

Costume Design

Lesson Ideas



The Film & TV
Educators Network

Icebreaker: Prompt: Think about what you are wearing today. If you were a character in a film or TV show, what would it say about you?

Depending on class numbers, this could be run as a Think-Pair-Share activity, or a group discussion. The aim is to get students to think about more deliberately about costume choices. Visual signals (tone, status, style) are already present in everyday clothing — costume design needs approaching in the same way.

Activity 1: Character Breakdown

Give the students a short script to read (ideally a short script which students haven't seen before, so they have time to read the full script before focusing on the opening scene). Looking at the opening scene, they should try to answer the following questions:

- Who is/are the character(s) at this moment in the story?
- What do we want the audience to understand about them?
- What kind of costume would support that?
- (if the students have read the full script) How might the character's costumes evolve throughout the film?

Discuss in pairs/small groups first, then open to the whole class. A few further prompt questions: what is the time period? what season is it? what time of day is it? what is characters' socio-economic background? what is the characters' personality/tastes?

Activity 2: Character from the Room

In their pairs or small groups, students now have 5-10 minutes to source (a) costume(s) for the character(s) — using *only* what they (or their team) have in their current rooms. This can include clothing, props, background objects. They then present this to the class for feedback, explaining the rationale behind each item.

Conclusion: emphasising the importance of resourcefulness and intentionality in costume design on student productions.

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