

China

Face Changing

变脸

China



Face Changing



Face Changing is a traditional Chinese magic.

biàn liǎn

变脸

- literally to change face

The performers wear brightly coloured costumes and masks.

By raising a hand, swinging a sleeve or tossing their head, they can very quickly change their masks.

Within an opera the actor may want to change their face as part of the story.

For example:

- the hero who doesn't want to become famous, changes their face to save someone;
- the villain (bad person) may change their face to escape.

Sichuan Opera

Face Changing is an important part of Sichuan Opera.

Sichuan Opera

chuān jù

川剧



川
剧

chuān is short for Sīchuān

sì chuān

四川 (the province, meaning 4 rivers)

jù means play or opera.

Costumes



mào zi

crown

帽子

pào zi

robe

袍子

shàn zi

fan

扇子

Methods

mā liǎn

Wiping Mask: 抹脸

The actor wipes special face paints over their face. The colourful paint can be hidden in parts of the face, especially the eyebrows.

chūi liǎn

Blowing Mask: 吹脸

The actor blows special make-up over their face. The make-up can be hidden in their hand or in a small box on the stage. The actor must keep their eyes and mouth closed and hold their breath when using this technique!

chě liǎn

Pulling Mask: 扯脸

The actor pulls down a mask over their face. Layers of masks can be hidden on top of their head. The actors are very skilled to quickly move each mask.



The Face

liǎn

脸

月

Meaning part of the character:

yuè means moon but can also mean body or meat.
In this character it takes the meaning of the **body**.

亻

Sound part of the character:

qiān is relating to the sound part of this character.

The meaning also helps to remember the character because **qiān** means **all** or **whole**. The whole self can be seen in the face. Your face is used to prove your identity.

Eyes, ears, nose & mouth

ear

耳朵

ěr duo

nose

鼻子

bí zi

eye

眼睛

yǎn jing

mouth

嘴巴

zuǐ ba

Colours

The colours of the masks show different characters and emotions.

For example:

- red: loyalty, courage and positive emotions
- yellow: brave
- green: violence (but can also mean brave)
- blue: cunning
- purple: serious
- black: fairness
- white: betrayal (usually the villain)
- silver and gold: fantasy characters

The masks are very colourful but the main colour of the mask will show its meaning.



hóng sè

红色



huáng sè

黄色



lǜ sè

绿色



lán sè

蓝色



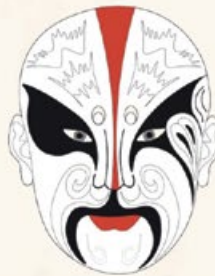
zǐ sè

紫色



hēi sè

黑色



bái sè

白色



jīn sè / yín sè

金色 银色

Can you change your face?

nǐ huì biàn liǎn ma
你会变脸吗?

China

Use the form of this sentence to ask other questions.

nǐ huì ... ma
你会...吗?

For example:

Can you make tea?

nǐ huì pào chá ma
你会泡茶吗?



Can you cook Chinese food?

nǐ huì zuò zhōng guó cài ma
你会做中国菜吗?



Can you draw a giant panda?

nǐ huì huà dà xióng māo ma
你会画大熊猫吗?



To answer the questions, you need to learn how to say I can or I can't.

I can

wǒ huì
我会

I cannot / I can't

wǒ bù huì
我不会

Glossary of main terms

帽子

mào zi

crown

变脸

biàn liǎn

face changing

扇子

shàn zi

fan

袍子

páo zi

robe

川剧

chuān jù

Sichuan Opera

吹脸

chuī liǎn

blowing mask
(blowing face)

扯脸

chě liǎn

pulling mask
(pulling face)

抹脸

mā liǎn

wiping mask
(wiping face)



Make your own mask

- You will need:**
- three sheets of white paper
 - coloured pens
 - glue

1



Fold the three pieces of paper in half. Draw half a face and an eye on the top piece of paper.

2



Cut along the lines and cut out the eye.

3



Unfold one of the faces and lay flat. Separate the other two but keep the faces folded in half. Take one of the folded faces and glue one side onto half of the full face. Take the second folded face and again glue this on top. You will have a little booklet with three face sides.

4



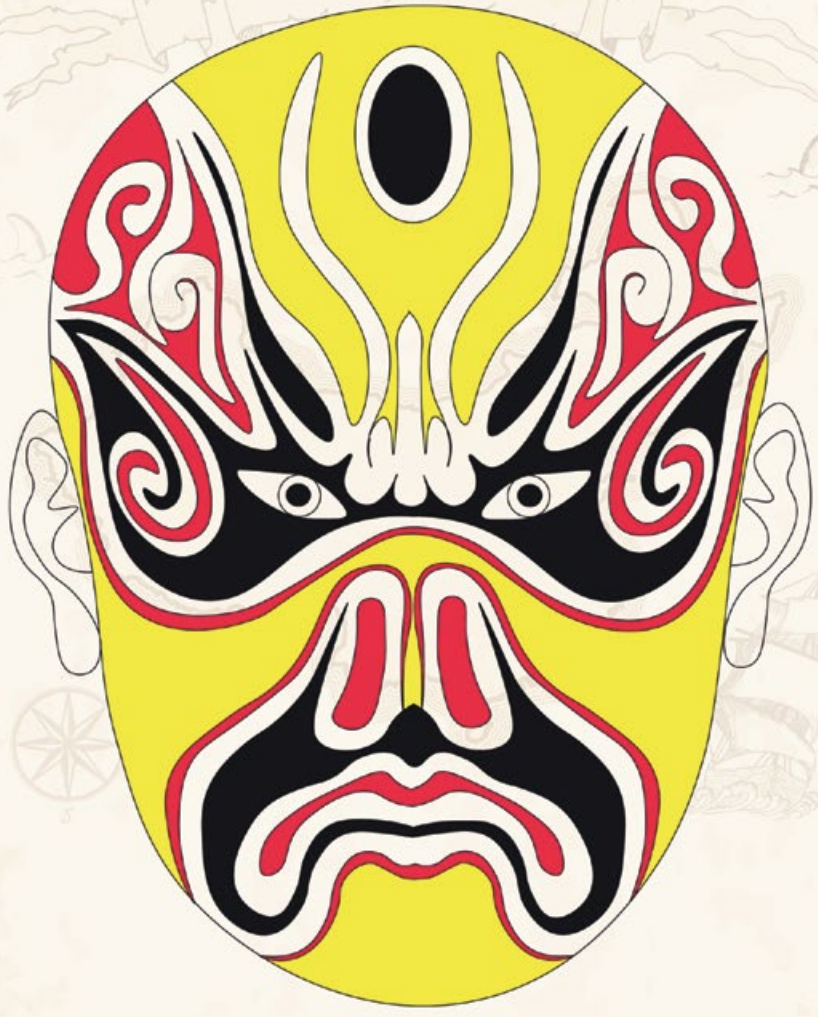
Decorate the three faces with different patterns and colours.

5



Attach to a headband to wear over your face and then turn each flap to perform the face changing.

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Beyond the Panda

This booklet has been produced with the help of the School of Foreign Languages, Southwest Jiaotong University, our Confucius Classroom partners and as part of the Beyond the Panda programme.

The Royal Zoological Society of Scotland's Beyond the Panda educational programme is designed for cross curricular learning where pupils investigate and discover more about China, its culture, language, geography, giant pandas and other Chinese wildlife.

Free resources are available on beyondthepanda.org.uk

Free outreach for schools is also available throughout Scotland.



in partnership with



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#BeyondthePanda



THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CHARITY