Back-Pocket Masks

By Wolf Trap Master Teaching Artist Paige Hernandez

What?

ARTS ELEMENT: Story

EXPERIENCE: Story with Emotions

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARD: CREATING AND PERFORMING
With prompting and support, transition between imagination and reality in dramatic play or a guided drama experience (e.g., process drama, story drama, creative drama)

Why?
RATIONALE:
All dramatizations are based on a story, or a beginning, middle, and end. Understanding story also sets up the foundation for learning more advanced plot structure.

How?

EXPERIENCE PROCEDURES

Step One: Introduce the back-pocket emotion mask warm-up.
  a. Tell children to reach around into their back pockets to pull out…A MASK!
  b. Tell the children when they put the mask on their faces, it will tell us what emotion they are feeling.
  c. Have the group decide on one emotion and a way to put it on (buttons, zippers, ribbon, etc.).
  d. Put the mask on and talk using that emotion.
  e. Instruct children to take the mask off (the same way they put it on) on the count of three.
  f. As an extension, have a few volunteers put on a mask and have the other children guess what emotion it is.

Step Two: Have children create a simple story using emotions.
  a. Tell the children that the story has three parts—beginning, middle, and end—so we need three emotions. Ask the children to select three emotions.
  b. Demonstrate each of the three emotions as a group.
  c. Determine the order of the emotions.
  d. Practice that sequence.
  e. Tell the children to choose character who will experience these emotions. Give character choices (boy, girl, mouse, frog, etc.) or let them choose.
  f. Have children create a story by asking intentional questions such as "Why does he feel that way? What happens next? How does this end?"

Step Three: Narrate the new story while the children perform simultaneously as a group.
  Give your new story a title.

Closure: Have children discuss the experience. If possible, would they choose different emotions, characters, etc.