



DIGITAL SURROGATES PROJECT

Masks Up Close: Looking at Masks across the MSU Museum Collections

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Analyze masks using material culture, visual art, historical inquiry, and cultural methods
- Write, draw, and discuss masks with other students in response to close looking and analysis
- Engage in multiple methods of comparing and contrasting masks
- Respond to examining masks through poetry, visual art, music, and other modes

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS FOR HIGH SCHOOL

Michigan English Language Arts Standards

TEXT TYPES AND PURPOSES

Grades 9-10 & Grades 11-12: 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF WRITING

Grades 9-10 & Grades 11-12: 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Michigan Social Studies Standards

P1 READING AND COMMUNICATION – READ AND COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

P1.2 Interpret primary and secondary source documents for point of view, context, bias, and frame of reference or perspective.

P1.4 Express social science ideas clearly in written, spoken, and graphic forms.

P1.5 Construct and present an argument supported with evidence.

P2 INQUIRY, RESEARCH, AND ANALYSIS

P2.1 Apply methods of inquiry, including asking and answering compelling and supporting questions, to investigate social science problems.

Michigan Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Theater Standards

ANALYZE

Standard 3: Analyze, describe, and evaluate works of art. (VPAA: C2, C3, C4, C5, P2, P3, R1, R2, R3, R4)

ART.VA.III.HS.1 Analyze and describe the formal characteristics of a work of art or design. (21st Century Skills: I.3, II.1, III.1)

ART.VA.III.HS.3 Critically observe a work of art to evaluate and respond to the artist's intent using art vocabulary and terminology. (21st Century Skills: I.2, I.3, I.6, II.1)

ANALYZE IN CONTEXT

Standard 4: Understand, analyze, and describe the arts in their historical, social, and cultural contexts. (VPAA: C2, C3, C4, C5, P2, P3, R1, R2, R3, R4)

ART.VA.IV.HS.1 Observe and describe artwork with respect to history and culture. (21st Century Skills: I.6, II.1, III.1, III.2, III.7, III.8, III.9, III.10)

CREATE, Standard 2: Apply skills and knowledge to create in the arts

ART.VA.II.HS.8 Explore social and global issues through the application of the creative process. (21st Century Skills: III.7, III.8, III.9, III.10)

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Listed under each individual activity plan

VOCABULARY

From Wiktionary (<https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Wiktionary:MainPage>). Used according to Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License and the GNU Free Documentation License, and in accordance with laws for educational use.

- **aspect:** any specific feature, part, or element of something
- **blueprint:** a detailed technical drawing (now often in some electronically storable and transmissible form)
- **compare:** to assess the similarities and differences between two or more things
- **contrast:** to set in opposition in order to show the difference or differences between
- **mask:** a cover or partial cover, for the face, used for disguise or protection. Etymology: Borrowed from Middle French masque (“a covering to hide or protect the face”), from Italian maschera (“mask, disguise”), from (a byform of) Medieval Latin masca, mascha, a borrowing of Proto-West Germanic maskā, from which come English mesh and mask
- **metaphor:** the use of a word, phrase, concept, or set of concepts to refer to something other than its literal meaning, invoking an implicit similarity between the thing described and what is denoted by the word, etc., that is used
- **metaphorical:** pertaining to or characterized by a metaphor; figurative; symbolic

EDUCATOR RESOURCES

Pre-readings:

- “Six Reasons Why Humans Wear Masks” by Jeremy Adam Smith, *Greater Good Magazine*, October 27, 2021 (https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/six_reasons_why_humans_wear_masks)
- “Masks in History” by Second Face Museum of Cultural Masks (<https://www.maskmuseum.org/masks-in-history/>)
- “Wearing African Masks: The Decontextualisation of Cultural Artefacts” (<https://antiqueafricanart.com/african-masks-the-decontextualisation-of-cultural-artefacts/>)

REFERENCES

Michigan Academic Standards

Michigan Department of Education. (2010). *Michigan K-12 Standards - English Language Arts*.

https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Literacy/Content-Standards/ELA_Standards.pdf

Michigan Department of Education. (2019). *Michigan K-12 Standards - Social Studies*.

https://www.michigan.gov/mde/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Academic-Standards/Social_Studies_Standards.pdf

Michigan Department of Education. (2011). *Michigan Merit Curriculum: Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade Level Content Expectations - Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Theater*. https://www.michigan.gov/mde/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Year/2014/06/06/Complete_VPAAExpectations_June_2011_356110_7.pdf

Mask List

1. Antelope Mask: <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/antelope-mask-eb0ba9b31d54479b8ef476aeeb5828b2>
2. Balinese Mask: <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/balinese-mask-fd3e8b271d4a43628865b0ba614778f6>
3. Baule mask: <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/baule-mask-6fad49241b594f49ba226b45b869648f>
4. Chinghai Mask: <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/chinghai-mask-f6799fc35d28483cb173b109fdf0e616>
5. Hahoe Mask: <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/hahoe-mask-2bde2963591f45df887c85d7c61938c8>
6. Jaguar Mask: <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/jaguar-mask-99e951f224c34d14a806ac4d8340960c>
7. My Bride Mask: <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/my-bride-mask-9b604fa68f1b4e97b0e3495ffa4fb578>
8. Skeleton King Mask:
<https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/skeleton-king-mask-bea7fb1247d04bd4bfdd8b7cb915601a>
9. Soweï Helmet Mask:
<https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/soweï-helmet-mask-18adcc906f0141199014fd21c466fd59>
10. Sparty Mask (leave place holder for this - scanning next week)
11. Volto Musica Venetian Mask:
<https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/volto-musica-venetian-mask-281864315fc844d79cc760e106219b0c>
12. World War I Gas Mask:
<https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/wwi-gas-mask-11505c605fbb40849ad98e2c94716dd8>

ACTIVITY 1:

MASKING UP GALLERY WALK

Time: 45-50 minutes

Materials:

- Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6JU_r_S4q1I
- Access to MSU Museum Sketchfab website (<https://sketchfab.com/msumuseum/models>)
- AR mask trading cards (printable – available with this guide)
- Blank paper to make gallery walk signs
- Blank paper for student exhibition labels or digital equivalent
- Markers or colored pencils or digital equivalent



1. Conversation Starter:
 - a. What is a mask?
 - b. What masks have you worn?
 - c. What do masks mean in different cultures?
2. Watch: "The History of Masks: From Ritual to Resistance" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6JU_r_S4q1I)
3. Deeper Dive: Ask students, "What are the reasons people make and wear masks?" As a class, make a list of reasons on the board or in collaborative digital document. Here are some categories to get you started:
 - a. To disguise
 - b. To entertain
 - c. To frighten
 - d. To impress
 - e. To protect
 - f. To pretend
 - g. To participate in something
 - h. To represent something
 - i. Add other categories
4. Collaborative Learning: Create a gallery walk using the mask categories.
 - a. Place signs around the room with the mask categories you brainstormed as a class.
 - b. Divide the students into small groups. Give each group 2-3 of the AR mask trading cards.
 - c. Tell students to look closely at the masks. Read the information about each mask. If possible, look up more information online about the different types of masks.
 - d. Discuss which category/categories the masks fit. Write a 2-3 sentence exhibition label to go with each mask card. Be sure students explain why each mask belong in the category you chose. Describe the evidence from the mask that supports your hypothesis. Be ready to share your explanation. If the students need duplicate AR mask cards because masks fit in more than one category, provide them.
 - e. Have each group put their mask cards and their exhibition labels around the room.
 - f. When everyone is done, allow students to view the exhibition. Encourage discussion about the masks.
5. Debrief: Discuss the activity and what students learned about the masks by close looking and by reading the exhibition labels.
6. Assessment
 - a. Student writing of exhibition labels
 - b. Student participation in the gallery walk activity

ACTIVITY 2:

MASKS IN MULTIPLES: COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Time: 30-45 minutes

Materials:

- Access to MSU Museum Sketchfab website (<https://sketchfab.com/msumuseum/models>)
- AR mask trading cards (printable – available with this guide)
- Blank paper or digital equivalent



1. Conversation Starter:
 - a. Show the students 2 masks to practice comparing/contrasting.
 - b. Ask: What do you observe about these masks?
 - i. What are the shape, size, color(s), etc.?
 - ii. How is the mask made?
 - iii. What is represented
 - c. Ask: What are some similar things about the masks [compare]?
 - d. Ask: What are some different things about the masks [contrast]?
2. Deeper Dive: Read “Comparing and Contrasting (Writing)” by Adrienne A. Kennedy (2022), <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/language-and-linguistics/comparing-and-contrasting-writing>
 - a. Discuss the differences between comparing and contrasting: “Comparing and contrasting is a process of analysis often used when writing. Comparing refers to finding similarities while contrasting refers to finding differences. When comparing and contrasting, writers explain how objects, people, or ideas are alike and different” (Kennedy, 2022).
 - b. Discuss the difference between “block organizational pattern” and “point-by-point organizational pattern” when comparing and contrasting.
 - i. Block organizational pattern (subject-by-subject organizational pattern): Completely discuss one subject, then go on to additional subjects.
 - ii. Point-by-point organizational pattern (topic-by-topic organizational pattern): Compare and contrast two or more subjects, detail by detail, flipping repeatedly between the list of subjects.
3. Individual/Collaborative Learning: Compare and contrast masks in notes, a written document, or a presentation.
 - a. Individually or in small groups, have students choose 2 masks from the MSU Museum Sketchfab website to compare and contrast.
 - b. Allow students to decide whether to use a “block” or a “point-by-point” organizational pattern for their notes/written document/presentation OR tell students to use the format you want them to use.
 - c. Encourage students to include details such as:
 - i. Shape
 - ii. Size
 - iii. Color(s)
 - iv. Materials
 - v. Design
 - vi. Artistic techniques
 - vii. Culture(s) of origin
4. Debrief: Have students share their work on comparing/contrasting the masks with the class or in small groups. Place emphasis on how the process was for them.
 - a. What did they learn from comparing/contrasting more than one mask, instead of examining just one mask?
 - b. How did their thinking process affect the process?
 - c. Did the organizational pattern they chose (or that you chose) make a difference in the process? Why or why not?

ACTIVITY 2:

MASKS IN MULTIPLES: COMPARE AND CONTRAST

5. Assessment
 - a. Student engagement in class discussion
 - b. Student participation in comparing/contrasting activity
 - c. Student product outcomes from activity (as assigned by teacher)
6. Extension activities
 - a. Have students repeat the comparing/contrasting exercise with different masks.
 - b. For homework or an additional class activity, have students expand on the comparing/contrasting work they did in the classroom. Have them produce a polished piece of writing or a presentation.



ACTIVITY 3: ANATOMY OF A MASK

Time: 30-90 minutes

Materials:

- Access to MSU Museum Sketchfab website (<https://sketchfab.com/msumuseum/models>)
- AR mask trading cards (printable – available with this guide)
- Blank paper or digital equivalent
- Graph paper or digital equivalent
- Pens, pencils, or digital equivalent
- Measuring tapes or rulers

30-minute Activity (Parts 1-2)



1. Conversation Starter: Ask students, “What can we learn about the physical aspects of masks by close looking?”
 - a. What materials are used?
 - b. How is the mask made?
 - c. How can the mask be worn?
 - d. Other ideas?
2. Deeper Dive: Select masks to use as examples. Together as a class or individually, look closely at the mask and determine:
 - a. Shape
 - b. Size
 - c. Color(s)
 - d. Design
 - e. Materials
 - f. Artistic techniques
 - g. Tools needed to make
 - h. Culture(s) of origin

60-minute Activity (Parts 3-5)

3. Collaborative Learning: Create a mask “blueprint.” Choose one mask. Through “reverse engineering,” work backwards from the completed mask to create a plan of how the mask was made, with enough detail that you or someone else could reproduce the mask. On blank paper or graph paper, include:
 - a. Dimensions (length, width, and height)
 - b. Materials needed (wood, paper, paint, etc.)
 - c. Tools needed
 - d. Step-by-step instructions for making the mask
 - e. Diagrams or drawings
 - f. Cultural information
4. Debrief: Have students discuss their mask blueprints with the class or in small groups. Place emphasis on how the design process was for them: interesting aspects, challenges, etc. What did they learn from doing this activity?
5. Assessment
 - a. Student engagement in class discussion
 - b. Student participation in mask close looking activity and mask blueprint activity
6. Extension activities
 - a. Showcase the students’ mask blueprints in the classroom. Give them time to see everyone’s work. Discuss the different plans and compare/contrast the designs.

ACTIVITY 4: WHAT'S MY MASK?

Time: 15-30 minutes

Materials:

- Access to MSU Museum Sketchfab website (<https://sketchfab.com/msumuseum/models>)
- Blank paper or digital equivalent
- Pens, pencils, markers, or digital equivalent
- Art materials
- Other options assigned by teacher or identified by students.

1. Conversation Starter: Ask students, "What 'masks' do you wear/have you worn and why?" Encourage students to consider physical or metaphorical use of masks.
2. Individual Learning: Create one of the following to represent your physical or metaphorical use of masks:
 - a. A poem or haiku
 - b. A drawing or other artistic piece
 - c. A playlist of music
 - d. Other options approved by teacher
3. Assessment
 - a. Student engagement in class discussion
 - b. Student participation in mask response activity

