Objective:

To explore the influence that clothing has on us, why we wear the clothes we do, the meaning of clothing, and any relationship between clothing and culture

Suggested Classes: Clothing, Fashion Design, Psychology

Student Activity:

Students interview adults, conduct research, and give an oral report to their class on their findings.

Suggested Materials:

- Paper
- Pens, pencils
- Adults of various age groups available for interviews

Warm-Up Exercise:

Ask students why we wear clothes. Responses might include: self-expression, protection, warmth, adornment, identification, to fit in, or to express values, attitudes, etc.

Ask volunteers to share why they chose what they are wearing. How do their answers relate to the above? Ask students if they believe that the reasons we wear clothing today are different from those in historic times.

Project Guidelines:

Have student teams of four interview three adults of different ages who would have been teenagers at different times in American history. The educator can determine if the interviewing will be conducted during class time or sometime prior to the
next class session. The interview should include questions (see below for examples) regarding how the individuals dressed when they were teenagers.

Have students find socially relevant information from the time period the fashion item was at its peak popularity. Students present their findings to the class in a five-minute oral report on how this fashion trend/item was a “sign of the times” in the context of social history.

**Example Interview Questions:**

- How is your dress today different from how you dressed when you were a teenager?
- What are the similarities?
- Was clothing more or less modest than today?
- Was clothing a representation of your heritage?
- Did you use decorative adornment?
- Did you wear a uniform for your job?
- How do you feel about the clothing teenagers wear today (e.g., values and attitudes)?

**Follow-Up Exercise:**

Invite one or more of the interviewees to come to class, share pictures of his/her clothing as a teen, and discuss how that style was appropriate for the time it was worn.

**State and National Standards:**

**Arizona State Standards**

*Life Connections*

2.0. Analyze factors that influence human behavior.
2.1. Describe how personal values influence choices and goals.

7.0. Integrate strategies for life and career success.
7.5. Evaluate professional dress.

*Social Studies: American History*

Concept 1. Research Skills for History

PO7. Compare present events with past events:
   a. Cause and effect
   b. Change over time
   c. Different points of view

**California State Standards**

*Fashion and Interior Design Industry Sector*

A5.2. Students understand how fashion and design have been influenced by politics, society, economics, culture, and aesthetics.
U.S. History and Geography
11.8. Students analyze the economic boom and social transformation of post-World War II America.

8. Discuss forms of popular culture, with emphasis on their origins and geographic diffusion (e.g., jazz and other forms of popular music, professional sports, architectural and artistic styles).

Washington State Standards

Essential Academic Learning Requirement – Social Studies: History
2.2. The student will understand how ideas and technological developments influence people, culture, and environment.

Essential Academic Learning Requirement – Social Studies Skills
2.1c. Interview Skills
2.1.2c. Identify appropriate people to gain needed information, ask relevant questions, pose follow-up questions: paraphrase conversations.

National Standards

Family and Consumer Sciences
Area of Study 1.0. Career, Community and Life Connections
1.2.4. Demonstrate teamwork skills in school, community, and workplace settings.

Area of Study 2.0. Consumer and Family Resources
2.1.2. Analyze how individuals and families make choices to satisfy needs and wants.

Social Sciences: U.S. History 5-12
NSS-USH.9-12.10. Era 10 Contemporary United States (1968 to the Present)
Understands economic, social, and cultural developments in contemporary United States.