

Fashion as Resistance

During the United States' entry into World War II, agricultural and industrial efforts to meet agricultural and labor demands encouraged minorities from across the country and Bracero Program farm laborers to move across state and national borders to the centers of production. The increase in cultural and racial diversity entailed tensions between the dominant groups enforcing segregation and discrimination through Jim Crow laws and the minoritized groups who suffered under them. In June of 1943, Los Angeles, as a major shipping and Navy port, became a powder keg as predominantly white sailors unfamiliar with the Chicano and Mexican American communities already living in the area.

The zoot suit, as a symbol of ethnic pride and protest social conventions for Mexican Americans and Chicano/a/x youth, became the object of patriotic and racial violence by the U.S. military and local police. This unit explores understanding how minorities and youth use clothing as expressions of solidarity and pride among themselves, but also as a resistance to participating in the dominant social and cultural.

Compelling Question	How did Pachuco culture and the Zoot Suit Riots mirror the social dynamics and tensions in urban areas of that era?		
Standards and Practices	<p><i>9-12.US.55. Examine immigration policy in the U.S. over time</i></p> <p><i>Geo.9. Present adaptations of arguments and explanations that feature provocative ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies and digital technologies.</i></p> <p><i>9-12. Civ.40. Analyze historical inequalities and evaluate proposed solutions to correct them.</i></p> <p><i>9-12.US.88. Describe how historical events and developments shaped human processes and systems in World War I.</i></p> <p><i>9-12. Civ.41. Apply an effective questioning strategy to evaluate sources intended to inform the public and consider the effects of choices made by media organizations (including social internet platforms), on elections and social movements.</i></p> <p><i>9-12 Econ.24. Critique Inequalities that exist in Economic systems</i></p> <p><i>9-12.ECI.21. Investigate how identity groups and society address systemic inequity through individual actions, individual champions, social movements, and local community, national, and global advocacy.</i></p>		
Staging the Question	What does what you wear say about you? How do others perceive you by your fashion choices?		
Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3	

<p>What responsibility do state and media entities have in portraying incidences or narratives of crime?</p> <p>What other national and international events were occurring in the mid 1940s that agitated the events leading to the Zoot Suit Riots and violence against Pachucos?</p>	<p>How does youth culture generate discourse or discord between families?</p> <p>How did Pachuco culture resist and follow dominant social norms at the time?</p>	<p>What is the significance and symbolism of the zoot suit?</p> <p>How was Los Angeles Pachuco culture and fashion influenced by Black culture and Mexican culture from the Southwest?</p>
<p>Formative Performance Task</p>	<p>Formative Performance Task</p>	<p>Formative Performance Task</p>
<p><i>Examine and critique primary sources for biased and prejudicial language.</i></p> <p><i>Write a letter to the editor from one of the articles from the perspective of a family member, a witness to the events, or a participant in the Zoot Suit Riots.</i></p> <p><i>**Read three articles and compare and contrast three newspaper clippings and explain how similar or contrasting themes continue to affect Mexican or other groups of migrant laborers as they are described in the media.</i></p>	<p><i>Challenge the dominant narratives which characterize “pachuco” culture negatively based on mistrust and misunderstanding with the empathy and understanding that comes from reading letters and personal stories of the participants in these events</i></p>	<p><i>Create a presentation that articulates how fashion is used as a form of resistance. You can either explain and analyze the symbolism behind one group’s fashion decisions or create your own fashion statement that promotes a belief or value that you hold personally or related to a cultural group to which you belong.</i></p>
<p>Featured Sources</p>	<p>Featured Sources</p>	<p>Featured Sources</p>
<p><u>Battle Between Marines and Pachucos</u></p> <p><u>Youth Gangs Leading Cause of Delinquencies</u></p> <p><u>Not a Race Issue, Mayor Says</u></p> <p><u>28 Zoot Suiters Seized</u></p> <p><u>City, Navy Clamp Lid on Zoot Suit Warfare</u></p> <p>**<u>Los Angeles Zoot: Race "Riot," the Pachuco, and Black Music Culture</u></p> <p>**<u>Chicago Daily Turbine: Mexico Studies Zoot Suit Riots to the U.S.</u></p>	<p><u>How the Zoot Suit Became a Symbol of Resistance for Mexican-American People</u></p> <p><u>How Anti-Mexican Racism in L.A. Caused the Zoot Suit Riots</u></p> <p><u>"Pachucos in the Making": Roots of the Zoot</u></p> <p><u>The Rise of Riots</u></p> <p><u>Remembering the Zoot Suit Riots</u></p> <p><u>From El Paso to Harlem: Troy Montes-Michie explores the subversive history of the zoot suit</u></p>	<p><u>Zoot Suit Riots: After 75 years, L.A. looks back on a violent summer</u></p> <p><u>Remembering the Zoot Suit Riots</u></p> <p><u>Zoot Suit Culture Zoot Suit Riots</u></p> <p>**<u>The El Paso Connection</u></p> <p>**<u>The Eternal Zoot Suit</u></p> <p>**denotes new resource or activity</p>