

Title: One of a Kind

Grade Ranges:

 K-4
 X 5-8
 X 9-12

Subject Tag:

Arts and Music: Visual Arts
Arts and Music: Theatre

Synopsis:

Students will create an outfit that is free of current trends and suits their dreams, their lives, or the lives they'd like to live. They will study costumes of the past to create this outfit and then create a collage, paint, or draw their design, displaying it with a caption on how and where it would be worn.

Keywords:

fashion, dress, outfit, costume, home-made outfit, textile, design, clothing, attire, garments, apparel, trend, vogue, style,

Body:

1. To prepare students for this lesson, ask them to bring in images from home that inspire them. These images can be from nature, art, family albums, or anywhere else. The images can be inspiring in their color, pattern, texture, line, shape, or other features.
2. Start a discussion about students' relationship to fashion. How does what other people wear affect their choices? What brand names are common among people their age? Do students feel that they can dress in a way that truly expresses the image they have of themselves? Why or why not? How does dress relate to activity: do students feel that clothes are made for maximum comfort and mobility, or is it difficult to dress comfortably and still be in style?
3. Show students images of various fashions, including those from other cultures and time periods. These can be found on the Web (links below) or in a multitude of books and magazines. (One especially good book is *Costumes and Fashion* by James Laver, published by Thames and Hudson, 1995.) You might also focus on fashion as found in art. Ask what kinds of lifestyles these clothes appear to support. Ask how these clothes might have advantages or disadvantages over the clothes students wear. What elements of these fashion images can students take to use in their own clothes? (Examples of fashion elements: how a shoulder is pieced together or the trim work on a dress.)
4. Have students work in pairs to create with their own designs for outfits. Students should spend half an hour to an hour showing each other their images from home and discussing what they found inspiring or lacking among the examples they have seen of fashion or costume. Have students help each other find patterns among what their partner brought in. Students should feel free to take parts of

- any image that inspires them. Remind students to consider how their outfit might reflect the life that they live or the life they would like to live.
5. Tell students how large to make their images. Depending on your materials, you could have student partners trace each other to create life-size images. Or, students could make drawings or flat collages using fabric scraps or paper. Alternately they could make dolls with fabric scraps. If students are working in miniature, have them measure each other and create an image to scale of their real bodies. Encourage outrageous and individual wear.
 6. Have students name their costumes and label them with a description of situations and places they might wear their creations.
 7. Have students display their work to share with their classmates. In discussing the work, ask the class to try to identify various inspirations for the outfits. Discuss how our culture might be different if people were dressed in all these different ways.

Related Links:

Greek Costume Through the Centuries

<http://www.annaswebart.com/culture/costhistory/>

In images and text, this site provides information on Greek dress from before Ancient Greece through the 1800s.

A History of the Kimono

<http://web.mit.edu/jpnet/kimono/index.html>

Gives a very visual history of the kimono. Details styles for men, women, and children.

Costume History

http://fp.uni.edu/lynch/costume_history.htm

This site includes images of fashion from ancient times through the 1990s. Click on “dates” for a timeline through the 1800s. Site created by Dr. Annette Lynch of the University of Northern Iowa.

Costume History at The Costumer's Manifesto:

<http://www.costumes.org/pages/costhistpage.htm>

This site links to amazing resources including an "ethnic" section and history information on various periods. **Warning: Do not give this Web address to your students.** The site includes a link to “kinky” dress that is not appropriate for students. Instead, review the Web site yourself before class (you can easily avoid the kinky section), and pick out the sites that you would like your students to see. Then, give students those Web site addresses, so they can visit the sites directly.

Features:

- ___ Contains special education tips
- ___ Quick Activity (less than 30 minutes; story starter)
- ___ Requires Internet access for students to complete

Objectives:

Students will express themselves in a new way in a form that they are very familiar with. Students will begin to see how they can create themselves in their own images rather than stopping at what is the latest and greatest. Students can consider fashion as a cross between art and commerce.

Standards:

NY: 1: Creating, Performing and Participating in the Arts. Students will actively engage in the processes that constitute creation and performance in the arts (dance, music, theatre, and visual arts) and participate in various roles in the arts. **2:** Knowing and Using Arts Materials and Resources. Students will be knowledgeable about and make use of the materials and resources available for participation in the arts in various roles. **4:** Understanding the Cultural Dimensions and Contributions of the Arts. Students will develop an understanding of the personal and cultural forces that shape artistic communication and how the arts in turn shape the diverse cultures of past and present society.

NYC: Performance Standards: A1a Design a Product, Service, or System: Identify needs that could be met by new products, services, or systems and create solutions for meeting them. **A2a** Make an oral presentation of project plans or findings to an audience with expertise in the relevant subject matter. **A4a** Learn from models.

CT: 1. Media Students will understand, select and apply media, techniques and processes. **4. History And Cultures** Students will understand the visual arts in relation to history and cultures. **6. Connections** Students will make connections between the visual arts, other disciplines and daily life.

NJ: 1.3: All students will utilize arts elements and arts media to produce artistic products and performances. **1.5:** All students will identify the various historical, social, and cultural influences and traditions which have generated artistic accomplishments throughout the ages and which continue to shape contemporary arts. **1.6:** All students will develop design skills for planning the form and function of space, structures, objects, sound, and events.

Prerequisite Skills:

1. People can be very unkind when personal appearance is involved. Students should be accustomed to contributing to class discussion in an open and respectful way.
2. Students will need previous experience working together in a supportive way.

Time Required:

four hours

Technology and Materials Needed:

1. images of fashion/costumes including some from other periods and cultures

2. images that inspire students, brought from home
3. paper to draw on (optional butcher paper)
4. paints
5. pencils
6. colored pencils
7. markers
8. scissors
9. fabric scraps

Assessment Criteria:

1. Do the outfits express something about the student?
2. Do the outfits attempt to depart in some way from mainstream fashion?
3. Are the outfits appropriate for the occasion the student plans to wear them to?

Recommended Lesson Plan Review Date:

Review Comments:

Check Web sites.