

POETRY AND FICTIONAL WRITING

Overview

There are numerous ways that maskmaking can be included in the teaching of writing. In fact, maskmaking may be a way to help those students who struggle to write. Often times, one of the hardest parts of writing for many students is coming up with the story or topic. A mask could provide that. Once a student has taken the time to create such a detailed piece as a mask, they have already begun to create the background for the story that the mask represents. With the mask as the impetus, the students should be able to transition into the writing process with more ease.

Descriptive writing is often an area that students struggle a great deal with. Learning how to write so as to paint a picture in the mind of the reader is often not something that many students do without prompting and practice. In the second lesson on Paper Plate Masks, students learn how emotions can be translated into facial expressions, or how our facial expressions communicate our emotions. The same lesson can be applied to writing and maskmaking. There are multiple ways this could be done. You could start with examples of masks and have students write how they would describe the feelings or state of that mask, encouraging them to use as many descriptive words as possible, perhaps requiring that they offer at least one adjective for each of the five senses. You could also start with a piece of descriptive writing and have students create a mask (or even drawing of a mask) that would portray in a visual image what the writing was communicating. Very descriptive, symbolic or metaphorical poetry would lend itself to a project like this. You may even have students create a poem about an image of a mask or a mask that they have created.