

Redesign. Repurpose.

Reinventing Clothing for the 21st Century Teenager
ART AND LANGUAGE ARTS
GRADES: 6-12

BASED ON



Yoshiki Hishinuma (1958-), Japan
Laminated Dress, 2000
Polyester & Urethane
Museum Purchase, Gift of Friends of Fashion, 2008.55

Blouse, 1990s
Polyester & Polyurethane
Museum Purchase with funds provided by Friends of Fashion, 2007.80

OBJECTIVES

- Students will infer and discuss the purpose of Hishinuma's pieces.
- Students will interpret quotations about fashion.
- Students will critically read and discuss a NY Times obituary about fashion designer Liz Claiborne (*Liz Claiborne, Clothing Designer, Dies at 78*).
- Students will analyze their own clothing choices as they compare to current clothing options for their lifestyle (school, athletics, work, church, social events, etc.)
- Students will devise a plan to design an improved clothing item from an existing clothing item to meet their personal needs.
- Students will present a final design which shows either recycling, repurposing or redesigning of an existing item.

CONCEPT

Fashion designers like Liz Claiborne often fill a void for consumers who need or want specific types of clothing. This activity is designed to help students critically think about what they wear and why they wear it, as well as improve existing clothing items through repurposing or redesigning. The goal is for students to consider, discuss and recreate existing clothing -- to fill their own fashion wants/needs by changing clothing to fill those voids.

MATERIALS

- Pens/pencils/paper
- White board/chalkboard/Smartboard
- Copies of NY Times obituary and two other articles (if extending activity)
- Fashion magazines and store sale circulars to locate items that represent or replicate clothing items students would normally wear
- Quotations about fashion (optional)
- Chart for activity

VOCABULARY

Fashion: a popular trend, esp. in styles of dress

Repurpose: adapt for a different use or purpose

Redesign: design or create something in a new or different way

Reinvent: change something so it appears to be entirely new

Obituary: notice of the death of a person (usually in a newspaper)

Void: empty, empty space, space lacking

Indefatigable: persisting tirelessly, unfaltering, persistent

Transcend: to go beyond a range or limit

Convey: to carry or deliver something

Wholesale: selling something in large quantities to be resold (retailed) to others

Retail: the sale of goods to the public in small quantities for use or consumption rather than for resale

Acute: having or showing a perceptive understanding or insight

Trendsetter: a person who leads the way in fashion

Glass Ceiling: an unofficially acknowledged barrier to advancement in a profession, especially affecting women and minorities

PROCEDURE

- View Hishinuma's *Laminated Dress and Blouse*. Who might wear these articles of clothing? What is the purpose of the dress? The blouse?
- Have partial quote displayed on board (or in some manner): Clothes don't make a man, but . . . ? [I actually hand students slips of paper as a bell ringer to respond as I'm taking attendance.]
- Ask students "How would you finish the sentence?" Give time for students to respond. No wrong answer here . . . just thoughtful responses.
- Explain that quote came from a businessman, Herbert H. Vreeland, who said "Clothes don't make the man, but clothes have gotten many a man a good job."
- Ask students what quote means to them. How does hearing the remainder of the quotation change the meaning? Agree/disagree? Explain/elaborate.
- As a class, read and discuss "Liz Claiborne, Clothing Designer, Dies at 78." Encourage students to highlight key words and phrases that describe Claiborne's philosophy of fashion and style.

Possible questions:

1. Why is Liz Claiborne famous?
2. What title did Claiborne give to her former boss?
3. What does the title given to Ortenberg imply about Claiborne's attitude about women and men in the workplace?
4. Is Claiborne a role model for women? Why/why not?
5. Liz Claiborne, Inc. owns what other clothing labels?

CLASS EXPERIENCE

6. Why do companies manufacture and sell a variety of brands?
 7. How did the timing of Claiborne's clothing line contribute to the success of the company?
 8. How does she characterize American women?
 9. How did Claiborne respond to her fame? How do you know?
- For class discussion: What void did Liz Claiborne see in fashion? How did she fill it? Divide class into groups for discussion. Students will then analyze today's clothing choices, including their own, and talk about personal clothing preferences. The next step is for students to choose an item of clothing they wear and then change it – repurpose or redesign the item in order to fill a personal fashion void.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What type of clothing do you wear most? Why?
 2. What do you look for in this type of clothing (color, cut, material, cost, etc.)
 3. Is it easy/difficult for you to find clothing you want to wear? Explain. Describe the items you have the most difficulty finding.
 4. What would you change or improve about the one particular item of clothing you wear most often? Why? [Do not accept the answer "nothing." There's always some way to improve – for example, itchy/scratchy tags, length of sleeves, etc.]
 5. What is most important to you when choosing clothing? Why?
 6. How important are clothing labels when you choose what to wear? Why?
 7. Do you think dressing professionally affects how a person behaves in a workplace environment?
- Groups share answers with the entire class. Use the responses to produce a two-column chart.
 - Distribute store sales ads and fashion magazines that illustrate current trends in fashion and clothing. Have groups analyze the images to come up with popular characteristics of today's clothing. Have students in groups fill out the column "Current Fashions."
 - During the last five minutes of class, give students time to share observations and insights about today's clothing as it compares to their own preferences. Review the charts. How do these lists compare? What is missing? Could repurposing/redesign affect how clothing fits or is worn, etc.? How might Liz Claiborne view these ideas?
 - ASSIGNMENT: Each student will individually sketch a repurposed or redesigned item of clothing which better suits his/her needs or wants. Students should consider: fit, style, comfort, color, size, etc. Once sketches are completed, students write a statement explaining the changes made and the reasons for these changes. Students would then present their sketches in class the next day.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Groups plan a clothing line for teenagers based on the results of the chart activity.
2. Students could interview women in the workforce and ask what they wear to work. Why do they dress this way? How do they feel about their clothing choices. Write a brief report of the findings.
3. Choose a fashion-related quote (see attachment). Create a "Pinterest" for the quote, including 1) the quote in its entirety, 2) the person who said it and 3) a visual representation with appropriate source citation that represents the essence of the quote.
4. Prepare profiles of highly successful females from a variety of careers.
<http://www.forbes.com/2005/03/09/bill05land.html>
5. Look for examples of fashion that fit student styles by using circulars, ads, catalogues or magazines. Create a stylebook that highlights your own personal preferences.

ASSESSMENT

Students assessed based on:

- Participation in bell ringer activity

CLASS EXPERIENCE

- Insightful/thoughtful participation in classroom discussion
- Appropriate interaction in a group setting
- Critical analysis of current clothing
- Repurposed/redesigned clothing designs and designer's statements.

NATIONAL STANDARDS

ART CONNECTIONS

Standard 1. Understands connections among the various art forms and other disciplines.

VISUAL ARTS

Standard 3. Knows a range of subject matter, symbols, and potential ideas in the visual arts.

Standard 5. Understands the characteristics and merits of one's own artwork and the artwork of others.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Standard 1. Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process.

Standard 9. Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media.

READING

Standard 5. Uses general skills and strategies of the reading process.

Standard 7. Uses skills and strategies to read a variety of informational texts.

TECHNOLOGY

Standard 6. Understands the nature and uses of different forms of technology.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Economics: What does it mean to be a Fortune 500 company? What types of clothing companies appear in the Fortune 500? How many companies are targeting teenagers? Are their profit margins higher/lower than companies targeting other groups?

American History/Social Studies: What is a garment district? Create a visual timeline of [a particular] fashion through history.

RESOURCES

Reading Assignment (Liz Claiborne obituary):

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/28/business/28claiborne.html?_r=0&adxnnl=1&pagewanted=print&adxnnlx=1389639740-GBeJVrcgRCQ1KFJHomMHqA

Reading Assignment (*Clothes Make the Man, Literally*):

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/brain-babble/201208/clothes-make-the-man-literally>

Reading Assignment (*When Clothes No Longer Make the Man*):

http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/10/07/when-clothes-no-longer-make-the-man/?_r=0



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FASHION & CLOTHING QUOTES FOR REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence on society.
Mark Twain

There's never a new fashion but it's old.
Geoffrey Chaucer

Fashion is a language that creates itself in clothes to interpret reality.
Karl Lagerfeld
Fashions fade, style is eternal.
Yves Saint-Laurent

What a strange power there is in clothing.
Isaac Bashevis Singer

Know, first, who you are; and then adorn yourself accordingly.
Epictetus

Beware of all enterprises that require a new set of clothes.
Henry David Thoreau

In Los Angeles, I drive a hybrid and live in a very simple home. Anything you do from carrying a canteen of water to starting a recycling program in your office makes a difference. Reusing what you already have has always been green - from clothes to boxes to glass jars from the supermarket.
Rachel Boston

If you're picking your best friend based on what kind of clothes she wears or how popular she is, chances are you aren't going to stay in touch after graduation.
Renee Olstead

Clothes make the poor invisible. America has the best-dressed poverty the world has ever known.
Michael Harrington

I really think that creating clothes and fashion has to be a statement about how we live and where we live and what's happening in the world.
Sarah Burton

You can make clothing as art, but I like the idea of my clothes actually being worn and being useful to women.
Tracy Reese

For work, I wear art; in real life, I wear clothes.
Meghan Markle

CLASS EXPERIENCE

Current Fashion	Personal Preferences
Types of Clothing	Types of Clothing
Color(s)	Color(s)
Fabric/Material/Textiles	Fabric/Material/Textiles
Features	Features
Purpose or Function	Purpose or Function
Style	Style
Fit	Fit
Comfort	Comfort
Other	Other