

READING 1: FASHION AND YOU!

July is a month full of fashion shows. In Amsterdam, Rome, Barcelona, Paris, Hong Kong and Berlin, models will be showing the latest styles on a variety of catwalks. But why is fashion such big business?

Fashion is important because it's a form of communication. The clothes we wear tell the world about the society and culture we come from. When we look at the clothes that are worn in a particular country, we can learn things about the weather and environment in that country. For example, fashions in cold countries are different from fashions in hot countries. We can also learn about the culture and beliefs of the people from that country, especially when religion affects what people wear, or there are laws against wearing some items of clothing.

Our clothes tell others who we are and what is important to us, whether we realize it or not. Your fashion choices might be telling the world what kind of music you listen to, or who your celebrity idols are. Your clothes might be showing the world who you are now, or who you want to be in the future. Clothes could advertise which group of people you belong to or you might be telling the world that you are one of a kind. Your chosen outfit can show the world how confident and comfortable you are, but you can also hide yourself behind your clothes.

So, what do your clothes say about you? You might think that nobody notices what you wear and how you wear it, but think again. When was the last time you judged someone because of their outfit? We do it all the time. When we see someone wearing designer clothes and holding the latest must-have handbag, we automatically label them as a 'fashion victim'. When we see someone wearing a smart business suit, we think that they must be successful. When we see someone wearing scruffy clothes, we think the opposite. And when we see someone wearing black clothes, with dyed black hair and painted black fingernails, we automatically label them as a 'goth'. We can't help noticing people's clothes and trying to guess what message they're sending out to the world.

Like it or not, the way we dress is the external expression of our personalities. But this doesn't mean that we should dress for other people. You don't need to follow trends or try to impress anyone else. The important thing is to find your own style and to feel good about what you are wearing. If you wear the clothes that suit you and that make you happy, you will look great and people will notice you for all the right reasons. Happiness is the best accessory, and you won't find it in a department store!

1 Read the article and choose the correct answers.

- 1 Fashion can tell us ...
 - A what kind of weather people like best.
 - B what people think about different countries.
 - C what the weather is like in a particular country.
 - D what people think about the society they live in.
- 2 In some countries ...
 - A people dress according to their religion.
 - B people break fashion laws.
 - C the government decides what is fashionable.

- D people don't believe in following fashion.
- **3** According to the article, our clothes sometimes show ...
 - A that we try to choose the right outfits.
 - B that we are affected by advertising.
 - C that we belong to a particular group.
 - D that we are kind to other people.
- **4** According to the article, a 'fashion victim' is ...
 - A a person who wears a lot of black clothes.
 - B a person who wears the latest designer accessories.
 - C a person who wears a handbag.
 - D a person who wears business suits.

2 Find in the text:

1 one synonym for 'to display'.

2 one opposite for 'tidy'.

3 one word meaning 'essential or desirable'.

4 one word meaning 'something you wear that is decorative'.

3 Are the statements true or false? Justify your answer with the precise words or phrases from the article, or use your own words.

1

We can learn a lot about society through the clothes people wear.

2

Everyone makes a conscious choice to use fashion to make a statement about themselves.

3 Some people use fashion to stand out from the crowd.

4 Our choice of clothes should please other people.