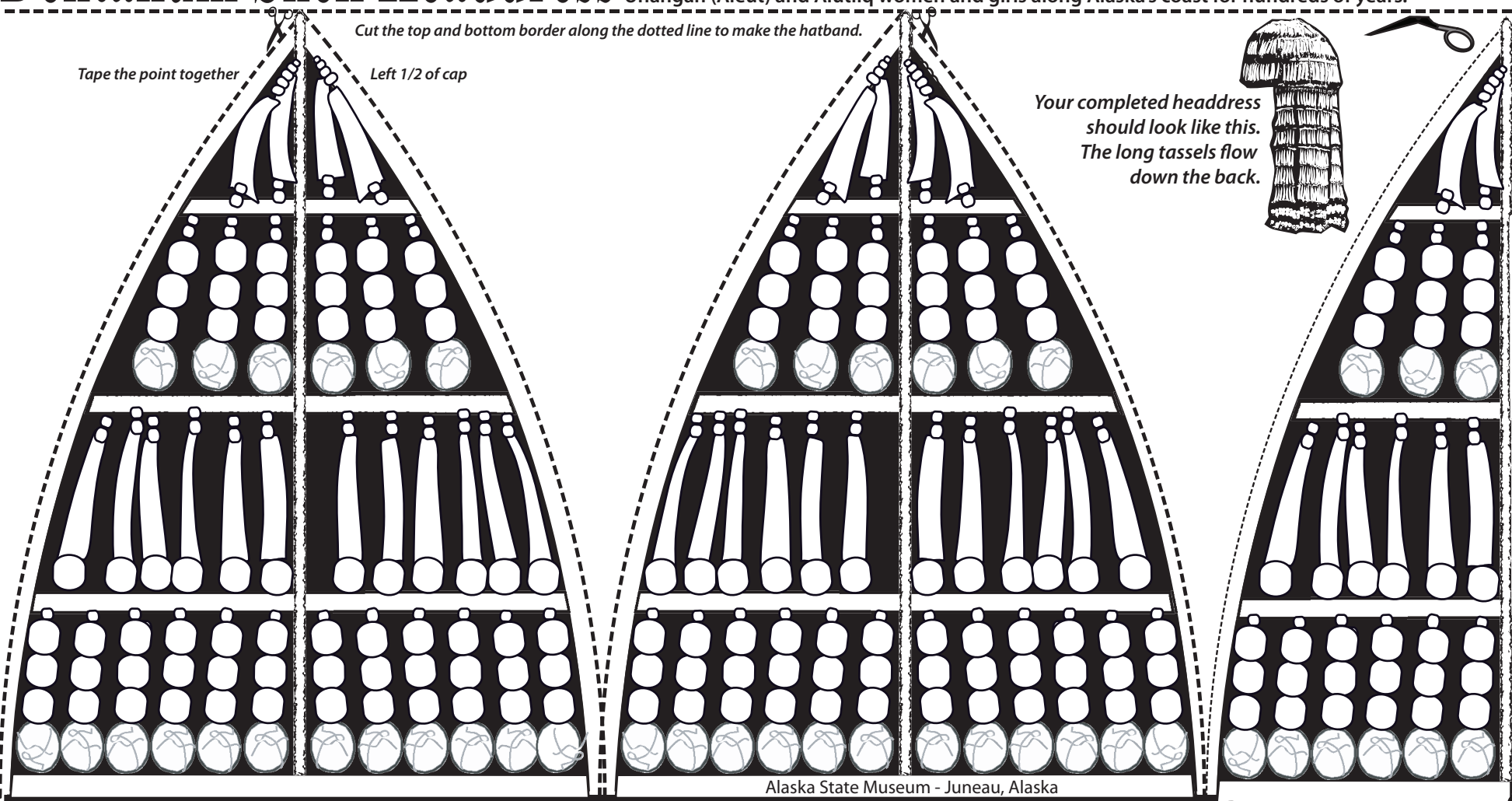
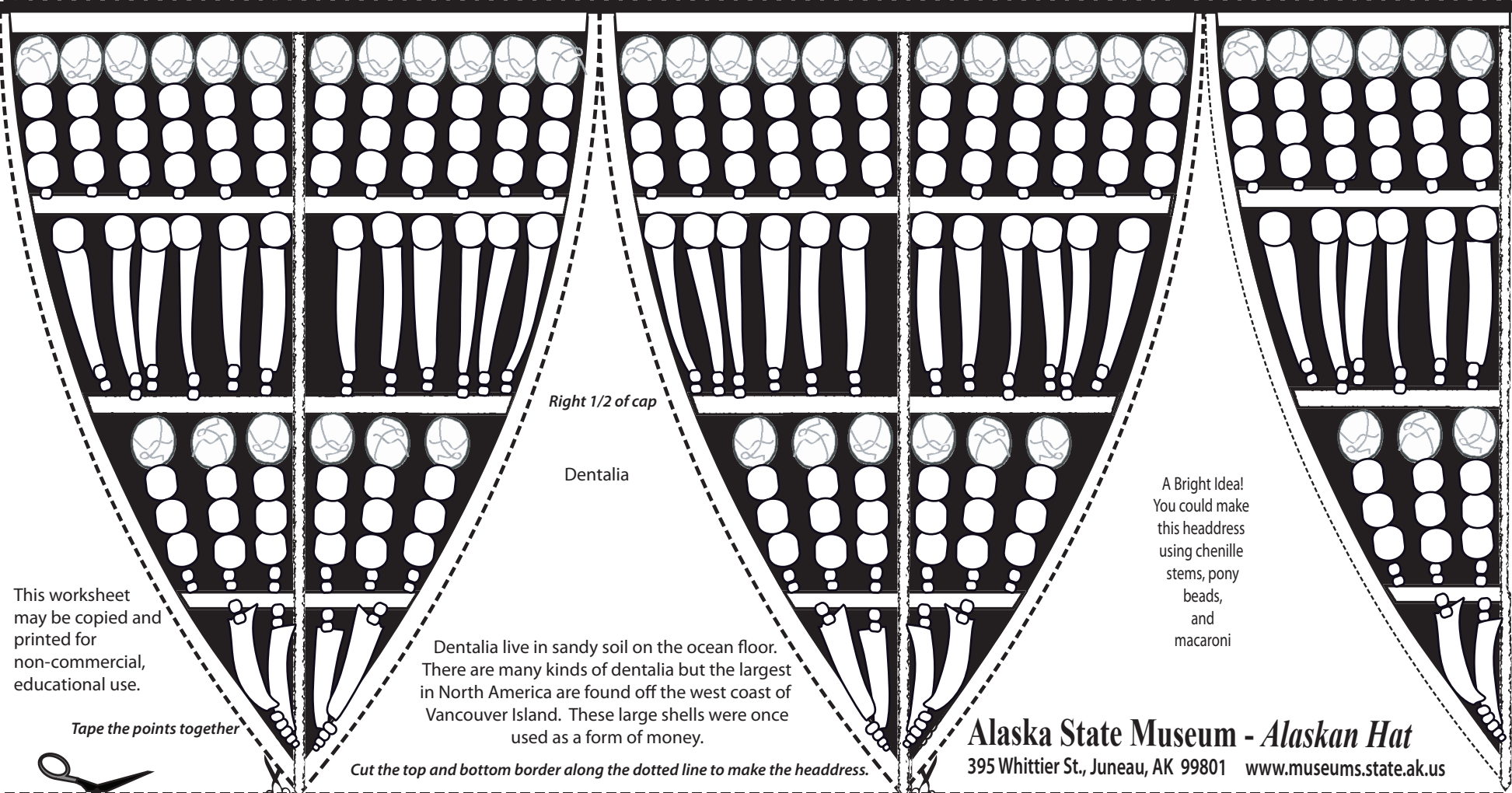
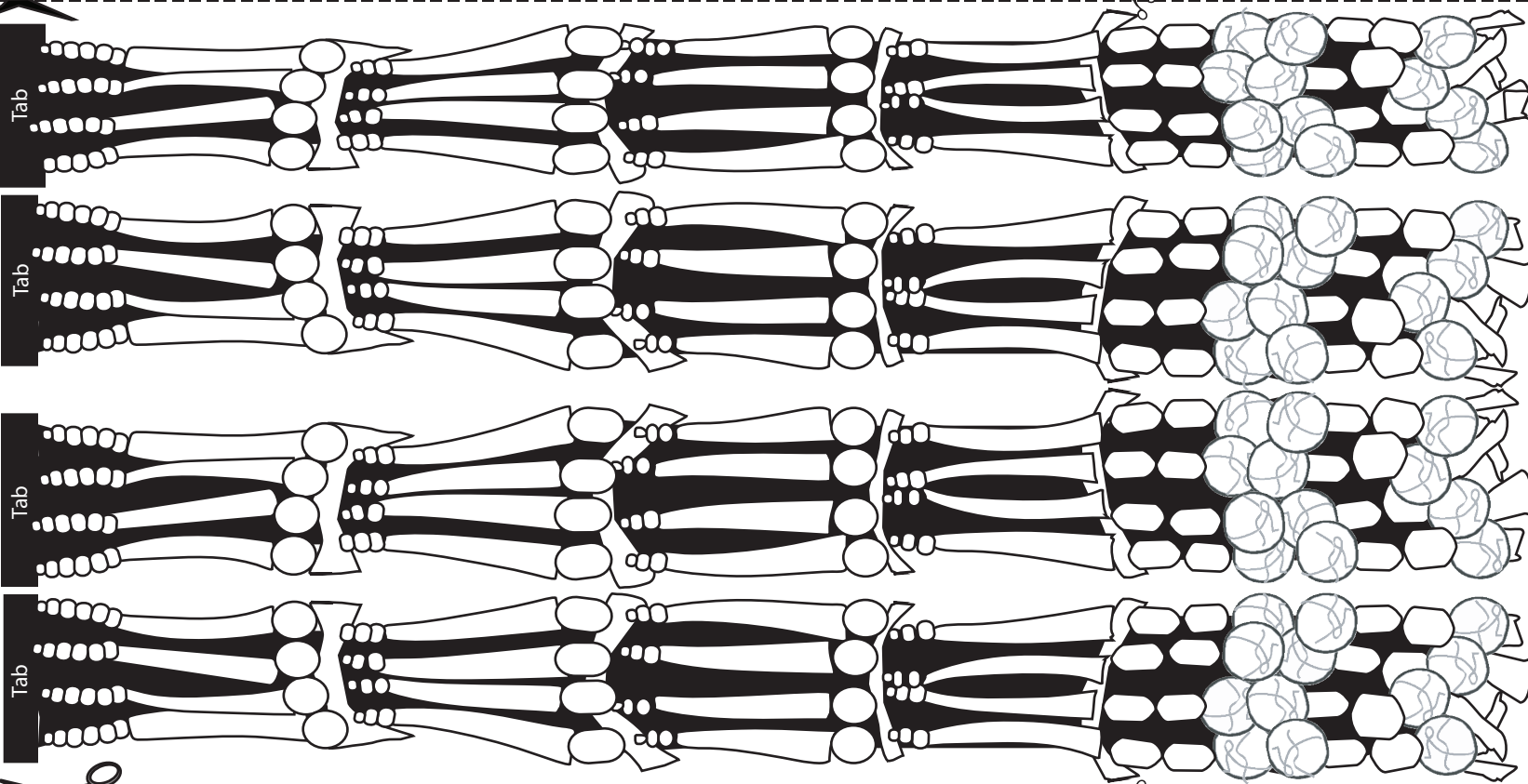


# Dentalium Shell Headdress

A fitted hat with long flowing tassels down the back, covered with strung shells and/or beads makes a regal headdress. During ceremonies headdresses like these have been worn by Tlingit, Unangan (Aleut) and Alutiiq women and girls along Alaska's coast for hundreds of years.



- Make the Hat**
1. Color the headdress parts.
  2. Cut off the top and bottom borders along the dotted lines and tape the ends together to make a long band. Wrap the band around your head and tape to make a fitted head band.
  3. Carefully cut out the triangles and the long tassels.
  4. Tape the 1/2 triangles together down the center seam.



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Dentalia live in sandy soil on the ocean floor. There are many kinds of dentalia but the largest in North America are found off the west coast of Vancouver Island. These large shells were once used as a form of money.

**Alaska State Museum - Alaskan Hat**

395 Whittier St., Juneau, AK 99801 [www.museums.state.ak.us](http://www.museums.state.ak.us)

One headdress in the Alaska State Museum made of white dentalium shells and glass beads was worn by a Tlingit woman named *Jiyal.áxch*. Dentalium shells are white tiny tusk-like shells found along the coast of North America from Southeast

Alaska to California. Dentalia can be seen on very old and new Native regalia on the coast and inland through the Great Plains, Canada, and Alaska. Long ago dentalia was harvested from the ocean floor in 50 to 60 feet of water using long poles.