

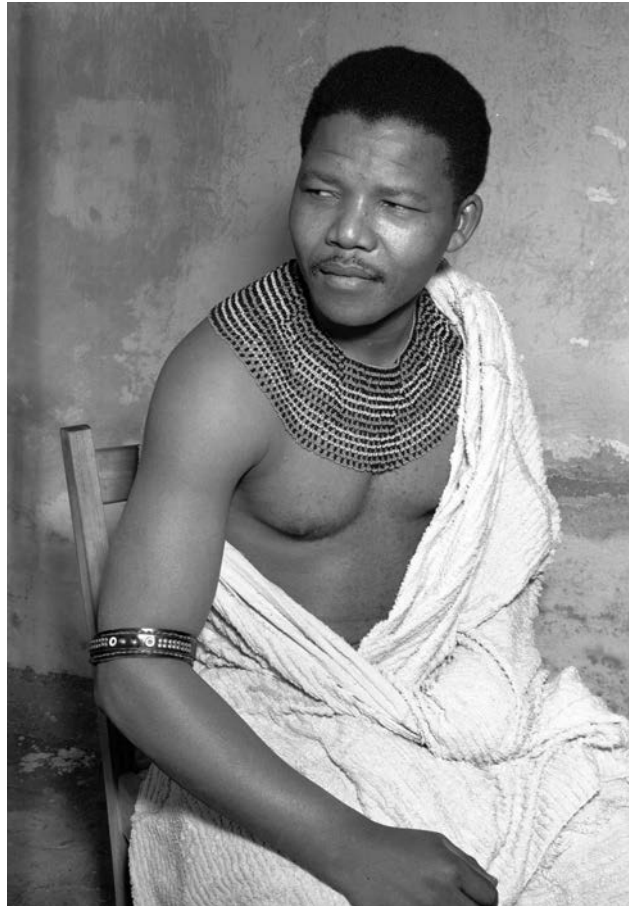
Clothing and identity

What does our clothing say about ourselves?

Nelson Mandela used clothing at various, significant points in his life to make particular statements about himself, his heritage, and the Freedom Struggle. He also dressed to communicate leadership and promote messages of peace and unity. Clothing was also used by others to symbolise his transformation from boyhood to manhood, to humiliate him while he was in prison, and to show the respect with which he was regarded as a global leader.

Students can use the [Collecting evidence and ideas](#) grid to write or sketch different examples from their visit to *Nelson Mandela: The Official Exhibition* that they think are important or interesting. They could combine this with the [What shaped Nelson Mandela?](#) resource to explore identity further.

Back at school they could use their findings for creative projects, such as designing a T-shirt emblem, a hat or headdress or their own personal alternative school uniform. How does this reflect their identity? Which aspects of themselves do they want to project or hide? What messages do they want their clothing to convey? Who to?



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