Kindergarten/1st Grade Cultural Diversity Inquiry

What do things I wear say about me?

Image from CNN

Supporting Questions

1. What do things people wear say about them?
2. Why do people wear that?
# Kindergarten/1st Grade Cultural Diversity Inquiry

## What do things I wear say about me?

### Tennessee Social Studies Standards

- **G-K.02.** Compare and contrast family traditions and customs, including: food, clothing, homes, and games.
- **C-1.03.** Compare and contrast family traditions and customs among different cultures within a student’s community and state.

### Staging the Question

Choose a piece of clothing that you are wearing today and tell a classmate why you chose to wear it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting Question 1</th>
<th>Supporting Question 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do things people wear say about them?</td>
<td>Why do people wear that?</td>
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### Formative Performance Task

- Make a class list of special things that people wear and why they wear them.
- View the image bank of clothing choices and decide what those choices may say about the person.

### Featured Source

- **Source A:** *What We Wear* picture book
- **Source A:** Clothing Image cards

### Summative Performance Task

**ARGUMENT** What do things I wear say about me? Construct an argument by drawing and annotating the graphic with what you wore and why you wear it.

**EXTENSION** Create a bulletin board display with the graphics created for the summative argument. Invite another class to view the display and ask them what the things that they wear say about them.

### Geo-Inquiry Process

**ARGUMENT** What do things I wear say about me? Construct an argument by drawing and annotating the graphic with what you wore and why you wear it.

**EXTENSION** Create a bulletin board display with the graphics created for the summative argument. Invite another class to view the display and ask them what the things that they wear say about them.
Overview

Inquiry Description

This Kindergarten/1st grade inquiry expands students’ understandings of how groups represent themselves through what they wear. The compelling question—“What do things I wear say about me?”—engages students in an examination of material culture by considering the factors impacting their own choices of what they wear such as geography, culture, and religion. Students will examine the similarities and differences they share with their classmates, as well as diverse cultures in their communities and around the globe.

The supporting questions and formative tasks help students build knowledge and skills through the course of the inquiry in order to explore the meanings and values associated with choices of what is worn. Students will investigate how what people wear communicates about the person, considering several different contexts and factors for what is worn. Students create an evidence-based argument about the meanings of their own choices of what they wear, in order to articulate the factors impacting their choices, as well as demystify the choices of others.

Though this inquiry asks students to analyze their own choices of what they wear and make inferences about others’, factors that impact student’s choices of what they wear may not be something all students are comfortable discussing. Teachers should provide space for students to share their experiences, but not pressure students to do so, nor should students be used as an example in a way that essentializes them and/or their cultural community. Likewise, teachers should be conscientious about the socioeconomic factors that may also impact students’ choices of what they wear and how conversations about choices may make some students feel singled out or vulnerable. Teachers should make adjustments to this inquiry in order to best serve the needs and experiences of their students.

NOTE: This inquiry unit is anticipated to require three-to-five 45-minute class sessions. The time needed depends on what lesson elements teachers would like to focus on. Teachers are encouraged to add and subtract additional resources according to preference, instructional time, and student needs. Resources can also be modified as necessary to meet individualized education programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans for students with disabilities.

Structure of the Inquiry

In addressing the compelling question “What do things I wear say about me?” students work through a series of supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources in order to construct an argument with evidence from a variety of sources.
In staging the compelling question—“What do things I wear say about me?”—teachers prompt students to choose a piece of clothing that they are wearing that day and discuss with a classmate why they chose to wear it. Teachers should encourage students to ask each other questions, and likewise, cue their attention to factors impacting their choice that day (e.g., weather, being at school versus at home, etc.) and why they own that item (e.g., it’s a color they like, it was passed down by a sibling, etc.)

**Supporting Question 1**

The first Supporting Question—“What do things people wear say about them?”—has students considering the ways in which things worn, as material culture, communicates information about different communities. Students spend time thinking of factors impacting choices about things which are worn. Featured Source A, *What We Wear: Dressing Up Around the World*, is a picture book providing images to contextualize choices about what is worn among various communities worldwide, considering cultural differences, customs, and traditions. The formative performance task asks students to make a class list of special things that people wear and why they wear them.

**Supporting Question 2**

The second Supporting Question—“Why do people wear that?”—and the formative performance task associated with it offers students an opportunity to consider the reasons behind a variety of different choices of what people wear—from meaningful, religiously-significant items to more banal choices based on personal preference. The Featured Source consists of several images, from which students can make inferences about reasons for the choice. Students will view the image bank and decide what those choices may say about the person. Teachers can have students use the provided sentence-starter format to scaffold the formative task (see Appendix A).

**Summative Performance Task**

Students draw upon understanding developed through the formative performance tasks to craft evidence-based arguments responding to the compelling question—“What do things I wear say about me?” The argument can be presented through written expression, or a combination of drawing and writing using the provided graphic organizer. Students can draw their outfit and label each item with what it says about them (see Appendix B). To prepare for the crafting of an argument, students may gather their sources and notes, and discuss in small groups the relationship between the supporting questions/featured sources and the compelling question.

Student arguments will likely vary, but could include any of the following:

- The things I wear say that I like to run really fast. I wear sneakers every day to help me run on the playground.
- The things I wear say that I like green. My favorite color is green and I wear a little or a lot of green every day because it makes me happy.
- The things I wear say that I am religious. I wear clothing that covers my head so that I honor my faith.
- The things I wear say that I am from a southern state. I wear shorts and a t-shirt because it is warm here.
- The things I wear say that I like baseball because I like to wear clothes that support my favorite team.
- The things I wear say that I have an older sibling because I wear a lot of the clothes they got too big for.
Students have the opportunity to extend their arguments by creating a bulletin board display with the graphics created for the summative argument. Teachers and students can invite another class to view the display and ask them what the things they wear say about them.

**Geo-Inquiry Process**

Students could engage in a Geo-Inquiry that focuses on a real world issue and take action on something that matters to them and connects with the ideas of the inquiry. The focus of the Geo-Inquiry process is inspired by a story that should resonate with Tennessee children. In 2019, a Florida elementary student made his own t-shirt to show his support for the University of Tennessee. He was bullied by other children because the design was not fancy. When the University of Tennessee heard about the incident, they turned the boy’s design into an official logo for UT fans. Proceeds from t-shirt sales ($1 million dollars) were donated to anti-bullying programs.

See story: [Shirt Designed by Fourth Grader Raises Nearly $1M for STOMP Out Bullying](#)

Students can use this story as inspiration to think about making a t-shirt for their school and raising money for an issue that they care about. The process may look like something like this:

- **Ask:** Students watch the story of a young boy who was bullied after making his own t-shirt to support the University of Tennessee Football team and how his design was made into the official gear for UT fans. Proceeds from t-shirt sales ($1 million dollars) were used for anti-bullying programs. Students can use this story as inspiration to think about making a t-shirt for their school and raising money for an issue that they care about. Together, they could ask questions about what that design should look like (e.g., What colors
should be in the design?) and what issue/program they would like the proceeds to benefit (e.g., What project needs funding?) and what are the steps to bring the t-shirt design to life.

- **Collect**: Students collect images of different school designs that are already being used by the school for t-shirts and other gear. They also can collect information about different projects that need funding.
- **Visualize**: Students create their own designs for a new t-shirt to show school spirit.
- **Create**: Students create a bulletin board of the various designs.
- **Act**: Students work with the teacher to choose 1-2 of the designs and have them put on a t-shirt or other piece of clothing. Students could work with teachers to organize a t-shirt fundraiser for an issue they care about.
### Supporting Question 1


![Image of the Featured Source’s cover](image-url)

### Supporting Question 2

| Featured Source | Source A: Clothing Image cards |

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Appendix A

Sentence Starters

Use these sentence starters to help scaffold Formative Performance Task 3. Copy and paste the sentences as many times as needed.

The person is wearing ________________________________________________________________.

One reason they are wearing it may be because____________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________.

Another reason they are wearing it may be because __________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________.

Appendix B

What do things I wear say about me?