

**COMPETENCY #1c:**

Define collections and understand how they are developed.

**VOCABULARY for Competency #1c:**1. **COLLECTION**

A collection is a group of original designs developed by one single designer or a fashion house. They are kept secret until they are officially launched at a fashion show. This prevents other designers from copying and passing a design off as their own. Once a collection is shown, it is virtually impossible to stop it from being copied.

2. **THEME**

The collection usually has a theme. It can be a period in history, a color scheme, a particular fabric or a certain line. A collection must provide a strong visual impact, be original and creative.

3. **STUDIO**

The studio is a workroom where fashion designers work as part of a team. Studios are operated differently depending on the number of employees, the market it caters to, and whether it specializes in one area of fashion.

4. **FASHION DESIGNER**

The fashion designer is to design the shape and style of every garment.

5. **FABRIC DESIGNER**

The fabric designer designs the fabric for the fashion designer.

**HOW DOES A COLLECTION TAKE SHAPE??** Review the following information and find out!

**LECTURE/DISCUSSION****DESIGNING A COLLECTION**

In fashion there are two main seasons a year. Spring and Summer, and Autumn and Winter. Each season requires a different fashion look and a new range of colors and fabric designs suitable for the time of year. Lightweight fabrics in summer, heavier fabrics in winter etc.

To get their designs into the shops at the right time, designers have to work about 12 months in advance, so in the spring, the studio will be working on the collection for the spring/summer collection of the following year! As soon as one collection is finished they begin the next one.

## PLANNING A COLLECTION

Every collection is very carefully researched and planned so that all the items in it complement each other, and have the particular fashion look which to company is known for. For example, Ralph Lauren's collections will carry his classic, comfortable, yet stylish signature.

## PREDICTING TRENDS

One of the hardest skills a fashion designer has to master is predicting future trends. To do this, they look at what the fashion directions have been in previous seasons, keep an eye on what others in the fashion business are doing, and read fashion forecasting magazines. They also rely on knowledge of their own customers to see which styles succeeded and which were less popular in past seasons. Most importantly designers use their imaginations to come up with new ideas. They often choose a theme to provide inspiration.

## CHOOSING A THEME

The theme of a collection can be a period in history, a foreign place, a range of colors, a type of fabric, anything that has a strong visual impact.

## DESIGNING A GARMENT

After the groundwork is completed as to the nature of the collection, the designer(s) must decide how many and what types of garments should be included in the collection. There is usually a three month period for them to design, produce and publicize the collection in time for their fashion show. It will be at the fashion show that buyers and international press will get the first look at the collection.

The following steps will go into each garment that is designed:

1. Different designers work in different ways. Some sketch their ideas on paper, others drape fabric on a dress stand, pinning, folding and tucking it until the idea for a garment emerges. Both of these two methods are widely used. A third method is to adapt their own patterns from previous seasons designs. Some feel this method can give continuity to a fashion studio's output.
2. Making a Paper pattern. This will be out of paper, life size 2-D.
3. Making a toile (or sample from an inexpensive fabric, calico or muslin.

4. Trying it on - The toile is put on a dress stand or live model to see how it fits and whether it hangs properly. Small adjustments can be made to the original design at this stage.
5. When the fit is satisfactory, it goes to a professional pattern cutter who then makes the finished, working version of the pattern out of card stock. The pattern cutter's job is very precise and painstaking. The fit of the finished garment depends on her/his accuracy.

A sample item is made up in the chosen fabric. The finished item will be produced in various colors.

6. The fashion show reveals the finished designs. Many things are considered for the final show; the place, the lighting, props, models, accessories and make-up are all carefully chosen to make the clothes look as attractive and appealing as possible.

#### **ACTIVITIES:**

1. Read the information page titled Designing a collection. Discuss as a class.
2. Look through Vogue or other fashion magazines and find pictures of recent collections. Vogue features a collection from ESCADA every month, Laura Ashley and Jessica McClintock are others featured regularly. Mount the collections you find and display them around the room.
3. Students will design their own collection following the guidelines for a collection. Colored pencil drawings would work, or even pictures cut out of different magazines that could be put together to form a collection of the students' favorite designs.
4. After reading the information given on designing a collection, have students identify all the supporting careers that help get the designers' ideas all the way to the fashion show catwalk. Students may select one career that is most interesting to them and do research on that particular career.