

FASHION
Statement
MARYLAND

Fashion Statement

*An original exhibit from the
Jewish Museum of Maryland*

April 7 – September 15, 2019

Educator's Guide

JewishMuseumMd.org



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Jewish  Museum
OF MARYLAND
Herbert Bearman Campus



AN AGENCY OF
The Associated
Inspiring Jewish Community

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Introduction

Every day, millions of people self-identify (or are identified by others) by what they wear. Clothes may indicate one’s profession, religion, or socio-economic status. Whether you intend it or not, your clothes telegraph—to those who know how to read the language—the groups to which you belong (or want to belong).

A new original exhibit at the Jewish Museum of Maryland (JMM) will invite students to think more deeply about the messages (overt and ambiguous) embedded in articles of clothing from the last two centuries in the collection of the JMM, and what they can teach us about our own lives.

Before you visit, please:

- Read through these materials,
- Discuss the key message with your students,
- Review the glossary of terms that students may find in the exhibit.

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in part, by our lead sponsor:
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Key Message

Fashion Statement will ask students to consider how a man's black hat can signal religious expression or a fur coat can communicate a woman's aspirations. Students will consider everyday clothing from club jackets to political tee shirts, military and civilian uniforms to "must-have" accessories, and explore how those everyday objects amplify (and sometimes disguise) identity and affiliation.

Using the disciplines of history and material culture studies, *Fashion Statement* displays clothing and accessories worn by Jewish Marylanders – women, men, and children – in the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. Historic photographs, documents, and maps will provide context, along with interpretive panels telling the stories of each garment and accessory.

We, Jewish Marylanders and all human beings, use clothing as one of the ways we assert *who we are*.

As a part of our experiential curriculum for *Fashion Statement*, students explore the stories behind the clothing. Stories are a way to understand the world around us, understand ourselves, and create communities (Wit & Wisdom: Power of Storytelling). Working together, students will make their own observations and find meaning in the various types of clothing. They will write stories, jingles, and/or advertisements about the clothing items and the people that wore the original clothes.



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Class Activities

What's Your Fashion Statement? (Grades 5-12)

What do your clothes say about you? Divide the class into pairs or small groups. Have students take turns interviewing each other about the clothing they are wearing and how their clothing represents them.

What message does your clothing send out about you? What brands are represented in your clothing and shoes? How do (or don't) your clothes express your ethnic/cultural heritage or religious affiliation? What about your city/state/nation/political beliefs? i.e. clothes with American flag symbols or colors, Maryland flag pattern, Orioles/Ravens/Baltimore themed designs, etc.

If you are wearing brand-name clothing or shoes, research the brand and find out what they imagine their ideal customers to be. Does their vision of their customer base match how you think of yourself?

Activity: Design your own clothes and accessories that match your vision of yourself. How do you want the world to see you? Draw designs on paper using pencils and markers. Design prototypes using felt, tissue paper, and other materials available. Have a "fashion show" where students take turns presenting their designs and explaining their visions.

Fashion Matching Game (Grades 3-6)

Match the fashionable clothing item with the name of the clothing.

- Tichel _____
- Alligator pumps _____
- Summer Suit _____
- Morning Suit _____
- Ermine Coat _____



A



B



C



D



E

Glossary of Terms

Clothing has long played a role in both Jewish culture and religious practice. It has also become a major part of Jewish identity. Which garments one chooses to wear, what materials they are made out of, and how one wears them, can identify the wearer as Jewish, and also signal which branch of Judaism to which they belong. In preparation for your school's visit to the Jewish Museum of Maryland's new exhibit *Fashion Statement*, we have prepared a glossary of Jewish articles of clothing:

Kippah (n.)

Hebrew word for a round head covering worn toward the back of the head. While traditionally worn only by Jewish men, today some Jewish women choose to wear them too. In Yiddish, the head covering is called a "*yarmulke*."



Shtreimel (n.)

A genuine fur hat worn by some married men who follow **Chasidic** Judaism (a form of Orthodox Judaism). The *shtreimel* is only worn on Shabbat, holidays, and other festive occasions.



Sheitel (n.)

Yiddish word for a wig made of human hair. Many married, Orthodox women wear a *sheitel* to cover their hair according to the code of modesty in Orthodox Judaism.



Tallit (n.)

A Jewish prayer shawl often worn during morning prayer services. A traditional tallit has several stripes of black on it, while a modern tallit may be colorful and include a variety of Jewish symbols.



Tefillin (n.)

Two leather, black boxes with long straps attached. One is worn on the arm, and the other is worn on the forehead at the hair line. The *tefillin* contain a small scroll written in Hebrew. Most often they are worn by men during weekday, morning prayers.



Tallit Katan (n.)

A traditional undershirt made of wool or cotton/ *Tallit katan* are worn by some Orthodox Jewish men.



Tichel (n.)

Yiddish word for a headscarf. Many married, Orthodox women wear a *tichel* to cover their hair according to the code of modesty in Orthodox Judaism.



Tzitzit (n.)

Ritual fringes that are hand tied and sewn onto the corners of a *tallit* or a *tallit katan*.



Resources



Stitching MD Together,
Stevenson University
www.stitchingmdtogether.com
Stitching Maryland (MD) Together is a movement that binds the fashion community with a single thread. Individual creators and organizations take center stage in an inclusive effort to engage the past, present, and future of a dynamic industry. This movement exists to give fashion the platform it needs to inspire ongoing involvement.

Fashion Archives, Maryland Historical Society
<https://www.mdhs.org/museum/fashion-archives>
The Fashion Archives at the Maryland Historical Society contains clothing and accessories that span four centuries of Maryland history. The collection includes men's, women's, and children's clothing as well as underpinnings, hats, shoes, fans, parasols, stockings, shawls, and lace that illuminate the life of Marylanders throughout history

Esther & The Dream of One Loving Human Family,
American Visionary Art Museum
<http://www.avam.org/exhibitions/esther-and-the-dream-of-one-loving-human-family.shtml>
Told without a tinge of anger, Esther's thirty-six, intricate needlework and fabric collages depict how then 15-year-old Esther and her younger sister survived the Nazi invasion of Poland by separating from their observant Jewish farming family on the road to the extermination camp and posing as Polish Catholic farm girls.

Garment Loft, Baltimore Museum of Industry
www.thebmi.org
Shares the history of one of Baltimore's leading industries, the production of garments and accessories.

Who Was the Woman Who Wore the Hat by Nancy Patz
This book, a meditation on a woman's hat on display in the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam, combines a pensive prose poem with arresting collage artwork.

The Red Ribbon by Lucy Adlington
This historical fiction follows the story of fourteen-year-old Ella as she works in a sewing workshop inside a Nazi concentration camp. This is an unforgettable story of strength, survival and friendship.



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