



Learning Activity:

I'm Proud of My Stripes!

Activity Type	Arts and crafts—mask making
Focus Areas	Arts education
Time Required	20–30 minutes

● Overview

This craft activity allows students to celebrate their artistic and creative individuality while learning about tigers' physical characteristics. Students learn fun tiger facts—including how each tiger has its own unique stripe pattern—and then each student designs a unique tiger mask, ultimately learning a lesson about how we can all be proud of our unique “designs.”

● Objective

At the completion of the activity, students should be able to:

- Describe physical characteristics of a tiger.
- Incorporate their understanding of a tiger's unique physical appearance into the design and creation of a wearable mask.

● Subject and Standards

National Core Arts Standards

- **Creating**
 - Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
 - Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
 - Anchor Standard #3: Refine and complete artistic work.
- **Responding**
 - Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.
 - Anchor Standard #8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- **Connecting**
 - Anchor Standard #10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.



● Materials Needed

- Copies of the tiger mask template (included below)—one per student
- Coloring utensils: crayons, colored pencils, markers
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Elastic string
- Optional: pipe cleaners, tissue paper, recycled cardboard

● Activity Procedure

Part 1: Introduction and Preparation

- Ask the students to share what they already know about the physical characteristics of tigers. Be sure to add to the discussion that most tigers have more than 100 stripes on their body and that no two tigers have the same stripe pattern. This makes each tiger unique, just like the students are.
 - The different stripe patterns can also be compared to how no two humans have identical fingerprints. In the same way that we can identify different people through fingerprint patterns, scientists can identify different tigers by their stripe patterns.
 - Tigers see six times better in the dark than humans do.
 - Tigers are the only large cat species to have distinctive striping on their hair AND skin.
 - Their whiskers are around six inches in length and are used to help them navigate in the dark and sense where to bite their prey.
 - Tigers' hearing is the most acute of all their senses and is very useful for hunting. They can rotate their ears like a radar dish to detect the origins of sounds.
 - Tigers have white circular spots on the backside of their ears. Some believe they function as “false eyes,” confusing a potential predator, while others believe the spots communicate aggression when tigers twist their ears around.
 - Tigers have about 30 teeth ranging from two to three inches in length.
- Prepare the students for the activity by telling them that they will use this information about a tiger's appearance to create one-of-a-kind tiger masks as unique as they are.



Part 2: Activity

- Provide each student with a copy of the tiger mask template (included below), coloring supplies, and scissors. For extra support and durability, glue or tape recycled cardboard to the back of the mask template.
- Instruct the students to decorate the mask using the various coloring utensils. The goal is to get creative and have each mask look different from anybody else's. Encourage them to use their imagination and artistic license—they can draw in their own individual stripe patterns and use all kinds of unique colors and designs.
- Once they have finished coloring, have them cut the mask template out carefully along the borders, remembering to cut out the eyeholes. Adult assistance may be required, especially if you are having to cut through cardboard.
- If you wish, you can also have them add other elements to the masks to make them even more unique. Provide other craft materials, such as pipe cleaners (for whiskers), tissue paper (for fluffy fur or ears), etc.
- To complete the mask, help them punch holes where the black circles are marked on the template and add some elastic string to keep the mask in place.

Part 3: Discussion and Assessment

- Ask the students to hold up their masks and compare them, pointing out differences between them.
 - Reiterate that scientists are able to study individual tigers in the wild by identifying each tiger's stripe patterns. Ask whether the students think they could differentiate each other by the looks of their masks. Emphasize that just like tigers, each student is unique and has a unique imagination and features, but that the class also has many things in common—including all being the same species!
 - Suggest a challenge where they wear the masks for a period of time and then see if they start to recognize each other by how their masks look.



Extended Learning Options

- Assign a writing prompt that asks students to write about what makes them unique and why they're glad to be who they are—and/or why they are glad to be a part of their class.
- Extend the post-activity discussion to cover other physical traits tigers use to communicate with each other—like their distinct sounds and movements—and compare it to how humans use sound and body language to communicate. For example:
 - Tigers can communicate using various sounds—including roars, grunts, growls, mews, moans, chuffs, hisses, gasps, and snarls. Each sound is used to convey a different message. A roar usually demonstrates dominance; a moan communicates submissiveness. By using sounds to communicate their moods, they are communicating to other tigers whether they're safe to approach.
 - A tiger's tail is around three feet in length and is used for balance and communication. If the tiger is relaxed, the tail will hang loosely; if the tiger is aggressive, it will move side to side rapidly or hang very low, with occasional twitches.
- Download the [WWF Together app](#) and explore the tiger segment. To augment the facts about tigers' vision, you can use the interactive tool that shows students what tiger vision looks like compared with human vision.
- Start a class fundraiser to protect tigers and other wildlife and their habitats using WWF's online fundraising tool. Learn more at worldwildlife.org/pages/fundraise-for-wwf.

Additional Background Info

You can use the information found at the links below to enhance your discussion with the class, or you may want to share some links directly with students if you determine they are grade-level appropriate.

- **Article:** [WWF Featured Species: Tiger](#)
- **Article:** [Where Do Tigers Live? And Other Fun Tiger Facts](#)

For more fun classroom activities with a focus on wild species and conservation, visit wildclassroom.org.



WILD CLASSROOM

TIGERS

Be proud of your stripes!

No two tigers' stripes are exactly the same, just like no two kids are exactly the same. Use your imagination, your art supplies, and the drawing below to create a colorful tiger mask that is as unique as you are!

