

Lesson Plan: “Narrative Threads: Designing from Literature”

Location: London College of Fashion Library

Duration: 3 hours (Run twice in one day, splitting year two menswear in half)

Cohort: Year 2 BA Menswear Students

Team: BA Menswear Lecturer: Rory Parnell-Mooney, Course Librarian: Louise Johnstone.

Aims

- To empower students to interpret a wide and varied array of sources as a conceptual foundation for design.
- To promote inclusive and critical engagement with global, diverse narratives, and international stories, allowing students to express or engage with their positionality.
- To equip students with research tools and references to deepen their design thinking.
- To introduce accessible and supportive resources including videos, glossaries, audiobooks, podcasts, and film/television adaptations.

Outcomes

By the end of the session, students will:

1. Select and contextualise a novel from the reading list for design development.
2. Use library tools to gather diverse visual and historical references.
3. Create a personal glossary of themes, terms, and cultural references.
4. Access inclusive digital learning resources to support independent research.

Pre-Workshop Preparation

- Students choose a **shortlist of 2–3 books** from the 30-book reading list.
- Students complete a **brief questionnaire** (via Moodle) on reading habits, accessibility needs, and preferred learning styles.

Lesson Breakdown

20mins | Introduction & Context

- Unpacking the project brief.
- Discussion on **why we are designing from literature**: identity, narrative, empathy, and character.
- deck showcasing **diverse fashion designers** inspired by text-based concepts (e.g., Grace Wales Bonner, Craig Green, Thebe Magugu, Noir Kei Ninomiya).

Inclusive support tip: Use visual slides with captions; offer handouts in large print; explain terminology.

40 mins | Workshop Part 1: “Mapping the Text”

- Students break into small groups (3–4).
- Each group selects a book and uses tools like:
 - LCF Library Search
 - JSTOR/BOB (Box of Broadcasts)
 - Fashion and Race Database
 - Vogue Archive, WGSN

- Task: Create a map linking the book's themes to:
 - Visual references (film, fashion, art)
 - Historical or cultural events
 - Keywords for further research

Resource provided: *“Research Mapping Template” handout*

15 min Break

45 mins | Workshop Part 2: Student Glossary Building

- Each student begins a personal **project glossary** based on:
 - Key literary themes
 - Cultural or regional references
 - Historical figures or events
 - Fashion terms or design vocabulary

Resource provided: Printable “My Project Glossary” template

Inclusive support: A bank of **video explainers** (3–5 mins each) on:

- Postcolonial theory basics
- Gender representation in fashion
- Visual storytelling from literature
(*Uploaded to Moodle with subtitles and transcripts.*)

30 mins | Peer to Peer sharing

- Each group presents a few of their reference discoveries.
- Open feedback and discussion: How can these themes be **translated into design?**

2:30–3:00 | Wrap-Up & Resource Pack Launch

- Recap of tools, glossaries, and video bank.
- Moodle launch of the **Learning Resource Pack** including:
 - Workshop slides
 - Project glossary template
 - Suggested films/artists per novel
 - Access to BOB playlists
 - Inclusive design reading PDFs (e.g., Decolonising Fashion, Fashioning Masculinities)

Assessment Links

This session supports the following areas of assessment:

- Concept development and depth of research
- Use of narrative and visual references
- Inclusive and personal response to literary source material

Follow-Up Activities

- 1:1 tutorials for deeper research support (via librarian sign-up sheet)
- Online forum for peer reference sharing
- Optional zine-making workshop: *“Book to Body: Visual Storytelling”*