

Heroic Luchadoras and Luchadores

Grades 1st thru 3rd

Inspired by: depictions of Luchadores by artist Manuel Bauman

Sports are more than just games - sometimes, athletes inspire us with their stories, drama, and triumphs of good over evil. Whether true life or scripted, we all can be inspired by the heroes we find on the field or in the ring.

Luchadores featured in popular Mexican professional wrestling, *lucha libre* (free fight) are such heroes. Rising to prominence during the Mexican Revolution, *lucha libre* provided an exciting escape for a nation fatigued from their fight for sovereignty. This lesson teaches students about how Luchadores transformed into folk heroes, and invites them to imagine their own Luchador / Luchadora alter ego for whom they create a symmetrical mask.

Objectives

- Students will analyze stories and identify heroic behaviors.
- Students will understand and apply symmetry.
- Students will express personal identity through artistic choices.

Essential Questions

What is a Luchador/Luchadora?

What makes someone a hero or role model?

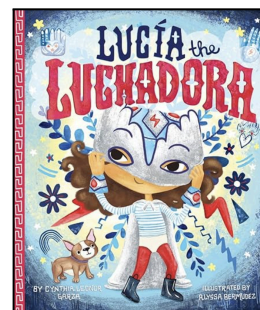
Who is an example of a hero in my family, school, or community?

Activities

1. **Introduce.** Read aloud the book [Lucia the Luchadora by Cynthia Leonor Garza](#), with your class or [play the read aloud](#) (Youtube, Search: *Read Aloud: Lucia the Luchadora by Cynthia Leonor Garza*, on Channel "Mrs. J")
 - a. Remind your class that this story is fiction - Lucia's wrestling moves are impressive, but it wouldn't be safe for kids to try them out for real on the playground or at home.
2. **Discuss.** Review the events of the book.
 - What made Lucia "spicy mad" on the playground? Has anyone ever said something like that to you?
 - What did Lucia's abuela (grandmother) give to her?
 - How did Lucia become a hero?
 - Why was it important for Lucia to take off her luchadora mask?
3. **Analyze.** Share Manuel Bauman's [artwork](#) from AVAM's Good Sports with the class. Lead them in a discussion using Visual Thinking Strategies questions below. For more on VTS, [visit Grand Valley State University art gallery's brief guide here.](#)
 - a. What's going on in this picture?
 - b. What do you see that makes you say that?
 - c. What more can we find?



Lucha Libre by Manuel Bauman



4. **Inspire.** Share the provided kid-friendly version of the story of real life Luchador, Frey Tormenta (Sergio Gutiérrez Benítez) with your class (see resources at end of lesson).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What made Sergio decide to become FRIAR STORM?
 - What made FRIAR STORM a hero?
 - What does it mean to be 'selfless'?
5. **Define or Review:** Linear Symmetry - a picture or object that is the same on both sides. If you draw a line down the middle of the object, the left side mirrors the right. This is called a Line of Symmetry. The object or picture can be cut exactly in half to form two identical parts.
 6. **Create.**
 - a. Students use the brainstorming sheet below to determine what traits their own Luchador or Luchadora might have.
 - b. Provide tracers, or precut mask-shaped templates.
 - i. Additional resource: Luchador mask templates provided beginning on page 14 from [this Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center lesson](#)
 - c. Option 1: Students fold their masks in half and put blobs of 2-3 colors of paint on one side. Fold and smooch to create symmetry. After drying, students draw shapes using oil pastels, making sure that everything they do on the right side is mirrored on the left. (Modification: Provide tracers of various shapes on cardstock, and demonstrate how to trace on the right side, then the left side to create symmetry.)
 - d. Option 2: Demonstrate how to fold and cut small pieces of construction/collage paper to create two identical shapes, and glue one onto both the right and the other on the left side of the mask. Continue adding shapes to create a full art piece.
 - e. Optional Final Step: Cut out eyes and mouth to turn an art piece into a real mask.
 7. **Present.** Students share at their tables, or with a partner, their Luchador's name and heroic traits.

Materials

- Mask templates on cardstock/watercolor paper
- Tempera paint
- spoons/scoopers
- Pencils
- collage/construction paper or oil pastels
- Scissors
- Lucha Libre planning sheet

K-2 Maryland State Visual Art Standards

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

- PK-2nd Grade: I:P-2:3: Creatively play with the elements of art and principles of design to develop compositions that are personally meaningful.
- 3rd-5th Grade: I:3-5:3: Creatively play with the elements of art and principles of design to develop compositions that are personally meaningful in our world.
- 3rd-5th Grade: E:3-5:1: Analyze components in visual imagery that convey messages and compare personal interpretations.

Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

- PK-2nd: E:P-2:1: Identify subject matter and describe the formal characteristics of art.

Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

- 3rd-5th Grade: E:3-5:1: Observe and interpret cultural traditions and surroundings in new ways by creating art

Kid-friendly biography of Sergio Gutiérrez

(1945-)

One of the most striking examples of lucha libre's folk hero tradition is Fray Tormenta. Fray Tormenta is a Spanish name that means "Friar Storm." In the 1970s, Sergio Gutiérrez Benítez was a Catholic priest who ran a home for children with no parents (orphanage). The home needed more money to be able to stay open, and give all the children what they needed to be happy and healthy.

To raise money for the home, Sergio got really creative. He became Friar Storm - a masked Luchador wrestler. Friar Storm became so famous as a wrestler, he was able to support the home all on his own for 20 years using the money he made from wrestling. The home became known as La Casa Hogar de los Cachorros de Fray Tormenta.

He fought in the ring not for his own popularity, but to provide for over 270 children in need. Friar Storm's generous acts as a priest and luchador made him a symbol of selflessness and resilience, inspiring movies, video games, and documentaries across the world. Fray Tormenta has since retired from wrestling, however he occasionally delivers sermons in his mask.

Manuel Bauman Biography

Provided by AVAM

(1958-)

Manuel Bauman is a Mexican artist known for his vibrant works that blend popular culture and traditional themes. His artwork has been exhibited across the United States, with the pieces originally purchased at his stall in a Mexico City open-air market. Bauman has been drawing since he was a young child. Bauman's work is a unique take on the "retablo," a folk art practice of devotional paintings usually hung behind an altar, used to pay homage and express gratitude to sacred figures from the Catholic tradition. In Bauman's work, are images of the Virgen de Guadalupe (Our Lady of Guadalupe), a reference to a 1531 apparition of the Virgin Mary in Mexico City. Unlike a traditional retablo, Bauman incorporates found objects like action figures, foil, sequins, and glitter, and his works are often reverse painted onto glass. Most notable of Bauman's work is the pairing of lucha libre imagery with the Virgen de Guadalupe.

Most of the works we have on display resemble El Santo, the most famous luchador of all time, especially his iconic silver mask, in this instance given its shine by adhered aluminum foil. Some include phrases in which the Virgen de Guadalupe is invoked for strength or given reverence, blending the powerful imagery of lucha libre heroes with spiritual devotion. For example: "Virgen de Guadalupe dame paciencia para no explotar en mis dificiles en frentamientos." (Our Lady of Guadalupe give me patience not to explode in my difficult situations.)



LUCHE LIBRE



BRAINSTORMING

My luchador has these personality traits:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My luchador's name is _____

My luchador's mask shows their personality with these colors (circle):



My luchador's mask shows their personality with these shapes/pictures:

Here is a rough draft of my mask:

