Emotional Masks
with David Guerra

A QUICK HOW-TO
Here is an acting exercise called “Emotional Masks.”

1 Begin by thinking about these four questions:
   - What did you notice when David entered the space and stood still?
   - What did you see when David put each individual mask on?
   - How did David communicate with each mask?
   - How do you know when someone is feeling happy, sad, angry, or scared? One way we can tell is by looking at the person’s facial expression. When someone is pretending, we say he/she/they is “putting on a mask.”

2 Start in actors neutral position, sitting or standing. One by one, try on your own emotional masks. Experiment with different ways to show each of these emotions: Happy; Sad; Angry; Scared.

3 Starting in neutral, perform your emotional masks for someone else or looking in a mirror. Discuss them.

THINK ABOUT IT
How did you feel when you were in “Actor’s Neutral?” How did you feel when you were Happy? Sad? Angry? Scared? Can you recognize what other people are feeling? How? How can you be aware and sensitive toward the emotions that others around you express? What else would you like to learn about emotions and emotional masks?

DIG DEEPER
To learn more about how actors show emotions, check out The Music Center’s ArtSource Curriculum: “The Chameleons - in Life Cycle.”
www.musiccenter.org/education/Teacher-Resources/Artsource-Curriculum/
Available-ArtSource-Units/The-Chameleons---World-Class-Mimes-Keith-Berger-and-Sharon-Diskin/

TRY THIS CHALLENGE
If there is another person to participate, explore how dialogue changes with each mask. The dialogue can be simple such as, A: "Hello, how are you?” B: “I am fine, thank you.”

Round #1: Each enter the space; meet in the middle; recite your dialogue neutrally.

Round #2: Each chooses a different mask, such as “A” selects Happy and “B” chooses Sad. Repeat the exercise with the imaginary masks. How did the emotion of the mask affect the dialogue? What did you discover?