

Conscious Couture:

Exploring Renewable Energy and Up-Cycling Through Fashion

Created by

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Grades and Subject Area

Grades 11 & 12

Drama

Duration

Three 75-minute periods

Hope Statement

We hope that students find inspiration from the environment and discover the ways that the natural world can connect to theatre. Our purpose for this lesson is to promote sustainable practices in the theatre. We are sourcing inspiration from local youth art to show students how their work can create impactful change.

Acknowledgements



This lesson was created by **teacher candidates in the Environmental Education concentration** of the Faculty of Education, Queen's University (2024-25), instructed by **Dr. Heather McGregor**. The lesson belongs to a set of lessons created by the class to demonstrate how teachers can be inspired in their climate teaching by youth-created art or stories. **The art and stories created by youth (grades 7-12)** and these lessons aim to help students imagine a positive future in the face of climate change—a future without the use of fossil fuels, where biodiversity is restored, and where humans live in caring communities. The art and stories in these lessons were created for the [Youth Imagine the Future](#) festival in Kingston, Ontario.

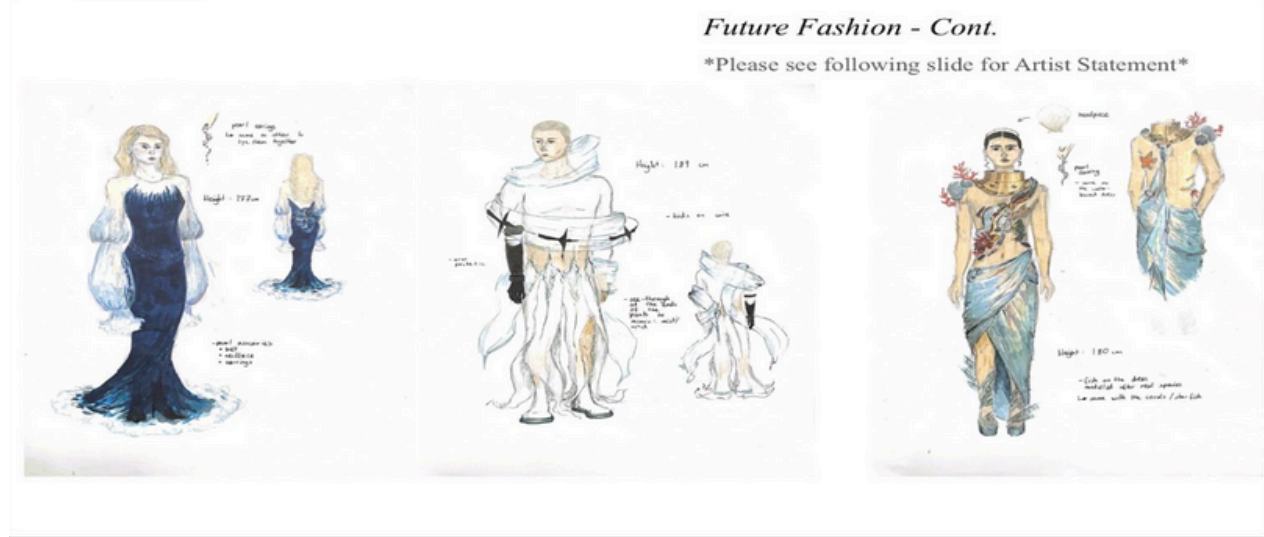
Thanks to **Jerri Jerreat and the Youth Imagine the Future team** for supporting this lesson plan initiative, and securing permission to use these art works and stories.

Thanks to **April McInnes** for designing the lesson plan template.

Thanks to the **Environmental Sustainability Committee of the Faculty of Education** for their support.

We hope teachers will be as inspired by young people's visions of the future as we are!

Our Inspiration



Artist Statement - Future Fashion by Lisa Luckas

Future Fashion: These clothing designs resemble the natural energy sources and the biodiversity of our planet as well as the diversity of people on our earth. For “renewable energy” the first three designs each resemble an energy source which are water, sun, and wind. “Biodiversity” is captured in the next designs with diversity in sea life, in Earth and plants, and in animals living in the area or more specifically, pollinators. Social Justice is conveyed through the models that wear the designs. They all have different body types, heights, and ethnicities. One has an arm prosthetic. I hope the people seeing my work don't only see the clothing I drew but also the people that wear them. There are also connections between these designs. For example, the pearl earrings in the first and fourth design tie the two “water” dresses together. There is a connection between the fifth and sixth designs where I tried to assemble some kind of wedding featuring a veil and overall darker outfit for the man and a white suit, a shawl similar to the veil, and a flower necklace instead of a tie for the woman. In this example I represent the importance of the relationship between plants and pollinators and also play with the gender ideas. The woman wears the suit and the overall concept of pollinators and the man wear the veil and the plant or flower concept.

Lesson Context

Guiding Question

How can theatre production become more sustainable by integrating renewable energy and up-cycling practices and be used as a vehicle for environmental stewardship awareness?

Curriculum Objectives

DRAMA, ADA3M

- B2.2 identify ways in which drama can influence personal growth, relationships with others, and aesthetic judgement
- B2.3: Identify ways in which drama can influence the broader community
- C3.1: Identify and follow safe and ethical practices in all drama activities

DRAMA, ADA4M

- B2.3 describe ways in which drama can support or influence school and/or local community goals (e.g., describe the role of Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed in improving conditions and raising awareness in marginalized communities; explain why a protest march is a form of theatre)
- C3.1: identify and follow safe and ethical practices in all drama activities

(*The Arts*, 2010)

Our Environmental/Climate-focused Learning Outcome:

Students will learn how to sustainably up-cycle materials for costume creations from within the community---inspired by renewable energy sources---and understand the impact of theatre on the environment.

Preamble or Lesson Overview

Students will perform a fashion show of costume pieces they design and create that highlight renewable energy sources (e.g., wind, hydro, geothermal, etc.) inspired by the *Future Fashion* artwork. Students will be using recycled materials to bring awareness to the environmental impact of theatre.

Period 1: Planning/Group Creation: Present PowerPoint on renewable energy and have students create vision boards in groups to gain inspiration for costume creation.

Period 2: Creation of Elements: Students will design their costume (1 costume per group) and prepare for the runway show.

Period 3: Final Performance: Students will perform, complete peer feedback, and engage in discussion regarding sustainability in theatre.

All materials are linked in lesson plans. Click on [underlined](#) words to access.

Lesson #1

(75 mins)

Materials Required

- [PowerPoint](#) (see [Appendix A1.1](#))
- [Assignment Outline](#) (see [Appendix A1.2](#))
- [Final Rubric](#) (see [Appendix A1.3](#))
- [Collage example](#)
- Large pieces of cardboard
- Scissors
- Magazines
- Glue

Explain (20 mins)

[PowerPoint](#)

- Present slideshow to students and discuss prompts as they appear in the slides

Introduce Assignment

Explain (20 mins)

- Introduce the assignment using [Assignment Outline](#) (it can be projected onto the board)
- Answer any questions students may have
- Have students form groups of 4 - 5 (depending on class size) based on which of the 4 renewable energy sources they liked the best from the slideshow for their costume creation
- Hand out [Final Rubric](#) to each group and review it with the class

Engage (30 mins: 15 mins collage; 15 mins sketch)

Collage:

- Each group will be given a set of magazines, glue, scissors, and a large piece of cardboard.
- They will cut out images and words that relate to their chosen renewable resource and glue them to their cardboard in a collage style to create a vision board for their costume. This will act as their inspiration for their upcoming design project.
- Show students [collage examples](#)
- You may choose to play [Project Runway Clip](#) as students are working

Sketch:

- Use costume design template in [Assignment Outline](#)
- Using collage as inspiration, create a rough sketch of a costume design

Remote or alternate adaptation: Create a shared Pinterest board and design on Google Drawings or Canva.

Conclusion (5 mins)

- Clean up materials
- Before leaving, remind students to bring in items for the following day to use in costume creation, such as empty toilet paper rolls, cardboard boxes, scrap fabric, plastic grocery bags, egg cartons, empty plastic water bottles, food wrappers, newspaper, magazines, repurposed items (toys, school supplies, cards, holiday decorations, etc.) and whatever else they can think of.
- Remind them to not purchase any materials or bring in clothes they already own unless they are going to deconstruct or up-cycle something for class the following day.

Lesson #2

(75 mins)

Materials Required

- Completed collages
- Sketch Handout in [Assignment Outline](#)
- Eco-Action Plan in [Assignment Outline](#)
- Unconventional materials (examples in [Assignment Outline](#))
- Miscellaneous fabrics, art supplies, hot glue guns, tape
- Pens, pencils, pencil crayons, markers

Explain (10 mins)

- Using their collages and sketch outlines as a stepping stone into the garment creation process, students will start piecing together their creation using their unconventional materials from home and school.
- Students are encouraged to use the full range of materials, including art supplies such as tape and glue guns to most effectively construct their pieces.
- Ideas change, so encourage students to alter their creations from their original sketch.
- During the construction process, students should start thinking about their “eco-action plans” and how they plan to incorporate them into their presentations.

Engage (55 mins)

- Students can use any supplies and materials provided for them as well as any materials that other groups may be able to share.
- Students should have their collages, sketch outlines, and eco-action plans readily available. The eco-action plan should be worked on as they work on their garment.
- Students are encouraged to delegate roles as they feel necessary, or work with a more holistic approach (e.g., the constructor, the editor, the documenter).
- Circulate amongst groups and pose planning/discussion questions to each group: How does your renewable energy source inform colours? Design elements? Wearability? The overall garment?
- Consider screening [RuPaul’s Drag Race Drag on a Dime Clip](#) and/or [Project Runway Unconventional Materials Challenge](#) in the background for inspiration as students work. Reference the “fun” in the project, stressing that eco-conscious thinking can be accessible to anyone.

Conclusion (10 mins)

Clean up materials and think of next steps: Do groups need more materials? Anything from home? Are they happy with their design? Do they need to do more research on their renewable energy source? Have they completed/almost completed their eco-action plans? Who will be modelling? Who will be speaking?

Once materials are put away, gather in a circle. Ask the class how they feel on a scale of 1-10 as they move towards the runway presentation. Stress the significance of participation in this initiative rather than the final outcome of their actual garment.

Lesson #3

(75 mins)

Materials Required

- [Final Rubric](#)
- [Peer Reflection Handout](#) (see [Appendix A1.4](#))
- [Sign-Up Sheet for Performance Order](#) (see [Appendix A1.5](#))

Explain (10 mins)

The teacher should write the finalized order for the runway on the board and remind students of how the lesson will proceed. Provide a verbal description of expectations for the runway show.

Students will be given 15 minutes to prepare for the runway show, which should include:

- Getting their model into costume
- Last-minute rehearsing of commentary for runway walk
- Handing in any last minute submissions of written assignment work

Preparation and Performance (25 mins)

- Quick review/reminder of audience etiquette:
 - Audience members should be quiet and respectful, applauding each costume runway
- All models will line up backstage in performance order with their designated speaker from their group
- Remaining group members will be seated in the audience.
- Students in the audience will be handed out a peer reflection sheet to fill out for each costume presented in the runway.
- Students perform runway walk.

Discussion (25 mins)

- The audience members will have the chance to verbally share their positive feedback with the class for each group.
- Question #1: What did you learn about environmental sustainability throughout your artistic process?
- Question #2: How can we recycle/up-cycle our garments? (donation, recycling, re-using costume pieces/materials, etc.)

Conclusion (15 mins)

- Students should hand in their peer reflections as well as their costume piece with the teacher for further admiration and reference while they finish grading.
- All students should help clean up the space that was used for the runway show and put their materials/items away.

Assessment and Accommodation

Assessment Description:

- Students will present a handmade costume piece in a fashion show depicting a renewable energy source using at least two pieces of unconventional materials
- Students will provide rationale on how their piece reflects renewable resources
- Students will provide peer assessments to each other during the fashion show
- Each group will create a draft sketch and an inspiration board
- Marking for costume is holistic and based on interpretation of renewable resource and use of unconventional materials
- Assignment will be marked based on the rubric (see [Appendix A1.3](#))

Accommodation Suggestion

- Separate rehearsal and creation spaces
- Online adaptations in vision board and sketch creation
- Performing in front of smaller audiences
- Noise cancelling headphones
- One-on-one consult instead of in front of class review
- No flashing lights
- Subtitles for slideshow in Lesson #1
- Ability to type answers, use text-to-speech, and/or use Google Translate for “Eco Action Plan” and all other written components

Appendix A

Appendix A1.1: [PowerPoint](#)



Appendix A1.2: [Assignment Outline](#)

CONSCIOUS COUTURE:
EXPLORING RENEWABLE ENERGY
AND UP-CYCLING THROUGH FASHION

Mission: Design and construct a unique garment inspired by a renewable energy source. Using unconventional materials (basically anything you can find), you will challenge the ways we think about art and fashion as a political statement. We will be simulating a runway showcase, and discussing ways to promote sustainable practices in the theatre.

Guidelines:

1. Choose a **renewable energy source** (solar, wind, hydro, geothermal, etc.)
2. **Create an inspiration collage:** Using magazines, find inspirations in colours, shapes, and current fashion that represents your renewable energy source.
3. **Create a sketch:** On your "sketch outline," include the title of your renewable energy source, a sketch of your garment, and a list of your necessary materials.
4. **Create your garment:** You will have 3 work periods to construct, edit, and finalize your final piece. Your garment should **integrate at least 2 unconventional materials** in a way that challenges ideals of fast fashion and wearability. Lean into how up-cycling can be both visually and environmentally impactful. **DO NOT use store-bought materials!** Stick to unconventional, recycled and re-purposed materials like **empty toilet paper rolls, cardboard boxes, scrap fabric, plastic grocery bags, egg cartons, empty plastic water bottles, food wrappers, newspaper, magazines, repurposed items (toys, school supplies, cards, holiday decorations, etc.).** Use as many unconventional/recycled materials on your garment. We are re-defining fashion!
5. **Create an eco-action plan:** Consider: what unconventional materials have you used? How will you recycle them? Use in future? Include 1 piece of research that contributes to sustainability and eco-conscious art.
6. **Final presentation:** will take place on **Friday**. Feel free to invite classmates or faculty! Select a group member to model your garment. Create a script that highlights your eco-action plan

You will NOT be assessed on the construction of their garment, but rather your innovation, creativity, thoughtfulness, and 'eco-consciousness' of your project.

Appendix A1.3: [Assignment Rubric](#)

Fashion Show Rubric	
50 points	
Group Members: _____	
1. Costume Piece: Includes unconventional materials and shows proper construction and is safe for the model to wear. The piece is clearly inspired by renewable energy, embodying an example of how up-cycling can be visually and environmentally impactful.	2 4 6 8 10
2. Collaboration: Group members use rehearsal time productively, share individual ideas respectfully with one another, and work efficiently to finalize ideas on drafts. Each student of the group has a specific role with responsibilities that fit their individual interests.	2 4 6 8 10
3. Final Presentation: Group members were present for the performance, modelled respectful audience etiquette, and was organized/well prepared for the runway show. The group members have successfully incorporated their eco-action plan in their commentary during the runway walk.	1 2 3 4 5

4. Draft/Planning: A completed vision board, a clear sketch/drawing that includes a costume plan and title of costume piece, short script of commentary (maximum 5 lines/comments), completed research application, a short rationale of the leaning behind their design.	1 2 3 4 5
5. Knowledge/Rationale: Group has effectively communicated their artistic choices to their teacher through the work periods. Students have explained their artistic process in their rationale which includes inspiration that has guided their decision making.	2 4 6 8 10
Comments:	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>	
Final Score: ____/50	

Appendix A1.4: [Peer Reflection Handout](#)

Peer Reflection Handout	
Your Name: _____	
Group Members:	_____
I appreciated...	_____
_____	_____
Group Members:	_____
I appreciated...	_____
_____	_____
Group Members:	_____
I appreciated...	_____
_____	_____
Group Members:	_____
I appreciated...	_____
_____	_____
Group Members:	_____
I appreciated...	_____
_____	_____

Appendix A1.5: [Performance Sign-up Sheet](#)

Order #:	Group names	Renewable energy source:
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

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