



with feeling

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE THROUGH THE ARTS

Unit 2.3 What Am I Feeling?

Lesson: Clay Sculpture Mouth Masks

Grade Levels 2–4



Yearlong Objectives

- I can express myself with words and art.
- I can work as an ensemble.
- I can recognize my work as unique and special.

Essential Questions

- How do we show our feelings in our faces?
- When do you feel different things?
- How can you create realistic art?

Lesson Objectives

- Define sculpture as it pertains to masks.
- Create a three-dimensional realistic sculpture of a mouth
- Combine elements to create a singular composition
- Provide definitions for “fear” and “surprise”

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:Cr2.1.2a)
- Repurpose objects to make something new. (VA:Cr2.3.2a)
- 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

Homemade Play-Doh (see recipe below) or store-bought air-dry clay, paper plates, hole punches, string, tacky glue



Time needed

90 minutes



Vocabulary for this lesson

Social-Emotional: *comfortable, uncomfortable, anger, joy*

Visual Arts: *shapes, colors, form, sculpture*

Theatre: *ensemble, gesture, emotion*



Warm-Up Phase (15 minutes)

Circle: “If you could” question: If you could change one thing about the world, what would it be?

Feelings question: How are you feeling today? Use any feeling words you know. Explain why if you feel moved to share.



I Do/ We Do (20 minutes)

Explicitly Teach

- Revisit “anger” and “joy.” Introduce “fear” and “surprise.” *Fear is when you feel scared of something and it is usually an uncomfortable emotion. “Surprise” is when you didn’t expect something to happen and it can be comfortable or uncomfortable.* Show corresponding emotions cards. Ask for examples of each. Role play if time allows and students are engaged.
- Using our bodies, identify gestures that match each of the emotions we are learning about. *Actors and actresses must study emotions closely to portray them in a play. They also must have control over their bodies.* Model showing “surprise” with your face, body, and voice. Have students show “surprise” with their faces and bodies. Repeat with “fear.”
- Identifying **three-dimensional** elements of faces and creating a sculpture. Show images of African face masks to show how mask-makers used sculpture to make their masks three-dimensional.
- How to use “clay” as a sculptural element. Include strategies for making the clay assume the shape you want it to, including rolling, adding crimps with a tool, or attaching many shapes together.

Keep in Mind

- Clay allows lots of leeway for change. *What should you do if you are unhappy with how your work looks? What are some strategies you can use to make sure you achieve the effect you want?*
- Shape vocabulary can be used as a teaching point. *How do mouths look when they are sad? Do all mouths look the same?*
- Sharing can be challenging for some students. *What are some ways we can ensure that everyone has the supplies they need?*
- Patience is required for the clay to dry. *What is important to keep in mind as we let the clay dry?*



You Do (55 minutes)

The project, step-by-step

- Decide on either “surprise” or “fear.”
- Look at a partner’s mouth when she is pretending to be surprised or afraid. Sketch a mouth on paper that looks like the mouth you want to sculpt.
- Cut a paper plate in half. You will use half of the plate to represent the bottom of the face.
- Color in the plate to reflect “sad” emotional energy. (You might color the plate in green, for example, if that reminds you of feeling afraid; or create lots of sharp, jagged shapes on the plate.)
- Take a small amount of clay or Play-Doh. Experiment moving it around to see how it can form different shapes and look different ways.
- On the paper half-plate that you’ve colored, use the clay to create a mouth that matches the sketch you created. Press the clay into the plate so it will stay (a teacher may eventually add tacky glue or hot glue to make the mouth sculpture stay put.)
- When all parts are done, punch holes in the side of the mask and attach string.

Extensions: Create a mask for the other emotion that was not selected for the first mask.

Closure: Share with a partner what was difficult about the strategy, and what was easy. What would you still like to be able to do?

Optional Writing Prompt: Write about a time you felt sad. What did you do to heal?



Big Picture

All our masks come together to form their own mask “ensemble.” Actors could use them to create a play if they choose.



Adjustments for K-1

Warm-Up Phase

Shorten the machine activity by calling up groups of three to make machines. Do the game or the circle question. Do not attempt both.

I Do/ We Do

Teach “fear” and “surprise” through role-play. Have students put those emotions on their faces and in their bodies.

You Do

Have students make the mouths without necessarily needing to attach them to a mask. They can place a popsicle stick into the wet “mouths” to create a mouth-on-a-stick that can work *like* a mask.



Make Your Own Pla-Doh

Basic ingredient ratios:

2 cups flour

2 cups warm water

1 cup salt

2 Tablespoons vegetable oil

1 Tablespoon cream of tartar (optional for improved elasticity)

food coloring (liquid, powder, or unsweetened drink mix)

Mix all of the ingredients together, and stir over low heat. The dough will begin to thicken until it resembles mashed potatoes.

When the dough pulls away from the sides and clumps in the center, as shown below, remove the pan from heat and allow the dough to cool enough to handle.