop Elements

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Unlike the previous sections of this class, the homework for this section will be less involved. We've already thoroughly explored different variations of the big letter mask so for the homework, we're going to simply have fun creating a beautiful and vibrant card using the things we've already learned. Think of this homework assignment like good old fashioned practice. We're going to practice using our custom big letter mask to make a card that you can print and use for so many things.

### Step One: Prepare the Workspace

- Open the Artistic Letter Mask Base file.
- In the Menu Bar, choose File > Duplicate. Click OK.
- Close the original Base file.

### Step Two: Update the Type

- First, press the letter D to reset the Color Chips.
- In the Layers panel, double click on the thumbnail for the type layer and type in a new word. I'm using the word THANKS in all caps. Click the checkmark to commit.
- Get the Horizontal Type tool.
- In the Tool Options, adjust the Size of your font until the word fits well within the bounds of the document. For this card, I'm using the Size of 100pts because I don't want the word to take up the whole width of the card front.
- Get the Move tool.
- Press Ctrl A (Mac: Cmd A) to Select All.
- In the Tool Options, click on the Align Horizontal Centers icon and the Align Vertical Centers icon.
- Press Ctrl D (Mac: Cmd D) to deselect.

# THANKS

### **Step Three: Add the Paint**

- Open Paint-02 and Paint-04 from the downloads for this class.
- On the document, while holding down the Shift key, click and drag each paint file to the letter mask base copy document.
- Once you have moved both paint files to the letter mask base document, in the Layers panel, click and drag both of the paint layers below the type layer.
- Now we need to resize the paint layers so that they aren't so big. I recommend doing this one paint layer at a time so you can size and position each one how you want.
- I'll first resize the watercolor paint layer (Paint-04) by pressing Ctrl T (Mac: Cmd T) to get the Transform options.
- While holding down the Alt key (Mac: Opt key) click and drag from a corner handle to reduce the size of the paint. Click the checkmark to commit.
- At this point, if you need to, use the Arrow keys to nudge the watercolor paint layer into place.
- Now, do the same thing for the paint splatter (Paint-02) layer.



#### **Step Four: Color the Layers**

- Now it's time to color the layers of our big letter mask. To do that, click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker.
- Pick a shade of orange that coordinates with our quick page card. If you want an exact Hex #, I'm using f0911c. Click OK.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Type layer to activate it.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon and choose Solid Color. The foreground color chip of orange should already be selected so click OK.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Create Clipping Mask.



- Press the letter X to switch the Foreground Color to white.
- In the Layers panel, click on one of the paint layers to activate it.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon and choose Solid Color. White should already be selected so click OK.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Create Clipping Mask.



- With the White Solid Color Fill Layer still active, Press Ctrl J (Mac: Cmd J) to duplicate this layer.
- In the Layers panel, drag the duplicated White Solid Color Fill Layer above the other paint layer.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Create Clipping Mask.
- At this point, our paint completely disappears into the background so let's go ahead and in the Layers panel, drag the white background layer to the trash.



#### **Step Five: Add a Gradient Layer Mask to the Type**

- In the Layers panel, click on the Type layer to activate it.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Add Layer Mask icon.
- Get the Gradient tool.
- Double check that your Foreground Color Chip is black. If it isn't press the letter X.
- In the Tool Options, click to open the Gradient Picker and choose the Foreground to Transparent Gradient. If you don't see the Foreground to Transparent Gradient, click to open the fly-out menu and choose Large List. If you still don't see the Foreground to Transparent Gradient, click to open the fly-out menu and choose Reset Gradients. Click OK.
- Continuing in the Tool Options, click on the Linear Gradient icon, set the Mode to Normal and the Opacity to 100%. Check Reverse, Dither, and Transparency.
- On the document, while holding down the Shift key, click and drag from the top edge of the word THANKS and drag it to just below the bottom edge of the word THANKS.



### **Step Six: Move to the Card Front Document**

- Now our custom big letter mask is ready to be used on our card. To easily transfer a flat version of this mask to the card, do the following:
- First, open the Quick Page Card Front.jpg file you can locate in the downloads for this lesson.
- Then, go back to the Artistic Letter Mask Base copy document.
- Press Ctrl A (Mac: Cmd A) to Select All.
- Press Shift Ctrl C (Mac: Shift Cmd C) to copy all of the layers.
- Go to the Quick Page Card Front Document.
- Press Ctrl V (Mac: Cmd V) to Paste.
- Get the Move tool.
- On the document, click and drag the big letter mask layer so that it appears to be centered on the card.



### **Step Seven: Add a Subtitle**

- Saying thanks is great but let's drive home the point by adding a subtitle to our card.



- Click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker and choose a pink color that coordinates with this card. I'm using Hex #: e15065. Click OK.
- Get the Horizontal Type tool.
- Now, in the Tool Options, select a script font of your choice. I'm using the font Grand Hotel which is a free font you can download from Font Squirrel. Set the Size to 48pts, the Tracking to 0, and the Alignment to Center.
- On the document, click once and type a secondary phrase like "you're the best" or "you rock" or "you're amazing" or something similar. I'm using the phrase you're the best in all lowercase letters. Click the checkmark to commit.
- Get the Move tool.
- On the document, click and drag the subtitle so that it's resting along the bottom of the word THANKS. You can either center it or do as I'm going to do and place it closer to the right end of the word THANKS.



### **Step Eight: Save As**

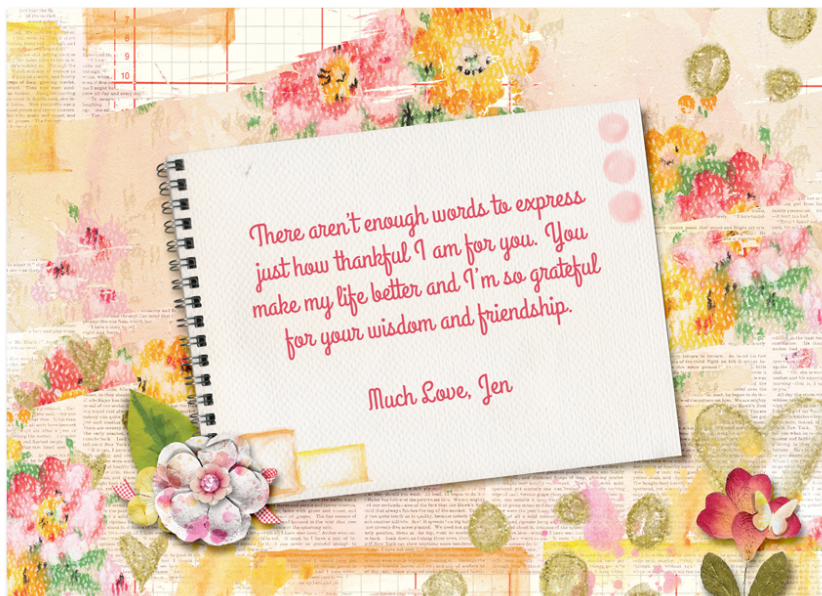
- At this point, you can save the card front as a layered PSD so that you can come back and change the subtitle or add a new custom big letter mask.
- I would also go back to the letter mask base copy document we were working in and save that as a fifth variation called Artistic-Letter-Mask-Variation5.PSD so that all the layers are intact.

Now that we've completed the card front together, I also want you to know that there is a coordinating quick page card inside that is also in the downloads.

Here's what it looks like blank:



And here's what it looks like with a text box added and rotated to match the rotation of the white notebook element.



Credits:  
Quick Page Design: Jenifer Juris  
Kit: Stories We Tell by Syndee Nuckles  
Fonts: League Gothic Bold, Grand Hotel