

HAND OUT

Lesson 9. Fashion and Image in American Culture

Reflective of our visual culture and as an artifact of culture, fashion reflects cultural values.

- What cultural values do you believe are reflected in the fashion you see every day?
- What cultural values do you believe are reflected in the fashion you see in popular magazines or on television?

Activity 1: Writing Reflection on Fashion

Fashion can be an artifact of culture. Describe American fashion.

- How is fashion important to Americans?
- How is it important to American culture?
- What characteristics of culture are conveyed through fashion? How?

Activity 2: Looking at Images

In small groups, look at various popular magazines based on various types of magazines. Find images that represent American fashion. Discuss the following:

- Why did you choose these images? Share responses with the large group.
- Discuss the audience and purpose of magazines and how the audience impacts the type of fashion that is represented and how it is represented.
- Discuss: What is fact or fiction about images we see in magazines?

Activity 3: Exploring Model Culture

View the Dove commercial “Evolution” (directed by Tim Piper in 2006) and discuss.

- What does this film portray about images in advertisements?
- Are the images fiction or nonfiction?
- What does this film suggest about American ideas related to beauty and fashion?

Interested in more analysis of model culture? Explore Cameron Russell’s TED Talk “Looks Aren’t Everything. Believe Me, I’m a Model” (2012), available at <http://on.ted.com/CameronRussell>.