

Much of the splendour of 'The Lion King' derives from the striking and innovative use of masks. This lesson will prepare students for the impact of the masks in the show, and for their own extended work on masks in the classroom.



Scar

WHAT'S BEHIND THE MASK?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Writing about and demonstrating the different purposes of masks in real life and in drama
- Exploring characters and learning presentational techniques through speaking and listening
- Exploring functions of masks from different historical and cultural contexts



Mufasa

To learn more view
**THE LION KING
 BEHIND THE SCENES**

EPISODE 1 - FROM SCREEN TO STAGE
EPISODE 6 - MASKS AND PUPPETS

PREPARATION

Photocopy the project sheet (Secondary 1) for each student. Collect a selection of masks, the more the better. Suggestions for masks include Halloween, animal, famous person, robber's stocking, surgeon, scuba diver, plus cyclist's pollution filter, and you'll need heavy make-up suitable for geishas and clowns.

LESSON OUTLINE

Begin the lesson by introducing the idea of masks and their range of uses to the class. For example, some are for protection or for disguise, decoration, ceremonial or ritual purposes. Discuss examples of masks in real life: the surgeon, welder, cyclist and in fiction, 'Batman', 'The Phantom of the Opera', Jim Carrey's character in the film 'The Mask'. Encourage students to come up with their own examples.

Next explain the tribal and ceremonial functions of masks. When a spiritual leader puts on a mask they cease to be themselves and become the embodiment of the spirit represented by the mask, taking on special gifts such as being able to heal or curse. The use of masks in ritual and theatre are often for similar purposes. They help to focus attention in particular directions, engage emotions and imagination, and have the power to transform participants.

Put on one of the masks and demonstrate how your whole being, posture, attitude and movement can change to match the mask.

Show students the other masks you have collected and choose students to try each one and take on a character to fit the mask. As a class, talk about how the wearer acts and moves and how this relates to the mask.

Distribute the project sheet. Students choose a number of different types of masks, from those they have seen or talked about (or any others they can think of), to describe the purpose of each.

PLENARY

Talk about the different masks and purposes students have mentioned. Revisit the introduction to the lesson about the different uses of masks. Discuss briefly the students' preconceptions of 'The Lion King' – many will be familiar with the animation film version – and prepare them for the idea of actors portraying the characters partly through costumes and masks.



Mufasa original costume sketch

WHAT IS BEHIND THE MASK?

Choose five different types of mask (e.g. from different cultures or time periods, ritual, disguise, practical, social, protection). For each, describe its purpose. One example has been done for you.

TYPE OF MASK

CYCLIST'S

To filter out pollution from the surrounding traffic.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM LINKS

LESSON PLAN 1 - WHAT'S BEHIND THE MASK? - PRE-SHOW

ENGLAND

	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
English – Spoken word	speaking confidently and effectively	listening and responding in a variety of different contexts, both formal and informal, and evaluating content, viewpoints, evidence and aspects of presentation
	using Standard English confidently in a range of formal and informal contexts, including classroom discussion	
Drama		apply knowledge and understanding when making, performing and responding to drama
		social, historical and cultural contexts including the theatrical conventions of the period in which the performances were created

WALES

	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
English – Oracy	communicate for a range of purposes	communicate for a range of purposes
	speaking and listening individually, in pairs, in groups and as members of a class	speaking and listening individually, in pairs, in groups and as members of a class
	use a variety of methods to present ideas, including ICT, dramatic approaches, discussion and debate	use a variety of methods to present ideas, including ICT, dramatic approaches, discussion and debate
	present, talk and perform in formal and informal contexts	present, talk and perform in formal and informal contexts

NORTHERN IRELAND

	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
English with Media	expressing meaning, feelings and viewpoints	expressing meaning, feelings and viewpoints
	talking to include debate, role-play, interviews, presentations and group discussions	talking to include debate, role-play, interviews, presentations and group discussions
	participating in a range of drama activities	participating in a range of drama activities
Drama	engage with a range of stimuli to develop critical and creative thinking skills	engage with a range of stimuli to develop critical and creative thinking skills
	take part in improvisation	take part in improvisation
	explore characterisation through use of masks, costume, props, puppets and electronic media	explore characterisation through use of masks, costume, props, puppets and electronic media

NATIONAL CURRICULUM LINKS

LESSON PLAN 1 - WHAT'S BEHIND THE MASK? - PRE-SHOW

SCOTLAND

	Third	Fourth – Senior Phase
Literacy and English – Listening and Talking	When I engage with others, I can make a relevant contribution, encourage others to contribute and acknowledge that they have the right to hold a different opinion	When I engage with others I can make a relevant contribution, ensure that everyone has an opportunity to contribute and encourage them to take account of others' points of view or alternative solutions
	I can independently select ideas and relevant information for different purposes, organise essential information or ideas and any supporting detail in a logical order, and use suitable vocabulary to communicate effectively with my audience	I can independently select ideas and relevant information for different purposes, organise essential information or ideas and any supporting detail in a logical order, and use suitable vocabulary to communicate effectively with my audience
	I can show my understanding of what I listen to or watch by commenting, with evidence, on the content and form of short and extended texts	I can show my understanding of what I listen to or watch by giving detailed, evaluative comments, with evidence, about the content and form of short and extended texts
Expressive arts – Drama	I can create, develop and sustain a realistic or stylised character through the use of voice, movement and language	In response to a variety of stimuli, I can use my understanding of characterisation to create characters using different approaches, making use of voice, movement and language. I can present my work to an audience
	Having developed ideas from a range of stimuli, I can contribute to devising, rehearsing and presenting drama or scripts	I can analyse technical aspects of drama and scripts, make informed judgments and express considered opinions on my own and others' work
	I can respond to the experience of drama by discussing my thoughts and feelings. I can give and accept constructive comment on my own and others' work	Having had opportunities to lead negotiation and decision making, I can work on my own and with others to devise, rehearse and refine dramas and scripts