

# 10. MASKS AND MASK DANCES: LOCAL FOLK DANCE OF HAHOE IN NORTH KYONGSANG PROVINCE

GRADES: 4-6

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SUBJECTS: Multicultural Education, Social Studies, Language Arts

TIME REQUIRED: Eight to ten class periods (One hour each)

## OBJECTIVES:

As a result of this lesson, students will:

1. Use a variety of world and local maps to identify and locate sites relevant to this lesson.
2. Understand historical significance of masks and mask dances in Korean village life.
3. Understand the meaning of social satire, read social satire and apply it to modern American society .
4. Develop understanding and respect for cultural difference through interpretation of traditional practices.

## MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- Maps of the world and a map of Korea for each student (may be obtained through the Korea National Tourist Organization, New Jersey: 201-585-0909).
- *Korean Cultural Heritage* (published by Korean Overseas Information Service, Seoul, Korea (ISBN: 89-7375-373-8 03910).
- Paper mache, newspapers, paint, paintbrushes, fabric, string, Korean music found on CD's and cassettes
- List of Masks and Characters and Vocabulary List (one per student).
- Photographs and dialogue adapted for this unit entitled, "A Hahoe Village Mask Dance" (one per student).

## BACKGROUND:

Masks are called *t'al* in Korean and were developed as early as the Prehistoric Age. Although given religious and magical meanings, the masks were also used for their entertainment value. Korean masks in general were never meant to be hung since they were perceived to have life; as such, they needed to move.

In Hahoe village, masks were made of wood and were in two pieces. The chin was made separately from the rest of the mask, then joined by string. This gave the masks greater expression. With a slight tilt of the head or a nod, the facial expression appeared to change.

In Hahoe Village, there were originally 14 masks, but only 11 are used today (nine of which are national treasures). The masks show both the good and evil traits of man and introduce to the viewer a young bride, an old monk of questionable morals, a haughty and cruel aristocrat, a gossipy grandmother, and a nobleman's servant with a simple soul. Masks in Korea poked fun at society and, in many ways, reflect not only society as it was but also as it is today. Mask dances gave commoners in a traditional society a way to express emotions and viewpoints that they could not express aloud. From a critique of corruption to a satire of elitism, mask dances were a vehicle for social protest and community spirit-building.

The masks are said to date back to the Koryo period. According to legend, they were first made by a carver named Ho who was told by a divine spirit to stay in his workshop and only make masks. Ho was prohibited to see or be seen by anyone until he finished his mask-making task. As time passed, his girlfriend could not stand being away from him and secretly went to see him. At this, Ho began spitting up blood and died. This happened before he finished the mask of Imae, the village half-wit, which explains the reason he does not have a chin.

The Mask Dances of Hahoe traditionally were and still are performed by men. Today, performances are given frequently for local and foreign visitors. The Hahoe mask dances are supported by Korean governmental agencies who underwrite the preservation of traditional culture.

Traditional stringed and percussion instruments accompany each performance. Costumes are colorful yet simple. No scenery is used, and performances are often done outdoors with the audience seated on the ground or on the floor if performed inside. Actors deliver their lines with much emotion and body language. Their manner brings the wooden masks to life, and the observer is caught up in the drama.

Today, mask dances are a part of Korea's tradition and tellingly reveals Koreans' creative spirit and their wonderful sense of humor.

#### PROCEDURE:

1. Introduce to the students Korea's location within a global setting and make special note of its neighbors, particularly China. From a general world map study to a specific study of Korea, students will learn the names, spellings and locations of major cities and waters. (South and North Korea will be identified and discussed with an overview of reasons the country is presently divided along the DMZ and the subsequent steps both governments are taking to unify the two Koreas.)
2. Show individual Hahoe masks to the students. Without any prior telling of who the characters are, assign students to write a paragraph on any one of the masks. Then have students share their descriptions of the characters.
3. Using the handout, "A Hahoe Village Mask Dance," introduce each mask character. Then have students read the drama silently to determine if their "guess" as to the nature of the character based on the mask's appearance was accurate. Students will then choose one character of interest and read the drama aloud.
4. Discuss the term "satire" in relation to, "A Hahoe Village Mask Dance." Have students discuss what they believe life must have been like during the Koryo period and why village people chose satire as a way to express social attitudes.
5. Assign students to surf the internet to view additional types and locations of Korean mask dances. Have students report three or more interesting discoveries that they made on the internet.
6. Assign students to research the role masks play or have played in American culture, and then have the students compare and contrast them to the masks they have studied from Korea. (A bulletin board can be developed to share this comparison with the entire school.)
7. Using the masks of Hahoe Village, students will work in cooperative learning groups to develop concepts for their own "dance/drama." Have students develop their own masks, dance/drama and dialogue, which can then be performed for the entire school.

#### EVALUATION:

- Students will be evaluated on an ongoing basis. Grading will be determined by student cooperation, attitude, participation, research assignments and written assignments.
- Students and teacher will group evaluate the drama and its execution. Students will evaluate themselves individually and as a whole group.
- Pre- and post-tests will be administered based on the geography of Korea as well as vocabulary requirements.

#### ENRICHMENT:

- Masks: in conjunction with the Art Teacher, posters can be made to “advertise” the original play based on the masks of Hahoe Village.
- Music: in conjunction with the Music Teacher, traditional Korean instruments can be studied.

#### THE MASKS AND CHARACTERS

- KAKSI is the bride mask. It has a sad expression with very small eyes and a closed mouth indicating that she should not speak much. She is made to appear shy and coy. Her mask is made up as though she is ready for a wedding: it is white with round rouge circles on her cheeks and brow. When she moves, she takes small steps and appears quite sedate.
- CH’ORAENGI is a stupid, meddlesome servant. The mask has a lopsided brown face, and he is shown with buck teeth. He makes quick, unathletic movements, and his voice is quite high.
- PAEKCHONG is the butcher. His mask is brown and has very heavy features. Although he appears to be smiling, he is sinister and cruel. His movements are with definite purpose, and he is quite gruff.
- HALMI, the granny, is an old widow. This mask has a tiny, wrinkled brown face, which shows the hard life that she has endured. She is sad looking and has a big mouth to indicate that she is constantly hungry. Her stomach is bare, since her shirt and skirt do not meet. She whines when she speaks and walks as though everything causes her pain.
- PUNAE is a smiling young woman who has enchanting eyes. She is heavily made up to look like a bride with thick white face powder, pink circles on her cheeks and one in the center of her forehead. She has red lips on her smiling mouth. Punae wears a bright blue skirt and a canary yellow top.
- CHUNG is the Buddhist monk. He has a brown face and a rather sneaky smile. Narrow eyes are used to show that he is quite wayward in his behavior. He is deliberate and sly in his movements. Often he is dressed in a gray coat with trousers tied at the ankle and wooden beads around his neck.
- IMAE is the mask that is said to have been left unfinished when Ho (the creator of the masks) died. Appearing light-hearted, he is the village fool with a vacant expression. The mask has no chin, which truly makes him look foolish. Eyes droop at the outer corners and both his voice and movements are vague.
- YANGBAN is the aristocrat. He has a black beard and a hooked nose with large nostrils. He is dressed in white and wears a black horsehair hat with a high crown. As a vain character, his movements are quite aloof and subdued in manner.
- SONBI is the scholar, and his mask is similar to the *yangban* but without a beard. He wears pale blue and moves in a very arrogant manner. His voice and movements make him appear pompous.
- #### 11. TWO LIONS
- SUSO is an ox.

## VOCABULARY LIST

1. mask
2. traditional
3. culture
4. satire
5. sedate
6. meddlesome
7. lopsided
8. buck teeth
9. butcher
10. sinister
11. cruel
12. enchanting
13. Buddhist monk
14. Buddhism
15. wayward
16. sneaky
17. sly
18. fool
19. vacant expression
20. vague
21. aristocrat
22. vain
23. horsehair
24. aloof
25. scholar
26. pompous
27. drama

### THE FOLLOWING TERMS ARE RELATED TO MAP STUDY:

28. Asia
29. peninsula
30. mountains
31. East Sea (Sea of Japan)
32. coast
33. DMZ (Demilitarized Zone)
34. P'anmunjom
35. Seoul
36. South Korea (Republic of Korea)
37. North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)
38. Andong
39. Hahoe
40. Kyongju
41. Pusan
42. Cheju Island

## A HAHOE VILLIAGE MASK DANCE



1. Musicians to accompany the performance.



2. The bride enters standing on somebody's shoulder. Then, together, they proceed to dance around.



3. Two fighting lions enter. The lion is a powerful figure in folk belief. This part of the drama was believed to remove evil spirits from the performance.



4. The butcher enters with a large straw bag swinging from his hand. He appears happy and dances around.



5. The big brown ox enters and dances with the butcher. The butcher kills the ox, hacks away at him and then stands up.



6. The butcher dances around holding up the ox's heart and offers to sell it. When no one buys, he reaches in his bag and removes a brown object. He then asks if anyone wishes to buy the ox's liver. When no one buys from him, he dances around holding it up and puts it into his basket and exits.

## ANOTHER ACT

- I. *Halmi*, the old granny enters pushing her loom. She appears quite poor and her head is covered with a scarf. She tells the tale of her difficult life. She talks of being a widow, toiling hard and having little food. Then she decides to stop whining and decides to dance. She then walks around the room looking at the audience and begins to beg for money. When no one gives her any, she exits.





## ANOTHER ACT

1. *Punae*, the smiling young woman enters. She is heavily made up to look like a bride. She looks around and believing that she is not being observed, squats down to relieve herself.



2. *Chung*, the Buddhist monk, enters quietly and observes *Bunae*. She suddenly realizes that he has seen her and modestly smooths down her skirt. *Chung* speaks to her and asks her to dance with him. *Punae* tries to refuse, but finally they dance together. *Choraengi*, the meddling servant enters and exclaims to everyone what he has seen: a monk dancing with a young girl. *Chung* throws *Bunae* over his shoulder and exits.



3. *Imae*, the village fool enters, and dances with *Ch'oraengi*. They dance and then exit.





## ANOTHER ACT

1. *Yangban*, the aristocrat, and *Sonbi*, the scholar, enter and sit a long way from each other. They are seated, trying to look quite dignified when *Ch'oraengi*, the servant, runs into the room. He tells of what he saw and *Yangban* demands that *Ch'oraengi* bring *Punae* to him. *Yangban* and *Sonbi* vie for the young woman's attention. They disagree, but eventually they all dance together.



2. While they dance, *Halmi*, the granny, joins them. She is pushed away by *Sonbi*, and *Yangban* does the same. Even the butcher joins them, still trying to sell the body parts of the ox. Finally, after the butcher tells *Yangban* and *Sonbi* that ox liver will make a man stronger, the men begin to fight over it. Suddenly, *Imae* yells that the tax collector is coming. Everyone runs off the stage.

ENRICHMENT: Examples of masks and their construction

