

# Photographic duos, or fashions in old photos

<b>Stimulus question</b>	<p>What fashions were worn during the communist era in Poland?</p> <p>Does fashion feature in the photos?</p> <p>What does it say about people's everyday lives?</p>
<b>Overview</b>	<p>'Photographic Duos' is a fashion-themed activity about the fashions from the different decades of the People's Republic of Poland. Based on archival photographs from the <a href="http://www.abc.tychy.pl">www.abc.tychy.pl</a> website and from family albums, the activity is an opportunity to jointly explore the meaning of fashions in people's daily lives, how it is related to politics, and what were some of the characteristic features of the period's fashions. It also serves to provide participants with an opportunity to gain hands-on experience of working with archival photographs and how to use them as a starting point for collecting memories, or even... organise a fashion show.</p>
<b>No. of participants</b>	up to 20 people
<b>Time</b>	The activity involves two separate sessions of about 45 minutes each and a task to be completed by the participants on their own.
<b>Location</b>	The activity can take place in the school, common room, community centre, library or any other suitable place with access to computers and the Internet (1 computer for 2 participants).
<b>Resources and equipment</b>	<p>Resources and equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• computers with Internet access (one for 2 persons) or mobile devices (tablet, smartphone) with Internet access (if there are no computers, access to the ABC website is still available),</li> <li>• projector, printer to which the computers are connected; printer paper, toner,</li> <li>• whiteboard, markers,</li> <li>• large (B1/B2 size) white paper sheet,</li> <li>• A4 sheets, clipboards, pens for every participant.</li> </ul>
<b>How to go about it? Preparation</b>	<p>Content-related preparation: 1- 2 hours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View the <a href="http://www.abc.tychy.pl">www.abc.tychy.pl</a> website</li> <li>• Useful readings and videos:  <a href="https://czarne.com.pl/katalog/ksiazki/to-nie-sa-moje-wielblady">https://czarne.com.pl/katalog/ksiazki/to-nie-sa-moje-wielblady</a>   <a href="https://lubimyczytac.pl/ksiazka/33673/teksas---land-moda-mlodziezowa-w-prl">https://lubimyczytac.pl/ksiazka/33673/teksas---land-moda-mlodziezowa-w-prl</a>  <a href="https://historia.org.pl/2014/08/02/moda-prl-u/">https://historia.org.pl/2014/08/02/moda-prl-u/</a>   <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ys7ywCbZlY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ys7ywCbZlY</a>            (access date: 25 Nov 2019)</li> </ul>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJzxJPYE-tY>  
(access date: 25 Nov 2019)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZ-juTC1Z7k>  
(from 7:27; access date: 25 Nov 2019)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orMhedQjkTk>  
(from 6:00; access date: 25 Nov 2019)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Jkq-hKNENc>  
(access date: 25 Nov 2019.)

Collect office supplies.

Set up the room – arrange chairs in a circle, turn on the computers, check that the printer is working, and that there is enough ink and paper.

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**Session 1: 45 minutes**

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15 minutes: Introduce participants to the topic of everyday life in the People's Republic of Poland.

The initial brainstorming session to harvest associations may be helpful. Ask each person to write down one association connected with fashions in communist Poland on 3 sheets of paper. Collect the sheets and spread them on the floor, combining similar ideas. Discuss the resulting map of associations. Conduct a discussion during which you will draw attention to the use of fashion to create an image and the relationship between fashion and politics. To illustrate the discussion you can:

1. use Google image search to look up “communist Poland fashion” – talk about search results
2. prepare in advance a selection of photos to indicate the differences in the fashions of particular decades.

10 minutes: Show the participants the digital map of the city of Tychy, briefly presenting its history during the communist era. The database on the website is a digital archive of everyday life. Ask the participants to view the photographs available on the map, focusing on fashions, including the outfits, accessories, hairstyles of the people in the photographs. Elicit impressions and observations from the group.

5 minutes: Ask the participants to pair up and choose one photograph they find particularly interesting in terms of the fashion featured. Print out the selected photos, each in two copies.

10 minutes: Spread the printed photos on the floor or stick them to the wall. Consider jointly what questions could you ask about each of these photographs? (e.g. what decade it comes from, what items of clothing the people are wearing, what is the name of the hairstyle.). Write down the answers on the whiteboard.

5 minutes: Ask the participants to take one photograph each and look for the answers by talking to their parents or grandparents. Give the participants a list of additional questions related to the family experience (e.g. if they dressed the same in their families; what clothes similar to those in the photograph their relatives wore; where the clothes in their family came from; how difficult it was to get clothing, how the fabrics and clothes were acquired; whether it was possible to have one's own style; if there are any items of clothing from the period preserved at home).

Viewing old family photos together can be helpful during the chat. The participants should bring clothes and/or photographs found at home to the second session.

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### Session 2: 45 minutes

The second session is designed as a summary and an opportunity to share information obtained during the conversations and searches.

5 minutes: Ask the participants to exchange in pairs the information they have learnt at home about their preferred photograph.

10 minutes: The duos share all the information collected with the entire group (maximum 2 minutes per pair). During this time, display the photo with the projector.

5 minutes: Ask the participants about their impressions from this stage of the work, and whether they were able to continue the conversation and browse the family albums and/or wardrobes together.

5 minutes: Ask the participants to display the photographs in the room (e.g. on tables or walls) and outfits/clothing items they have brought from their homes.

20 minutes: invite the participants to do a guided tour – go from exhibit to exhibit together, while the person who has brought the item briefly tells its story

5 minutes: Elicit impressions from the guided tour. What was the biggest surprise to the participants? What was most worthwhile?

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### Possible variations:

1. You may advise the participants to bring their photos to the first session. The family photos may be helpful in the brainstorming process.
2. The photographs brought from home may be scanned, printed, captioned and displayed in the room/hall.
3. An option for Tychy residents: the participants may search the family collections for similar images to those found on the digital ABC map, including matching neighbourhoods, locations and people. The photographs available on the website and those from family archives may then be combined into 'photographic duos'" and displayed in the form of prints.