

Unit 2 Reading

Fashion Victims

<Informational Essay>

Some people spend a lot of time **scrutinizing** the image their clothes project. As the saying goes, "Clothes make the man." Some outfits are practical, **impervious** to rain or wind or sun or biting insects, while other outfits are chosen to express the **quintessence** of the wearer. People may not always be aware of it, but clothes offer hints about wealth, status, and even political standing. For as long as humans have worn clothes, **adroit** observers have discerned these clues.

[Color]

The color of clothes often tells a story. For millennia, societies around the world **extolled** the color purple. It came to represent royalty, wealth, and power because dyeing cloth purple required expensive ingredients. Ancient Greek writers were **meticulous** when describing the recipe for purple dye, a product derived from mollusks. For one gram of dye, the Greeks needed nearly 10,000 shellfish. Thus, obtaining purple clothing was not **feasible** for any but the wealthiest people. Chinese officials in the Tang Dynasty also favored purple robes, which were dyed with ingredients from a different mollusk. With the expansion of the Spanish empire in the 16th century, purple found a near rival in a deep, bright crimson, which came from a dye made of crushed cochineal insects found in Central and South America. After the British army adopted red, the soldiers sent into battle came to be known as the **belligerent** army of Redcoats.

White, in many cultures, suggests purity and spirituality. In the African countries of Nigeria and Zambia, people wear white for good luck at joyous occasions, but it is the color of bereavement in India and Asia. In Europe and the United States today, black is the color of mourning. Dyers in days gone by saturated cloth many times to ensure the darkest possible color. Because the dyeing process was labor-intensive and thus expensive, only wealthy Europeans could afford black cloth.

[Social and Political Status]

Throughout the world, rulers historically passed laws that controlled their subjects'

consumption of certain foods, building materials, and clothing. Rule breakers put their freedoms in **jeopardy**. In ancient Rome, only citizens could wear togas—and usually only in the natural off-white color of wool. Citizens running for public office could bleach their togas white, so even a **cursory** glance told the observer who was running for office. These Romans came to be known as *candidati* or “extra white” men. In Revolutionary-era France, in the late 1700s, the *sans-culottes* became a political force and participants in the country’s revolution. *Sans culottes* means “without breeches.” Wealthy people rode horseback and so wore breeches. The *sans culottes* were working class and wore trousers.

Eventually, laws that restricted consumption disappeared in every area but fashion, but this was not the result of the edicts of **benevolent** rulers. The **impetus** that drove such laws had been the desire to segregate people into visible, hierarchical categories. Regulations on fashions were designed to penalize **duplicity** among commoners, who might try to get ahead by dressing like aristocrats. For years, rulers believed that people who dressed as they wished would not be **amicable** subjects. Yet even as support for these laws turned **tepid** and they fell into disuse, purple remained the prerogative of the wellborn and wealthy until 1856. That’s when an 18-year-old Englishman named William Perkin developed an inexpensive artificial dye of intense purple, which made the color, like fashion itself, accessible to all.

Unit 2 Examples

1. Many rodeo performers are **adroit** at twirling a rope while on horseback.
2. Sometimes mediation by a neutral individual can lead to an **amicable** settlement of a dispute.
3. You are not likely to become a marathon runner if you are **averse** to strenuous exercise.
4. I did not expect such a **belligerent** answer to my request for directions.
5. After each **belligerent** signed the peace treaty, the war was declared officially over.
6. The newcomers had nothing but **benevolent** feelings toward all their neighbors.
7. The mayor gave a final **cursor**y glance at the text of her speech before mounting the podium.
8. We found it difficult to believe that our good friend could be capable of such **duplicity**.
9. Many inspiring stories and plays have been written that **extol** the heroic deeds of Joan of Arc.
10. Our city needs to develop a **feasible** plan of action for dealing with storms and other emergencies.
11. The **grimace** of the refugee in the photograph reveals the pain of homelessness.
12. Most people **grimace** at the mere sound of the dentist's drill.
13. Journalists at the time were eager to interview survivors of the Chicago **holocaust**.
14. It is best to store flour in a container with a plastic cover that is **impervious** to moisture.
15. The coming of winter gave a new **impetus** to the appeals for food and clothing for needy families.
16. Experienced mountaineers know that a single mistake can put an entire expedition in serious **jeopardy**.
17. If you have a full-time job outside the home, you may find it exceedingly difficult to be a **meticulous** housekeeper.
18. Looking at old scrapbooks and reading old letters can bring on a vague sense of **nostalgia** for days gone by and friends no longer near.
19. Risking one's own life to save the lives of others is considered the **quintessence** of selfless valor.

20. In the novel, the survivors of a nuclear explosion **retrogress** into a state of barbarism and anarchy.
21. Lawyers are paid to **scrutinize** legal papers and explain the fine print to their clients.
22. A cup of **tepid** tea will not warm you up on a chilly morning.

Unit 2 Choosing the Right Word

1. Because I was not even born when The Beatles were at the height of their popularity, their albums do not fill me with **nostalgia**.
2. It was rude of you to **grimace** so obviously when the speaker mispronounced words and made grammatical errors.
3. Though it may appear rather ordinary to the casual reader, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address is to me the **quintessence** of eloquence.
4. Some civil engineers believe that someday it may be **feasible** to derive a large part of our energy directly from the sun.
5. Providing a powerful defense force for our nation does not mean that we are taking a **belligerent** attitude toward any other nation.
6. 6. Though the peace talks began with an exchange of lofty sentiments, they soon **retrogressed** into petty squabbling and backbiting.
7. **Extolling** other people's achievements is fine, but it is no substitute for doing something remarkable of your own.
8. Anyone who is **averse** to having a girls' hockey team in our school doesn't know what's been happening in recent years with women's sports.
9. News of famine in various parts of the world has given added **impetus** to the drive to increase food production.
10. It made me very uncomfortable to see the suspicion with which the wary customs officer **scrutinized** my passport.
11. After shouting at each other rather angrily, the participants in the roundtable discussion calmed down and parted **amicably**.
12. When I saw my sister land in a tree on her first parachute jump, my interest in learning to skydive became decidedly **tepid**.
13. The lawyer's **adroit** questioning slowly but surely revealed the weaknesses in his opponent's case.
14. Carelessness in even minor details may **jeopardize** the success of a major theatrical production.

15. Do you think you are being fair in passing judgment on my poem after such a **cursory** reading?
16. His parents tried to encourage an interest in literature, music, and art, but he seemed **impervious** to such influences.
17. The nightmare that continues to haunt all thoughtful people is a nuclear **holocaust** in which our civilization might be destroyed.
18. In the Sherlock Holmes stories, we read of the evil Professor Moriarty, whose **duplicity** was almost a match for Holmes's genius.
19. On the morning of the picnic, the sky was gray and overcast, but suddenly the sun came out and smiled on us **benevolently**.
20. I knew you would be **meticulous** in caring for my plants, but I did not expect you to water them with a medicine dropper!
21. After the dictator walked out of the peace talks, the visiting diplomat tried to carry on **amicable** negotiations between the two nations.
22. Many people become **nostalgic** when they watch black and white movies and old serial reruns on television.
23. How many people actually enjoy drinking **tepid** milk before bedtime even though it is highly recommended to ease digestion?
24. **Impervious** to everything except a rare radioactive isotope found deep in the earth, the superhero battled the giant aliens to save the world.
25. Those who are **averse** to seafood may enjoy the many other menu options.

Unit 2 Synonyms

1. Her **antipathetic** response to the homeless man: **averse**
2. A shocking case of **fraud**: **duplicity**
3. Rescued dozens of people from the **blazing inferno**: **holocaust**
4. The intimidating **scowl** on his face: **grimace**
5. Brief spell of **yearning**: **nostalgia**
6. Staged a **painstaking** re-creation of a famous battle: **meticulous**
7. Respond with a **confrontational** voice: **belligerent**
8. Not **practicable** during the winter months: **feasible**
9. **Relapse** to a pattern of self-destructive behavior: **retrogress**
10. **Imperilment** caused by risky behavior: **jeopardy**

Unit 2 Antonyms

1. **Smiled broadly** at the sight of her grandchild: **grimaced**
2. The **enthusiastic** response of the fans: **tepid**
3. An **inundation** of the valley after the storm: **holocaust**
4. Saw them **develop** into a successful team: **retrogress**
5. A **forward-looking approach** to life.: **nostalgia**

Unit 2 Completing the Sentence

1. If, as you claim, you really like raw oysters, why do you make such an eloquent **grimace** every time you swallow one?
2. Because I was looking forward to a hot bath, I was disappointed at the feeble stream of **tepid** water that flowed into the tub.
3. An expert from the museum **scrutinized** the painting, looking for telltale signs that would prove it to be genuine or expose it as a forgery.
4. My teacher counseled me to keep up my studies, or my performance in class might once again **retrogress** into mediocrity.
5. If you are **averse** to hard study and intensive reading, how do you expect to get through law school?
6. Only when we learned that the embezzler had tried to cast suspicion on his innocent partner did we realize the extent of his **duplicity**.
7. Although he shows no particular talent as a worker, he is exceptionally **adroit** at finding excuses for not doing his job.
8. We must not forget the millions of people who were ruthlessly slaughtered by the Nazis in the **holocaust** of World War II.
9. Our physical education instructor **extolled** the virtues of regular exercise.
10. What good is a plastic raincoat that is **impervious** to water if it also prevents any body heat from escaping?
11. When I realized how bad the brakes of the old car were, I feared that our lives were in **jeopardy**.
12. Although the ranchers and miners had been feuding over water rights for years, the sheriff tried to maintain **amicable** relations with both parties.
13. For centuries, Switzerland has avoided becoming a **belligerent** in the conflicts that have scarred the rest of Europe.
14. When I heard you speaking French so fluently, my determination to master that language received a fresh **impetus**.

15. As the old soldier watched the parade, he was suddenly overcome with **nostalgia** for the youthful years he spent in the army.
16. A triple reverse looks mighty impressive on the chalkboard, but I doubt that the play will prove **feasible** on the football field.
17. The accountant's records—neat, accurate, and complete in every respect—show that she is a most **meticulous** worker.
18. King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table were the **quintessence** of chivalry.
19. A **cursory** examination of my luggage was enough to show me that someone had been tampering with it.
20. No one doubted the **benevolent** intentions of the program for community improvement, but it was ruined by mismanagement.

Unit 2 Vocabulary in Context (Literary Text)

1. „[T]he court, guiding itself by the general principles of evidence...is **averse** from swerving at particular instances. And this steadfast adherence to principle, with rigorous disregard of the conflicting exception, is a sure mode of attaining the maximum of attainable truth.... (from “The Mystery of Marie Roget”)

When people are **averse** to something, they are typically

- a. annoyed by it. **b. resistant to it.** c. committed to it. d. resigned to it.

2. Presently I took a candle, and seating myself at the other end of the room, proceeded to **scrutinize** the parchment more closely, (from “The Gold Bug”)

To **scrutinize** a document means to

- a. translate it b. revise it c. illustrate it. **d. analyze it**

3. The Parisian police, so much **extolled** for acumen, are cunning, but no more.... The results attained by them...for the most part, are brought about by simple diligence and activity, (from “The Murders in the Rue Morgue”)

People who are **extolled** for a trait are generally

- a. obeyed b. mocked **c. respected** d. ignored

4. It is probable that the police...examined the back of the tenement; but, if so...they did not perceive this great breadth itself, or, at all events, failed to take it into due consideration. In fact, having once satisfied themselves that no egress could have been made in this quarter, they would naturally bestow here a very **cursory** examination, (from "The Murders in the Rue Morgue")

A **cursory** exam is one that is definitely NOT

- a. hurried b. leisurely c. limited **d. thorough**

5. In the afternoon we all called again to see the patient. His condition remained precisely the same. We had now some discussion as to the propriety and **feasibility** of awakening him; but we had little difficulty in agreeing that no good purpose would be served by so doing, (from "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar")

People discuss the **feasibility** of an action to determine whether it is

- a. achievable** b. complex c. genuine d. productive

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[Color]

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