

## **Lesson 2:** Coco Chanel— Fashion as Function & Liberation

**Grade Level:** 6-12

**Focus:** Fashion as identity, functionality, visual analysis, vocabulary

### **Coco Chanel** — Fashion as Function

This lesson introduces students to the work of Coco Chanel and explores how fashion functions as a form of communication, identity, and cultural change. Students will analyze how clothing can express ideas, challenge restrictive norms, and reflect shifting social values, particularly through comfort, movement, and modernity.

The lesson begins with visual and cultural context, using imagery to examine early 20th-century fashion alongside Chanel’s designs. Students will examine how restrictive garments shaped daily life and how Chanel’s work responded by prioritizing simplicity, functionality, and ease of movement.

Through a guided gallery walk, students will analyze garments, silhouettes, and materials, identifying key themes such as liberation, simplicity, and modern identity. Students will discuss how visual elements—such as structure, proportion, fabric, and movement—communicate both function and meaning.

Students will then build vocabulary related to visual analysis and fashion, connecting terms to both historical and contemporary examples. This supports their ability to articulate how and why design choices matter.

Using these ideas, students will develop a concept for a garment, accessory, or design that emphasizes comfort, movement, and simplicity. Through sketching and planning, students will focus on intentional design choices—such as silhouette, proportion, and material—to communicate a clear message or perspective.