



THE  
REPRESENTATION  
PROJECT

# THE MASK YOU LIVE IN

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW  
SECOND EDITION



# OVERVIEW

Boys are twice as likely to drop out of school and four times as likely to be expelled, in comparison to girls. As early as elementary school, boys confront messages about masculinity (what it means to be a man) that lead them to suppress their emotions, deny their need for close friendships, objectify and degrade women, and resolve conflicts through violence.

The Representation Project's *The Mask You Live In* curriculum encourages students from kindergarten through university levels to think critically about ways in which gender stereotypes manifest in their lives – in the media and elsewhere – and intersect with race, class, and circumstance to influence people's attitudes, behaviors, and options. Through classroom activities designed to engage students in thoughtful discussions that are relevant and meaningful to them, students will learn to question and critique gender norms that are inaccurate and/or incomplete, and to become savvy consumers of media.

The goal of this curriculum is to foster and support students' healthy resistance against societal messages and pressures that undermine their sense of integrity, hinder their interpersonal relationships, and limit their opportunities. With an emphasis on creating participatory experiences that will impact students' views and ways of being in the world, this curriculum strives to inform and more importantly to empower students to acknowledge and honor the full range of their humanity, and to define success in terms of their ability to feel whole, connected, and valued.





# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings educators, parents, and guardians,

In 2011, I premiered my first film, *Miss Representation*, which revealed how media contributes to the under-representation of women in positions of power and influence in America. While traveling the world with *Miss Representation*, I encountered many parents and educators who thanked me for making *Miss Representation*, but also asked, “What about our boys? Isn’t there a ‘boy crisis’ going on? How can we help our boys and men to be their truest selves? After all, stereotypes hurt everyone, don’t they?”

As a mother and an advocate, my curiosity and concern were sparked by these questions. So, I began to research and what I found was troubling. My film *The Mask You Live In* was born out of that research and explores how issues related to masculinity are impacting American boys and men. Through this work, it has become clear to me that we need to have a national conversation around what it means to “be a man” and how to recognize, resist, and replace toxic notions of masculinity. And as with any cultural change, extending the conversation requires your help.

Change begins with education, and the role you play in teaching and raising our nation’s youth makes you the greatest change-makers in our society. With deep appreciation for your hard work and dedication, I offer you *The Mask You Live In* curriculum as a tool for raising awareness about how media and culture perpetuate gender (and other) stereotypes, how stereotypes constrain individuals and weaken our society, and how everyone can help to challenge destructive stereotypes and make the world a better place.

Warmest,

Jennifer Siebel Newsom  
Filmmaker of *The Mask You Live In*  
Founder & CEO of The Representation Project



# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING ALIGNMENT

## GOALS

*The Mask You Live In* curriculum will introduce students to concepts of media literacy, gender socialization, and the ways media shapes our culture. Each module is aligned with the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Core Competencies defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2010). Students will learn how culture shapes our ideas about what it means to be a boy or man, and ways to develop healthier self-concepts and interpersonal relationships. The short-term goals are to promote students' self awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These, in turn, provide a foundation for better adjustment and academic performance as reflected in more positive social behaviors and peer relationships, fewer conduct problems, less emotional distress, and improved grades and test scores. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programming is associated with multiple positive benefits.

## SHORT TERM GOALS SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING CORE COMPETENCIES

### Self Awareness

The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior

### Self Management

The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations

### Social Awareness

The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures

### Relationship Skills

The ability to establish and maintain healthy relationships with diverse individuals and groups

### Responsible Decision-Making

The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal conduct and social interactions





# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING ALIGNMENT CONTINUED

CURRICULAR MODULES		SHORT TERM GOALS SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING CORE COMPETENCIES	LONG TERM GOALS IMPACT OF ENHANCING STUDENT'S SEL
Gender in America ( Module II & III )	➔	Self Awareness	<b>Better Academic Performance</b> Higher achievement scores, as compared to students who did not receive SEL instruction  <b>Improved Attitudes and Behaviors</b> Greater motivation to learn, deeper commitment to school, increased time devoted to schoolwork, and better classroom behavior  <b>Fewer Negative Behaviors</b> Decreased disruptive class behavior, noncompliance, aggression, delinquent acts, and disciplinary referrals  <b>Reduced Emotional Distress</b> Fewer reports of student depression, anxiety, stress, and social withdrawal
Mask of Masculinity ( Module II )	➔	Self Management	
Gender in America ( Module I )	➔	Social Awareness	
Mask of Masculinity ( Module II )	➔	Relationship Skills	
Relationship to Self and Others ( Module III )	➔	Responsible Decision-Making	

<sup>1</sup> Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (2010). Social and Emotional Learning and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. Chicago, IL: Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning.





# K-5 & MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Grade Levels	Kindergarten - 5th Grade	Middle and High School
Objectives	<p><b>Module 1: GENDER IN AMERICA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify concepts relating to gender, gender socialization, and media literacy</li> <li>Critique gender stereotypes and gendered inequalities</li> <li>Explore how individuals learn what it means to be a boy/man and girl/woman</li> <li>Consider the influence of personal factors and situational factors on human behaviors</li> <li>Foster social awareness, critical reflection, and savvy media consumption</li> </ul> <p><b>Module 2: THE MASK OF MASCULINITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify concepts related to performing gender and deconstructing stereotypes</li> <li>Distinguish between appearances and reality</li> <li>Critique societal forces (norms, roles, expectations) that limit possibilities for boys and men</li> <li>Problematize the division of human qualities into masculine or feminine</li> <li>Foster self-awareness and responsible decision-making</li> </ul> <p><b>Module 3: RELATIONSHIP TO SELF AND OTHERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empower individuals to be authentic in their own way</li> <li>Devise strategies for developing healthy self-concepts and protective relationships</li> <li>Redefine success in terms of achieving one's full potential, preserving personal integrity, and developing meaningful connections to others</li> <li>De-stigmatize help-seeking and identify supportive resources</li> <li>Foster a sense of agency and efficacy</li> </ul>	
Additional Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aligns with Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Best Practices.</li> <li>Aligns with science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) best practices.</li> <li>Links to Common Core Standards for English Language Arts K-5.</li> <li>Make media including visual art, commercials, and poetry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aligns with Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Best Practices.</li> <li>Aligns with science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) best practices.</li> <li>Links to Common Core Standards for English Language Arts K-5.</li> <li>Make media including visual art, commercials, and poetry.</li> <li>Engage in social media campaigns.</li> <li>Participate in service learning activities.</li> </ul>





# FACILITATOR NOTES

As a facilitator, your role is to support students by fostering a creative and engaging learning environment. The lessons in this curriculum are intended to be learned through active participation and mutual dialogue, rather than through a one-way flow of information from facilitator to student.

As students are likely to be familiar with most of the topics to be discussed, they can be expected to have opinions based on their own life experiences. In fact, discussions will be richer and more interesting if students are encouraged to draw upon their unique and diverse backgrounds. There is no pressure on you, the facilitator, to be the unquestioned authority on everything. Rather, you can be most helpful by creating a space in which students can share their views openly without having to worry about being judged.

## A. CREATING AND MAINTAINING A BRAVE SPACE

Whereas safe spaces are necessary, especially when trying to establish healing, solidarity, and community, brave spaces explicitly encourage and enable people to explore new ideas, try new things, and learn from (rather than avoid) making mistakes. The first opening activity (Rules for Engagement) provides guidelines for creating

and maintaining a brave space, which should be explained prior to administering the curriculum and emphasized throughout its course.

## B. LOGISTICS

### 1. Read the Directions and Instructions for Each Activity

In the curriculum, each activity includes directions (in italics) that are addressed to you (the facilitator) and are not intended to be read aloud, instructions (in plain text) that are addressed to your students and may serve as a sample script, and talking points (in bold print) that suggest main ideas and may serve as prompts for further discussion. Links to video clips from *The Mask You Live In* are also provided, in case it would be helpful to review certain themes of the film.

### 2. Be Mindful of Time Constraints

While students may feel inclined to talk at length about certain subjects, keep in mind the suggested durations (e.g., for working in pairs or small groups), as they pertain not only to completing each activity within a 45-minute class period but also to saving certain discussions for later activities. Of course, you may allocate more or less time for each part of an activity at your discretion; there's no need to cut short a good discussion. However, in most

cases, there will be subsequent opportunities to return to many of the topics and issues that are introduced earlier on.

### 3. Define and Discuss Key Terms

The curriculum includes key terms (in bold print) and their definitions where the term first appears. In addition to reading the definitions provided, you could ask students what they think the term means (e.g., before you read the definition) and/or whether the term has a specific meaning in this context (e.g., after you read the definition).

### 4. Ensure Accessibility

Some of the activities call for students to get out of their seats and move around the classroom. If this is not possible for some students, adapt instructions to accommodate to individual restrictions. For example, during small groups, assign a group's meeting location to be near the student whose access is restricted.





# FACILITATOR NOTES CONTINUED

## 5. Have a Plan for Addressing Difficult Issues

- Make sure you are aware of your school's or organization's protocol for mandatory reporting.
- Know how to recognize signs of trauma and mental health concerns, especially with regards to self-harm and harming others.
- Partner with counselors or psychologists on-site, if possible, and with clinicians in the community to ensure that students have access to additional support, if needed.
- During activities that bring up vulnerable topics and sensitive issues (e.g., depression, violence, and sexual assault), remind ALL students about available resources and, if you're approached by individuals, help to put them in touch with specific providers.

## C. ACTIVITY FORMATS

The formats for the curriculum activities include:

### 1. Think/Pair/Share

This 3-step format encourages students to think critically about a specific question and to share and process their thoughts with a partner before presenting their "conclusions" to the class. You may have students pair up with whomever is sitting next to them or you may assign pairs based on some other criteria. Try to make sure

that students don't always end up with the same partners.

### 2. Small Groups

This format involves dividing students into small groups of no fewer than 3 students but no more than 5 students. This format allows students to consider multiple perspectives on an issue. Also, the relatively small number of participants in each group provides more opportunities for each member of the group to contribute to discussions. Visit each group to observe and help clarify prompts, if necessary, but avoid taking control of the discussions. Try to make sure that students don't always end up in the same groups.

### 3. Class Discussion

This format engages the entire class in a discussion about the topic at hand. When preceded by Think/Pair/Share or Small Groups, this format enables students to hear about what pairs or groups other than their own discussed. The larger size of this discussion provides students with opportunities to develop their public speaking skills and helps to ensure that certain concepts and ideas are presented to the whole class.

### 4. Introspective Writing

This format asks students to reflect on how the topics and issues presented in the curriculum apply (or don't apply) to their own experiences, and to record their reflections in a journal. This format provides students with opportunities to process personal experiences privately and enables students who are not comfortable with speaking up during group or class discussions to voice their thoughts and opinions.





# OPENING ACTIVITIES

## A. RULES FOR ENGAGEMENT

### Objective:

The purpose of this activity is to provide guidelines that facilitate meaningful discussions and learning.

### Activity:

## CREATING AND MAINTAINING A BRAVE SPACE

### Part I: Class Discussion

For the next few weeks, we will be talking in class about ourselves, our experiences, and people and things that are important to us.

In order to allow for a range of perspectives and to give everyone the chance to speak for themselves, it's important to create a brave space.

**Brave Space** – A learning environment in which *everyone* feels comfortable voicing their opinions and questions, and where everyone (facilitators and students) can learn from one another

As a class, we can maintain a brave space by trying our best to:

1. Show respect
2. Consider intent and impact

3. Use “Ouch!/Oops!” to provide feedback
4. Protect confidentiality

### 1. Show Respect

Many of the activities in this curriculum involve drawing upon personal experiences.

Try to be patient and fair when speaking and listening to others, especially during disagreements.

When we dismiss or belittle someone else's comment or question, we create a hostile learning environment in which it becomes difficult for everyone, including ourselves, to share and to learn.

What are some ways that you can show respect for each other?

### 2. Consider Intent and Impact

There is a difference between intent (what you mean to say or do) and impact (how others interpret your words or actions).

For example, consider these two situations:

- A. You borrow your friend's bike and get into an accident, which destroys the bike completely.
- B. You borrow your friend's bike and purposefully use a hammer to destroy it completely.

In these situations, the *intent* differs but the *impact* is the same (your friend's bike is broken and needs to be fixed/replaced).

Now, consider how this applies to people's feelings about sensitive issues, such as gender, race, class, etc. For example:

- A. A student means well but uses words that end up hurting people.
- B. A student purposefully uses hurtful language.

Again, the intent differs but the impact is the same (people feel hurt and the issue needs to be addressed with the help of the facilitator).

Your questions and comments should always reflect positive intentions (e.g. wanting to learn more, wanting to clarify any confusion, etc.).

### 3. Use “Ouch!/Oops!” To Provide Feedback

One way to let people know how their words and actions have impacted us is by providing feedback.

For instance, if someone's comment feels hurtful to you, you can say, “Ouch,” to acknowledge its negative impact.

The person who made the comment (the speaker) would then respond, “Oops,” to acknowledge their positive intent.





# OPENING ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

After the speaker finishes making their point, we would then discuss what happened and give everyone involved a chance to express their views on the matter.

Regardless of the speaker's intent, it's important to validate hurt feelings and to consider the possibility of negative impacts.

## 4. Protect Confidentiality

Agree that, "What's said here stays here. What's learned here leaves here."

Any personal details that are shared during class discussions should not be mentioned outside of class.

However, lessons learned from classroom discussions should be shared at every opportunity.

In other words, DON'T gossip about people, but DO help raise awareness about the issues.

What else can we do to create and maintain a brave space in our class?

## B. WE CAN RELATE

### Objective:

The purpose of this activity is to establish common ground among students and to bolster the sense of community and trust in the classroom.

### Activity:

## GOOD DAY/BAD DAY

### PART I: Think/Pair/Share

*Ask students to pair up with someone sitting near them (point out a couple of examples to avoid confusion about whether to partner with the person to their left or right, front or back).*

Think about the best thing and the worst thing that happened to you this week.

With your partner, share what these experiences were.

Listen carefully because you will describe your partner's experiences to the class.

You have 5 minutes before we come back together as a class.

## Part II: Class Presentations

*Remind everyone to protect classroom confidentiality, and to show respect when speaking and listening to each other.*

Each of you will describe your partner's best and worst experiences to the class.

- Who would like to begin?

**While we are unique individuals with different backgrounds, our common humanity enables us to empathize with each others' joys and struggles.**

- What is empathy and why is it important?

**Empathy** – The ability to understand and share the feelings of another

- What can help us to develop our empathy?





# SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF GENDER

## Objective:

The purpose of this activity is to examine gender as a social construction and to critique binary constructions of gender that portray masculinity and femininity as opposites and mutually exclusive.

## Activity:

### BE A MAN/IDEAL WOMAN

Suitable for Grades 3-5

## Source:

This activity is based on “Acting Like a Man” by Paul Kivel in *Men’s Work: How to Stop the Violence that Tears Our Lives Apart* (Hazelden, 1998).

## Supplies:

Two large sheets of poster paper (e.g., 3 feet x 3 feet), 2 thick markers (in bold colors), masking tape

## Before You Begin:

Tape the posters side by side on the blackboard.

## Part I: Class Activity (Be A Man)

Gender is not located within individuals.

**Masculinity and femininity are not distinct sets of traits that individuals are born with and possess to various degrees.**

Rather, masculinity and femininity are social constructions, and individuals perform or demonstrate gender according to societal beliefs about appropriate qualities and behaviors for boys/men or girls/women (C. West & D.H. Zimmerman, 1987, *Doing Gender. Gender & Society*, 1(2), p.125-151).

**Social Construction** – A concept, idea, role, belief, value, or norm that is created, institutionalized, made into tradition, and accepted as reality over time by communities

## Inside the Box

On one of the posters, draw a large box and write “Be a Man” at the top. Inside the box, write students’ responses to this question:

- What do you think of when you hear the phrase, “Be a Man”?

## Additional Prompts:

1. What does this man look like (physical features)?
  2. What qualities does he possess (characteristics)?
  3. How does he express his emotions?
  4. How does he view and treat men? Women?
  5. How is he viewed and treated by men? Women?
  6. What does he value/stand for/care about?
  7. How does he define success? What is he trying to achieve?
  8. For what is he valued? Is he taken seriously?
  9. Where have you seen this image of masculinity?
  10. How is this image of masculinity similar to or different from what you see in the media?
- What do boys and men think will happen if they are in this box?





# SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF GENDER CONTINUED

## Outside the Box

*On the “Be a Man” poster, outside of the box, write students’ responses to this question:*

- What words are used to describe a boy or man who is NOT in that box (i.e., whose masculinity differs from the “Be a Man” image)?

Many of us are familiar with these words as well.

Notice if any of these words are meant to be insults.

The likelihood that a boy will be called these things if he is not in the box indicates the pressure boys may feel to stay in the box.

**So, one thing that can keep a boy in the “Be a Man” box is the fear that others will think and treat him like he is not masculine enough.**

- What are some other reasons a boy might try to stay in the box, even if he is uncomfortable there?
- At this school, what are the differences between how boys who are inside the box and boys who are outside the box get treated?

## Unattainable Masculinity

- If a boy hears these words (outside the box) daily, what is likely to happen to him?
- Is it safe for a boy to be outside the box? No.
- Is it safe for a boy to be inside the box? Not really. Why not?
- How many boys/men do you know who are all of these things (in the box) all the time?

**The secret of the “Be a Man” image of masculinity is that no one can be all of these things all of the time.**

**Even boys who are mostly in the box can have their masculinity questioned by anyone and at any moment, if they step out of the box in some way.**

- What do boys have to give up in order to fit the “Be a Man” image?
- What happens if a boy is unwilling to give up those things?
- What would make it okay/safe for a boy who can’t or doesn’t want to be in the box to be outside the box?



# SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF GENDER CONTINUED

## Part II: Class Activity (Ideal Woman)

Next, we're going to examine some of our society's beliefs about how girls/women should look and act.

### Inside the Box

*On the other poster, draw a large box and write "Ideal Woman" at the top. Inside the box, write students' responses to this question.*

- What do you think of when you hear the phrase, "Ideal Woman"?

### Additional Prompts:

1. What does this woman look like (physical features)?
  2. What qualities does she possess (characteristics)?
  3. How does she express her emotions?
  4. How does she view and treat women? men?
  5. How is she viewed and treated by women? men?
  6. What does she value/stand for/care about?
  7. How does she define success? What is she trying to achieve?
  8. For what is she valued? Is she taken seriously?
  9. Where have you seen this image of femininity?
  10. How is this image of femininity similar to or different from what you see in the media?
- What do girls and women think will happen if they are in this box?

### Outside the Box

*On the "Ideal Woman" poster, outside of the box, write students' responses to this question:*

What are the words that will be used to describe a girl or woman who is not in that box (i.e., whose femininity differs from the "Ideal Woman" image)?

Notice if any of these terms are meant to be insults.

- How have words like these (and the beliefs behind them) been used to prevent girls/women from challenging gender stereotypes and gaining equal respect and access to opportunities in our society?

**Stereotype** – A generalization about a group of people that is usually exaggerated or oversimplified and oftentimes offensive

Notice if any of these terms are meant to be compliments.

- How have changes in society's beliefs about gender enabled girls and women to feel valued as they are, whether or not they appear to be in the box?
- Do these changes apply to boys and men as well? Why or why not?

## PART III: Class Discussion

One problem with the "Be a Man" and "Ideal Woman" images is that they can lead people to believe that there is one best way, or only one right way, to be masculine and feminine.

As a result, other possibilities may be overlooked or dismissed.

In societies that view masculinity and femininity as opposites and mutually exclusive, boys are typically taught to devalue femininity in order to prove their masculinity.

So, what have we feminized? Critical things like valuing relationships, expressing emotions, and showing empathy towards others.

1. What are some of the consequences for boys of learning to devalue their qualities that are said to be feminine but are actually a part of what makes them human?
2. What happens to the qualities that boys learn to devalue?
3. What would it take for boys to feel free to value and express their full humanity?
4. How can we make it safer for all individuals to resist and challenge limiting stereotypes?



# GET INVOLVED

## Objective:

The purpose of this activity is to encourage individual engagement and activism.

## Activity:

### TAKE ACTION

## Supplies:

Personal Action Plan

## Before You Begin:

Make copies of the Personal Action Plan for every student.

## Optional:

Show video clip *Men Are Doing Better: Learning Healthy Masculinity* (5 minutes, 23 seconds) on your DVD and online at <https://vimeo.com/130908747/3313fd05a7>

## Part I: Class Discussion

*Distribute a copy of the Personal Action Plan to every student. Ask for volunteers to read each of the seven suggestions.*

The folks at The Representation Project (who made *The Mask You Live In*) have suggested some ways that you can use your voice to challenge society's limiting representations of gender.

Raise your hand if you plan to...

- Learn more about an issue concerning gender and/or the media that interests you.
- Tell your friends about the film (e.g., in person or via social media).
- Plan a movie night for your friends and/or family to watch and discuss *The Mask You Live In*.
- Avoid buying products whose ads represent men or women in ways that send harmful messages to boys and girls.

What kinds of changes would you like to see at your school and in your community?

How can you help to create those changes?



# PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

## 100 SECONDS

Take the pledge at [therepresentationproject.org](http://therepresentationproject.org) to receive our weekly actions and begin creating change in your local communities.

Tell your friends in person and online about ***The Mask You Live In.***

## 10 MINUTES

Organize consumer activism in response to a commercial, film, magazine, radio, or television show that represents men or women in ways that send harmful messages to boys and girls, and encourage your friends to join **#NotBuyingIt.**

## 100 MINUTES

Plan a movie night for your friends and/or family to watch ***The Mask You Live In.*** and use the discussion guide and tools from [therepresentationproject.org](http://therepresentationproject.org) to continue the conversation.

## 10 HOURS

Learn more about an issue concerning gender and/or the media that interests you. Write an article for a magazine. Write a blog or contribute to an existing blog that addresses the issues presented in the film.

## 10 DAYS

Create your own stories, films, and/or web series about positive role models in non-traditional roles. Market and host a screening of ***The Mask You Live In*** in your community. Find out more at [therepresentationproject.org](http://therepresentationproject.org).

## 10 WEEKS

Become a Peer Ambassador. Create a club at your school or organize a group in your community that will meet regularly to discuss the messaging of ***The Mask You Live In.***





# MULTIPLE MASCULINITIES

## Objective:

The purpose of this activity is to acknowledge multiple forms of gender expression, and to explore healthier and more inclusive constructions of gender.

## Activity:

### A GOOD MAN (VS. “BE A MAN”)

## Supplies:

“Be A Man” poster, one large sheet of blank poster paper (e.g., 3 feet x 3 feet), a thick marker, and masking tape

## Before You Begin:

On the blackboard, tape the “Be a Man” poster and the blank poster side by side, and write “Good Man” at the top of the blank poster.

## Optional:

Show video clip *The Three Lies Of Masculinity* (5 minutes, 32 seconds) on your DVD or online at <https://vimeo.com/131114316/2c64accb81>

## Part I: Class Activity

One problem with the “Be a Man” and “Ideal woman” images is that they can lead people to believe that there is one best way, or only one right way, to be masculine and feminine.

As a result, other possibilities may be overlooked or dismissed.

For this activity, we will consider another image of masculinity.

*On the poster marked “Good Man,” write students’ responses to this question:*

- What do you think of when you hear the phrase, “Good Man”?

## Additional Prompts:

1. What does this man look like (physical features)?
2. What qualities does he possess (characteristics)?
3. How does he express his emotions?
4. How does he view and treat men? Women?
5. How is he viewed and treated by men? Women?
6. What does he value/stand for/care about?
7. How does he define success? What is he trying to achieve?
8. For what is he valued? Is he taken seriously?
9. Where have you seen this image of masculinity?
10. How is this image of masculinity similar to or different from what you see in the media?

Most of us are familiar with this image, too.

So, we know that there is more than one way to be masculine.

In fact, there are multiple ways of enacting manhood – across cultures and within a given culture – that may be differently valued but are equally valid.

**Value** – To assign importance or worth

**Valid** – The quality of being logically or factually sound; acceptable; legitimate

Likewise, there are multiple ways of enacting womanhood

Therefore, it is more accurate to conceptualize gender as a spectrum than as a binary.

Let’s compare the “Good Man” image to the “Be a Man” image.

- What qualities do these two images have in common?
- In what ways are these two images different?
- Are there any contradictions in the messages conveyed by these two images of masculinity?
- Is it possible to “Be A Man” and also be a “Good Man”? Why or why not?
- Does conforming to one image make it easier or harder to conform to the other? How?



## D. MULTIPLE MASCULINITIES CONTINUED

### Part II: Class Discussion

In *The Mask You Live In*, Joe Ehrmann says that boys and men are taught to measure success in terms of three things: athletic ability, economic wealth, and sexual conquests.

He calls these the three lies of masculinity.

1. What makes these lies (i.e., untrue)?
2. Does having these things make a person masculine? Why or why not?
3. Can a person be masculine without having these things?
4. How are girls and women who have these things viewed in our society?
5. How are girls and women taught to measure their success? What would be the three lies of femininity?
6. What happens when people believe these lies about masculinity and femininity? What are the costs and benefits for individuals? For society?
7. What are some other ways to measure success?
8. What would have to happen in order for individuals and societies to measure success in terms of the ability to act responsibly, cultivate strong interpersonal relationships, and contribute to the greater good?

### Part III: Introspective Writing

(Optional)

On a sheet of notebook paper, write about the qualities that YOU value and respect in a man.

While you are writing, I will write more questions for you to address next, so make sure to check the blackboard.

1. What is your own ideal image of masculinity (e.g., how a man should be and act)?
2. How are your ideas about masculinity shaped by the cultures of your family, school, neighborhood, and community?
3. How are your ideas about masculinity similar to or different from what the media teaches us to value in boys and men?
4. What can help you to maintain your personal values and also stay open to considering other people's views?

Think about how you would respond to these questions in regards to femininity.

- Would your responses change? If so, how? Why?





THANK YOU FOR USING  
***THE MASK YOU LIVE IN*** CURRICULUM

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: [THEREPRESENTATIONPROJECT.ORG](http://THEREPRESENTATIONPROJECT.ORG)