



DESIGN SKILLS FOR A CHANGING WORLD



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V&A

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INTRODUCTION

What we wear, how it's made and the impact it has on the world.

People dress for warmth, for protection, to express themselves or to make a statement. But the clothing industry is harming our planet, and we all need to consider the wider consequences of what we wear.

This resource supports delivery of the WEAR contextual challenge for V&A Innovate. It is suitable for Key Stage 3 and uses objects from the V&A collections to kick-start research and ideas generation.

STARTING POINTS

Investigate WEAR with your students and encourage them to find an opportunity or problem they want to solve using design. Here are some areas you might want to explore:

THROWAWAY FASHION

Around 300,000 tonnes of clothing are discarded to landfill in the UK each year. The need to repair and recycle our clothes has become critical. A growing number of designers are championing ethical production and trying to use materials otherwise destined for landfill to create garments.

CLOTHING POLLUTION

The clothing industry is one of the top five polluters in the world. It depends on chemicals and coal for energy, contributing to high levels of air, water and waste pollution. A huge amount of water is used to produce garments: it can take 2,700 litres to produce the cotton needed to make

a single t-shirt. This has led many fashion companies to seek a more ethical stance on design, sourcing and production.

MATERIALS OF PROTEST

What we wear is a statement of identity and self-expression, but not everyone in the world has the freedom to openly express their gender, religion, sexuality, or politics. Many designers use their clothes as a platform to bring about change and make their concerns about the world heard.

TEXTILE FUTURES

Textiles are becoming more intelligent. From clothing to bandages, e-textiles and smart materials are being used by designers to solve some of the world's biggest challenges..

THINK LOCAL

Encourage students to think about these global contexts at a local scale. How does WEAR relate to their own lives and the lives of those in their community?

What do you do when your clothes tear or rip, or become too small?

Do you know who made your clothes and how they were made?

What do your local clothes shops do with items they cannot sell?

ONLINE RESOURCES

Watch designer and engineer Oluwaseyi Sosanya explore the potential of 3D weaving.

Search over one million objects from the V&A Collections online, including ceramics, fashion, furniture, glass, metalwork, and more. <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/>

Fashioned From Nature Teachers' Resource

This resource explores two key questions:
– How can we design a more sustainable fashion industry?
– What can we learn from the past?

The Future of Fashion Films

Take a closer look at the complex relationship between fashion and nature

Mary Quant Teachers' Resource

This resource explores key themes from the exhibition such as the power of Quant's brand, her use of innovative textiles and the idea of women's liberation through fashion.

MUSEUM VISIT

EXHIBITION

Mary Quant,
6 Apr 2019 – 16 Feb 2020
Discover how Mary Quant launched a fashion revolution on the British high street.

Enjoy our vibrant exhibitions programme and take advantage of the concessionary ticket rate for educational groups - £3 per student and teacher. Booking essential (a minimum of two weeks' notice is required). Find out more here.



Taua Amazon, designed by Lily Cole with Veja, 2014 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

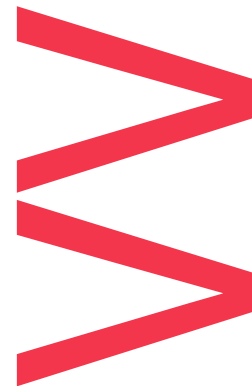
> WHAT IF OUR SHOES HELPED PROTECT THE RAINFOREST?

TAUA AMAZON

DESIGNED BY LILY COLE
WITH VEJA, 2014

In 2014, with support from World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) and Sky Rainforest Rescue, Lily Cole teamed up with ethical footwear brand Veja to launch a range of trainers made with wild rubber. The trainers' uppers are made from organic cotton and the soles contain 40–50% wild rubber. Inspired by her visits to the rainforest, Cole designed a print for the trainers in

three different colourways. Rubber trees grow naturally in the Amazon rainforest. The wild rubber trade is managed by skilled local families who extract the sap from the trees without damaging or cutting them down. Environmental campaigners argue that the wild rubber trade is a positive and proactive way to protect areas of rainforest. Veja works directly with co-operatives in Brazil producing sustainably-grown organic cotton and wild rubber.



> ACTIVITY <

Pick a garment in your own wardrobe. What can you find out about the item from its labels? Where was it made? What is it made from? What other information would you like to know?

Have you ever thought about the environmental impact of your clothes? How important is it to understand how our clothes are made? Discuss with your classmates to hear what others have found out.



Prototype Cabbage Chair, Oki Sato, 2008 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

> CAN WE REPURPOSE MATERIAL THAT NORMALLY ENDS UP IN THE BIN?

PROTOTYPE CABBAGE CHAIR

DESIGNED BY OKI SATO,
2008

This prototype chair was made in 2008 by the Tokyo-based studio Nendo. A scale model for the 'Cabbage Chair', it is made entirely from waste paper. In creating the Cabbage Chair, Nendo designer Oki Sato was interested in re-using

materials. The final version uses fabric leftover from the process of making fashion designer Issey Miyake's 'Pleats Please' collection.

With this prototype, Sato managed to create a chair made entirely from paper, with no additional core or supports. The chair's final design was then developed using this and other prototypes in different materials, colours and sizes.

>ACTIVITY<



Find waste or leftover materials in your classroom. In teams, spend two minutes thinking of as many uses as possible for them. Try to imagine uses that are unusual and unique.

With your classmates, think about some other ways different kinds of designers could work together to re-use materials and combat waste.

How could a fashion designer work with an architect?

How could an aeroplane engineer work with a furniture designer?



Robe, made in Japan, 1850-1900 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

> WHAT IF WE TREASURED OUR OLD AND WORN OUT CLOTHES?

BORO ROBE 1850-1900

This robe would have been worn by a farmer or fisherman in late 19th-century Japan. It has been pieced together and repaired using recycled indigo-dyed cotton. This type of textile is known as 'boro', from 'boroboro' which means 'in tatters'.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, boro garments might have been handed down through many generations of impoverished rural families to express 'mottainai' – the conveyance of regret about waste.

>ACTIVITY<

Look up maker, curator and activist Bridget Harvey: www.bridgetharvey.co.uk. Learn more about her practice and views on repair-making, working with others, and clothing as political choice.

Could you design a new system, service or campaign that would encourage people to care for and repair their clothes?



Clean Up or Die, Katharine Hamnett, 1989 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Given by the designer.

> CAN WHAT WE WEAR BE PART OF BUILDING A BETTER WORLD?

CLEAN UP OR DIE
DESIGNED BY KATHARINE
HAMNETT, 1989

This black leather jacket is from Katharine Hamnett's Winter 1990 'Clean Up or Die' collection. Hexagonal studs and round studs are riveted through the leather to create blocks of pattern broken by short, heavy zips.

Since the 1950s, the black leather motorbike jacket has been adopted by teenagers as a symbol of

rebellion and defiance. Katharine Hamnett's stud designs are a less aggressive, high fashion reworking of tough street wear.

The jacket back is emblazoned with the environmental plea 'Clean Up or Die'. This collection marked the start of Hamnett's efforts to clean up the industry by raising awareness of the untold damage done in the manufacturing of materials.



> ACTIVITY <

Campaign groups use slogan t-shirts to draw attention to their aims and to fundraise. For the wearer, they are an effective way of expressing their commitment to a cause.

Talk to your classmates, family, friends and people in your local community. What causes are they passionate about? Could you design a clothing campaign to build a better world?