

# Why We Wear Clothes

## The Functions of Fashion



## EDUCATOR'S RESOURCE GUIDE

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### The Video: *Why We Wear Clothes: The Functions of Fashion*

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This program is closed-captioned.

### Related Learning Seed Programs

*Jobs in Clothing, Textiles & Fashion*

*Flattering Fashions*

*Sensible Steps to a Stylish Wardrobe*

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### Unit Lesson Plans

Each lesson lasts about 40 minutes (one class period) unless otherwise noted.

Each lesson assumes the student has blank paper and a writing instrument.

#### 1. What You've Got On Right Now

**Knowledge:** Can the student recall or remember main principles, ideas, or information?

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#### 2. Why We Wear Clothes: Viewing Activity

**Comprehension:** Can the student explain ideas or concepts?

(Students watch the video *Why We Wear Clothes: The Functions of Fashion* during this lesson)

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## Program Summary

As a tool of the individual and of culture, clothing has meaning. In this program, students explore the functional, social, and psychological aspects of clothing. Viewers learn how clothing provides more than just protection from the elements; it offers comfort, helps us to fit in with our peer group, and encourages us to follow trends. The right clothes can boost our self-image and confidence, too. We examine the fashion industry, as well as the influential role that marketing and advertising play in our daily decision of what to wear.

## Program Learning Objectives

- Students will know the impact clothing has on people and how it affects the way others perceive them.
- Students will understand the effect that design, marketing, and merchandising have on what people choose to wear.
- Students will be able to identify and explain the functional, social, and psychological factors that influence our clothing choices.

## Discussion Questions:

*Use these 5 questions EACH DAY OF THE UNIT to wrap up your lessons and reinforce basic concepts:*

1. What are all of the different roles in the distribution chain for clothing and what are their functions?
2. What kind of effect can your clothes have on how people perceive you?
3. What are some social reasons that influence our clothing choices?
4. Name some functional factors that affect our clothing choices.
5. What are some psychological reasons for choosing the clothes we do?



## **Additional Resources**

### **Online**

**Costumes.org: The Costumer's Manifesto**

<http://www.costumes.org/>

**Fashion-Era**

<http://www.fashion-era.com/>

### **Books**

20,000 Years of Fashion: The History of Costume and Personal Adornment

Francois Boucher

The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Clothing throughout World History [Three Volumes]

Jill Condra

Clothing: A Pictorial History of the Past One Thousand Years (Millennium)

Sue L. Hamilton

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Unit Pre-Test

**Directions: Use the words in the word bank to complete the following sentences**

We have several reasons for our clothing choices. We choose clothes based on \_\_\_\_\_ reasons – for comfort, protection against the elements and to support our physical activities. We also choose clothes for \_\_\_\_\_ reasons, such as adhering to cultural norms, meeting expectations, and fitting into groups. And we base our clothing decisions on \_\_\_\_\_ factors, such as a desire to be attractive, feel powerful, or express our creativity.

The \_\_\_\_\_ we choose affect how we see ourselves and can make a strong impression on others. Some people try to appear current and \_\_\_\_\_ by choosing to wear the latest, popular fashions. Others may prefer to take a more \_\_\_\_\_ approach and wear simple, \_\_\_\_\_ styles, such as polo shirts and khaki pants.

Color choice also affects how we perceive ourselves and how others perceive us. For instance, we may wear the color \_\_\_\_\_ because it is slimming, simple, and neutral. The color \_\_\_\_\_ is emotionally intense and can elevate your heart rate. \_\_\_\_\_ has a long history of being the color of royalty.

\_\_\_\_\_ strive to create clothing that is creative, fashionable and marketable to different groups of people. \_\_\_\_\_ make the clothes that stock the shelves of retail businesses. \_\_\_\_\_ buy clothes from manufacturers and then \_\_\_\_\_ and market them to their customers. They sell clothing by category targeted to customer \_\_\_\_\_ and lifestyles.

Ultimately, we choose clothing based on a variety of reasons - marketing, functional needs, our physical, social, and psychological \_\_\_\_\_, and our own \_\_\_\_\_ taste!

### Word Bank

functional  
social  
black  
styles  
red  
reasons

trendy  
demographics  
purple  
manufacturers  
merchandise  
individual

psychological  
classic  
fashion designers  
retailers  
conservative

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Unit Post-Test

**Directions: Fill in the blanks with the appropriate answers.**

We have several reasons for our clothing choices. We choose clothes based on \_\_\_\_\_ reasons – for comfort, protection against the elements and to support our physical activities. We also choose clothes for \_\_\_\_\_ reasons, such as adhering to cultural norms, meeting expectations, and fitting into groups. And we base our clothing decisions on \_\_\_\_\_ factors, such as a desire to be attractive, feel powerful, or express our creativity.

The \_\_\_\_\_ we choose affect how we see ourselves and can make a strong impression on others. Some people try to appear current and \_\_\_\_\_ by choosing to wear the latest, popular fashions. Others may prefer to take a more \_\_\_\_\_ approach and wear simple, \_\_\_\_\_ styles, such as polo shirts and khaki pants.

Color choice also affects how we perceive ourselves and how others perceive us. For instance, we may wear the color \_\_\_\_\_ because it is slimming, simple, and neutral. The color \_\_\_\_\_ is emotionally intense and can elevate your heart rate. \_\_\_\_\_ has a long history of being the color of royalty.

\_\_\_\_\_ strive to create clothing that is creative, fashionable and marketable to different groups of people. \_\_\_\_\_ make the clothes that stock the shelves of retail businesses. \_\_\_\_\_ buy clothes from manufacturers and then \_\_\_\_\_ and market them to their customers. They sell clothing by category targeted to customer \_\_\_\_\_ and lifestyles.

Ultimately, we choose clothing based on a variety of reasons - marketing, functional needs, our physical, social, and psychological \_\_\_\_\_, and our own \_\_\_\_\_ taste!

## UNIT PRE- & POST-TEST ANSWER KEY

**Directions:** Fill in the blanks with the appropriate answers.

We have several reasons for our clothing choices. We choose clothes based on functional reasons – for comfort, protection against the elements and to support our physical activities. We also choose clothes for social reasons, such as adhering to cultural norms, meeting expectations, and fitting into groups. And we base our clothing decisions on psychological factors, such as a desire to be attractive, feel powerful, or express our creativity.

The styles we choose affect how we see ourselves and can make a strong impression on others. Some people try to appear current and trendy by choosing to wear the latest, popular fashions. Others may prefer to take a more conservative approach and wear simple, classic styles, such as polo shirts and khaki pants.

Color choice also affects how we perceive ourselves and how others perceive us. For instance, we may wear the color black because it is slimming, simple, and neutral. The color red is emotionally intense and can elevate your heart rate. Purple has a long history of being the color of royalty.

Fashion designers strive to create clothing that is creative, fashionable and marketable to different groups of people. Manufacturers make the clothes that stock the shelves of retail businesses. Retailers buy clothes from manufacturers and then merchandise and market them to their customers. They sell clothing by category targeted to customer demographics and lifestyles.

Ultimately, we choose clothing based on a variety of reasons - marketing, functional needs, our physical, social, and psychological reasons, and our own individual taste!

### Word Bank

functional  
social  
black  
styles  
red  
reasons

trendy  
demographics  
purple  
manufacturers  
merchandise  
individual

psychological  
classic  
fashion designers  
retailers  
conservative

## Lesson 1: What You've Got On Right Now

### Previewing Activity: LESSON PLAN

**Summary:** Students observe the variety of clothing styles present in the classroom and then examine the reasons behind these clothing choices in a writing exercise.

**Special Materials:** None.

### Learning Objectives (Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills)

- The student will learn why clothing choices are made.
- The student will know some reasons behind clothing choices.
- The student will be able to explain why they made the clothing choices they did.

### Lesson Warm Up (10 min.)

Facilitate a class discussion asking students to describe what they are wearing and why they chose to wear it. Probe for functional, psychological and social reasons by using follow-up questions such as “Did the weather play a role? How?” “Was your peer group a factor? Why?” Keep a tally of reasons on the board for students to see.

### Lesson Activity (30 min.)

1. Instruct students to write for 10 minutes on the following prompt:
  - *Look at the clothing you wore to school today. Describe your outfit choice in one paragraph.*
  - *Then explain why you chose to wear what you're wearing today. Identify at least three factors that influenced or guided you as you were deciding what to wear.*
2. Follow-up with a 10-minute class discussion of student responses, adding additional answers to the list on the board.
3. Ask students to consider different ways to categorize or group the list of factors on the board.

### Lesson wrap-up questions:

Should be the same each day. Suggested discussion questions are on page 4.

## **Lesson 2: *Why We Wear Clothes***

### **Video Viewing Guide: LESSON PLAN**

**Summary:** Students watch a 23-minute Learning Seed video, *Why We Wear Clothes: The Functions of Fashion* while completing a corresponding worksheet.

#### **Special Materials:**

- Learning Seed's video, *Why We Wear Clothes: The Functions of Fashion*
- A means of playing the video to students
- Copies of the "Why We Wear Clothes Video Viewing Guide" Worksheet
- Video Viewing Guide Worksheet Answer Key

#### **Note to Educator:**

This lesson can be preceded by the Unit Pre-Test. To fully set-up, complete, and review the lesson, you may prefer to use two class periods.

#### **Learning Objectives (Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills)**

- The student will identify the functional, social, and psychological aspects that influence clothing choice.
- The student will be able to describe the variety of clothing options that exist.
- The student will understand that clothing choices are based on several factors including functionality, personal tastes, and social/psychological needs.

#### **Lesson Warm Up (10 min.)**

Lead a class discussion to explore the various reasons we wear clothes. Record all responses on the board for reference.

#### **Lesson Activity (30 min.)**

1. Distribute the "Why We Wear Clothes Video Viewing Guide" Worksheet and instruct students to complete it while watching the *Why We Wear Clothes* video.
2. Read through the worksheet instructions with the class and address any questions students may have.
3. Play the video.
4. Go through the worksheet answers as a class.
5. Return to the list of reasons on the board. Which reasons were accurate? Which reasons were missing?

#### **Lesson wrap-up questions:**

Should be the same each day. Suggested discussion questions are on page 4.

## Lesson 2: *Why We Wear Clothes*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Video Viewing Guide: STUDENT WORKSHEET

**Directions:** As you watch the video *Why We Wear Clothes*, follow along and fill in the appropriate answers.

1. Over the last century, clothing has evolved into what it is today, a worldwide \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Clothing has been used for \_\_\_\_\_ over many centuries.
3. When we ask, "What do the clothes do for you?" we are asking about the \_\_\_\_\_ of clothing.
4. List three reasons why functionality is important:
5. List three social reasons for our clothing choices:
6. List three psychological reasons for our clothing choices:
7. Define the cultural significance of each the following colors:
  - a. black \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. white \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. red \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. purple \_\_\_\_\_
8. Fashion designers strive to create designs that are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ to different groups of people.
9. We buy clothes because of how they look and feel, and also to fit the categories of our \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

## Lesson 2: Why We Wear Clothes

### Video Viewing Guide: WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

**Directions:** As you watch the video *Why We Wear Clothes*, follow along and fill out the appropriate sections.

1. Over the last century, clothing has evolved into what it is today, a worldwide industry.
2. Clothing has been used for adornment over many centuries.
3. When we ask, "What do the clothes do for you?" we are asking about the functionality of clothing.
4. List three reasons why functionality is important:

*Acceptable answers may include:*

- **protection from elements**
- **designed for work**
- **comfort**
- **supporting physical activities**

5. List three social reasons for our clothing choices:

*Acceptable answers may include:*

- **acceptance**
- **dress codes**
- **fitting in with social norms and trends**
- **meeting cultural expectations**
- **to meet the expectations of others, a role at work, group identity**

6. List three psychological reasons for our clothing choices:

*Acceptable answers may include:*

- **self-image**
- **to feel more confident or unique**
- **to express our creativity**

7. Define the cultural significance of the following colors:

- a. black - **mourning, death, purity**
- b. white - **purity, mourning**
- c. red - **seductiveness, emotional intensity**
- d. purple - **royalty**

8. Fashion designers strive to create designs that are creative, fashionable, and marketable to different groups of people.

9. We buy clothes because of how they look and feel, and also to fit the categories of our lifestyle and demographic.



## Lesson 3: Around The World

### Group Research Project: LESSON PLAN

**Summary:** Students work in groups to research the fashion traditions of a specific culture. They will create a poster of their findings and present it to the class.

#### Special Materials:

- online access and printer
- poster board
- markers
- copies of grading rubric

#### Note to Educator:

This activity will span two class periods.

#### Learning Objectives (Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills)

- The student will understand that there are different cultural standards and trends.
- The student will know that there are different cultural expectations.
- The student will be able to explain one culture's clothing history.

#### Lesson Warm Up (10 min.)

Lead a class discussion on the following topics:

- How are trends and styles specific to culture?
- What are some American trends or styles that are truly unique?

#### Lesson Activity (60 min.)

##### DAY 1 (30 min.)

1. Separate students into pairs or small groups.
2. Assign each group a specific culture to research. Choices may include Mayan, Russian, Bulgarian, and Indian (for a comprehensive list of traditional fashions and links to various online examples, visit [www.costumes.org](http://www.costumes.org)).
3. Instruct groups to gather information on the history of the culture's traditional dress and clothing trends and styles. Their research should include explanations of the reasons these traditions exist.
4. Each group will create a poster with information to share with the class. Each poster should include at least 3 image examples of clothing styles.

##### DAY 2 (30 min.)

Invite groups to take turns presenting their research findings and posters. Each member must participate in the presentation.

#### Lesson wrap-up questions:

Should be the same each day. Suggested discussion questions are on page 4.

### Lesson 3: Around The World

#### Group Research Project: GRADING RUBRIC

#### POSTER & PRESENTATION

	4	3	2	1	Score
<b>Quality of Information</b>	All of the information was accurate and deepened the class's understanding of the topic.	All of the information was accurate	There was 1 inaccuracy in the project.	There were 2 or more inaccuracies in the project.	
<b>Cooperation</b>	The group showed outstanding cooperation with each other.	The group showed cooperation with each other.	Cooperation was somewhat lacking in the group.	Group showed a severe lack of cooperation with each other.	
<b>Preparedness</b>	The group was well prepared and needed no prompts or reminders during the presentation.	The group was prepared and needed 1 reminder or prompt during the presentation.	The group needed prompts and reminders more than twice during the presentation.	The group was severely unprepared and needed prompts and reminders during more than half of the presentation.	
<b>Neatness/ Layout</b>	The poster project is exceptionally neat, and the layout is completely balanced and pleasing to the eye.	The poster project is neat, and the layout is balanced.	The poster project is somewhat lacking neatness, and the layout is somewhat unbalanced.	The poster project is sloppy and disorganized, and the layout is very unbalanced.	
<b>Knowledge Gained</b>	The project demonstrates deep knowledge of the topic.	The project demonstrates adequate knowledge of the topic.	The project demonstrates little knowledge about the topic.	The project did not demonstrate knowledge about the topic.	
<b>Quality of Presentation</b>	The presentation and poster were skillfully presented and easy to understand. Members spoke clearly and with inflection.	The presentation and poster were understandable, and members spoke clearly.	The presentation and poster were somewhat difficult to understand, and members spoke somewhat quietly or incoherently.	The presentation and poster were difficult to understand, and group members spoke too quietly or incoherently.	
				<b>Total Score</b>	

**Lesson 4: Dress Codes****Class Activity: LESSON PLAN**

**Summary:** Students will create a dress code for an institution or workplace.

**Special Materials:** None.

**Learning Objectives (Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills)**

- The student will know the definition of a dress code.
- The student will understand why there are dress codes.
- The student will be able to give examples of dress codes.

**Lesson Warm Up (10 min.)**

Lead a class discussion on dress codes: What is a dress code and what reasons do companies or schools have for creating and enforcing them?

**Lesson Activity (30 min.)**

1. Separate students into small groups to create a dress code for an institution or workplace environment, such as a school or a restaurant.
  - a. The dress code may be a bulleted list or a paragraph.
  - b. Students should include a brief sentence explaining the reason for each rule in their dress code.
2. A representative from each group will present their dress code to the class, explaining its overall purpose and the reason for some of the specific rules in the dress code.

**Lesson wrap-up questions:**

Should be the same each day. Suggested discussion questions are on page 4.

## Lesson 5: What To Wear

### Group Presentation: LESSON PLAN

**Summary:** Students work in pairs to design three outfits appropriate for three different occasions.

#### Note to Educator:

This lesson will take 2 class periods to complete.

#### Special Materials:

- students will work in pairs. Each pair needs 3 copies of the “doll sheet” on the following page.
- markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils

#### Learning Objectives (Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills)

- The student will understand how clothing helps us fit into different social environments.
- The student will know that clothing helps people fit into different roles throughout the day.
- The student will be able to explain different clothing choices for different situations.

#### Lesson Warm Up (10 min.)

Lead a class discussion around how different people’s environments will influence their clothing choices. Create a list of answers shared with the class.

#### Lesson Activity (30 min.)

##### DAY 1

1. Group students into pairs.
2. Give each pair three copies of the template (on the following page) and tell students they will “dress” the doll for three different occasions and environments. For example: *Going to work, going to a party, going outside to shovel snow.*
3. Each partner must participate in the design and drawing of the outfits.
4. Groups will write two-sentences to explain how each outfit is appropriate for the environment it was designed for.

##### DAY 2

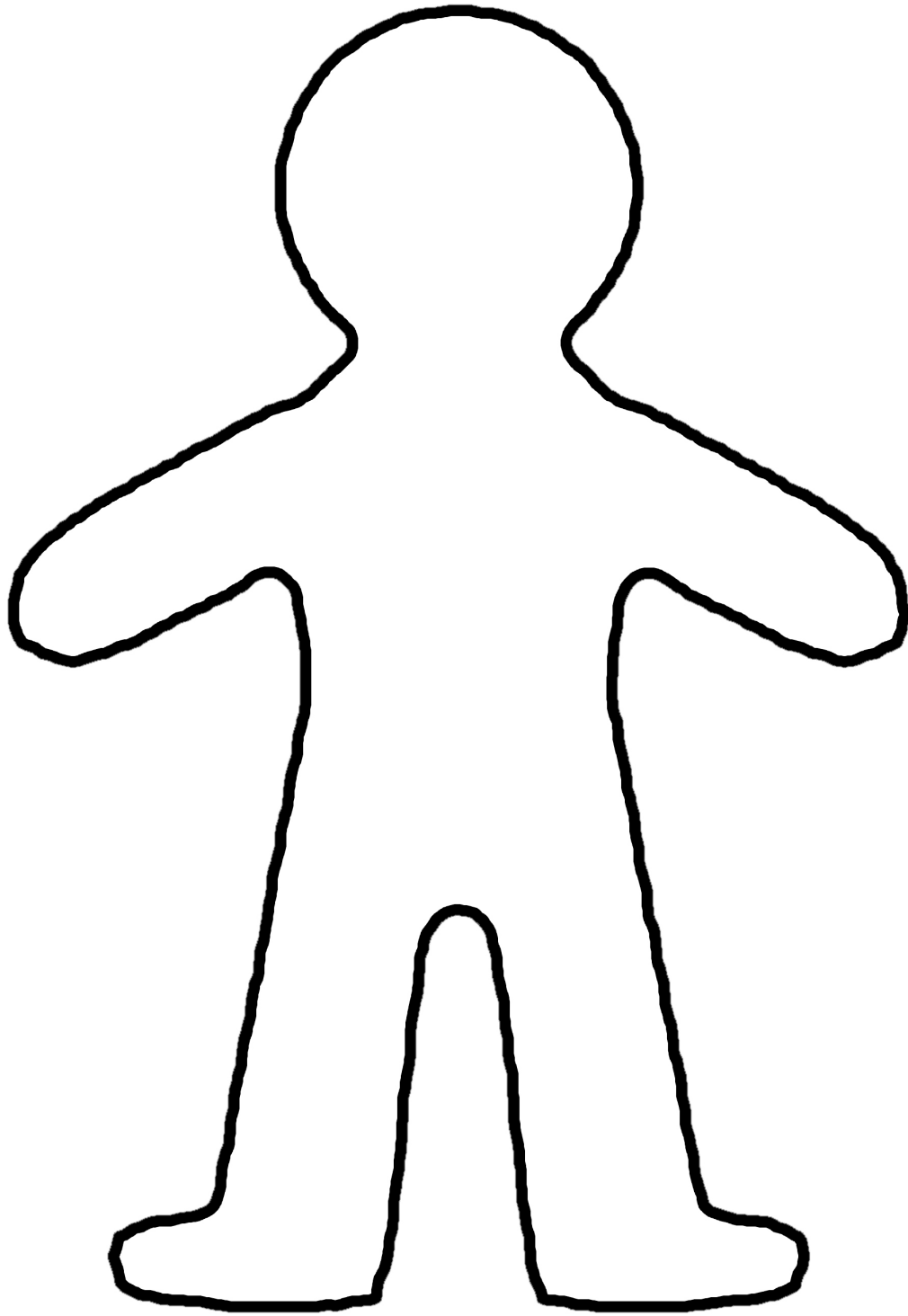
1. Invite pairs to take turns presenting their scenarios.
2. Have students explain why they chose the clothing for each scenario.
3. Both members must participate in the presentation.

#### Lesson wrap-up questions:

Should be the same each day. Suggested discussion questions are on page 4.

**Lesson 5: What To Wear**

**Group Presentation: TEMPLATE**



## Lesson 5: What To Wear

### Group Presentation: GRADING RUBRIC

#### DRESS CODES FOR DOLLS

	4	3	2	1	Score
<b>Appropriateness of Outfits</b>	The outfits designed were appropriate for the chosen scenarios and deepened the class's understanding of the topic.	All of the outfits were appropriate.	There was 1 inappropriate outfit in the project.	There were 2 or more inappropriate outfits in the project.	
<b>Cooperation</b>	The group showed outstanding cooperation with each other.	The group showed cooperation with each other.	Cooperation was somewhat lacking in the group.	Group showed a severe lack of cooperation with each other.	
<b>Preparedness</b>	The group was well prepared and needed no prompts or reminders during the presentation.	The group was prepared and needed 1 reminder or prompt during the presentation.	The group needed prompts and reminders more than twice during the presentation.	The group was severely unprepared and needed prompts and reminders during more than half of the presentation.	
<b>Neatness/Layout</b>	The outfits were exceptionally neat and pleasing to the eye.	The outfits were neat.	The outfits were somewhat lacking neatness.	The outfits were sloppy and disorganized.	
<b>Knowledge Gained</b>	The project demonstrates deep knowledge of the topic.	The project demonstrates adequate knowledge of the topic.	The project demonstrates little knowledge about the topic.	The project did not demonstrate knowledge about the topic.	
<b>Quality of Presentation</b>	The presentation was skillfully presented, easy to understand, and fun to watch. Members spoke clearly and with inflection.	The presentation was understandable, and members spoke clearly.	The presentation was somewhat difficult to understand, and members spoke somewhat quietly or incoherently.	The presentation was difficult to understand, and group members spoke too quietly or incoherently.	
				<b>Total Score</b>	

**Lesson 6: Your Closet****Essay: LESSON PLAN**

**Summary:** Students will demonstrate their overall knowledge of why we wear clothes in a final essay.

**Special Materials:**

- Copies of the “Your Closet” topic worksheet
- Copies of the grading rubric

**Note to Educator:**

This lesson activity may be completed in one class period as a timed-writing, or may be assigned as homework with a deadline.

**Learning Objectives (Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills)**

- The student will demonstrate knowledge of what influences clothing choice.
- The student will be able to explain the effect that design, marketing, merchandising have on what people wear.
- The student will be able to explain the impact clothing choice has on others.

**Lesson Warm Up (5 min.)**

Journal Exercise: Instruct your students to free-write for 5 minutes on the following prompt:

*Think about your own closet. Which articles of clothing come to mind right away? What are your favorite articles of clothing and why? Where and when do you typically wear these items?*

**Lesson Activity (35 min.)**

1. Distribute copies of the essay instructions and grading rubric to the class.
2. Review assignment instructions with students and the grading rubric expectations.
3. Direct students work on their paper as a timed-writing activity -OR- assign the paper as a take-home project.

**Lesson wrap-up questions:**

Should be the same each day. Suggested discussion questions are on page 4.

**Lesson 6: Your Closet****Essay: INSTRUCTIONS & TOPIC WORKSHEET**

It's time to think about your own clothes! You will describe and analyze the clothes in your closet in a six-paragraph essay.

Try to think about all the clothes you own.

- Is there one color you seem to have more of?
- Is there a certain style or pattern that makes up most of your wardrobe?
- Is there any clothing you own simply because it's functional?
- Is there something you used to wear but don't anymore? Why not?
- Is there clothing you wear simply because your friends do too?

After you provide a description of your closet, explain your style. How does it show who you are and how does it make you feel about yourself?

Make sure your essay includes:

- The styles/colors/patterns you prefer
- Clothing you have for functionality
- Trends you used to follow or follow now
- What you think your style is
- How your style shows who you are
- How your style makes you feel about yourself



## Lesson 6: Your Closet

### Final Essay: GRADING RUBRIC

#### ESSAY

	4	3	2	1	Score
<b>Quality of Information</b>	All of the information was accurate and showed a deep understanding of the assignment.	All of the information was accurate and showed a satisfactory understanding of the assignment.	There was 1 inaccuracy in the paper and understanding of the assignment was somewhat lacking.	There were 2 or more inaccuracies in the paper and there was little understanding of the assignment.	
<b>Spelling and Grammar</b>	There were no grammatical or spelling errors in the paper.	There were 1 - 2 grammatical or spelling error in the paper.	There were 3 - 4 grammatical or spelling errors in the paper.	There were 5 or more grammatical or spelling errors in the paper.	
<b>Organization and Structure</b>	The paper was extremely organized and structured in a clear and logical manner.	The paper was organized and clearly structured.	The paper lacked some organization and structure.	The paper was disorganized and has no logical structure.	
<b>Knowledge Gained</b>	The paper demonstrated deep knowledge about the topic.	The paper demonstrated adequate knowledge about the topic.	The paper demonstrated little knowledge about the topic.	The paper did not demonstrate knowledge about the topic.	
<b>Required Elements</b>	All six paragraphs were included.	All six paragraphs were included, but some information was missing.	One paragraph was missing from the paper.	Two or more paragraphs were missing from the paper.	
				<b>Total Score</b>	

## GLOSSARY

<b>CLASSIC</b>	style preference favoring clean, simple, timeless designs over trendy fashions.
<b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b>	a way of categorizing groups of people based on characteristics like age, gender, income and education.
<b>FASHION DESIGNER</b>	creates clothing designs based on what is fashionable and marketable to different people.
<b>FUNCTIONALITY</b>	the practical usability of an object, such as clothing.
<b>MARKETING</b>	the process of using various strategies and techniques to sell items, such as clothing.
<b>MERCHANDISING</b>	the process of making clothing available for sale at retail businesses.
<b>LIFESTYLE</b>	a person's pattern of living as expressed in their activities, interests, and opinions.
<b>RETAILER</b>	buys clothes from manufacturers to merchandise and market them to the public.
<b>SELF-IMAGE</b>	how we view and think about ourselves.
<b>STYLE</b>	the type, design, or fashion of an object, such as clothing. Also refers to aesthetic preferences.
<b>TRENDY</b>	the latest, most popular fashions.