

CREATING FASHION

Expressing Self

4 | EMPOWERING FASHION



Creating Fashion/Expressing Self

Empowering Fashion

Introduction

Creating Fashion: Expressing Self is a series of projects designed for teens who have an interest in clothing and a desire to learn more about dressing fashionably no matter the occasion. The series starts with activities designed to help youth get to know themselves and their wardrobe better.

Throughout history, fashion has provided a means to connect to each other, to express ideas, and to promote change. Much of our identity can be shared with others through our fashion choices. In this project book you will explore your own fashion, the fashions that have connected and propelled social movements in our own society, the fashions of ethnic and cultural groups that have had heavily influenced fashion, and the ongoing struggle between fast and slow fashion.

If you have not completed the entry level portion of "Creating Fashion/Expressing Self - Exploring Self", take time to complete it before beginning this project. You will need information from several of the activities to complete some of the following workbook.



By the time you work through the project will learn to plan your wardrobe or customize your clothing:

- With styles that are an outward expression of yourself
- With clothes that reflect your cultural background
- With clothing based on personal style
- By making the most of the clothes you already have

Book 4 - Empowering Fashion is designed for high school Seniors.

Project Workbook Objectives

To complete this project:

- Youth will make connections between their own cultural backgrounds and fashion.
- Youth will understand fashion's connection to social movements.
- Youth will understand appropriation vs. appreciation.
- Youth will identify the cultural influence of different groups on fashion.
- Youth will make informed decisions about the clothing they buy.
- Youth will complete a project book.

Creating Fashion/Expressing Self Portfolio

1. Title page with a personal photograph, title of project, and your name
2. The following activity sheets in the order listed:
 - a. Fashion of Past Generations
 - b. Exploration of one social movement
 - c. Appreciation vs Appropriation
 - e. Thrifting worksheet
 - f. Upcycling worksheet
3. One to two pages of photographs which visually describe you as an individual.
 - Include pictures of yourself involved with people and activities which help express who you are and what you enjoy doing.
 - Also include one picture of yourself modeling a garment and/or accessories you acquired.
 - Include one picture per outfit. If items were purchased and/or made that do not coordinate with each other, include additional photographs representing the outfits with which they coordinate.

Garment(s)

You must purchase, construct, acquire and/or recycle one or more garments and/or accessory items to complete at least one outfit based on your identified wardrobe needs and/or desires.

Interview

The items acquired and/or recycled and their use in your wardrobe must be demonstrated by wearing them during an interview-modeling session. During the session you will be asked the following questions:

1. Which item or items were acquired? Explain how the items were acquired.
2. Describe how this item fits into your wardrobe?
3. Describe how this item expresses who you are?

Fashion Revue

Make plans to model your completed outfit at your local Fashion Revue. The county winner will be eligible to participate in the State Fashion Revue. A state winner will be selected from the participants and honored at the State Fashion Revue program.

Empowering Fashion

Fashion should help empower you to present your most confident and truest self to the world. Fashion is a tool to build a wardrobe that someone could examine and know it is yours. Using the knowledge you have of wardrobe planning, shopping, and clothing coordination, we can now explore how those skills can interact with the world to express you, your community, and your support for others.

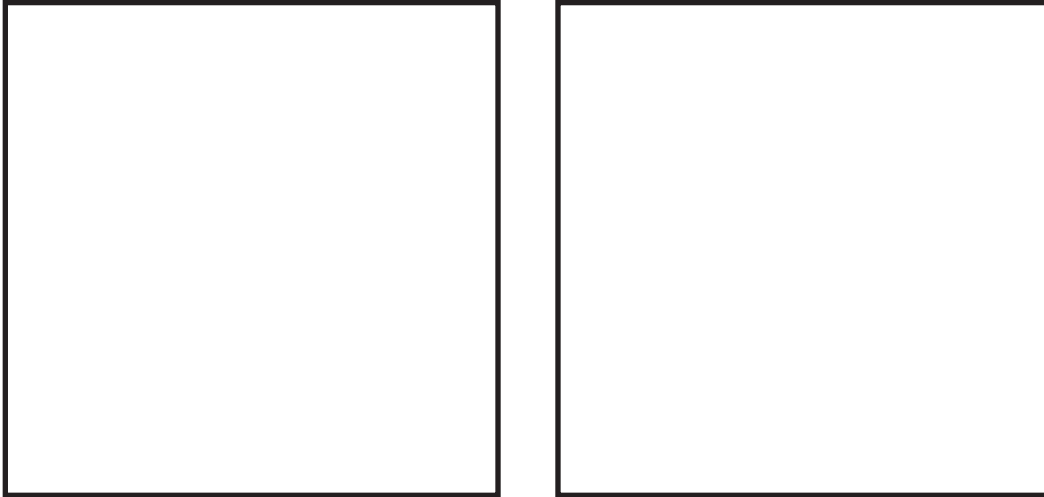
Part 1: My Fashion/ My Expression

The natural place to start on this exploration of empowering fashion is with you. Your own individual history, the history of your family, and your community all play into the person you are. Aspects of our own fashion are often passed down to us from the generations before. Fashion itself draws from past decades as it moves forward.

Fashion of Past Generations

Select a person from one generation back that is important to you personally. This could be a parent, friend, club leader, or any other person you choose.

Find a picture of this person when they were your age.
In the box below place a copy of their photo and a copy of your photo next to it.

Two empty rectangular boxes with black borders, positioned side-by-side. The left box is intended for a photo of the chosen person from their youth, and the right box is intended for a photo of the student from their youth.

How would you describe their fashion when they were your age?

What styles were in fashion at that time?

What styles from this generation are back in fashion now?

If possible interview them and ask the following:

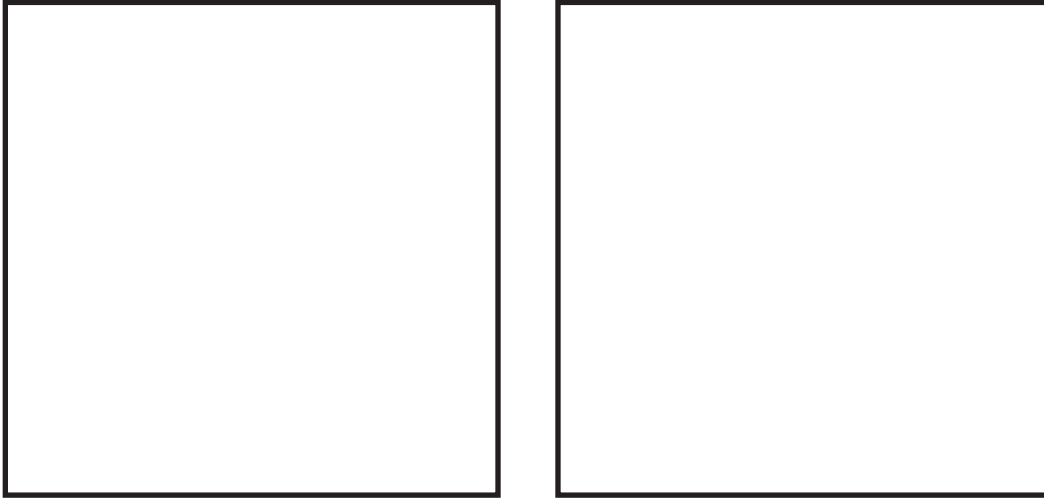
How would they describe their fashion when they were your age?

What was their favorite thing to wear when they were your age?

Who influenced the way they dressed?

Select a person from two generations back that is important to you personally this could be a grandparent, a community member, a club leader, or any other person you choose.

Find a picture of this person when they were your age.
In the box below place a copy of their photo and a copy of your photo next to it.

Two empty rectangular boxes with black borders, intended for pasting a photo of a person from two generations back and a photo of the respondent.

How would you describe their fashion when they were your age?

What styles were in fashion at that time?

What styles from this generation are back in fashion now?

If possible interview them and ask the following:

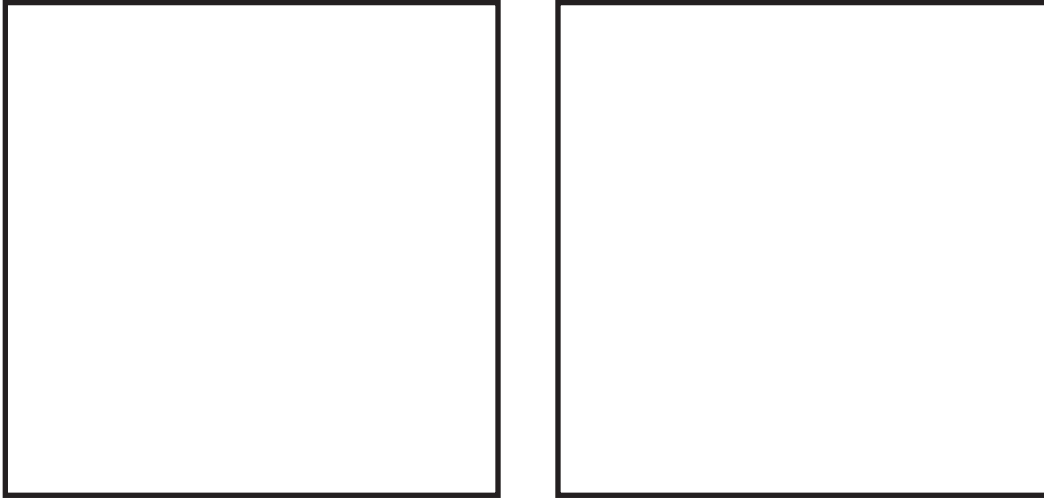
How would they describe their fashion when they were your age?

What was their favorite thing to wear when they were your age:

Who influenced the way they dressed:

Select a person from three generations back that is important to you personally this could be a great-grandparent, a community member, a club leader, or any other person you choose.

Find a picture of this person when they were your age.
In the box below place a copy of their photo and a copy of your photo next to it.

Two empty rectangular boxes with black borders, positioned side-by-side. The left box is intended for a photo of the chosen person when they were the respondent's age, and the right box is for a photo of the respondent at that same age.

How would you describe their fashion when they were your age?

What styles were in fashion at that time?

What styles are back in fashion now?

If possible interview them and ask the following:

How would they describe their fashion when they were your age?

What was their favorite thing to wear when they were your age?

Who influenced the way they dressed?

Fashion of my community

Every community is unique. A community is a group of people who share a geographic location, an identity, or hobby. Some of our communities are heavily influenced by local professions. In mining communities, you might think nothing of steel toe boots and safety yellow striped shirts at a restaurant while this would feel completely out of place in a large metro area such as Atlanta or Detroit. Cowboy boots might be practical footwear in farming communities but would be an unpractical choice for city sidewalks. If a part of your identity is hiking and backpacking you might have a large amount of light-weight clothing that would not be found in the wardrobe of someone who spends their time snowboarding.

Think of two communities you belong to. What would a four season look book for these communities look like? Find a look for each of the four seasons that would represent these communities and attach them on the pages below. You should have 8 looks total. Label each look with the community and season they represent.

The first community I chose is _____.

Spring:

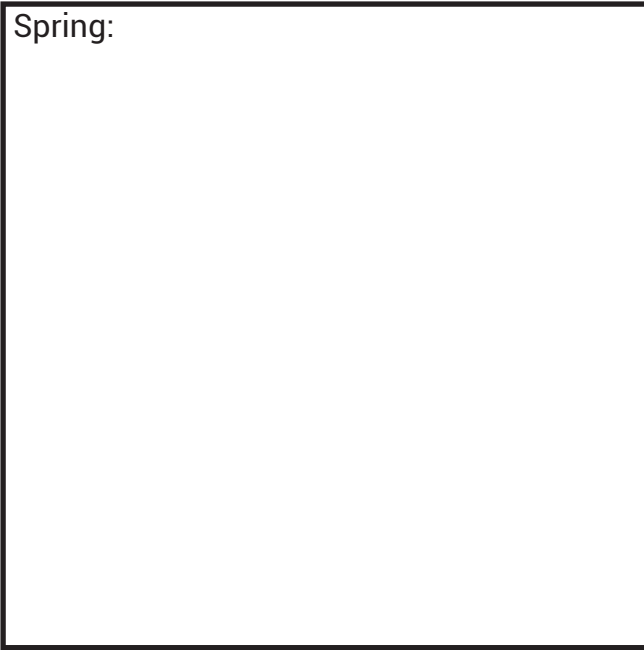
Fall:

Summer:

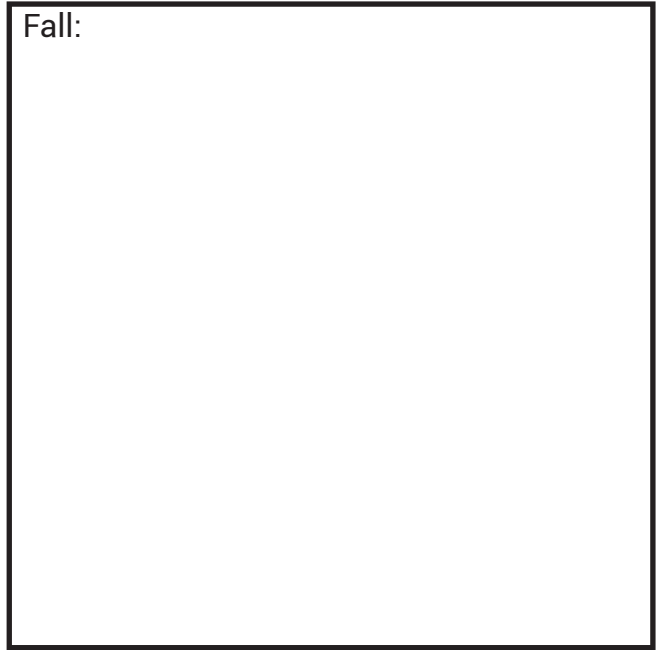
Winter:

The second community I chose is _____.

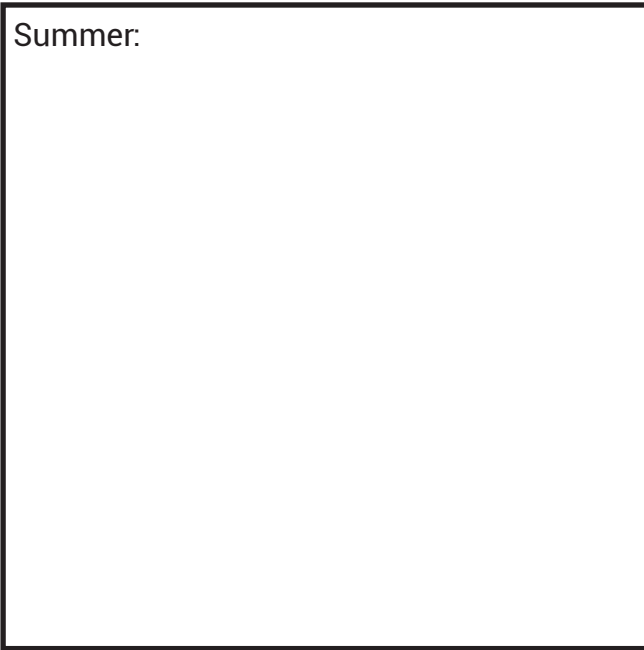
Spring:



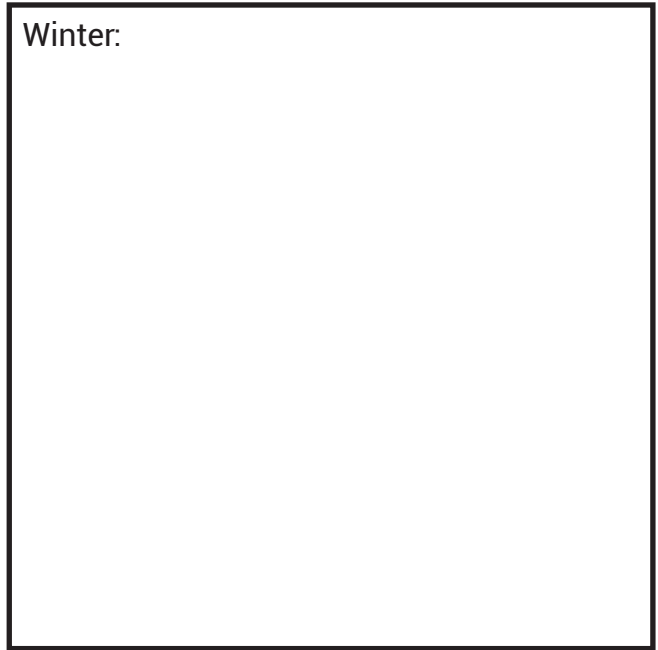
Fall:



Summer:



Winter:



My twist on the past

Now that you have explored the past fashions of those who are influential to you and the fashions for the communities you are a part of let's find how they influence you. Look through your wardrobe. Identify one item in your wardrobe which could also have been found in each of the three previous generations you examined.

How do these items represent your community?

How do they represent you?

Part 2: The Fashion of Social Movements

According to the Oxford Dictionary, a social movement is a loosely organized effort by a large group to achieve a particular goal, typically a social one. In many ways our society is driven by social movements. As different groups of individuals strive to change society for the better, their work is often translated into fashion. With the loose organization of many of these movements, a shared fashion can be an inexpensive and effective way of communicating a shared interest or goal. We are going to examine at some of the iconic fashion that have come out of a few such social movements.



Women's Movement

The Woman's movement is one that has a central goal of equality between men and women. During different time periods in history, this movement has had many different focuses. Some such focus areas include but are not limited to: the right to own property, vote, reproductive rights, and the right to work for equal pay.

Iconic Fashions: trousers, the color white, wrap dresses

Influential Designer: Miuccia Prada

Civil Rights Movement

The civil rights movement was an organized effort by Black Americans to end racial discrimination and gain equal rights under the law. It began in the late 1940s and marked a time of heightened visibility for Black Americans' struggle for equality. This movement led to a great number of advancements for the equality of Black Americans.

Iconic Fashion: "Sunday best" - Often individuals would wear clothes considered appropriate for religious gatherings and everyone had hard shoes, there were no sneakers. This was intended to present an image of respectability at protests, a rejection of the pervasive stereotypes of the Black community.

Influential Designer: Ruby Bailey



Black Power

This movement was motivated by a desire for safety and self-sufficiency that was not available inside redlined Black American neighborhoods due to government policies of redirecting funds (redlining was a federally backed practice of banks not loaning money to Black families except for in pre-determined neighborhoods and then devaluing the property in those neighborhoods. This led to long-term wealth inequities). Activists associated with this movement founded black-owned bookstores, food cooperatives, farms, media, printing presses, schools, clinics and ambulance services. This movement has changed over time, with a renewed focus on police brutality and institutional racism.

Iconic Fashion: leather jackets, denim, berets

Influential Designer: Kerby Jean-Raymond

Chicano Movement (El Movimiento)

The Chicano Movement beginning in the 60's consisted of three major goals: education reform, rights for farm workers, and land restoration. In more recent times the Chicano Movement has focused on immigration and anti-Hispanic attacks. Dolores Huerta, one of the early leaders for the Chicano Movement, created the Agriculture Workers Association which helped deal with many issues including equal rights among farmers who had historically not received benefits or pay at living levels.

Iconic Fashion: zoot suites, chola, black typeface

Influential Designer: Willy Chavarria



LGBTQ+

LGBTQ+ is an acronym that intended to include Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and more. This is a collection of social movements that advocate for LGBTQ+ people in society. These social movements can sometimes focus on equal rights such as marriage, or more broadly on liberation. The movements before the 1950's focused on self-help and self-acceptance. Although there is no primary central organization that represents all LGBTQ+ individuals, numerous LGBTQ+ organizations can be found worldwide. Among these organizations you can find a common goal of equality.

Iconic Fashion: Voguing, androgynous styling, gender fluid expression

Influential Designer: Christopher John Rogers

Adaptive Fashion

According to the CDC, 61 million adults in the United States are living with a disability and, according to US Census Bureau, well over 14 million of those individuals have difficulties with daily activities such as getting dressed. For many of these individuals, it is not only a struggle to engage in these activities but it's also possible that their health suffers because of a lack of access to clothing designed for them. Some examples of this include: divots in jeans, tight clothing, or lack of access to port and tube locations. Adaptive fashion promotes the idea that individuals with disabilities should have access to clothing that not only is accessible to them but that is stylish. After all, we know that clothing and fashion can directly impact self-esteem and that the celebration of a diversity of bodies is important for all of us. Some of these adaptations include: Velcro, magnetic closures, pull loops, higher waste lines in the back, flattened seams, port and tube access holes, and many others.



Iconic Fashion: magnetic snaps, Velcro, seamless backed pants, port access, custom shaped clothing.

Influential Designer: Izzy Camilleri

Each of these movements has helped shape our culture as it is today. Each one is unique with different goals and has contributed to fashion in different ways. Some of us will be more influenced by one movement while others are influenced by a different movement. Maybe you can identify yourself within one of the movements above or maybe you are just interested in learning more about one. Select one movement to dive into for the following activity.

The Fashion of Social Movements Worksheet

With the movement you selected use the following prompts to help guide your exploration of its influence on fashion. Be sure to use reliable resources in your research of these movements. If you run out of space in the area provided attach additional sheets.

The movement selected to explore:

I selected this movement to explore because:

The fashions that defined the movement are:

The fashion that I am drawn to is _____ . The reason I find this fashion exciting is:

Some leaders of this movement are:

Things this movement has achieved:

Items in my wardrobe that have been used by this movement are:

Items I would like to add to my wardrobe from this movement are:

Part 3: Fashion of Culture/Identity

Appreciate all, Appropriate None

Today our access to information and images from across the world makes it easy to find an article of clothing or jewelry that we find appealing. Before we buy or make something like it, we need to make sure we are appreciating the culture it comes from and not appropriating it. One way to think about this is to use your own culture as an example. We all come from a cultural group. How would you feel if someone wore an item that was important to your culture without knowing its meaning or maybe even wearing it in an offensive way?

Appreciation- when you work to learn and understand the cultures of others to broaden your perspectives and connect with people across cultures.

Appropriation- taking or adopting customs, practices or ideas of a marginalized community and using it for your own personal interest or financial gain.

Are the following examples of Appreciation or Appropriation *(circle the correct answer)*

Purchasing a piece of clothing that has significance to another culture to use as an extender for your wardrobe.

(Appreciation or Appropriation)

Supporting a Nigerian designer by purchasing clothing directly from them.

(Appreciation or Appropriation)

Taking a video of a powwow simply to get lots of view on Tiktok.

(Appreciation or Appropriation)

The goal is to appreciate all cultures without appropriation. Be open to and curious about other cultures, as well as share your own. Others are probably just as interested in your culture as you are in theirs.

We are going to examine some fashion that has roots in and are significant to cultural groups that have had strong influence on fashion in the United States. It is important to remember that these fashions are not wholly representative of the entire culture and instead offers a single view of a single aspect.



Tokyo Street Fashion

Tokyo is perceived as the melting pot of world fashion. With its unapologetic fashions and willingness to fully celebrate self-expression, it has developed some of the most iconic fashions. Fashion in Tokyo highlights the need for self-expression in a country with restricting traditions.

Tokyo street fashion has a long history, stemming from the youth protest against the Vietnam War in the 1960s. How the protesters dressed became a representation of the historical uprising, taking the term 'fashion statement' to a whole new level. In the early 2000s, international brands started taking interest in setting up shops around Tokyo to become a part of this fashion-forward movement.

Tokyo street fashion invites people to mix and match - the new and the vintage, bright and dark colors, and secondhand finds and luxury pieces. It's not so much about what you wear, but how you wear it.

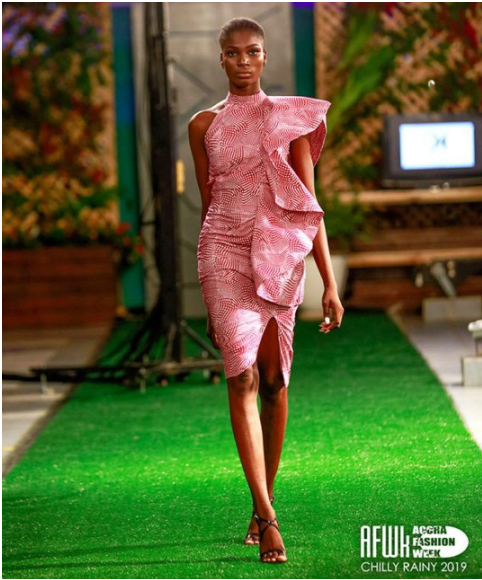
Influential designers: Toshikiyo Hirata and Kiro Hirata, Jun Takahashi Hiromichi Ochiai.



Ghanaian Fashion

Ghana was one of the major exporters of slaves during the height of the transatlantic slave trade. For many Africans it would be the last place they would step foot on African soil. This connection stretches through history and makes it a particularly special place for many Black Americans. The slave trade stole family histories from individuals and so Ghana offers a reconnection to home. This connection can also be seen in the fashion associated with Black Power. Ghanaian fashion is known for its use of vibrant colors and eclectic prints. The fashion industry of Ghana is centered in its capital, Accra, where you will find designers who specialize in infusing traditional Fugu or Kente cloths with modern ideas.

Influential designers: Atto Tetteh, Larry Jafaru Mohammed, and Christie Brown who collectively have designed for some of the most influential people globally.



Indigenous American Fashion

The blurring between inspiration and appropriation is something that perhaps no one understands better than the Indigenous communities of North America. The sacred prints, appliques, leatherwork of these communities have been stolen by fashion labels for centuries. This appropriation of cultural items without crediting the cultures who developed them has been extremely harmful to Indigenous people, who continue to be marginalized. These designs are often the result of specific techniques that have been mastered by communities and often times represent generations of knowledge. Some of these crafts include quilt work, weaving, beadwork, and others. It is important to remember that there are over 500 tribes recognized by the US government, 36 by Mexico, and more than 50 by Canada. Each of these unique cultures have their own prints, patterns, and significant fashions.

The Cherokee designer Lloyd Kiva New is considered by many as the individual who launched the modern era of Indigenous designers reclaiming space in the fashion world and presenting Indigenous fashion from a space of empowerment for marginalized communities. New is credited with introducing the fashion world to the Native Modernism movement and helping develop the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Today, there are several native owned brands and designers who are using their platform to infuse their culture into design and lifting communities while doing so.

Influential designers: Bethany Yellowtail, Jamie Okum, Jared Yazzie, Louie Gong



Scottish Fashion

With linen being the premiere industry of Scotland in the 1700's, its role in global fashion can be traced back several hundred years. With about 18% of the United States population identifying as either Scottish or Scottish-Irish, it is no surprise that traditional Scottish textiles and patterns are woven into American fashion. Some of the more iconic Scottish fashions include: Harris tweed, contemporary kilt, Fair Isle knit and the Tartan kilt. Tartan is a patterned cloth consisting of crisscrossed, horizontal, and vertical bands in multiple colors. The Scottish Tartans represented individual families with most of them having their own registered Tartan. This can be a deeply personal type of clothing. Many of Scotland's iconic fashions can be seen incorporated into fall and winter designs almost every year.

Influential designers: Christopher Kane, Brian Rennie, and Jonathan Saunders

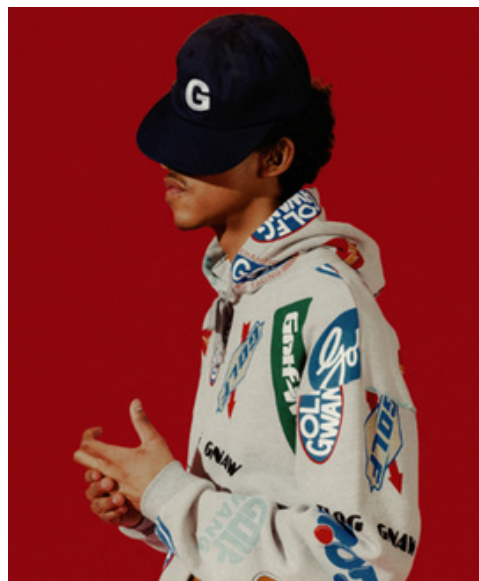
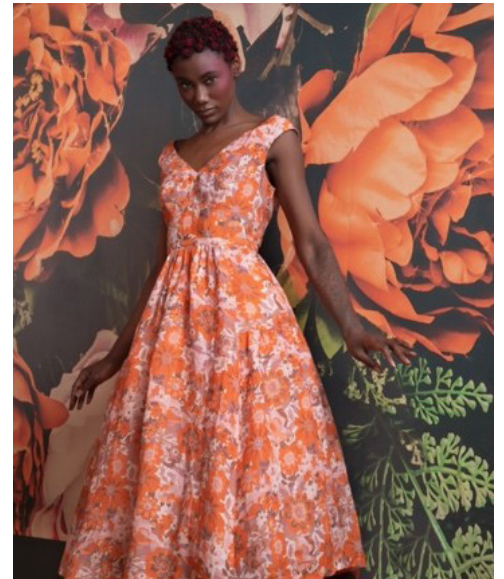


Black American Fashion

Black American culture's impact on the United States and global fashion industry cannot be understated. The start of the modern Black American influence on fashion can be traced to the Harlem Renaissance, a movement that is considered the "rebirth of African American arts." Some of the fashions from this era that are still influencing modern fashion are: pinstripes, silk shirts, wide-brim hats, brogues, and flapper dresses.

In the 1980s and 1990s, hip-hop and the fashion culture around it became hugely influential on mainstream fashion. Primary colors, large shapes, Afro-Centric prints, and social messages began finding their way into closets across the world. Athletes and entertainers began making their mark on fashion in the 1990s and the 2000s with items like the Air-Jordan's, caps, and sports jerseys. By the 2000s, Designer Dapper Dan had married streetwear and luxury together in a way that would influence the next 10 years of fashion with individuals such as Virgil Abloh and Rihanna taking over major fashion houses.

Influential Designers: Rihanna, Dapper Dan, Stephen Burrows, Patrick Kelly, Kimora Lee Simmons, Tracy Reese, Ozwald Boateng, Stella Jean, LaQuan Smith, Telfar Clemens



When reviewing the influences that these cultures have had on fashion, can you think of items in your own wardrobe that have elements of these cultures? Have you ever thought about what inspired the designers who made the clothes you buy? Have you ever thought about what inspires you to buy them?

There are many different cultures in this world and each one lends and borrows from others. Exploring the way cultures express themselves through fashion can be an exciting and empowering adventure. For some, finding and expressing a connection to their culture can be a symbol of empowerment, resistance, or pride. Think about your own cultural background. Maybe you are Irish, German, Filipino, Indian, Greek, Pakistani, or Nigerian. You could identify as Asian, Arab, or Aboriginal. You might consider yourself culturally Creole, Appalachian, Mid-western, Delta, or Tex-Mex. You could be a combination of these as well as follow a religious tradition such as Judaism, Islam, or Christianity. All of these aspects make up your own unique culture. Lets spend some time exploring the fashion of the groups above as well as others that might be a part of your identity.

Looking at your culture

How would you describe your culture:

What is a fashion that represents your culture:

What is the cultural/historical context that you would like other people to know about that fashion:

Draw a garment that represents your culture.

Part 4: Upcycling and Thrifting

Environmental impact of the fashion industry

The fashion industry is the second largest polluter behind the oil industry. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has calculated that the fashion industry produces 10% of the world's carbon dioxide emissions and consumes about 3.9 billion gallons of water annually. Without changes to the way the fashion industry operates, this number will continue to increase as the fashion market grows. Consumers bought 60% more clothing items in 2014 than they did in 2000 and 85% of all textiles end up in landfills each year. Some of the main sources of environmental impact can be described as water pollution, water consumption, waste, greenhouse gases, and soil degradation.

With such a large impact on our environment, many people are left wondering what they can do as individuals to help reduce this impact? How can we reduce our own contribution to the environmental impact of fashion? Fortunately, as a consumer in today's economy you have a lot of power to control your impact. You have the ability to research companies and choose brands who are transparent in their impact and efforts to reduce it. You can also become informed about processes of production to choose products that are not as impactful. An example is choosing natural fabrics that don't require as much dye and therefore do not create as much wastewater. Another example is choosing fabrics that require less water to grow such as linen or recycled fabrics. We can also extend the life of our garments by mending them, recycling them, thrifting them, or engaging in thrifting ourselves. This not only reduces the production impact but also the end-of-life impact of waste in landfills.

Thrifting and Upcycling

Thrifting is the act of shopping at thrift stores, second hand stores, yard-sales, or other locations to buy clothes that have been previously owned. By engaging in this form of shopping, you can reduce your environmental impact by not creating new items and not tossing out old ones. It is a win at both ends of the fashion industry. When thrifting, it is important to start your shopping with a plan and also be open to ideas.

Upcycling is similar to thrifting but with a different goal in mind. With upcycling, you are intending to change or modify the items to create a new item and extend the life of the fabric. When shopping with the intent to upcycle, the fabric and condition tend to matter more. Look for patterns and colors you want to incorporate. Think about what you want the final product to look like. Will you be using the garment as salvage or will you retain the structure of the garment? If you want to deconstruct the garment and use the fabric, would you look for larger sized clothing that is in good condition? If you are looking to retain the structure you will want to think about sizing and seam lines.

With the clothing coordination skills you developed in the previous project books, you can thrift like a pro. Use the chart on the next page for your thrifting and upcycling adventure.



For this activity you will be thrifting one item.

Item needed	
Willing to spend	
Locations	
Actual cost	

<p><i>Photo of Item</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Front</p>	<p><i>Photo of Item</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Back</p>
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<p><i>Use this box for photo of item included in an outfit</i></p>
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Upcycling Goal	
Items Purchased	
Total Cost	

<i>Photo of purchased items</i>	<i>Photo of upcycled product</i>
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Part 5: Complete Your Project

Do you feel like a more knowledgeable clothing consumer? If you have completed all of the project worksheets up to this point, you have a basic understanding of different movements and cultures that have influenced fashion. You have also investigated your own cultural background, examined, and added items to your wardrobe that represent you, your family, and your culture. With the knowledge you have gained, think about how you can use fashion to empower yourself. Is it through connection to culture? Is it as a way of expressing ideas and beliefs? Is it a way to be environmentally friendly? Maybe it is all three.

After completing your project book review the items in it and develop a community service project that reflects what you learned.

Remember that your portfolio should include the following items in order.

1. *Title page with a personal photograph, title of project, and your name*
2. *The following activity sheets in the order listed:*
 - a. *Fashion of Past Generations*
 - b. *Exploration of one Social Movement*
 - c. *Appreciation vs Appropriation*
 - d. *Thrifting Worksheet*
 - e. *Upcycling Worksheet*
3. One or two pages of photographs which visually describe you as an individual. Include pictures of yourself involved with people and activities which help express who you are and what you enjoy doing. Also include one picture of yourself modeling a garment and/or accessories you acquired. Include one picture per outfit. If items were purchased and/or made that do not coordinate with each other, include additional photographs representing the outfits with which they coordinate.



Leadership and Citizenship Activities

Leadership and citizenship activities are a part of every 4-H project. The following list should serve as a springboard of ideas:

- Assist your leader with meetings.
- Serve as a project teen leader and help younger 4-H'ers with their clothing projects.
- Assist with fashion shows for your club, school, or other community function.
- Model in fashion shows in local stores or community clubs.
- Help 4-H members with clothing demonstrations.
- Do news articles and radio or TV spots about club activities for local, school, and community newspapers and stations.
- Arrange to do a clothing display in the library or a local store on coordinating clothing items or some other topic of interest.
- Sponsor a grooming clinic for special groups.
- Assist with the clothing exhibit at your county, local, and area fairs.
- Help select costumes for a community drama club or the 4-H talent show.
- Collect clothing for home disaster victims.
- Help collect and recycle clothing for non-profits.
- Organize a display at school or in a department store window on clothing or a fabric-related topic.
- Offer to do chores or mending for someone who is unable to leave his or her home.
- Help involve local department stores in presenting programs to your 4-H group or club on accessories or how to shop for clothing.
- Work with younger 4-H'ers in teaching them how to mix and match clothing items.

Project Exhibit

You must purchase, construct, acquire and/or recycle one or more garments and/or accessory items to complete at least one outfit based on your identified wardrobe needs and/or desires. The exhibit will consist of the notebook and the garment/accessories acquired.

Interview

The items acquired and/or recycled and their use in your wardrobe must be demonstrated by wearing them during an interview-modeling session. During the session you will be asked the following questions:

1. Which item or items were acquired? Explain how the items were acquired.
2. How does the item fit into your wardrobe?
3. How does this item express who you are?

Project judging will be based on the following:

- 50% The Portfolio – complete and organize all charts and activities (*see page 3 for information*)
- 20% The Interview – response to questions, behavior, posture, and poise
- 30% Coordination – garment/accessory line and design, texture, color, fit, accessories, and value for money spent

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