

*Discovering the Story:
A City and Its Culture*

*WHY WE DRESS THE
WAY WE DO*

A Social Studies Lesson
for Grades K-3

Based on

Reception Dress

by Selina Cadwallader



Selina Cadwallader (active 1870-1886)

Reception Dress, 1886

Gift of Wilmar Antiques c/o Mr. Maurice Oshry, 1971.550 a-c

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CONCEPT 3

OBJECTIVES..... 3

TEACHER PREPARATION 4

 CLASS PERIODS REQUIRED..... 4

 BACKGROUND INFORMATION 4

 VIDEO 4

PRE- VIDEOCONFERENCE 5

 VOCABULARY 5

 GUIDING QUESTIONS 5

 PROCEDURE..... 5

VIDEOCONFERENCE..... 7

 OBJECTIVES 7

 CONCEPT 7

 SCHEDULE 7

POST- VIDEOCONFERENCE 8

 MATERIALS..... 8

 PROCEDURE..... 8

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES 8

ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS 9

 NATIONAL STANDARDS: SOCIAL STUDIES 9

 NATIONAL STANDARDS: VISUAL ARTS..... 9

 OHIO STANDARDS: SOCIAL STUDIES 9

 OHIO STANDARDS: VISUAL ARTS 10

CONCEPT

Teacher will engage students in an activity that investigates the reasons for which people wear clothing: for decoration, for protection, and for modesty. Students will look at a variety of images, including an image of the *Reception Dress* by Selina Cadwallader, that depicts each of these criteria and will learn to differentiate each. Using only the categories of modesty, protection, and decoration, students will create a clothing workbook that reflects their understanding of these concepts.

Teacher will facilitate students in study and hands-on application through pre-videoconferencing lesson activities, a videoconference visit with Cincinnati Art Museum staff, and post-videoconferencing lesson activities.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn the three main reasons for which clothing is worn: for decoration, for protection, and for modesty.
- Students will compare the clothing of today with the clothing of long ago. (NAS Standard 1/Benchmark 1 & 2 – OAS: History – Benchmark C)
- Students will create a clothing workbook that reflects their understanding of the three purposes of clothing.
- Students will appreciate the art and design of Selina Cadwallader through close inspection of her *Reception Dress*.

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up."

Pablo Picasso

Teacher Preparation

CLASS PERIODS REQUIRED

1 to 5 (30-50 min.) periods for Pre-Lesson Activities
1 (50-min.) class period for Videoconference
1 week for Post-Lesson Activities

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Background Information, which contains additional details on the *Reception Dress* and the artist who created it, has been written for teachers to review before the lesson and then share with students and is at <http://www.discoveringthestory.org/goldenage/dress/background.asp>.

VIDEO

Share the dressmaker video with your students prior to the videoconference. The video, which is on the website at <http://www.discoveringthestory.org/goldenage/video.asp>, depicts Museum curator, Cynthia Amneus, as she prepares the *Reception Dress* for exhibition. While she works, she speaks at length on the *Reception Dress*. This video is an excellent resource that will help to prepare students for the videoconference.

Video Duration – 6 minutes.

"I believe it is impossible to make sense of life in this world except through art."

Daniel Pinkwater
author

PRE- VIDEOCONFERENCE

VOCABULARY

Definitions can be found in the Glossary on the *Discovering the Story* Website at <http://www.discoveringthestory.org/goldenage/bed/glossary.asp>

Decoration
Protection
Modesty

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Why do people wear clothing?
- Why do we choose the clothing to wear that we do?

MATERIALS

- Pencil
- Image of the *Reception Dress*
- Examples of modesty now and long ago
- Examples of protection now and long ago

PROCEDURE

Teacher will:

- Review and brainstorm guiding questions with students.
- Explain to students that throughout history there have been three consistent reasons for people to wear clothing:
 - Decoration
 - Modesty
 - Protection
- Make three columns on the chalkboard. Write the following words as headings for the columns:
 - Decoration
 - Modesty
 - Protection

- Define and discuss each vocabulary term.
- Show students an image of the *Reception Dress*; this dress fits in the decoration category. Tell students that this is part of the collection at the Cincinnati Art Museum and that they are going to get a chance to learn more about the dress during a videoconference with the Museum. Tell students that this is a dress that a lady would have worn long ago. At this time, share the history of the *Reception Dress* with students.
- Ask students to list things on the board that they think can be used for decoration. Discuss with students the different ways in which we decorate ourselves. Possible answers could be: having pierced ears, nail polish, baseball caps, or fancy dresses.
- Ask students to list things on the board that they think can be used to make a person more modest. *This might be a bit more difficult, as students may not be familiar with this term or idea.* Explain to students that when we want to be modest we dress appropriately, and speak and act on our best behavior. Show them the example of modesty from long ago (old-fashioned bathing suit) and ask them to compare that to today's bathing suits. Ask them why the suit from long ago is different, and explain the historical reasoning.
- Now discuss with students the concept of protection. Ask students to list how our clothing protects us and why it might be important to have clothing that is protective. Ask students to create a list of clothing that would be for protection. Show them the example of protective clothing from long ago (football uniform) and ask them to compare that to today's football uniforms. Ask them why the uniform from long ago is different, and explain the historical reasoning.
- Ask students to create a list of questions they might like to ask the Cincinnati Art Museum staff about the *Reception Dress* or about the uses for clothing. Email the questions to emily.holtrop@cincyart.org prior to the videoconference.

“Culture is something that evolves out of the simple, enduring elements of everyday life; elements most truthfully expressed in the folk arts and crafts of a nation.”

Thor Hansen

VIDEOCONFERENCE

OBJECTIVES

- Students will interact with the Cincinnati Art Museum staff through a sixty-minute videoconference. Get information at <http://www.discoveringthistory.org/videoconference/>.
- Students will learn about Cincinnati history from 1850 to 1900.
- Students will use Museum objects to reinforce activities completed in preparation for this videoconference.

CONCEPT

A videoconference conducted by the Cincinnati Art Museum staff extends student learning through emphasis on the viewing and discussion of art objects. During this videoconference with the Museum, students will explore Cincinnati art history and the methods and practices of many of the artists working in the city.

SCHEDULE

- **5 minutes** Introduction to CAM staff (*This is also buffer time in case of complications*)
- **10 minutes** Brief discussion of student pre-videoconferencing activities.
- **10 minutes** Museum staff will lead an interactive discussion with students on the history of Cincinnati from 1850-1900
- **20 minutes** Museum staff will lead students in an in-depth investigation of selected Museum objects.

Objects include:

- *Bedstead* by Benn Pitman, Adelaide Nourse Pitman, and Elizabeth Nourse. http://www.discoveringthistory.org/goldenage/images/bedstead_full.jpg
- *Reception Dress* by Selina Cadwallader. This image can be found at http://www.discoveringthistory.org/goldenage/images/dress_full.jpg
- *Aladdin Vase* by Maria Longworth Nichols Storer, which is available at http://www.discoveringthistory.org/goldenage/images/aladdin_full.jpg
- *Ali Baba Vase* by M. Louise McLaughlin, which is available at http://www.discoveringthistory.org/goldenage/images/alibaba_full.jpg
- *Vase and Dedication Medallion* by Tiffany & Co. This image is on the website at http://www.discoveringthistory.org/goldenage/images/springer_full.jpg

- **10 minutes** Questions and student sharing of art projects.
- **5 minutes** Closing (*This is also buffer time in case of connection complications*)

POST- VIDEOCONFERENCE

MATERIALS

- Clothing workbook (8 legal sheets folded and stapled down the center to create a workbook)
- Paper
- Old magazines and catalogs
- Pencil

PROCEDURE

Teacher will:

- Ensure that, upon completion of the videoconference with the Cincinnati Art Museum, students are more aware of the history of not only the *Reception Dress*, but also the city of Cincinnati.
- Review with students what they learned during the videoconference. Ask them whether it helped in their understanding of the purpose for clothing.
- Tell the students that they are going to create a clothing workbook.
- Share with students a selection of old magazines and catalogs containing different types of clothing. Tell them that for an assignment they must find at least five examples each of clothing that shows decoration, protection, and modesty. Students should cut and paste images into their clothing workbook and explain through drawings or words why they selected each piece of clothing. (Older students should be encouraged to write descriptive sentences about the different pieces of clothing in their workbooks and why they included them in their workbooks.)
- Encourage students, upon completion of their clothing workbooks, to present to their classmates.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

- Students actively participated in the videoconference with the Cincinnati Art Museum.
- Students learned the three main reasons for which clothing is worn: for decoration, for protection, and for modesty.
- Students created a clothing workbook that reflects their understanding of the three purposes of clothing.

ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS

NATIONAL STANDARDS: SOCIAL STUDIES

Grades K-4 History

Topic 1: Living and Working Together in Families and Communities, Now and Long Ago

Standard 1: Understands family life now and in the past.

Grades K-2

Benchmark 3: Knows the cultural similarities and differences in clothes, homes, food, communication, technology, and cultural traditions between families now and in the past.

Standard 2: Understands the history of a local community and how communities in North America varied long ago.

Benchmark 1: Understands changes in community life over time (e.g., changes in goods and services; changes in architecture and landscape; changes in jobs, schooling, transportation, communication, religion, recreation).

NATIONAL STANDARDS: VISUAL ARTS

Standard 4: Understands the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Grades K-3

Benchmark 1: Knows that the visual arts have both a history and a specific relationship to various cultures.

Benchmark 2: Identifies specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places.

Benchmark 3: Knows how history, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other.

OHIO STANDARDS: SOCIAL STUDIES

History: Students use materials drawn from the diversity of human experience to analyze and interpret significant events, patterns, and themes in the history of Ohio, the United States, and the world.

Grades K-2

Benchmark C: Compares daily life in the past and present demonstrating an understanding that while basic human needs remain the same, they are met in different ways in different times and places.

OHIO STANDARDS: VISUAL ARTS

Historical, Social, and Cultural Contexts: Students understand the impact of visual art on history, culture, and society from which it emanates. They understand the cultural, social, and political forces that, in turn, shape visual art communication and expression. Students identify the significant contributions of visual artists to cultural heritage. They analyze the historical, cultural, social, and political contexts that influence the function and role of visual art in people's lives.

Grades K-4

Benchmark C: Identifies and describes the different purposes people have for creating works of art.

Creative Expression and Communication: Students create artworks that demonstrate understanding of materials, processes, tools, media, techniques, and available technology. They understand how to use art elements, principles, and images to communicate their ideas in a variety of visual forms.

Grades K-4

Benchmark A: Demonstrates knowledge of visual art materials, tools, techniques, and processes by using them expressively and skillfully.

"Art is humanity's most essential, most universal language. It is not a frill, but a necessary part of communication. The quality of civilization can be measured through its music, dance, drama, architecture, visual art, and literature. We must give our children knowledge and understanding of civilization's most profound works."

Dr. Ernest L. Boyer
former president

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1988
Toward Civilization: A Report on Arts Education