

HOW YOUR APPEARANCE COMMUNICATES YOUR ATTITUDE

THE GOAL



A person's appearance is the first thing most people notice and therefore it is the first impression that can be made. The students need to learn that their attire, grooming, and overall appearance are very specific communicators of their self-concept and attitude. They also need to understand that there are certain situations that call for certain types of appearances and when these expectations are not met there will be consequences.

THE OBJECTIVE

This exercise will help the students define how their appearance is perceived by others as well as the message it conveys.

• EXERCISE •

- 1 Ask the students to think of and share their three favorite female performers, such as musicians or movie stars. Write the identified names on the board. Next, ask them to identify their three favorite male performers, such as musicians or movie stars and write these on the board as well.
- 2 Ask the students to identify three family members they respect and care about and create a column for these people.
- 3 Now ask the students to identify three people they believe are three of the most respected people in the country. Help them think of people such as the president or a news person etc. Again, write these names on the board under a separate heading.
- 4 Now ask the students to look at the list and give a reasons why they chose these people as their favorite performers, most respected friend or family members, and most respected Americans.
- 5 Ask the students to go through the lists and describe the physical appearance of each person including the types of clothes they wear. Have the students give a full description of their appearance.

6 After the students have finished ask them to look at the lists. Make sure that each physical description includes clothing styles, hairstyles, and general grooming.

7 Now choose one of the people the students listed as a family member they respect and one of the people the students listed as a favorite male or female entertainer (match gender).

8 Ask the students to now switch the clothes, hairstyle, and grooming of these people. Ask the students to describe how the respected family member and their favorite entertainer would look if they switched the way they dressed, did their hair, and groomed.

9 Switch several people on the list and include mixes that make the favorite entertainers much more conservative while making the more respected figures much more flamboyant.

10 After each switch of appearance ask the students if they think people would think differently of these people if they actually dressed and looked like this.

11 After several switches and conversations about how appearance changes could affect the way the students perceive a person, ask them to look back at the reason they gave for why they respected each person. Ask them to share why they like the performers and why they think the nationally respected figures are respected.

12 Ask the student to identify reasons why each person is on the list.

13 Now point out to the students that more than likely only the entertainers had looks and appearance as a reason they were on the list. The other people are likely there because of personal relationships or accomplishments. Remind the students of how silly their family members and respected leaders would have looked if they had dressed like the entertainers.

14 Point out to the students that more than likely none of the reasons they gave for respecting someone close to them was due to that person's appearance. However, if that person dressed silly or had a weird hairdo or bad hygiene then it would be harder to respect that person.

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Even though the person they trust and respect is not on the list because of their appearance it is likely that their appearance could change how much they respect that person.

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Ask the students if the people on their list that are nationally respected figures would be as respected if they dressed the same as the students' favorite entertainers.

17

Explain to the students that the way people dress and present themselves tells people about them. It expresses what they think of themselves and in fact it expresses their attitude. People can and will decide what they think of someone based upon their appearances.

18

There is nothing wrong with an entertainer dressing wildly. However, someone who is looking for a job can't dress like that. Likewise, if a student wants to be taken seriously he must present him or herself in an appropriate manner.

19

Ask the students to describe the difference in clothes they would wear for the following:

- GOING TO CLASS VS. GOING TO A MOVIE
- GOING TO A MOVIE VS. PLAYING BASKETBALL
- GOING TO CLASS VS. HANGING OUT FRIENDS
- GOING TO CHURCH VS. GOING TO THE MALL
- GOING TO SCHOOL VS. GOING TO THE PLAYGROUND

20

Explain to the students that there are times and places for play clothes and formal clothes and comfortable clothes and silly clothes. There are also times and places where it is OK for your hair to be messed up and to be dirty. However, there are times and places where they must be clean, well groomed, and wearing nice clothes.

21

Explain to the students that you are not talking about name brand versus generic clothing. Reassure the students that there is nothing wrong with wearing clothes that are not expensive. You are talking about the type of clothes fitting the occasion.

FOR EXAMPLE, ask the students if they would wear their school clothes to the swimming pool. The answer is obviously NO so why would they wear their swimming suit anywhere else in public? Explain that the way they look should be appropriate for where they are going and what they are doing.

22

Ask the students to look at what they are wearing right now. Ask them to think about whether or not their clothes are appropriate for the classroom. Ask one of the students to share why they think their clothes are or are not appropriate for the classroom.

23

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THE SUMMARY

Appearance is a subject many people wrestle with. Many people want to be individualistic, others want to conform, and others don't know what they are doing. The students need to understand that what they wear and how they look will directly impact and affect the way other people perceive them. Their appearance will also affect their ability to succeed now and later in life.

DISCUSSION POINTS

How can the way you look send messages about you to other people?

Do you have to wear expensive clothes to look good? Why not?

How can your cleanliness, or lack thereof, send messages about you to other people?

If you don't take pride in the way you look what does it tell other people about you?

THE PLEDGE

ASK THE CLASS TO EITHER READ OR REPEAT THE FOLLOWING:

I will respect myself by caring about the message my appearance is sending.
I will make sure my appearance tells people that I have a good attitude.

COMPLIMENTS & BACK-PATS



- ... Thank the students for participating and tell them that you are proud of them.
- ... Tell the students that they are all capable of sending good messages about themselves in their appearance.
- ... Tell the students that they deserve to feel good about themselves and feel good about the way they look.

RIGHT WAYS & NO WAYS

Ask the group to tell if the following is the “Right Way” or the “No Way”



- Wanda was really hot so she put on her bathing suit to go hang out with the guys. (No Way)
- Freddie's mom told him to get ready to go see his Grandma so he combed his hair, washed his face, and put on clean clothes. (Right Way)
- Every time Johnny comes out of the restroom he forgets to zip up his pants. (No Way)
- Selena doesn't have a lot of money for fancy clothes but she makes sure her clothes are well taken care of and clean. (Right way)

SKILLS LESSON RECAP

THE GOAL

A person's appearance is the first thing most people notice and therefore it is the first impression that can be made. The students need to learn that their dress, grooming, and overall appearance are very specific communicators of their self-concept and attitude. They also need to understand that there are certain situations that call for certain types of appearances and when these expectations are not met there will be consequences.

...EXERCISE KEY POINTS...

You identified your six favorite performers, then you identified three people you respect and three of the most respected people in the country. You then provided an explanation as to why you feel the way you do about these people.

You described the appearance of each person listed. You then practiced switching the appearances of the performers with the people you respect and described what your reaction would be.

You discussed how people changing their appearances will often change your opinion and the public's opinion of that person.

You were asked to look at your own clothes and define the message you believe your overall appearance is conveying to others.

**CONSEQUENCES
OF NOT USING
THIS SKILL**



**BENEFITS
OF USING
THIS SKILL**

Ignoring your overall appearance leads others to perceive you as lazy and lacking self respect.

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Paying attention to your appearance and dressing appropriately will assure that the impression others get from your appearance is the correct one.

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How Your Appearance Communicates Your Attitude

Part 1

Identify your 3 favorite female performers

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Identify your 3 favorite male performers.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Identify your 3 favorite people you respect the most.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Identify your 3 people most respected in our country.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Pick one from each of the lists above and describe their appearance including hairstyle, clothing and grooming.

Female performer _____

Male performer _____

Most respected individual _____

Most respected American _____

What would happen if your most respected American appeared in public dressed similarly to your favorite performer?

Would the public's opinion change?

Does someone become the most respected American based on their appearance? Why or why not?

Student: _____ Facilitator: _____ Date: _____

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How Your Appearance Communicates Your Attitude - Part 2

Describe the difference in clothing and grooming for the following:

JOB INTERVIEW	VS	GOING TO A MOVIE
GOING TO A MOVIE	VS	PLAYING BASKETBALL
GOING TO CLASS	VS	HANGING OUT WITH FRIENDS
GOING TO CHURCH	VS	GOING TO THE MALL

What you are currently wearing is appropriate dress to wear to _____ and _____, and inappropriate to wear to _____.

Thought Questions:

What message does your appearance send to other people? How can your appearance help you? Hurt you?

In what way do clothing and grooming styles convey attitude?

Student: _____ Facilitator: _____ Date: _____