

# HISTORY OF COSTUME

*FIDM's Just for Educators Classroom Projects & Activities*



## **Objective:**

The student will establish a common understanding of the meaning of clothing in the context of social history and perform research and reporting exercises.

**Suggested for use in the following Departments:** *Social Studies and Art*

## **Student Activities:**

Students view parts of an old movie such as *The Breakfast Club* or a television show such as *That Seventies Show* to determine the decade represented and what the clothing indicated about people or a popular trend. Students research the social history of a fashion, fad, or style from a particular decade. They collect pictures representing the fashion trend or item and find socially relevant information from the time of the trend (item's peak popularity). They then present their findings to the class by giving a five minute oral report on how the fashion trend/item was a sign of the times in the context of social history.

## **Arizona State Standards:**

### **• Visual Arts: Strand 2: Relate:**

- PO 001 Identify visual/tactile characteristics of artworks from a diverse culture, different place, or time.
- PO 401 Research the origins of artistic traditions and visual conventions (visual/tactile qualities) valued by diverse cultures (e.g. American, European, etc.).

## **California State Standards:**

### **• Fashion Design, Manufacturing and Merchandising Pathway:**

- A5.0 Students understand the relationship between history and fashion.
- A5.3 Students understand how designs and trends have developed and evolved throughout history.
- A5.5 Students understand fashion cycles and the adaptation of historical fashions to current trends.

## Washington State Standards:

### • Essential Academic Learning Requirements: The Arts:

4. The student makes connections within and across the arts, to other disciplines, life, cultures, and work.
- 4.4 The student will understand that the arts shape and reflect culture and history.

## Materials Needed:

- Books on fashion history (e.g. *Fifty Years of Fashion*, *The Language of Clothes*, etc.)
- Access to online databases
- Availability of library research with Librarian assistance
- Disposable cameras
- Period/historical
- DVDs or videos

## Warm-Up Exercise:

Ask students if they've seen television shows such as *That Seventies Show* or made-for-television movies such as *The Rosa Parks Story*. Or have them watch part of an old movie from the 1980s such as *Working Girl* or *The Breakfast Club*. What decade was represented by that particular show? What does clothing indicate about people or a popular trend? How was the social history of that timeframe reflected by the clothing? One example would be Rosa Parks wearing a hat and gloves because during the Civil Rights Movement in the early Sixties, educated working women like Mrs. Parks still "dressed up" to "go out of the house" to work.



In *That Seventies Show*, young people “dressed down” according to the trends and mores of the Youth Culture. Examples include Vietnam War protesters, Woodstock attendees, students, and ordinary people who wore tie-dyed fabrics, bell bottoms, and peace sign jewelry.

### ***Project Guidelines:***

1. Have student pairs research the social history of a fashion, fad, or style from a particular decade.
2. Have students collect pictures representing the fashion trend or item.
3. Have students find socially relevant information from the time of the trend (item’s peak popularity).
4. Have students present their findings to the class by giving a five-minute oral report on how this fashion trend/item was a “sign of the times” in the context of social history.

