Unit 2.1 What Am I Feeling? Lesson: Paper Plate Comfortable/Uncomfortable Masks Grade Levels 2–4

Yearlong Objectives
- I can express myself with words and art.
- I can work as part of an ensemble.

Essential Questions
- What is unique about different feelings?

Lesson Objectives
- Create at least one emotion mask showing characteristics of comfortable or uncomfortable emotions.
- Describe and differentiate between “warm” and “cool” tones.

National Arts Standards
Note: For consistency, all arts standards listed are second grade standards. However, National Anchor Standards naturally build on each other. To adjust for your grade level, find the corresponding Anchor Standard for your grade.
- Experiment with various materials and tools to explore personal interests in a work of art or design. (VA:Gr2.1.2a)
- Repurpose objects to make something new. (VA:Gr2.3.2a)
- Interpret art by identifying the mood suggested by a work of art and describing relevant subject matter and characteristics of form. (VA:Re8.1.2a)
- Contribute to group guided drama experiences (e.g., process drama, story drama, creative drama) and informally share with peers. (TH:Pr6.1.2.)

Materials needed
Colored pencils, scrap paper, paper plates, scissors, hole punches, thought journal from previous session, ribbons or popsicle sticks

Time needed
90 minutes

Vocabulary for this lesson
Social-Emotional: comfortable, uncomfortable
Visual Arts: shapes, colors, form, portrait
Theatre: ensemble, gesture

Warm-Up Phase (15 minutes)
Circle: “If you could” question: If you could have one dessert right now, what would it be?
Feelings question: Are you feeling comfortable or uncomfortable? Include one sentence about why if you feel safe to do so, or you are moved to share.
Team-building game: Build a Machine, Level 1 (see Team-Building Games)

I Do/ We Do (20 minutes)
Explicitly Teach
- Comfortable vs. uncomfortable emotions. We have been talking a lot about comfortable versus uncomfortable emotions. Today we’ll explore that a little more. Give examples of comfortable and uncomfortable emotions or situations.
- Using our bodies and identifying gestures. Our bodies and faces are great tools for expressing ourselves. When you change your face or your posture or the way you walk, you can convey an emotion. Model and have students put different basic emotions on their faces and/or in their bodies.
- Identifying shapes for portraits. We will be creating masks today. Masks can be a form of visual portraits. When you look at human faces, see if you can identify different shapes in the face. When I frown, my mouth is sort of like the top of a semi-circle. You can use these shapes when you’re creating a mask.

Keep in Mind
- It can be difficult to work with a partner. When working with a partner, take turns and be kind. If something is bothering you, try gentle phrases like, “Can you please _____” and “I’m feeling uncomfortable because ____.”
- Monopoly over materials can lead to jealousy or arguments. We have a limited number of materials. How can we ensure that everyone gets to use a fair amount?
- Discuss the importance of sharing. We will be using colored pencils today. How can we preserve these supplies so others will be able to use them?

You Do (55 minutes)
The project, step-by-step
- Work with a partner. Decide whether you will create a “comfortable” mask or an “uncomfortable” mask.
- Ask your partner to put your chosen emotional state on her face. Observe the shapes on her face and make a quick sketch on scrap paper of what you notice.
- Cut a paper plate into the shape of a face (or have an adult help you).
- Mark where you’d like eyes and mouth cut out (and in what shapes).
- Add shape details using colored pencils.
- Punch holes in the sides of the plate and attach ribbon to tie it on (or glue popsicle sticks so students can hold it up in front of their face).

Extensions: Create the opposite emotion on another paper plate.
Closure: Students show their masks, say whether they’re comfortable or uncomfortable, and have their partner show the face the mask was modeled from. Audience members may observe similarities between the mask and the face, choices made by the actor, or choices made by the artist.
Optional Writing Prompt: What kinds of things happen to your face when you’re feeling comfortable? Uncomfortable? Describe in detail.

Big Picture
We will make more masks to create a full spectrum of masks that might be used in a play or a theatrical performance.

Adjustments for K-1
Warm-Up Phase
Shorten the build a machine activity/choose either the activity or the question. Do not attempt both.
I Do/ We Do
Go over the comfortable and uncomfortable vocabulary. Don’t go into other feelings-based vocabulary; focus on only “comfortable” and “uncomfortable.”

You Do
Work with pre-cut paper shapes so students just have to arrange and glue on paper plates.