

GROUPWORK – Our clothes can express our opinions – CORRIGÉ

DOC A – Tignons

- **Presentation:** This document is an educational article from the website wams.nyhistory.org (no author or date is given). It is illustrated with a painting from 1844 and photos of Alicia Keys and Lauryn Hill. It deals with how free Black women in colonial Louisiana turned a discriminatory law into a protest.
- **Summary:** First of all, the article explains that in 1786 the governor, under Spanish rule, forced free Black women to wear a tignon (a head scarf worn by enslaved women). He wanted to make them different from white women, because white men found them too attractive. Secondly, the women obeyed, but they used colourful fabrics, feathers and jewels. As a result, the tignon became a mark of beauty, wealth and creativity. What's more, the photos show that this fashion is still alive today.
- **Link:** Clothes can express an opinion when people transform a symbol of oppression into a symbol of pride: the tignon became a silent rebellion against the colonial government.

DOC B – Hippie fashion

- **Presentation:** This document is an article from the website thecollector.com (no author or date is given). The photo shows the musical *Hair* (San Francisco, 2010). It is about hippie clothes and the protest against the Vietnam War.
- **Summary:** The author states that hippies wore colourful clothes, bell-bottom pants, tie-dye and paisley patterns, and black armbands. Each item had a meaning: the clothes symbolised life, love and peace, and the armbands showed mourning for people who died in the war. Furthermore, bell-bottoms represented defiance against society's standards. In addition, hippies disapproved of the draft and promoted a non-violent protest.
- **Link:** Clothes can express political opinions: hippies showed their refusal of war and their wish for peace through what they wore.

DOC C – Black Panthers and anti-apartheid movement

- **Presentation:** This document is an informative article from the website fashionology.in (no author or date is given), with a photo of Black Panthers raising their fists. It deals with clothes as symbols of resistance against racial oppression in the USA and in South Africa.
- **Summary:** First of all, the author explains that during the Civil Rights Movement the Black Panthers wore black leather jackets, a symbol of resistance and solidarity. They also wore African clothes, such as dashikis, to reclaim their roots in a predominantly white society. Secondly, the author states that in South Africa the ANC encouraged people to wear traditional African clothes against apartheid.
- **Link:** Clothes can express an opinion by showing pride in a cultural identity and solidarity against racism.

DOC D – Women's liberation

- **Presentation:** This document is an excerpt from an online article on teenvogue.com (no author or date is given), with a photo of women demonstrating. It is about how the women's liberation movement used fashion to challenge beauty standards.
- **Summary:** The author points out that activists wanted to criticise society's ideas about how women should look. For instance, in 1968, at the Miss America Pageant (a beauty contest) in Atlantic City, they threw bras, lipstick, stockings and girdles into a trash can. They believed these items were forced on women to look "perfectly feminine".
- **Link:** Clothes can express an opinion even when people reject them: throwing away these items was a way to denounce beauty standards and ask for freedom.