You Are What You Wear

Activity 1: Introduction

1. Is there a dress code (rules about what you may wear) at your school?
2. Are there different rules for boys and girls?
3. Have you or someone you know ever been sent home for wearing something that broke the dress code? If so, what broke the dress code?
4. Does it feel unfair to have a dress code?

Activity 2: Uniforms at School











Look at the pictures of the different school uniforms all over the world. **What do you notice?** With a partner, make notes of some observations about what the students are wearing and who is wearing what type of clothing.

Activity 3: Reading Comprehension

https://www.garmentprinting.co.uk/blog/school-uniform-pros-and-cons/

Read the pros and cons given in this excerpt of an article by Garment Printing Co. Think about what arguments you agree and disagree with.

Pros for School Uniform

Smartness

Wearing a uniform to school every day creates a sense of smartness and presentation among students, making them look more professional to the general public and encouraging them to take pride in their own appearance.

Level playing field

Since everyone is required to wear the same clothes, there is no controversy over what children are wearing and the socioeconomic barriers between different students can be eliminated, reducing the probability of bullying.

Sense of inclusivity

When all students are dressed the same, they will instinctively feel part of a team and generate a greater sense of community among themselves. This promotes good relations with one another and enhances their abilities to work in a team.

Discipline

Kids who are clothed in a uniform are likely to be conscious that they are representing their school, which in turn may make them more disposed to attending their classes and behaving.

Saves time

If there's a uniform policy in place at the school, parents do not have to waste time every morning deciding what their children will wear. At the same time, a standard dress code is far easier for teachers to enforce if uniforms are in place.

Saves money

A recent study found that the cost for parents who had to buy a simple uniform was, on average, £88.05 per outfit, where the cost increased to £113 for those who were forced to create their own wardrobe for children.

Cons for School Uniform

Individuality
A student who must wear a uniform is less able to express their own sense of individuality, instead being taught to conform to the expectations which society places upon them.

Sexism
Any school which adopts a uniform policy that designates different articles of clothing for different genders (such as trousers for boys and skirts for girls) stops the opportunity for people to express themselves as they want and could make mental health issues worse.

Autonomy
When students are dictated what they can and cannot wear, they may avoid making decisions for themselves and delay transitioning from an adolescent into an adult, thus impacting negatively on their ability to become autonomous.

Lump sum expense
Although uniforms are actually cheaper than normal clothes when priced individually, a child's everyday wardrobe is normally built up over time. School uniforms, on the other hand, generally constitute a one-off but not inconsequential expense, which can be hard on a family's budget.

Performance
Despite the general perception that uniforms can help improve student grade averages and exam performance, there is little to no scientific evidence to back this up. Achievement is more linked to quality of teaching and individual ability than any dress code.

Student opinion
Uniforms are fairly omnipresent in the UK, but are less common in the United States – and students themselves are heavily opposed to their introduction. A 2017 survey found that 82% of those asked said they would prefer to wear their own choice of clothes.

Questions to think about:

1. Do you agree with the positives (the pros) in this list?
2. Do you agree with the negatives (the cons)?
3. Can you think of other reasons why school uniforms are positive or negative?
4. What would you choose if you could? Uniforms or regular clothes?

Activity 4: Class Debate
Now that we have looked at school uniforms around the world and seen some reasons why certain countries use them. You will divide into two groups: Pro School Uniforms and Anti-School Uniforms.
With your group, you will prepare an opening argument and response to the opposing group. Use the examples from the lesson and the reasons listed in the article to help you. Use the following expressions to present your viewpoint:

Stating an opinion
* The way I see it...
* In my opinion...
* If you want my honest opinion...
* According to this article...
* As far as I'm concerned...
* If you ask me…
* The issue is that
* The danger is that
* When all is said and done
* I feel/ believe that
* I believe that
* Obviously
* Essentially
* Ultimately
* Basically
* To my mind
* It seems to me that
* It's obvious that
* Clearly

Asking for an opinion
* What's your idea?
* What are your thoughts on all of this?
* How do you feel about that?
* Do you have anything to say about this?
* What do you think?
* Do you agree?

Expressing agreement
* I agree with you 100 percent.
* I couldn't agree with you more.
* That's so true.
* You're absolutely right.
* Absolutely. / Exactly
* That's exactly how I feel.
* I'm afraid I agree with James.
* No doubt about it.
* I suppose so. / I guess so.
* You have a point there.
* Clearly / Obviously
* That seems obvious to me

Expressing disagreement
* I would have to disagree with that.
* That doesn't seem right
* I don't think that can be true
* That's clearly not the case.
* That is not correct, actually.
* I don't think so.
* No way.
* I'm afraid I disagree.
* I totally disagree.
* I'd say the exact opposite.
* Not necessarily.
* That's not always true.
* That's not always the case.
* No, I'm not so sure about that.
* That's completely untrue.

Activity 5: Design a School Uniform

With a partner or group, design a school uniform and dress code rules for your own school! When you draw your design, make sure to label the clothing pieces.
Here are some pieces of clothing you might include:

- Blazer
- Necktie
- Button-down / Blouse
- Trousers
- Pleated Skirt
- Stockings
- Shoes









