

# Sam's Mask

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photographs by Terence Taylor

## Overview

This book shows Sam making a mask at school and then wearing it home to surprise Mum. Mask making is an activity with which many children will be familiar, though they may not have seen one made out of a brown paper bag before. The text has a clear narrative structure that builds towards a strong climax. The photographs reflect the authentic classroom context of this story. Other emergent texts about making things include *Make It!* and *The Boat*.

**Curriculum links:** the arts, technology

## Text features

- the narrative structure
- the high-frequency words "a", "He", "big", "the", "on", "said"
- the silent "k" in "knocked"
- the use of the adjectives "big" and "long"
- the use of apostrophes to denote possession ("Sam's") and for the contraction "Who's"
- the change in sentence structure from page 8
- the use of direct speech
- the use of the pronoun "he"

## Setting the scene

The reading of this text could follow a language experience activity of making a mask, or you could quickly make a paper bag mask with the group before the reading.

Talk about making things at the construction table. *What kinds of things do you like to make? Have you ever made a mask? What did your mask have on it?*

## The first reading

Look closely at the photograph on the cover of the text. *What has been used to make the mask?* Discuss the features of the mask. *What can you see on the mask? Do you know the boy's name?* Give the children the opportunity to work it out themselves, but tell them if necessary. Draw attention to the apostrophe and "s" at the end of the name. That's there because this mask belongs to Sam.

Look at the title page. *What are the children doing? What else will they need?*

Listen to the children read the text themselves, encouraging the use of the photographs and initial letter cues as aids to prediction.

Pages 2 and 3 – *What is Sam doing now? What part of the mask will he make first? Lead the children into the syntactic structure of the text by asking What did Sam make?*

Pages 4 and 5 – *What did he make next? What sort of mouth did he make? Draw attention to the initial letter "b" for "big". What do you think he will make next?*

Page 7 – *What sort of hair does the mask have?*

- Page 8 – *Where is Sam going? Why is he wearing his mask?*
- Page 9 – *Who do you think will be at home? Why is he knocking on the door?*
- Page 10 – *What might Mum say? What kind of voice might she use?*
- Page 11 – *Who is speaking? How do you know?*
- Page 12 – *What are Mum and Sam doing? How do you think Sam is feeling? What do you think Mum will say about Sam's mask?*

## Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to and observe the children as they reread the text. The variation in the sentence structure throughout this text creates an opportunity to monitor the children's control of one-to-one word matching. Monitor the children's use of a return sweep on pages 8 and 11.

Consider the mask examples on the inside of the front and back covers. *How are these masks different from Sam's? If you made a mask, what would you use?*

Focus on the adjectives. *What other sort of mouth/hair could he have made?* Look at the photographs of the other masks on the inside covers and choose adjectives to describe their features. Use adjectives to describe the eyes and nose on Sam's mask.

Explore the punctuation used in the text. You could make particular reference to the speech marks (pages 10 and 11), the exclamation mark (page 10), the question mark (page 11), the possessive apostrophe in "Sam's" (front cover and page 11), or the contraction "Who's" (page 11).

## Suggestions for further activities

The children could make their own masks, following Sam's method or their own design. They could present their masks to a group or to the class, describing how they made them and what they used.

After creating their own masks, the children could take them to "surprise" the principal. You could use a digital camera to take photographs to make a slide show of this process.

Create a diagram and label the parts of a mask.

As a group, draw or write instructions for making a mask.

Innovate on the text structure and make individual booklets about making a mask, substituting the names