

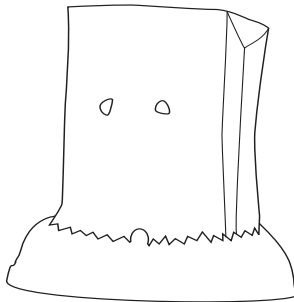
Hello and welcome!

The Blue Man Group Education Program is based on community, communication and learning. Our Program includes related subjects, major ideas, background information, vocabulary, activities and inquiries that will enrich your students’ everyday lives and help them to develop judgments about issues and ideas that surround us. The material encourages self-expression, analytical thought and creative learning in mathematics, science, sociology, music, theatre, literary arts and more.

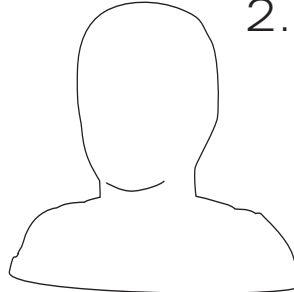
The Mask

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

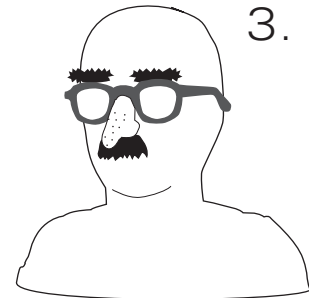
- ① A covering worn on the face to conceal one's identity.
- ② A face having a blank, fixed, or mysterious expression.
- ③ Face covering used in **ritual** and theatre that disguises the wearer and usually communicates an alternate identity.



1.



2.



3.

quote

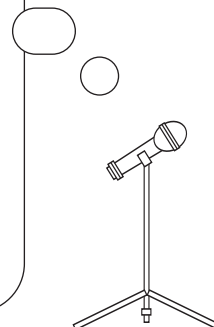
We have found that performing in a mask can be a truly profound experience.

*One of the things people report about wearing a mask is that it "puts them in their body." Part of this is pure mechanics. Masks often limit facial movement and seem to have the effect of squeezing **expressiveness** into the extremities. But it also has to do with "getting out of one's head" and entering a more **visceral state**.*

*When we wear a mask, we are freed from our own identities, our own personalities and our own **egos**. We become less **self-conscious**. We stop thinking so much. When our attention can be removed from tending to our precious little circumstances, we become open to feelings and actions that are more **authentic**. All of the energy we normally expend to manage our appearance in the eyes of others become available for more creative endeavors.*

*Before we tried it, we had the mistaken notion that wearing a mask meant covering one's self up. Now we know that wearing a mask means exposing one's self. What gets covered up is the **cultural mask**; the selves we have been creating since our school days, when we first realized that we needed to manipulate our personas in order to fit in.*

Chris Wink, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton – Founders of **BLUE MAN GROUP**

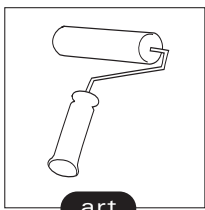




writing

Masks aren't just things that cover our face. We all wear masks –and not just on Halloween. Modern **society** has constructed its own set of masks –social/cultural masks that we hide behind in an attempt to fit in. Even the clothes we wear can be masks. These masks are in a constant state of change; the mask we wear with our parents at age 10 will morph to an entirely different one at age 18 or 25 or 28. We all have different masks we wear at our jobs, in our classes, with friends, with children.

- ?** How many masks do you wear?
- ?** Give names (e.g. "Fearless Big Sister Mask," "Confident and Cool Friend Mask") to at least 5 masks you wear in your everyday life. Use 1 or 2 adjectives in naming your mask that describe the "character" you are portraying when you wear that particular mask.
- ?** Identify the mask you enjoy most. What about the one you dislike most?
- ?** Do you imagine that as you grow older you will have fewer masks?



art


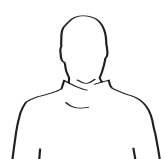

I. You are an artist who is going to create a non-human mask –an animal, something not of this world or an inanimate objects (e.g. a radio or stapler). Imagine your mask. Write down your thoughts about what it looks like, its personality and where it's come from –be very descriptive. Once you have determined the mask's identity and history, move on to step II.

II. Now construct the mask. Your mask should be a 3-dimensional object that could be worn, hung in your room or displayed in a gallery. Possible materials to use: fabrics, paper, paint, metal, wood, modeling clay, papier mâché, collage, found objects (e.g. kitchen sponge, toilet paper roll, bottle caps). Be creative –you can use a variety of things.

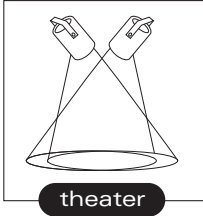
- III. When your mask is finished, show it to friends and have them tell you what they see. Hopefully they will describe your mask with some of the same adjectives you wrote down when thinking about it.
- IV. Reflect on your work using the 3 excitement levels of the Blue Man and these three main ideas:



Check the things that apply.

	 This Blue Man is extremely excited!	 This Blue Man is sort of excited.	 You did not get his attention.
creativity – is it unique, dynamic, inspirational?			
investment – did you invest time and energy into your work?			
execution – does your project fulfill all of the requirements of the assignment?			



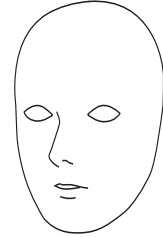


I. The Blue Man has stripped away his **individuality** to rediscover a childlike wonder –to have a completely fresh view of the world. Imagine that you are a child –or actually you are yourself but a fresh new you. You know nothing about the world around you; you have no concept of what it is to be “late” or “angry” or “in trouble.” Imagine what it was like when you saw something or felt something for the very first time. To help you, find or create a “neutral mask.” You can either purchase one at your local theatrical supply house or you can make one on your own.

II. Wearing the mask.

- a. Put the mask on and look at yourself in the mirror. How does it change you? How does it change your perception of you? Take off the mask to record your thoughts. (Remember that your masked self doesn't even know how to write or what a pen is.) When you have the mask back on, pick up an object and examine it. You have never seen it before. What does it do? How does it feel? Are you excited by it, scared of it? How do you feel about it? Do this several times with different objects. Remember to take off the mask to record your thoughts and feelings about each object. Look at yourself in the mirror before you examine each object.
- b. Now find a partner and have them observe your neutral mask. Can they guess how you are feeling without seeing your face? Now switch. Then try the exercise together (both wearing your neutral masks) with different objects. How do you interact, react, without using language? Can you use the object to communicate? How can you communicate under these circumstances –stripped of your social/cultural masks?

Neutral Mask


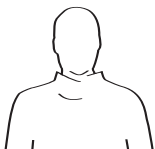



III. Make sure you have recorded all of your thoughts and feelings. Compare and contrast your observations with your partner's. Complete the project by writing a paragraph summarizing your experiences with your neutral mask including any similarities or differences with your partner's.

IV. Reflect on your work using the 3 excitement levels of the Blue Man and these three main ideas:



Check the things that apply.

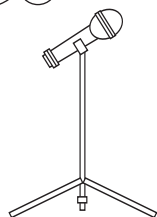
			
	This Blue Man is extremely excited!	This Blue Man is sort of excited.	You did not get his attention.
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quote

Watching someone who is wearing a mask is definitely not as good as doing it one's self, but it is still potentially moving if the circumstances are right.

Chris Wink, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton –
Founders of **BLUE MAN GROUP**



WORDS YOU SHOULD PROBABLY KNOW

Ritual A ceremonial act or series of such acts. Also personal daily habits: like getting a bagel with vegetable cream cheese every morning on your way to school might be your daily ritual.

Expressiveness The ability to make one's feelings or thoughts known.

Visceral state Intensely emotional. Pertaining to, situated in or affecting the body organs; specifically the intestines.

Ego Your consciousness, the part of your brain that controls your behavior and is most in touch with reality. An exaggerated sense of self-importance.

Self-conscious Aware of oneself or one's own being, actions or thoughts. Excessively conscious of one's appearance or manner; socially ill at ease.

Authentic Real, genuine.

Cultural/Culture The big picture of everything you are taught by society within your lifetime: behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions and all the characteristics of a community or population.

Society The relationship of human beings within a common culture. American society, Asian society, agrarian society, democratic society, etc.

Individuality Distinctness. Distinguishing attributes of a person or thing. The things that make you different from anyone else in the world.

OTHER COOL STUFF

*the following suggestions are books or short stories unless otherwise noted

Ant Hills of the Savannah, Chinua Achebe
Cat's Cradle, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.
Comedy of Errors, William Shakespeare
The Count of Monte Cristo, Alexandre Dumas
Anne Frank the Dairy of a Young Girl, Anne Frank
Dr. Jeckyl and Mr. Hyde, Robert Louis Stevenson
Fires in the Mirror (play), Anna Deveare Smith
Flowers for Algernon, Daniel Keyes
Frankenstein, Mary Shelley
The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald
Immortality, Milan Kundera
Mask (film, 1985)

The Mask (film, 1994)
Narcissus and Goldmund, Herman Hesse
Masque of the Red Death, Edgar Allan Poe
Rope, Alfred Hitchcock (film, 1948)
The Scarlet Letter, Nathaniel Hawthorne
The Short Stories – The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber, Ernest Hemingway
Siddhartha, Herman Hesse
Steppenwolf, Herman Hesse
Things Fall Apart, Chinua Achebe
Tootsie (film, 1982)
Twilight: Los Angeles (play), Anna Deveare Smith

