Create Your Own Wig

Grade Level: elementary, middle school

Objectives:

- Students will understand that personal appearances and styles change over time.
- Students will create artworks reflecting historical and cultural influences.

Materials

- Getting To Know George Washington DVD
- images of European nobility wearing wigs
- three black-and-white portraits of each student
- safety scissors
- 3 sheets of paper per student
- glue or tape
- crayons or markers
- (optional) images of recent hair styles

Pre-Lesson Activity

(option 1) Ask students to bring a recent photograph from home. The photograph should prominently feature his/her face.

Using a copying machine, enlarge and make three black-and-white copies of each student's photograph.

(option 2) Use a digital camera to take photographs of each student in class. For each student, print out three black-and-white copies.

Introduction

Watch **Getting To Know George Washington**. Then display images of European nobility with fancy wigs.

Explain that French king Louis XIII (1601-1643) started wearing a wig because he was going bald in his 20s. Later European kings also continued the trend. Tell students that whatever the king did was very important. Other people who wanted to be considered rich and powerful like the king usually copied his example.

Point out that since the thirteen colonies were a part of England before the Revolution, American leaders, such as George Washington, also wore wigs.

Brainstorm with students to name some influential hair trendsetters of today. List these on the board.

Activity

Hand out each student's three black-and-white portraits. Ask students to cut out their faces, taking away as much hair as possible.

Students should glue the cut-outs to blank sheets of paper, leaving plenty of room for newly drawn-in hair.

Tell the class that they will give themselves three new hairdos.

- The first one should be similar to the wigs of the kings.
- The second should reflect a trendy hairstyle of today. Reference the brainstormed list and provide samples if necessary.
- The third is up to their imagination. They can give themselves a hairstyle that they like, or they can design a new look for the future.

Conclusion

Display the artworks. Have volunteers share their creations and provide explanations of their choices if appropriate.