A Style of Your Own

is a clothing decision project. It includes three publications:

- Discovering Choice for youth in Grades 6-8
- Managing Choice for youth in Grades 9-12
- Helper's Guide for the adult leader and for use with groups

Youth Activity Guides

The youth activity guides are developmentally appropriate for particular grades but may be used by youth in any grade depending on their experience, skill, and interest. Each guide contains an achievement program, activities, a glossary, and a resource list.

Helper's Guide

The Helper's Guide provides additional learn-by-doing activities that can be adapted to family, home school, classroom, scout, club and other educational settings. You will find a handy chart that lists supplies, special instructions, and answers for the activities in the youth guides. The Helper's Guide also contains helpful hints for working with youth, developing life skills, and teaching experientially.

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What’s on the Clothes Rack?

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Fashions fade; style is eternal.
— Yves Saint Laurent
French couturier. 1975.
A Note to the Helper

A Great Opportunity
A pre-teen or teen has asked you to be his/her helper for Discovering Choice. In this important role, you will shape learning, offer encouragement, provide recognition, and enjoy the fun. Together you will tackle consumer issues related to clothing and work through the critical steps of sound decision making.

Your Responsibilities
- Become familiar with this guide and the Helper's Guide.
- Provide a safe, supportive, and non-judgmental environment.
- Understand and use the experiential learning cycle.
- Reinforce the clothing and decision-making skills.
- Assist the youth's efforts to set goals and complete the Achievement Program.
- Serve as a resource person who connects youth to related materials; community projects; and people with needs, interests, or expertise in clothing or decision making.

Your Challenge
Support teens as they explore the activities and develop conclusions. Resist the urge to provide or insist on "correct" answers. Instead, talk with teens, share their concerns, listen to their ideas, and promote follow up and follow through.

Experiential Learning Cycle
The five steps of the experiential model are incorporated into each activity. This ensures that youth will learn by doing and will develop skills for life-long learning and self responsibility.

Project and Life Skills
Each activity emphasizes a life skill that builds workforce and personal competencies and a project skill related to the subject matter. An icon on the first page of every activity identifies the skills being practiced and states what is expected of the youth (success indicator). Notice the hanger icon for decision-making skill, clothing skill, and success indicator.

Life skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, keeping records, planning/organizing, and self responsibility are part of this curriculum, but the life skill most emphasized is decision making. Thus, each activity highlights a decision-making skill:
- Define Problem
- Consider Alternatives
- Gather Information
- Evaluate Alternatives
- Make Decision
- Evaluate Decision

The project skill, clothing skill, addresses a consumer's need to acquire, manage, and dispose of clothing. Clothing skills include understanding self; clothing styles, fabric characteristics, wardrobe and money management, and laws related to apparel.

Decision-Making Skill: Clothing Skill:
Define Problem Consider Alternatives
Gather Information Evaluate Alternatives
Make Decision Evaluate Decision

Youth do before being told or shown how.
Youth describe the experience and their reaction.
Youth discuss what was most important about what they did.
Are you in Grades 6-8? Do you help select your own clothes? Are you influenced by clothing advertisements? Have you and your friends ever organized a clothing drive or traded clothes among yourselves? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, *Discovering Choice* is for you. It will help you understand your clothing choices and discover your own style.

**What's in Discovering Choice?**
*Discovering Choice* has an achievement program, 15 activities, a glossary, and a list of additional resources. Each activity has these sections:
- Introduction - topic and expectations
- Stepping Out - instructions for doing the activity
- Suiting Up - discussion that helps you think about how the activity relates to your life
- Gearing Up - information
- Looking Good - extra challenges and fun
- Stocking Up - interesting or fun fact

Words written in **bold type** are defined in the Glossary on page 38.

**What You Will Do**
- Ask someone to be your helper
- Work with your helper to plan the year's activities
- Complete the required activities of the Achievement Program
- Try some extra activities if you have time
- Keep track of your progress

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**Style is the image of character.**
— Edward Gibbon, English historian, 1971

**Your Activity Guide and More**
In this activity guide you will make lists, answer questions, sketch designs, outline ideas, record observations, and make collages. The book is yours to keep. You might enter it in a fair or record book competition, add it to your keepsake chest, or keep it handy for easy reference.

This guide allows space for the basic program but you may want to do more. A journal, portfolio, or videotape are great for the extra challenges in *Looking Good* or for related experiences you dream up. Keep your journal in a sketch pad, notebook, or binder. Make a portfolio for things that don't fit into your journal. You can use a big envelope, manila folder, folded piece of cardboard, or box. Capture your unfolding saga on a series of videotapes or create one project highlights tape. Involve your friends or make it your personal record.

**Your Helper**
Your project helper is an important part of your clothing decisions project. Choose a leader, parent, neighbor, or older friend who is interested in clothing decisions and in working with you. Involve your helper as you set your goals and discuss the questions found in each activity. Sometimes you may work together on an activity.

Write the name and contact information of your helper below.

**Helper's Name**

**Telephone**

**Email address**
To complete all 15 sessions is a big commitment. Most youth work in the project for 2-3 years. You are eligible for a Completion Certificate each year that you meet these achievement requirements:

- 6 Stepping Out Activities
- 2 Leadership/Community Service Experiences
- 2 Looking Good Activities

Your first year, select one Stepping Out Activity from each chapter so you learn and practice the six steps of decision making. For other years, select at least four new activities. You may want to repeat some activities to update your changing personal profile.

Place a check beside the activities you plan to do this year. Have your helper date and initial the activities when you complete them.

### STEPPING OUT

**Required Activities** *(Requirement: 6 each year)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Plan to Do</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Helper's Initials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1 Define Problem: Wondering What to Wear?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. What's on Your Calendar?</td>
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<td>2. Stats and Sizes</td>
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<td>4. Shoe Count</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Buy, Borrow, or Barter?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 3 Gather Information: Getting Down to Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. You as Designer</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Whose Idea Is It?</td>
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<td>8. Truth and Consequences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 4 Evaluate Alternatives: Which Way is Up?</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Where's Your Favorite T-shirt?</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Colorful Characters</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Mapping Choices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 5 Make Decision: It's Up to You</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Trade Up or Trade Down?</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. To Spend or Not to Spend?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6 Evaluate Decision: Rate Your Decision</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Great Gripes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Leadership/Community Service Experiences

*(Requirement: 2 each year)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan To Do</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Helper's Initials</th>
<th>Experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Give a demonstration related to the project</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare an exhibit about clothing decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Invite someone to talk to your group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Help someone with a Style of Your Own project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Volunteer for a charity activity related to the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Volunteer for a community event related to the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Your idea)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Optional Activities
(Requirement: 2 each year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Helper's Initials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4 **Discovering Choice Highlights**
New and exciting things I learned:

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

5 **Discovering Choice Review**
Once you have completed what you planned, review what you accomplished with your parent or helper.

**Discovering Choice Completion Certificate**

I certify that

has completed all requirements in the **Discovering Choice Achievement Program**.

Discovering Choice Helper's Signature

Date (Year 1)

Discovering Choice Helper's Signature

Date (Year 2)

Discovering Choice Helper's Signature

Date (Year 3)
Define Problem:

Wondering What to Wear?

Can’t decide what to wear? The first step in decision making is to clearly define the problem—to understand the situation so well that you can write it and say it. Chapter 1 helps you think about the different parts of the ordinary problem of what to wear.

What’s on Your Calendar?


STEPPING OUT

Create a seasonal calendar of things you do. Use that calendar to illustrate your lifestyle and to write a statement about one clothing challenge.

1. Clip pictures of your activities and interests from newspapers and magazines.
2. Paste clippings into a four-season collage on a separate piece of paper for your portfolio.

Gearing Up

Decision-making does not always follow a straight line. To keep track of where you are in the six-step process, check the decision-making skill list at the beginning of each activity. The step you are practicing is marked with a button.

Spring

Summer

Fall

Winter

Decision-Making Skill:
- Define Problem
- Consider Alternatives
- Gather Information
- Evaluate Alternatives
- Make Decision
- Evaluate Decision

Clothing Skill:
- Connect lifestyle and clothing choices

Success Indicator:
- State a clothing problem

2. Select one activity from your calendar and describe it in the blanks below:

Example: My clothing problem is what to wear when I jog in the park at 10 AM for 45 minutes in hot weather.

My clothing problem is what to wear when I ___________ (activity) in the ___________ (where) at ___________ (time of day) for ___________ (minutes/hours) in ___________ (weather).

You have just written a clothing problem statement. The problem statement = the core problem (what to wear) + the details about your activity. Each detail of your activity is a clue to the kind of clothes you need.
SUITING UP

Share
How many activities did you put on your calendar? How does what you wear when doing these activities compare with what the magazine models wore in your clippings?

Process
How did you select the activity you used for your problem statement? Add two additional details to your problem statement that would help you decide what clothing to wear.

Generalize
What other decisions besides clothing are affected by your activities and interests?

Apply
Name a non-clothing problem you have. List the details of that problem.

Gearing Up
Lifestyle and fashion influence your clothing choices. For example, to spend time with friends you plan a summer picnic. You like sports so the picnic includes volleyball. You need clothes that are cool and allow you to move so you decide to wear shorts. That’s function. Whether you choose Bermuda shorts, cargo shorts, athletic shorts, or cut-offs might depend on what your friends are wearing or what is in style. That’s fashion.

Garments developed for function often create fashion. The baggy pants of skaters and skateboarders have been adopted by today’s youth for general casual wear. Bell-bottom pants popular in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1990s began as a practical garment for sailors who needed to fold up their pant legs.

Looking Good
1. Design a cover for a calendar that includes your favorite things to do and your favorite clothes. Some ideas are:
   a. Make an abstract painting by using blotches of different colors to represent seasonal activities. Are you more active in summer than in winter?
   b. Put together a photo album of yourself doing activities. Note your appearance and attitude. Were you wearing your favorite clothes? Did you look comfortable, involved, or bored?
2. Suppose you need to organize your school backpack. State the problem and list its details in your journal or on a separate piece of paper.

The first women to play professional tennis wore long dresses. Today’s stars choose shorts and skirts. These players shared the problem of what to wear on court but defined it very differently.
When you go shopping, do you head straight for the rack with your size or do you collect everything from XXSmall to XXXlarge and head for the dressing rooms? What's the difference between T-shirts sized 6 and Small? And does it make any sense that you wear different sizes in different brands?

**STEPPING OUT**

Some clothing manufacturers adopt popular sizing systems; others develop their own. To get an idea of how sizing systems are developed, measure your hand and find your glove size.

- Wrap a tape measure around your hand just below your knuckles and across your palm.
- Read the measurement in inches. The closest whole number is your glove size.
  
  (Example: If the circumference of your hand is 7 inches, you wear a size 7 glove. If the measurement is 7.5 inches, round up to 8 inches. You wear a size 8 glove.)
- Check the chart below to determine your glove sizes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hand Measurement (inches)</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glove Size</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes Labeled</td>
<td>XS</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>XL</td>
<td>XXL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Record your other body measurements. You might ask a friend or family member to help you with the tape measure. (Refer to How to Take Measurements, Helper’s Guide, page 33.)

  Date: __________________________
  Height: ________________________
  Shoulder width: ________________________
  Bust or chest: ________________________
  Back (base of neck to waist): ________________________
  Waist: ________________________
  Inside leg length: ________________________
  Hip (9-inches below waist): ________________________
  Neck: ________________________

- Compare your measurements to sizing charts in clothing catalogs, on sewing pattern envelopes, or internet sites (p.40) to find your figure type and size for different garments.

  My figure type is ________________________

  (Examples: boys, mens, girls, juniors, misses, womens)

  My clothing size range is ________________________
SUITING UP

Share
Have you taken your hand measurement before? For which occupations do you think glove size might matter?

Process
When did you last take your body measurements? Which measurements do you expect might change in the coming year?

Generalize
How does knowing your body measurements help you make clothing decisions?

Apply
What other kind of personal data could you collect that might help as you select your clothes?
(Hint: personality, design preferences, skills, etc.)

Gearing Up

Figure type depends on your height and proportions. For example, junior petite sizes are for females 5' to 5'4" in height. Husky sizes are for guys with fuller bodies in proportion to height than regular boy or teen boy sizes. You usually wear more than one size because:

- you like some garments to fit snugly and others to fit loosely
- your proportions require tops and bottoms of different sizes
- manufacturers use different sizing systems
- you need to allow for shrinkage of some fabrics.

Sizing systems are strange creatures. American sizes differ from European sizes. The system for sizing gloves differs from the system for sizing coats. Pattern sizes differ from ready-to-wear sizes. Even if you are just talking jeans and T-shirts, every manufacturer can choose its own system. Some base their sizes on statistics gathered from the military or other large groups of people. Others use human models to represent the sizes that the company wants to make. Occasionally, the manufacturer will add or subtract inches based on customer feedback.

Looking Good

1. Measuring accurately is difficult. Check the Helper's Guide, clothing catalogs, clothing texts, or internet sites of pattern companies for hints on how to take correct body measurements.

2. Brainstorm with a friend at least ten types of gloves.
(Hint: baseball, driving, ski, mittens, etc.)
Do you think you wear the same size in all of these gloves?

Astronauts have gloves made to fit their exact hand measurements. Gloves for earthlings are usually sized broadly as Small, Medium, and Large. They are not expected to fit perfectly.
Got a Dime—or a Dollar?

Getting new clothes usually means spending money. But what if you don’t have much cash or you want to spend it on something other than clothes? Before heading to the store, you need to know how much money you have and what things are competing for your dimes and dollars. You need a clear picture of what is coming and going from your wallet.

**STEPPING OUT**

One way to get a handle on the ins and outs of your wallet is to track your income and expenses for a month. Income includes all money moving into your wallet. Expenses include all the money moving out of your wallet.

MONTH OF: ____________________

(Hint: if your income is seasonal such as shoveling snow or helping on the farm, you might prefer to make a budget for six months or a year.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME ($ moving into your wallet)</th>
<th>AMOUNT ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cash on hand (any left over from last month)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allowance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gifts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL INCOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENSE ($ moving out of your wallet)</th>
<th>AMOUNT ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>add to savings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school supplies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entertainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clothing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>snacks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gifts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charity/church/temple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL EXPENSES

\[
\text{\$ (INCOME)} \quad \text{minus} \quad \text{\$ (EXPENSES)} \quad \text{equals} \quad \text{\$ (BALANCE)}
\]
SUETING UP

Share
Where do you get most of your income? How do you spend most of your money? Does your spending exceed your income?

Process
How much do your parents spend on clothing for you (in addition to what you spend)?

Generalize
How does knowing your income and your family's spending habits help you make clothing decisions?

Apply
How do your parents decide if your request for new clothes is within the family budget?

Gearing Up
A budget is a map, a plan for reaching your goals. To make a budget:
- set your goals
- estimate your income
- analyze recent spending
- plan future spending
- track spending
- compare spending to your budget
- take action to keep your spending in line with your budget OR revise your budget.

Looking Good

1. Suppose you want to buy something that costs twice as much as your monthly income. What would you do to cut costs and save money? What would you do to earn more income? How long would it take you to save the amount needed?

2. Volunteer to help at your 4-H club's fair booth, the class carwash, the school store or a similar event to learn more about tracking income and expenses.

Stocking Up
A survey of more than 1,000 kids ages 8 to 14 showed that 43% get an allowance, 26% get spending money, and 31% get no allowance or spending money. —Zillions, January 1999.
Consider Alternatives:

Scan the Scene

Do you click the TV remote from channel to channel? Does it take you 15 minutes to choose a snack from the refrigerator? Maybe you change your clothes three times before leaving for school. Lots of choices complicate decision making. This chapter looks at the types of choices you face and asks you to consider whether you might be better off with less.

Shoe Count

Dorothy's ruby red slippers carried her from the Land of Oz to Kansas. Laced sandals took the Romans all over their vast empire and certain basketball stars credit their footwear for their amazing dunks. What about you? What's on your feet?

STEPPING OUT

A close look at the many types of footwear will help you realize the range of choices you have in the U.S. marketplace.

- Ask a grandparent or an older person to list the types and number of shoes they wore when they were your age.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grandparent/Older Friend</th>
<th>You</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type(s)</strong></td>
<td><strong>No. of Pairs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Decision-Making Skill:
- Define Problem
- Consider Alternatives
- Gather Information
- Evaluate Alternatives
- Make Decision
- Evaluate Decision

Clothing Skill:
- Explore range of clothing choices

Success Indicator:
- Understand footwear alternatives

- Record how they used each type.
- List the types and numbers of shoes you own.
- Record how you use each type.
SUting Up

Share
How many types of shoes did your grandparent list? What differences did you observe between your list and your grandparent’s list?

Process
What similarities did you observe among the shoe types you listed? Which shoes serve more than one function?

Generalize
Why do you think there are so many different kinds of footwear? What criteria do you use to decide between the shoes you want and the shoes you need?

Apply
Name two possessions that you really need. Name one possession that you like but could do without. How did you decide?

Gearing Up

In a 1998 survey of Zillions readers, 81% said that sneakers (tennis or athletic shoes) are too expensive. A typical pair costs about $70 although some brands can cost $200 or more. Here’s what goes into the $70 versions:

Manufacturer:
- Materials ........................................ 9.00
- Equipment ......................................... 6.50
- Worker’s salary ................................... 2.75
- Profit for manufacturer ......................... 1.75

Wholesale Sneaker Company:
- Selling/delivery to stores ..................... 5.00
- Advertising ........................................ 4.00
- Research & development ...................... 0.25
- Profit for sneaker company .................. 6.25

Store
- Salespeople salary ............................ 9.50
- Store rent and other costs .................... 16.00
- Profit for store .................................. 9.00

Total: .............................................. $70.00

Looking Good

1. List on an index card all the types of sneakers that you and your friend can name in five minutes. Then go to a shoe store and compare your list to their selection. Which types did you forget?

2. You are packing for a three-week trip to Mexico and can only take one small suitcase. Which shoes will you pack and why?

3. The fellow on the left is wearing shoes called crackowes. Check the glossary to learn more.

The first Thom McAn shoe store opened in 1922, selling men’s shoes for $3.99 a pair. The first Bass Weejuns were introduced in 1936 and cost $12 a pair.
—Bookshelf, 1997
Buy, Borrow, or Barter?

Are you a yard-sale hound or part of the mall crowd? Do you trade for what you want or fork over the cash? Not only do you have to decide what to wear, you have to decide where and how to get the best deals.

STEPPING OUT

Buying something new is not always the best way to update your wardrobe. Think about other ways to get the clothes you need as you have fun with this story surprise.

1. Arrange these words in any order in the numbered slots below:
   borrow, buy, charge, clean, cut off, exchange, layaway, order, rent, repair, sew, trade

1. ________________
2. ________________
3. ________________
4. ________________
5. ________________
6. ________________
7. ________________
8. ________________
9. ________________
10. ________________
11. ________________
12. ________________

2. Use the numbered words above to fill in the corresponding blanks in the story.

Seems like I never have the right stuff to wear. Take today for example. I plan to sneak my brother’s sandals out of his room. I know I should ask, but I’m in a hurry and I will only ________________ (1) them to wear to my friend’s house. What could be safer? I could wear mine but I would have to ________________ (2) them. Also, the strap is broken and I haven’t had time to take them for ________________ (3). Besides, I’d rather ________________ (4) new ones. The problem is I don’t have enough money and my parents won’t allow me to ________________ (5) anything. I don’t even have enough cash to put them on ________________ (6). My friend has a similar situation. He wants to ________________ (7) the green shirt his aunt gave him for a blue one, but the store was sold out of blue. The salesclerk said he could ________________ (8) a blue one but it won’t come in for two weeks. In the meantime, his sister said she could ________________ (9) one of her blue shirts for him and his Dad suggested that he learn to ________________ (10) so that he could make his own. A budget-minded friend offered to ________________ (11) him the shirt off his back. I think his best offer came from the guy at the pizza shop who is willing to ________________ (12) a pizza (with extra cheese!) for the green shirt. Now I’m thinking “pepperoni” and wondering if that guy could use a pair of dirty sandals with a broken strap.
**SUATING UP**

**Share**
Did the paragraph make sense when you chose the words before reading the sentences? Which of the sentences are complete nonsense?

---

**Process**
Put the words in order so the story makes sense to you.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 
11. 
12. 

**Generalize**
Which words fit in more than one sentence? Do some problems have more than one solution?

---

**Apply**
List at least three ways you get clothes.

---

**Gearing Up**

Have you ever thought about how you get most of your clothes? They come your way through exchange, receipt or extension. You exchange money, work or items for clothes. You receive clothes as gifts and hand-me-downs. You extend clothes through creativity—by remodeling or using clothes in new ways.

The ways you get your clothes sometimes affects how satisfied you are with them. For example, if you sew (exchange work for clothes), you could make just what you want. If you trade one item for another (say your old football helmet for a pair of sneakers), you probably will need to compromise. If you’re confident about being creative, you can extend your clothes in many ways that can be satisfying and fun.

---

**Looking Good**

1. Visit a used clothing store, a department store, and a boutique. Find a similar garment at each and compare the quality and price. Discuss with a friend what you gain and what you lose by shopping each location.

2. Learn about the barter system. You might browse the internet for fun, research a paper for school, or set up a clothing exchange among your neighbors.

3. Interview friends to see how many have something in their closet that belongs to others.

---

*Stocking Up*

Over four million tons of clothing and textiles are disposed of yearly. About one million tons are collected for reuse or recycling.
Gather Information:

Getting Down to Details

Sound decisions depend on sound information. As you gather information—the third step in decision-making—think about what type of information you need, where you will get it, and how you will know it is correct.

You as Designer

Can you name three types of information on clothing labels? Why is that information important to you? Have you ever wished other information were also part of the label?

STEPPING OUT

Imagine that you have just designed a new item of clothing. Now design labels that fully inform the buyer. Include:

- information you think the buyer needs to know
- words and/or symbols that are easy to understand.

Compare your label to the ones on pages 36 and 37.
Gearing Up

Your clothes have labels sewn inside, usually in the neck or side seams. Manufacturers must provide these labels, and the labels must state:

- brand name
- registration number of the manufacturer
- country where the garment was made
- fiber content
- care instructions.

The label must list the fiber by name not trademark (polyester not Dacron) if it makes up 5% or more of the garment. Fibers present in less than 5% can be listed as “other fibers.” The care label must give either a washing or dry cleaning instruction. If both methods work, only one has to be listed. It must also tell you how to iron and dry the garment and whether it can be bleached.

This information can be in words or symbols.

Looking Good

1. Clip cloth labels from old clothing and assemble into a memory collage or sew together to make a vest or pillow.

2. Read label care information on the Soap and Detergent Association website [http://www.sdahq.org]

3. Note the different fibers in your clothes by reading the fiber content labels. How many did you find?
Whose Idea Is It?

Who makes up your mind? You do? And who influences you? Some information sources are factual like clothing labels and hang tags. Other sources are biased opinions and vague impressions. Can you tell one from the other?

STEPPING OUT

Figure out the who, what, and where of clothing information.

- Choose a clothing item(s) you want to own.
- List people, organizations, and places (or things) that provide information about this garment or outfit. (You may need to do a bit of research.)
- Write a phrase describing the kind of information each source provides.

Clothing item wanted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People to ask for information:</th>
<th>Type of information expected:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizations to approach for information:</th>
<th>Type of information expected:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Places to look for information:</th>
<th>Type of information expected:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUITING UP

Share
How many sources of information did you list? Which sources provided the same or overlapping information?

Process
Which information sources provided factual information? Which were sources of opinions? Which do you consider the most useful?

Generalize
How is a combination of factual and opinion information useful in comparing different clothing alternatives?

Apply
What are the advantages of checking several sources of information before making a decision?

Gearing Up

Are you “blessed” or “overloaded” with information? U.S. adults spend on average 18 minutes daily reading newspapers. School-age children watch television about 5 hours daily. At least 100 million internet users are expected by the year 2000. You are faced with lots of information and many ways to get it. How can you practice selecting information that is useful to you?

Looking Good

1. Observe a family member for a weekend and record in a journal or notebook what they say about what influences them. Notice whether they are affected by authority, friendship, flattery, humor, financial gain, the media or other things. (Example: Your parent might say, “A fellow at work recommends the XYZ auto repair shop.” A sibling might say, “My friends aren’t studying for this test because it doesn’t count much toward your grade.”)

2. Check the “Social and Human Services” section in the yellow pages of your telephone directory. Count the number of entries that provide information that could be useful to you or your family.

Youngsters born in the 1990s will have seen or heard 360,000 30-second TV commercials by the time they are 20 years old.
When the television flashes images, you get only a general impression. When you read the information panel on a cereal box, you can see and ponder all the figures in detail. How do you gather information? Do you go with your hunch or do you get serious about what is really said?

STEPPING OUT

Analyze an advertisement by locating the “weasel words,” words and phrases that are used to avoid making a direct statement and the “puffery words,” words that give an inflated opinion of the product.  
- Select several clothing ads from magazines, newspapers, or sales flyers.  
- Use highlighters or colored pencils to mark all the weasel words in one color and all the puffery words in a second color (see Gearing Up).  
- Staple the advertisements in the space below.
SUITING UP

Share
How many weasel words did you find? How many puffery words?

Process
Select one phrase that you highlighted and write two possible meanings below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weasel Words</th>
<th>Ask Yourself</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>as much as 30% off</td>
<td>30% off what—the wholesale, retail, discount, sale, or newly-created price? Is it still too expensive?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from $10 and up</td>
<td>How many items are really $10? What do the up items cost?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puffery Words</td>
<td>Ask Yourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfect gift</td>
<td>Perfect for whom? Why is it perfect? Whose opinion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>biggest sale of the year</td>
<td>How big were the other sales? What does big mean in dollars?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>superior in every way</td>
<td>Superior to what? What ways? Where's the evidence?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Generalize
Why do you think weasel and puffery words are so effective? Give an example of a purchase you or a family member made because of these misleading terms.

Apply
In addition to words, what other parts of an advertisement can mislead you? Give two examples.

Looking Good

1. Design two advertisements for a product. One advertisement promotes the product as environmentally safe. The second ad promotes the same product as low cost. Discuss the contrasting results with your family.

2. Shopping by internet and by television is growing. Check out some on-line shopping sites or channels and discuss with your helper whether weasel and puffery words are used to mislead shoppers.

Stacking Up

In a survey of kids aged 8-13, 61% said they had been misled by a toy ad. Of the 39% who were not misled, many were on the lookout for ad tricks.

—2llons, November/December 1998

21
Evaluate Alternatives:

Which Way is Up?

The fourth step in decision making is evaluating alternatives. Review what is available and what each choice means to you. Then balance quality and cost.

**Activity 9**

Where's Your Favorite T-shirt?

Everyone has favorite clothes. You know—the ones that always seem to be in the laundry basket because you just wore them. And then there are the closet clowns—the ones that might be entertaining but never look good enough to wear. Understanding why you like your favorites and why you dislike the others can help you make better choices in the future.

**STEPPING OUT**

Sort through your T-shirt collection and use the chart on page 23 to record your information. The following definitions will help.

- **Length**
  - Short (cropped above the waist)
  - Medium (slightly below the waist)
  - Long (hip length or longer)

- **Sleeve Length**
  - Short or Long or Elbow-length

- **Neck**
  - Collar or Round or Square
  - V-shaped

- **Design**
  - Briefly describe front and back

- **Rating**
  - (really hate this one) = 0
  - (hate it) 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5 (favorite)

**Decision-Making Skill:**
- Define Problem
- Consider Alternatives
- Gather Information
- Evaluate Alternatives
- Make Decision
- Evaluate Decision

**Clothing Skill:**
- Inventory and evaluate wardrobe

**Success Indicator:**
- Record T-shirt inventory and preferences
SUITING UP

Share
You made an inventory (count and description of items) of your T-shirt collection. How many T-shirts did you find? How many T-shirts got a 1 or 2 rating? How many T-shirts got a 5 rating?

Process
What did you learn about your T-shirt collection? What factors did you consider in rating your T-shirts?

Generalize
How does knowing how many T-shirts you have and the details about them help you make future clothing decisions?

Apply
What other things in your room could you inventory? Why might you want to inventory them?

T-shirt Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Fiber</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Sleeves</th>
<th>Neck</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>front: school name back: plain</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use more paper if you need it.

Gearing Up
When shopping for a T-shirt, remember to:
- choose fabric with firm, even, close knitting with rounded loops
- select cotton fiber for absorbency
- add some polyester for easy care; nylon for strength; spandex for stretchability
- check that ribbing at neck, sleeves, and waist returns to original shape when stretched
- look for matched stripes or designs at seams
- be sure seams are secure and well finished
- buy a size that allows for some shrinkage.

Looking Good
1. For every T-shirt that received a rating of 1 or 2, explain why it got a low rating and decide what to do with it.
   (Example: My green T-shirt is too small so I will give it to my younger sister.)
2. Investigate the history of T-shirts and share your findings with a class at school or summarize them in your journal.

The ever-useful T-shirt got its start as an undershirt. It got its name from the shape of the shirt when spread flat.
Many people buy clothes just because they like the color. Do you have a favorite color? Maybe you have more than one...a favorite color for sports equipment like bikes and skis; another for clothes; and still another for posters. Explore how colors work and what they mean to you.

STEPPING OUT

- Select tissue paper in three colors you like and tear the paper into small shapes.
- Spread glue over half of a white paper plate or in left half of the box below.
- Press the tissues into the glue, overlapping some of the pieces.
- Observe what happens to the colors in the tissues.
- Repeat the process on the other half of the plate or box using tissue paper in three colors you do not like.
- Hold the tissue-covered paper(s) near your face and look at yourself in the mirror.
- Compare how the two sets of colors make you look and feel. Note their position on the color wheel.

Colors I Like

Colors I Do Not Like
SUING UP

Share
What are your most-liked and least-liked colors? When you looked in the mirror, which colors did you think looked best on you?

Process
What were your favorite colors when you were younger? Which of those are flattering for you now? What colors do others say look good on you?

Generalize
How does knowing your most flattering colors affect your clothing decisions? How do seasons and fashion colors influence your choices?

Apply
Describe an outfit in a catalog that comes in colors that look good on you.

Gearing Up

The color you see depends on the light reflected from the fabric. A red fabric absorbs all the wavelengths from white light except the red, which is reflected back to the human eye. A black fabric absorbs the entire light spectrum. A white fabric reflects all light.

Each color has a different hue, value, or intensity. Hue is the name of the color (blue, green, red). Value is its lightness to darkness (shade, tint). Intensity is its brightness to dullness.

Find the three primary colors, red, yellow, and blue, on the color wheel. If you mix those colors, you get the secondary colors of orange, green, and violet. A monochromatic color scheme uses different values and intensities of only one hue (light yellow and gold). An analogous color scheme uses colors that are next to each other on the wheel (red and orange). A complementary color scheme uses colors that are on opposite sides of the color wheel (yellow and violet). A triadic scheme combines three colors that are an equal distance apart (violet, green, orange).

Looking Good

1. Colors affect our moods. Compare how you feel when you look at a cool winter scene in blues, grays, and white to the way you feel when you gaze at a warm desert scene in browns, yellows, and oranges. Use references in your school library to learn more about warm and cool colors. Which do you prefer?

Warm

Cool

2. Can you imagine Darth Vader in pink, Cinderella in bright red, or Batman in lavender? Describe a favorite book, movie, or cartoon character to your helper or a friend. Do you associate the character with a particular color? What is the connection between what the character does and the color it wears? How do the colors you wear reflect your lifestyle and your personality?

There are at least one million different colors. Thread and fabric companies usually work from a bank of about 10,000 colors.
Mapping Choices

Do you like a sweatshirt that oozes softness or a sturdy one that can survive a locker room stampede? Should it be loose or snug? Plain or plastered with logos? To find the sweatshirt that is right for you, follow your internal atlas. At every crossroad you will weigh the alternatives and take the road that is most important to you.

STEPPING OUT

Below is a score card for judging sweatshirt quality. It includes characteristics normally found in sweatshirts. Add other characteristics that matter to you.

- Gather several catalogs that offer sweatshirts for sale (you may also compare garments you own or garments in stores).
- Select three different brands of sweatshirts and record their names.
- Mark X in the appropriate column if the shirt has that characteristic.
- Circle the X if the characteristic is very important to you.
- Total the number of circled Xs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sweatshirt Characteristics</th>
<th>Brand #1</th>
<th>Brand #2</th>
<th>Brand #3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>style you like</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>color you like</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>logos or patterns you like</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>available in your size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100% cotton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cotton/polyester blend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acrylic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knit loops run up and down (lengthwise)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knit loops run side to side (widthwise)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fleecy inside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>rib knit bands and cuffs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heavy duty locking zipper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>double-stitched pockets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hood drawstring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>machine washable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wash in warm water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wash with similar colors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tumble dry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Score</strong> (Circled X marks only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUITING UP

Share
Which sweatshirt brand scored the highest? How did that differ from what you expected?

Process
Which sweatshirt characteristics are important to you? Which is the most important?

Generalize
How does comparing clothing characteristics help you evaluate different brands?

Apply
If you were purchasing a coat or jacket, which sweatshirt characteristics could you use to evaluate coat alternatives?

Gearing Up
The characteristics in the sweatshirt score card are important to you because they help you predict serviceability, comfort, and style.

- Some applied designs will crack when washed and tumbled dry.
- Cotton fibers are comfortable but usually shrink.
- Polyester and acrylic fibers pill.
- Acrylic fibers are soft but they collect static and are weakened in the dryer.
- Knits usually shrink in the direction of the loops (up and down loops shrink in length; side to side loops shrink in width).
- Fleecy inside feels soft and holds body heat.
- Rib knits have excellent stretch and recovery.
- Dark or bright colors may bleed onto lighter ones if the care label says “wash with similar colors.”

Looking Good
1. Gather old sweatshirts and make costumes for a nursery or elementary school.
2. Sweatshirts are often made from fabric described as “fleece.” Check the internet, library, and fabric stores to discover all the ways this word is used.

Stacking Up
The cotton knit pullover shirts of the 1930s became known as sweatshirts by the 1940s.
Make Decision:  
It’s Up to You

Making a decision is like ringing the bell at the fair. Take your time. Adjust your approach. Start again, consider the options and work a little harder. After a few tries, you’ll be a winner!

Trade Up or Trade Down?

Are you a bargain bug? A sales seeker? A loyal logo fan? Do you prefer to pay top dollar but have fewer things? Sound decisions depend on knowing when to grab that awesome discount and when to pay more to get more. And when to say, “No thanks, I’ll keep my money in my pocket.”

STEPPING OUT

Create your personal backpack for school, hiking, or travel from the features below. Decide how much you will pay.

Total willing to pay for this backpack is $______________

Note: If you do not use a backpack, design a sports bag, handbag, book bag, beach tote, or other similar item. You may need to create your own list of characteristics and values.

- Start with a basic model.
- Add features to your backpack by circling the characteristics on the list that you want and are willing to pay for.
- Calculate the price by totaling the cost of each feature.
- If the total is higher than you would pay for a backpack, take away some features.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic model</td>
<td>$15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory compartment</td>
<td>$5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inside organizer pocket for pens and other small items</td>
<td>$5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padded shoulder straps</td>
<td>$3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waist belt support</td>
<td>$3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web haul loop</td>
<td>$2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective tape strip</td>
<td>$2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorite brand</td>
<td>$5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorite color</td>
<td>$3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monogram</td>
<td>$5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My designer backpack</td>
<td>$______________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUITING UP

Share
Which backpack characteristics did you buy?
How much money did you spend?

Process
Which characteristics do you think are over priced? Which are truly worth the money? What patterns do you see in the characteristics you were willing to purchase?

Generalize
How can this trading game help you make real tradeoffs when you shop for clothes?

Apply
Calculate what your designer backpack would cost at 10%, 20%, and 50% discount. At what point would you consider it a bargain?

(Hint: Original cost \times \text{percent discount} = \text{savings}
Original cost - \text{savings} = \text{sale price})

$35 \times 10\% \text{ discount} = $3.50 \text{ (savings)}
$35.00 - $3.50 = $31.50 \text{ (sale price)}$

About one in three seventh and eighth graders carry backpacks that are too heavy for their size. Divide your weight by seven to estimate what weight is safe for you to carry.
—Zillions, Sept/Oct 1997

Gearing Up
Before buying a backpack, check for these features.
- Strong stitching; zig-zag stitching or multiple rows of stitching
- Firmly attached shoulder straps
- Zippers with wide flaps to keep out rain and dust
- Compartments that suit your needs
- Waist belts and sternum straps that help balance the load
- Panel or top loading according to your preference
- Well-designed, adjustable shoulder straps (Padded straps and C- or S-shaped straps improve comfort)

A proper fitting pack hangs just below your shoulders, with its bottom resting on your hips. Shoulder straps should be snug but not cut into your shoulders. The waist belt should hit about 1 in. above your hipbones. The sternum strap should feel comfortable across your chest. For the best fit, try on the backpack filled with the stuff you usually carry. If ordering the pack, make certain you can return it if it doesn't fit.

1. Shop for a real backpack. Compare the cost and features to your virtual choice.

2. Reflective tape on a pack is a safety feature for after-dark use. Talk to your helper about other ways that reflective tape is used on clothing to make the wearer more visible.

3. Discuss with your club, class, or a group of friends whether wearing designer brands is important and whether it is worth the extra cost.
To Spend or Not to Spend?

Do you have your new notebooks and pencils? Can you almost hear the locker doors slam, the bell ring, and your best friend laughing? Then it must be time for back-to-school shopping.

STEPPING OUT
You will select two complete outfits. One is just exactly what you want (cost is no problem because you are using virtual money!). The second outfit can cost no more than $30 for girls and $40 for guys, the approximate cost of a school uniform.

• Go window shopping, log-in to internet sites, or browse clothing catalogs.
• Sketch or cut and paste the outfit you want most into the first box and record the cost.
• In the second box, sketch or cut and paste an outfit that you would wear that costs no more than $30 or $40.

1 Outfit I most want

Cost $__________

2 Outfit that cost no more than $30 for girls or $40 for guys

Cost $__________
SUITING UP

Share
How do the two outfits differ?

Process
Which outfit costs the most? Do you believe the difference in cost is justified? Why or why not?

Generalize
How does virtual shopping help you improve your buying skills?

Apply
Do you think wearing uniforms to school would save you money on clothes? Why or why not?

Gearing Up

Parents and students do their back-to-school shopping at malls (32%), department stores (23%), discount stores (23%), and other (12%). To get the best deals, get to know the different retailers in your area. At what types of stores or retailers do you shop? Why?

Specialty - few types of items; personalized service
Department - many choices
Discount - discount prices; few customer services
Factory outlets - discount prices; selection includes irregulars and close-outs; few customer services
Consignment - discount prices; limited selection; clothes may need repair
Thrift - discount prices; limited selection; clothes may need repair; no guarantees; reduced store hours
Yard/garage sales - low prices; limited selection; clothes may need repair; missing labels; may require cash; time consuming
Mail order - many choices; written descriptions; convenient
TV shopping - no written descriptions; convenient
Computer shopping - may or may not have written descriptions; convenient
Mass merchandise - many items including clothing; wide range of qualities and prices

Looking Good

1. Nine percent of students wear school-sanctioned uniforms. Discuss with your helper or club the pros and cons of wearing uniforms to school. To get started, check out this website <www.ed.gov/updates/uniforms.html>

2. If you could reduce your clothing budget by 20%, how would you use that money? Record your ideas in your journal.

Stocking Up

American teens spend about $250 on back-to-school clothes. The most popular item is jeans.
—American Express Retail Index, 1998.
Evaluate Decision:
Rate Your Decision

The final step in decision making is to evaluate your choice. Are you happy? Could you have done better? Can you do a retake? An honest evaluation of your decisions will help you make better ones in the future.

Activity 14

Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down?

Your teammate scores a goal and you flash a "thumbs up" signal. You call a parent from school asking to go home with a friend but the answer is "thumbs down." Use these expressions of approval and disapproval to evaluate your clothing purchases.

STEPPING OUT

The number one consumer complaint about clothing is color change. Learn the color lingo and check the garments in your wardrobe for colorfastness.

Check the terms and definitions below if you have experienced these problems.

☐ color rubbed off (crocking)
☐ color faded when exposed to light
☐ color faded when washed or dry cleaned
☐ color changed when exposed to perspiration
☐ dark or bright color ran when wet and stained lighter-colored areas or another garment (bleeding)

- Describe a garment of your own you rate as Thumbs Down for colorfastness.
- Describe a garment of your own you rate as Thumbs Up for colorfastness.

Decision-Making Skill:
- Define Problem
- Consider Alternatives
- Gather Information
- Evaluate Alternatives
- Make Decision

Clothing Skill:
- Understand clothing color terms

Success Indicator:
- Evaluate color problems
SUITING UP

Share
What different types of color problems have you experienced?


Process
How does colorfastness or the lack of it affect your satisfaction with a garment?


Generalize
How can understanding terms for color performance help you explain clothing problems to the store’s customer service?


Apply
Read the care label on the thumbs-down garment and list any statements related to colorfastness. How can understanding these statements help you avoid future color problems?


Gearing Up

Although a good quality garment keeps its color a long time, no dye is completely colorfast. More than 40 environmental factors are known to affect color. To reduce color problems, use the garment as the manufacturer intended and follow the care label. For example, dyes used in swimsuits are more resistant to chlorine water in swimming pools than dyes used in garments not intended for swimming.

Color change can be desirable. The traditional way to remove color is by bleaching. Your ancestors used urine and dung as bleaches. You use chlorine or oxygen bleach.

Manufacturers use fabric finishes to deliberately cause color change. The color of jeans is fashionably softened by stonewashing, acidwashing, or enzyme washing.

Looking Good

1. Vat dyes have a reputation for colorfastness during laundering. Visit your school or public library to learn more about this class of dyes.

2. Compile information about these fabric finishes: stonewashing, acidwashing, and enzyme washing. Present your research to your 4-H club or other youth group.

Stocking Up

Madras is a fine cotton fabric from southern India. It is dyed with vegetable dyes that bleed, giving the fabric a distinctive muted appearance.
Great Gripe

If a garment fades, stretches beyond belief, or falls apart the first time you wash it, something is wrong. If you did nothing to cause these disasters, then you should ask the retailer or the manufacturer to refund, exchange, or repair the item.

STEPPING OUT

Returning merchandise isn't always easy. Prepare by carefully reading labels and warranties and knowing catalog and store return policies.

- Find at least two catalog order forms.
- Highlight or circle customer service and return policies.
- Staple forms into book.
  OR
- Telephone two retailers in your area and ask about their policies for returning or exchanging merchandise.
- Record what you learned in the box below.

Staple order forms or write telephone interview notes here.
SUITING UP

Share
Which policies did you find surprising? Which were familiar?

Process
List two things you can do to make returns easier.

Generalize
How does understanding customer service and return policies help you decide which clothes to buy?

Apply
How can you use your knowledge of labels to become a smarter shopper?

Looking Good

1. Ask your dry cleaner if they require customers to sign a **waiver** when they clean certain fabrics. Share your findings with your helper.

2. Make a file for your receipts, hang tags, and warranties.

Stocking Up

If you feel uncomfortable returning an item or if the store requires personal identification such as a driver's license, you should take your parent/guardian with you.

Gearing Up

Ever since 1962, U.S. consumers have had the right to demand that a wrong be corrected. With that right comes responsibilities. For example, you have the responsibility to clean a garment according to the instructions on the label. If you do and the garment fades, shrinks, or stretches you have the right to demand a refund or a new garment. To make returns easy, remember to save:
- receipt or packing slip
- garment label and hangtags
- packaging.

Also note customer service policies:
- Who should you contact with complaints?
- What time limits exist on returns?
- Does the store give refunds or only credit?
- Are sale items returnable?
- Is identification needed?
Labels pack a lot of important information in a small space. It's worth your time to find out what they have to say.

**Fiber Content Labels**

**The Laws**
- Textile Fiber Products Identification Act, 1960
- Fur Products Labeling Act, 1951
- Wool Products Labeling Act, 1939

Refer to: <www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/pubs/buspubs/thread.htm>

**Fiber Content Label Information**
- Fibers by generic names
- Percentage of each fiber in descending order by weight
- Fiber quantities of less than 5% are listed as “other fibers”
- Manufacturer's name, registered trademark, or a registered identification number
- Country of origin

**Examples of Fiber Content Labels:**
- 100% COTTON
  KOZY CLOTHES
  MADE IN SRI LANKA

- 70% COTTON/COTON
  25% ACRYLIC/ACRYLIQUE
  5% OTHER FIBRE/AUTRE FIBRE
  CUFFS/WAISTBAND REINFORCED
  WITH SPANDEX
  RN 00000 CA 00000
  MADE IN USA/FABRIQUE AU CANADA

- Super Sweaters
  WPL 00000
  CA 00000
  WOMENS/FEMME
  MEDIUM
  80% WOOL
  20% ALPACA
  MADE IN HONG KONG
Care Labels

The Law
Permanent-Care Labeling Ruling of the Federal Trade Commission, 1972

Care Label Information
- At least one recommended cleaning method
- Instructions for ironing, if ironing is needed
- State “no bleach,” if not bleach safe

Example of Care Labels:

MACHINE WASH IN COOL WATER
GENTLE CYCLE
LINE DRY
DO NOT BLEACH
COOL IRON IF NECESSARY
UNDER 100°F

Care Symbols
- May use symbols with or instead of words
- Six main symbols are WASH, BLEACH, TUMBLE DRY, DRY, IRON, and DRY CLEAN
- Dots mean heat; more dots indicate more heat
- One underline means PERMANENT PRESS CYCLE
- Two underlines mean GENTLE/DELICATE CYCLE
- An X through the symbol means DO NOT

Temperature
- Cool Cold
- Warm
- Hot

Heat Setting
- Any Bleach (when needed)
- No Heat
- Low
- Medium
- High

Dry
- Line Dry
- Dry Flat

Iron
- Drip Dry
- Medium
- High

Dry Clean
- Low
- Do Not Dry Clean

Cycle
- Normal
- Permanent Press
- Delicate/Gentle
- Other

Other
- Do Not Wash
- Hand Wash
- Do Not Iron

Wash in warm water on permanent press cycle. Use any bleach. Tumble dry with medium temperature on gentle cycle. Do not iron.
Absorbency - ability of fiber to take up water.

Acidwashing - a finishing process that creates a worn appearance by tumbling garments or fabric with pumice stones containing bleach.

Analogous color scheme - colors that are side by side on the color wheel.

A

B

Bargain - something offered or acquired at a price advantageous to the buyer.

Barter - to trade one item for another.

Bleach - chemical that removes color. Chlorine bleach is very strong; oxygen bleach is relatively safe for colorfast dyes.

Bleeding - color loss when washed or dry cleaned. Color may be picked up by other garments.

Budget - list of proposed expenses and expected receipts for a definite period.

B

C

Colorfastness - color resists fading in light, air, and laundering.

Complementary color scheme - colors that are on opposite sides of the color wheel.

Cotton - natural cellulose fiber from the cotton plant.

Crackow (crak' ow) - a long, pointed-toed shoe worn by European nobles in the 10th, 12th, 14th, and late 15th centuries as a sign of status. Also called poulaine (poo-lan').

Crocking - dye rubs off the fabric.

D

Decision-making - a process for reaching a conclusion after considering options.

Enzyme washing - a process that creates a worn appearance by washing garments or fabric in a cellulase-based solution.

F

Fade - color becomes lighter.

F

H

Hue - color name.

I

Intensity - brightness to dullness of a color.

Inventory - detailed, itemized list, report, or record of one's possessions (noun) or to make such a record (verb).

K

Knit - fabric made by forming a loop with yarn and pulling that loop through another loop.

M

Monochromatic color scheme - only one color.

N

Nylon - strong manufactured synthetic fiber made from petroleum.
P

Pill - ball of tangled fibers on the fabric surface.

Polyester - strong manufactured synthetic fiber made from ethylene glycol and terephthalic acid.

Primary colors - red, yellow, and blue.

Problem statement - sentence that clearly describes a problem. It consists of a core or main problem plus any number of descriptive characteristics.

Puffery words - words that give an inflated opinion of the product without proof.

R

Rib knit - basic single knit with excellent stretch and recovery.

S

Secondary colors - orange, green, and violet.

Spandex - manufactured elastic fiber.

Stonewashing - a finishing process that creates a worn appearance by tumbling garments or fabric with stones.

T

Triadic color scheme - three colors that are an equal distance apart on the color wheel.

Value - lightness to darkness of a color.

W

Waiver - relinquish a right, claim, or privilege.

Warranty - guarantee given to the purchaser stating that a product is reliable and free from known defects and that the seller will, without charge, repair or replace defective parts within a given time limit and under certain conditions.

Weasel words - words and phrases used to avoid making a direct statement.
Resources

Books
Clothes: For Work, Play & Display
Jacqueline Morley
Franklin Watts, Inc., 1995
ISBN: 0531157407

It's My Money: A Kid's Guide to the Green Stuff
Ann Banks
Puffin, 1993
ISBN: 0140360867

Why Do We Wear That? (Why Do We?)
Trish Cole
Franklin Watts, Inc., 1996
ISBN: 0531143961

Computer Program
Flash 'N Fashion, Diskette or CD-ROM
Media Motion Publications
PO Box 658
Cherry Hill, NY 08003-0658
609-273-8999
e-mail: infomediamotion.com

Users design clothing, explore color combinations, study fiber/textile properties, and learn construction terms. Lots of fun. Discounts for orders of five of more.

Internet Web Sites
Care labels
- Textile Industry Affairs
  <www.TextileAffairs.com>
- International Fabricare Institute Consumer Info
  <www.ifi.org/coninf4.htm>
- Soap and Detergent Association
  <www.sdahq.org>

Figure types and sizes and how to take accurate measurements
- Butterick patterns
  <www.butterick.com>
- McCall Patterns <www.mccall.com>
- Simplicity Patterns
  <www.simplicity.com>
- Vogue Patterns <www.vogue.com>

Textile and clothing
- Apparel Related Websites
  <einstein.human.cornell.edu/apparel_sites.html>
- Cotton Incorporated
  <www.cottoninc.com>
- Iowa State University Textiles and Clothing Extension
  <www.iastate.edu/~tc.ext/>
- Ohio State University Ohioline
  <www.ag.ohiostate.edu/~ohioline.html>
- Pennsylvania State University PENpages
  <www.penpages.psu.edu/>
- Woolmark <www.woolmark.com>

Magazine
Zillions
Consumer Reports
PO Box 54661
Boulder, Co 80322-4861
<www.zillionsedcenter.org>

Mail Order Supplies
Nasco Arts & Crafts
901 Janesville Ave.
PO Box 901
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538
920-563-2446
Fax: 920-563-8296
e-mail: info@nascof.com
<www.nascof.com>
Art, drawing, and craft supplies; color wheels

Videotapes
Buy Me That Too: Kid's Survival Guide to TV Advertising
Ambrose Video Publishing Inc.
800-526-4663
6th-8th graders examine ads aimed at kids.

The Thing About Money
Aid Association for Luthers
4321 N. Ballard Road
Appleton, WI 54919-0001
800-455-1025
e-mail: aalmail@aol.org
<www.aal.org>
Viewers explore how to earn and save money, comparison shop, and make a budget. 21 min. Free.

Why Ads Work: The Power of Self-Deception
Learning Seed
330 Telser Road
Lake Zurich, IL 60047
800-634-4941
Fax: 800-998-0854
e-mail: Learnseed@aol.com
Viewers focus on claims made by ads. 21 min.
Look for more than 130 publications, videos, CD's and audio tapes to support youth development programming.
Programs and activities of the Cooperative Extension Service are available to all potential clientele without regard to race, color, sex, national origin or handicap.

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