

## Masks, Rituals and Tribes

<b>Rationale</b>	<p>Use of masks is deeply rooted in the rituals of many tribes and cultures: in initiation, healing and burial ceremonies or for storytelling and entertainment. They are also used to disguise or protect. Rituals can help us with identity and a feeling of 'belonging' which is often missing in our modern culture.</p> <p>We also all have an 'inner self' and an 'outward self' and all put on masks to hide behind or for our protection.</p>
<b>Title</b>	"Masks, Rituals and Tribes"
<b>Aim</b>	<p>SENSING 'OTHERNESS', SENSING MYSTERY</p> <p>To understand the ritual use of masks in other cultures and to recognize that we all 'put on masks' for our own purposes and protection.</p>
<b>Objectives</b>	<p>By the end of the assembly pupils will understand that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rituals exist in all cultures today</li> <li>• Masks can be visible or invisible</li> </ul>
<b>Link with 5–14</b>	Art; Drama; Music; PSD
<b>Link with ACfE</b>	Language; Poetry
<b>Is this part of a series</b>	Masks, Rituals and Tribes; Barriers; Pathways
<b>Introduction</b>	<p>This assembly outline is suitable for a whole school assembly or a departmental group.</p> <p>Children will be given a rhythm to clap before they enter the Assembly Hall. They will be ceremonially led in, class at a time, clapping the rhythm, and sit in concentric circles. This ceremonial entry will be accompanied by a presentation of tribal drumming and a video clip of ritual dancing.</p>
<b>Stimulus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display of different masks: Native American, African, Venetian, Greek theatrical and plain white masks showing different emotions</li> <li>• Video of different Native American rituals performed and explained</li> <li>• Video of the rugby 'hakka' ritual as an example of a modern take on a ritual.</li> <li>• Video of various modern uses of masks used for protection for example "hockey, baseball and scuba diving masks, dentists' and doctors' masks</li> <li>• Listen to <i>My Inside Self</i> by Rachel Field to introduce them to the idea that we have an 'inside self' and an 'outside self' and all, at times, put on masks for our own protection, to feel part of a group or because we want to be seen in a particular way</li> <li>• A teacher will put on various masks (happy, sad, angry) and move contrary to the mask to show that what is happening on the outside is not always what is happening on the inside.</li> </ul>
<b>Guided Reflection</b>	<p>We sit in this circle to remind us that we are all of equal importance and that we each have a right to our views and opinions.</p>

	<p>We sit in a circle together to identify with this tribe of ..... School.</p> <p>Belonging to a tribe can be very important to us, as we all need to feel that we belong and are accepted – but it is important that we are true to ourselves and are accepted for who we are and not try to be different just to please other people.</p>
<b>Response</b>	<p>In own class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils could view a suitable excerpt from the film <i>The Mask</i> where Jim Carey’s personality transforms when he puts on his mask</li> <li>• Pupils should be given an opportunity to discuss the idea of hiding behind masks (with little ones it could be as simple as discussing if they have ever said sorry just to get off with a punishment.)</li> <li>• Infant classes could make masks with different emotions and respond appropriately when they put them on and discuss how they feel inside</li> <li>• Upper primary could make papier-mâché masks and write poetry to go with the masks</li> <li>• Working in small groups, pupils could create a ‘Greetings Ritual’ for their class.</li> <li>• As a class, pupils could discuss the idea of the school as their tribe. They could choose a symbolic object to represent their tribe and make up its story and create a ritual to go with this. This could be celebrated annually. The story could fit in with the school motto or aims</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation (a)</b>	<p>Observation of pupils during assembly; discussion with pupils post assembly.</p>
<b>Evaluation (b)</b>	<p>Discussion with Staff Consultative Committee and with whole staff group at appropriate points in school quality assurance process.</p>

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### *Running Order*

<b>Running Time</b>	<b>Mins</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Action</b>
0-5	5	Entry and gathering	Class Teachers Facilitator	Rhythm provided for each class	
5-7	2	Guided reflection about sitting in a circle	Facilitator	Written Script	
7-13	6	Video 1: Native American Rituals	Facilitator to introduce and explain	DVD Player Projector	
13-16	3	Video 2: Rugby 'Hakka'	Facilitator makes the link to modern rituals	DVD Player Projector	
16-20	4	Video 3: Modern Masks	Facilitator makes links	DVD Projector	
20-22	2	Reading of Poem	Facilitator or Teacher	Copy of Poem	
22-28	6	Facilitator works against the mask. Discussion time	Facilitator	Variety of white expressive masks	
28-30	2	Guided Reflection about being true to ourselves and not hiding behind masks	Facilitator	Written Script	

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### *Support Materials*

#### *My Inside Self*

by Rachel Field

My Inside-Self and my Outside-Self  
Are as different as can be.  
My Outside-Self wears gingham smocks,  
And very round is she,  
With freckles sprinkled on her nose,  
And smoothly parted hair,  
And clumsy feet that cannot dance  
In heavy shoes and square.

But, oh, my little Inside-Self—  
In gowns of misty rose  
She dances lighter than a leaf  
On blithe and twinkling toes;  
Her hair is blowing gold, and if  
You chanced her face to see,  
You would not think she could belong  
To staid and sober me!