

Disney HERCULES

Lesson 4

MONSTER MASKS

CURRICULUM AREA

DRAMA/ART/HISTORY

MATERIALS

- ✦ Materials: Image of the comedy/tragedy masks, images of Ancient Greek theatre masks, images of a Hydra, information about Greek theatre/masks, paper/card and art materials to decorate, worksheet.

VARIATIONS/EXTENSION

- ✦ Children could create the mask that they have designed to wear.
- ✦ Children could create masks for other characters in Hercules e.g. Philoctetes, Megara or Zeus.
- ✦ Children create their own scenes using their masks.

INTRODUCTION/HOOK

Show the children an image of the comedy and tragedy masks. What do pupils think of when they see these? What do these masks represent? Where did this idea originate? Teacher to explain that this image originates from Ancient Greek theatre where actors would use masks to represent character, gender, species and emotion. This was particularly necessary as the theatres were so large that you could not always read an actor's expression and because all actors in Ancient Greece were male.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Share some relevant information about Ancient Greek theatre/masks and how it provided the origins for modern theatre. Talk about how special effects have evolved due to technological advancements and share images from Disney Theatrical's productions showing how puppetry, costume, and technology are used to bring characters and creatures to life. Explain that in the theatre production of *Hercules* the Hydra (a mythical multi-headed beast) is portrayed using photography of the production. However, in today's session, we are going to be imagining how the Hydra may have been portrayed if *Hercules* was performed on the Ancient Greek stage using, for example, masks. Show images of the Hydra and pick out important details that we may want to focus on, i.e. multiple heads, angry expression, fangs, etc. Children then create a design (2D) for an Ancient Greek mask of the Hydra).

PLENARY/REFLECTION

Aside from masks, how else could the Hydra have been recreated in an Ancient Greek theatre? Remember you would not have access to today's technology.



Comedy and tragedy masks – the symbol of drama



Example of a Greek theatre mask

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NAME

The Hydra is a mythical creature from Greek mythology. It looks like a huge, scary snake with many heads, and it lives in a swamp. What makes the Hydra really dangerous is that when someone cuts off one of its heads, two more grow back in its place! So, the more you try to defeat it, the harder it gets!

The Hydra's heads are also poisonous, so if it bites you, you could get very sick. The creature's biggest head is immortal, which means it can never die, no matter what happens to it.

The hero Hercules had to defeat the Hydra as part of one of his big challenges. He didn't do it alone—he had help from his friend Iolaus, who used fire to burn the Hydra's necks after each head was cut off, so no new ones could grow.

The Hydra is a symbol of a big problem that seems to get worse the more you try to fix it. Even though it seems impossible to beat, Hercules showed that with clever thinking and teamwork, any challenge can be overcome!

How will you represent the Hydra on an Ancient Greek mask?

Which features of the creature will you choose to include?

For example:

Multiple heads

Fangs

Angry expression

