

Lesson 1: Vivienne Westwood — Fashion as Rebellion

Grade Level: 6-12

Focus: Fashion as activism, visual analysis, vocabulary

Vivienne Westwood — Fashion as Communication

This lesson introduces students to the work of Vivienne Westwood and explores how fashion functions as a form of communication, identity, and cultural commentary. Students will analyze how clothing can express ideas, challenge norms, and reflect both personal and societal values.

The lesson begins with visual and cultural context, using imagery and music to introduce the energy of 1970s London. Students will examine Westwood’s work within this context, considering how fashion can respond to and reshape cultural moments.

Through a guided gallery walk, students will analyze garments, protest imagery, and street style, identifying key themes such as identity, rebellion, and self-expression. Students will discuss how visual elements—such as material, silhouette, text, and styling—communicate 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 graphic that communicates a personal message or perspective. Through sketching and collage, students will focus on symbolism, intention, and visual storytelling.