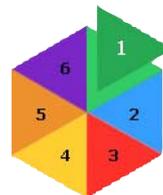
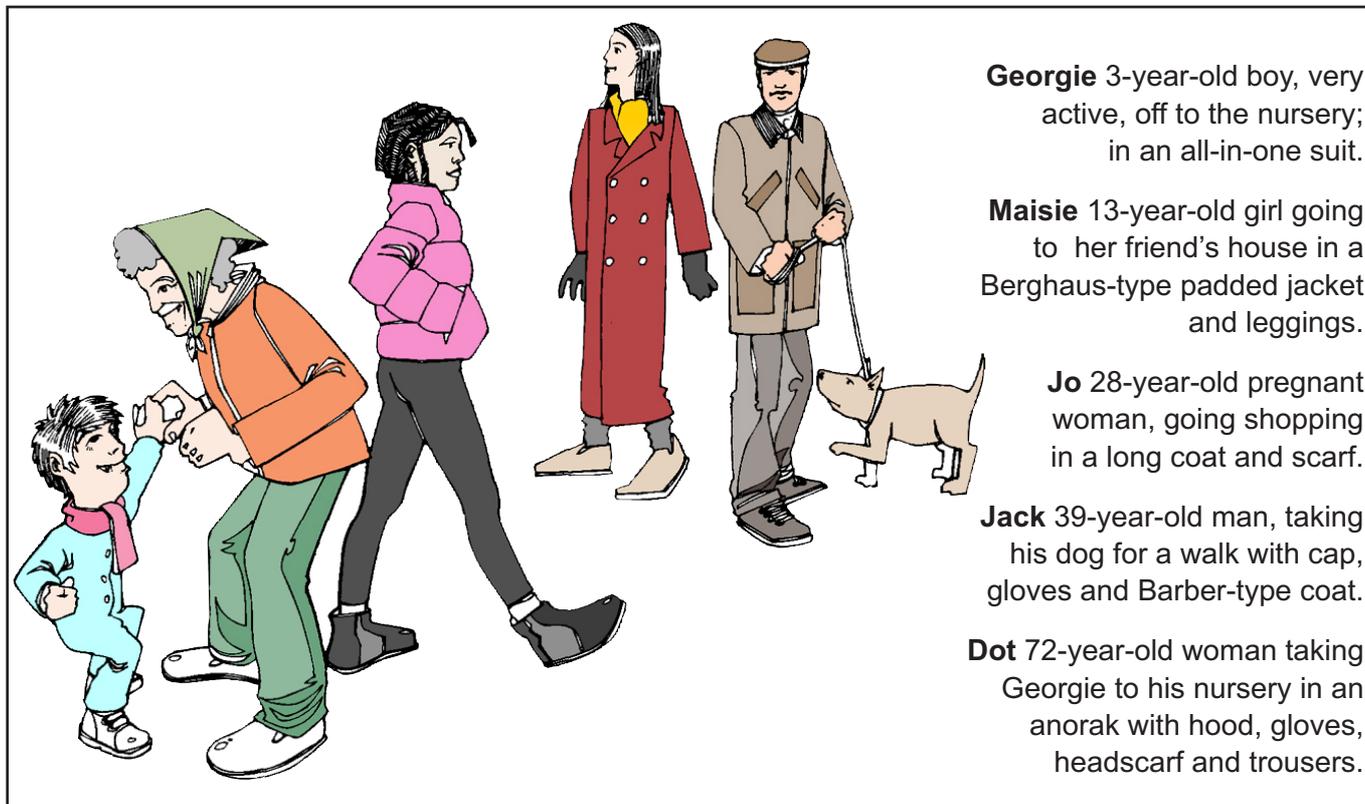


# Textiles: Understanding the user



## Identifying needs and likes

You can revise strategies for identifying needs and likes from key stage 3 by thinking about these people who are going out on a cold winter's morning.



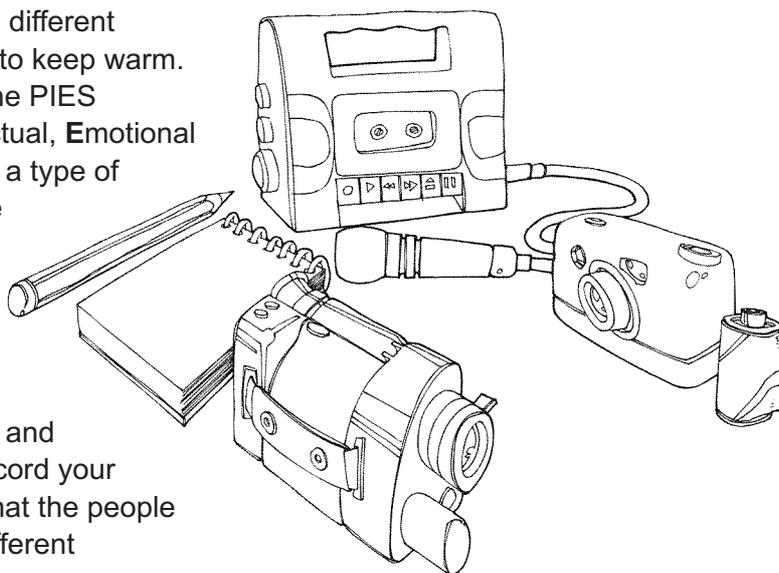
## Thinking about what people might need

The people going out in the winter will have different needs and likes, although they will all want to keep warm. You can try thinking about these by using the PIES approach: PIES stand for **Physical**, **Intellectual**, **Emotional** and **Social**. Each of these worlds describes a type of need that can be met by products that have been designed and made.

## Observing people

You can find out a lot about people's needs and likes by watching them. It is important to record your observations in a way that doesn't affect what the people are doing. The illustration shows several different recording methods.

Can you explain which ones are suitable for use outdoors?



## Asking questions

You can find out about people's preferences by talking to them and asking questions. This is sometimes called **interviewing**. It is different from using a questionnaire as you will only interview a few people. It is important to ask the right sorts of questions. To find out what each of these people want from their outdoor clothing you would probably need to ask them different questions.

## Using books and magazines

Sometimes you need to find out something by looking things up in books and magazines. Some magazines might tell you about the preferences of the people's outdoor clothing.

Where would you find these magazines?

Which books would help?

## Image boards

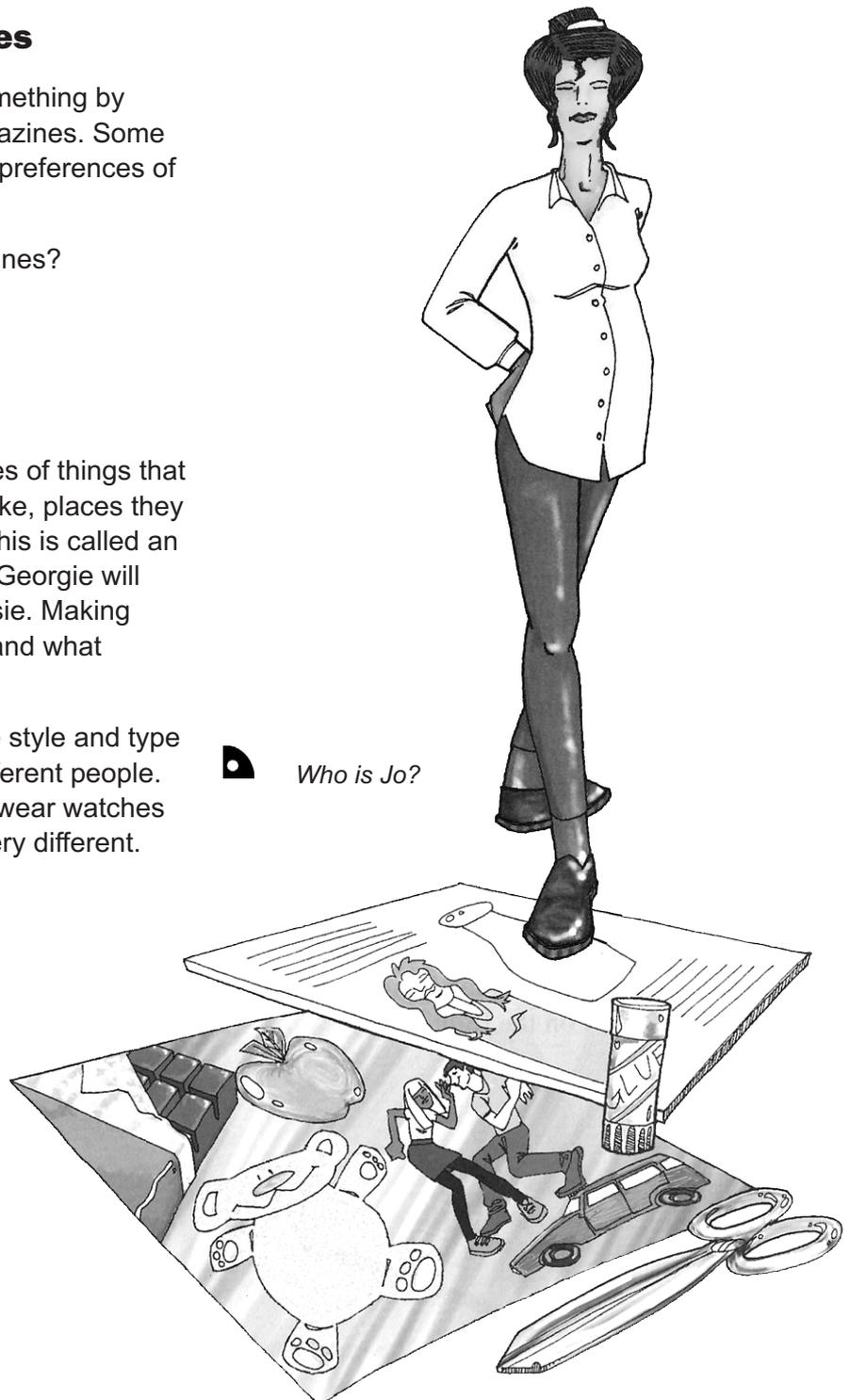
You can make a collection of pictures of things that a person or group of people might like, places they might go, activities they might do. This is called an **image board**. An **image board** for Georgie will look very different from one for Maisie. Making image boards will help you understand what different people might like.

It may also help you understand the style and type of products that would appeal to different people. For example, Jo and Dot may both wear watches but they will almost certainly look very different.

## Q Questions

Here is the beginning of an image board for Jo.

- 1 What does it tell you about her.
- 2 What other images could be added to give a fuller picture?



## Using questionnaires

A questionnaire is a carefully designed set of questions. It is often used by businesses to find out what different groups of people like or would buy. A questionnaire will usually try to get information about the sort of person who is answering it – their occupation, how much they earn, and so on. This information enables businesses to provide goods and services that people want at a price they are prepared to pay. It also shows where and when these products could be sold and how best they might be advertised.

## Designing your own questionnaire

You need to be clear on what you are trying to find out. Target your questions to obtain the information you want. Avoid leading questions that suggest the answer. Avoid questions that don't discriminate, such as 'Do you like sunny days?' Everyone always answers 'Yes'!

Sometimes you will use the questionnaire in face-to-face questioning when you record people's answers. At other times people will fill it in on their own and return it to you. In this second case it is particularly important that the meanings of the questions are clear as you won't be there to explain them.

Advice on writing questionnaires is given in the panel on the right.

## Questions

Notice how some newspapers and magazines use so-called questionnaires to attract the readers' interest rather than provide useful information.

What sort of information do these sorts of questionnaires reveal to the reader?



## Questionnaire writing guide

- ✦ Use closed questions. These require a yes or no answer or give people a choice of answers.
- ✦ Make it easy to fill in the answers. Use tick boxes where possible.
- ✦ Each question should be short and simple.
- ✦ Use words people will understand.
- ✦ Write questions which only have one meaning.
- ✦ Each question should ask only one thing at a time.
- ✦ A scaled choice of answers is a good way to find out people's attitudes.

## What sample size should I use?

It is important to present your questionnaire to as many people as possible. This will give you a large number of responses from which you can draw reasonable conclusions.

A hundred responses might be an ideal number, but this would be a huge task for one researcher. If the research is shared amongst a group of people, the task becomes manageable both in terms of collecting responses and collating data. If each member of a class of 20 students took responsibility for 5 questionnaires, the sample size would be 100.

You can analyse the information in a variety of ways and present your findings in graphical forms like pie charts and bar graphs.

Here is an example of a survey of outdoor coats. The completed questionnaires provided information on the coats worn by young adults. This information was recorded on a tally sheet. It was then analysed using a spreadsheet to identify user preferences. The results were presented visually.

## Collating the results

Once you have the returned questionnaires you will need to analyse the information. Here's how to do it.

- ▲ Draw up a summary results table or tally sheet of the possible answers to each question.
- ▲ Count how many of each possible answer you got for each question and write this in the table or on the tally sheet.

When you have done this for each question on each questionnaire the table is complete and you can begin to think about what the results mean. You will find that putting the information into a database or spreadsheet may help you to collate it more quickly.

Male  Female

Age 10-12  13-15  16-18  19-21

Do you have an outdoor coat? Yes  No

Describe its length  
 Short (to the waist)  Short/medium (covers your bottom)   
 Medium (reaches mid-thigh)  Medium/long (reaches knee)   
 Long (below ankles)

Describe its shape: fitted  loose

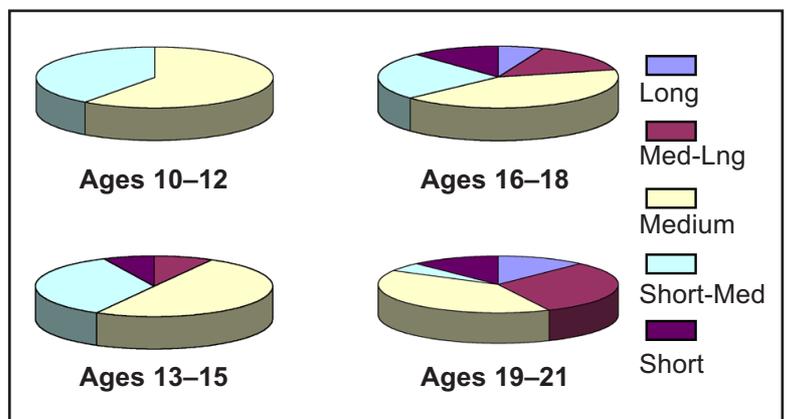
List the fastenings on main opening:  
 inside ties  buttons  toggles  zips  Velcro

List extra fastenings  
 belts  cuff buttons  cuff Velcro

## Using spreadsheets and databases

The database will organise the information so that it is easily accessible and can be displayed clearly. The database can be 'interrogated' for statistical information and thus provide a picture of user needs and likes.

Statistical information from the database can be put into a spreadsheet. The spreadsheet displays the information as rows and columns of numbers.



This information was used by pupils who were designing cheap, street-style outdoor coats made by recycled fabrics