EXPLORE!

Pocahontas Portrait

Has anyone heard of Pocahontas? She was a Virginia Indian who lived most of her life near here, along the James River. What type of clothes do you think she would have worn? Later, she married someone from England and went to live over there, which is when she sat for this picture. Why is she dressed differently?

Breastplate

When people moved to Virginia from that other country, England, they brought things with them. One of those things would be armor like this. Why might someone wear metal like this? Would you rather wear something hard or soft to protect yourself?

First Family Portraits

Let's look at these pictures together. How many pictures are there? Let's count! How are these people dressed - fancy or not? Why do you say that? What are some colors you see in their clothes? Where do you wear your fanciest clothes? We can also look at the way kids dressed in the past - would you like to dress like that?

Patrick Henry's Glasses

Does anyone here wear glasses? Do you know anyone who wears glasses? Do you know the difference between glasses and contacts? Patrick Henry couldn't wear contacts because they hadn't been invented yet! Sometimes science changes what people wear.

Uniforms

What do uniforms tell us? Do any of you play sports? How do you know who is on your team? Uniforms can show us who is on their team or what job people have. Soldiers wear uniforms, which is what is behind us, but nurses and policeman and doctors also wear uniforms. Let's vote whether or not these two uniforms were on the same team. Why or why not?

Loom and Spinning Wheel

We have talked about what clothes can teach us, but where do we get them? Where do you guys get your clothes? In the past, people would have to make a lot of their clothes instead of buying them at stores. Let's think about the steps to make cloth to turn into clothes.

Suffrage Sash

Did you know that men and women weren't always treated equally? One way they weren't treated equally was through voting. Today, we vote for people in our government like the president. In the past, women were not allowed to do that. So, people wore these colors to show that they though women should be treated equally. What is something that you think is important? Do any of you wear the colors of your favorite sports teams to show your support?

Richard Byrd's Fur Coat

Richard Byrd, who wore this coat, was an explorer. Do you think he was exploring cold places or warm places - why? We talked about how the Powhatan Indians also used fur in their clothes. Why is fur so good at keeping us warm? Do animals wear clothes?

VMHC EDUCATION

Join us on the 1st & 3rd Saturday every month for Stories at the Museum - a guided storytime & craft activity from 11:00-12:00

VMHC EDUCATION

DRESSING THE PAST

1. Pocahontas Portrait: Virginia Indians like the Powhatan wore clothes made from leather and fur, and decorated with bones and shells. They would have used the resources available in nature to shape their lifestyles. In England, there was already manufacturing, stores, and cloth like wool, cotton, and silk. They would have worn clothes made of those materials in different styles and shapes. Clothes can tell us about location and culture! I Extension Option - You can see buttons like the ones on Pocahontas's clothes beside the canoe.

2. Breastplate: This breastplate was brought over by the British to defend again Indian attacks. Though it would have been outdated against guns, it still protected well against arrows. Clothes can be used for protection! I Extension Option - Look around for other objects made of metal.

3. First Family Portraits: This collection of portraits shows us some of the "First Families" of Virginia, or the first English settlers to truly establish elite dynasties in Virginia. Clothes can show us how people spend their time or how much wealth they might have. | Post Trip Activity - Draw pictures of yourself wearing your favorite outfit.

4. Patrick Henry's Glasses: Patrick Henry was known to push his glasses on top of his head when he got really excited and talked about something he was passionate about. He is most famous for his "give me liberty or give me death!" rallying cry spoken at St. John's Church here in Richmond. I Extension activity: Explore some other clothing in the nearby case. Do you think the man who wore that waistcoat was big or little? What is on Martha Washington's head?

5. Uniforms: These are both Confederate uniforms, which you can tell by their color and detailing on the sleeves. They are different types of clothes because they had different job - the suit on the left belonged to JEB Stuart, who was a General. The suit on the right belonged to a surgeon. Clothes can show us what team you are on or what job you have! I Post Trip Activity - Have students create their own "class" uniform.

6. Loom and Spinning Wheel: During times of unrest, like the Civil War, stores would close and money was scarce. Families had to make some of the things they would have previously purchased, like clothing. Thinking about how to make clothes can teach us about the past vs. the present! I Post Trip Activity - weave a potholder in your class

7. Suffrage Sash: Women did not get the right to vote until 1920, with the passing of the 19th amendment. Clothes can teach us about what people think! I Post Trip Activity - have students make sashes or signs to represent what they care about.

8. Fur Coat: Richard Byrd was potentially the first man to fly over the North Pole, but definitely the first man to fly over the South Pole. Clothes can show us the weather! I Extension Activity - find another piece of clothing along this wall and learn about it!

CREATE!

In this gallery walk, we've explored what clothes can tell us about where and when people are from. We've seen how clothes can tell us what people think without using any words at all, or what type of job they might have. We've even seen how clothes were made in the past. Now, it's your turn to design an outfit for the person below!