



## What's in a Hat

Sunburns, skin cancers and sun related eye damage are largely preventable when sun protection behaviors are taught and practiced early. Popular hats such as baseball caps do not effectively protect us from UV radiation, because the neck and ears are not covered. Hats with brims of 2 inches or more are needed to protect you from the harm of UVR. Throughout history people have chosen hats both because of their function and their style.

### Estimated Time

30 – 45 minutes

### Learning Objectives

Students will understand the importance of wearing protective gear to block the sun and will learn which hats effectively protect them from the sun.

### Introductory Discussion

Discuss the many reasons for wearing hats.

1. Why do people wear hats ?
  - a. Protection--*football helmet, bike helmet, hardhat*
  - b. It's the law--*motorcycle helmets*
  - c. Job requires it--*hardhat at construction site*
  - d. Part of uniform--*baseball cap, military cap*
  - e. It's fashionable—*visor*
2. Do you ever wear a hat to protect your head from weather? *Winter hats and ski caps, baseball caps, visors, broad-brimmed hats*
3. Do you choose what hat to wear because of how it looks on you, or because it is like the hats your friends wear?
4. What types of hats have you seen in the movies?  
*Cowboy hat, Indiana Jones hat, military uniform caps*

### Web Resources

<http://www.millerhats.com>

<http://www.ediehats.com/hatstories/intro.html>



## **Art Activity**

### **Supplies**

Ask student to bring an old hat from home, or cut out two-dimensional cardboard hats or make paper hats for the students. Students will want to use the following materials to decorate their hats:

- fabric pieces
- colored construction paper
- Stapler, scissors and glue
- Decorating materials—glitter, feathers

Have students attach fabric or paper pieces to their hats in a way that creates a sun safe hat...one with a rim, such as a wide-brimmed hat, or one with a flap that covers the ears and necks. Decorate the hats. Vote on which hat is the craziest, most colorful, etc. but still a sun safe hat. Display the hats or have a parade.

### **Web Resources**

<http://mardigraszone.com/retail/default.php/cPath/27>  
<http://www.demonium.com/we.htm>

## **Social Studies Activity**

Throughout history people have chosen both fashionable and functional hats. Hats can tell us a great deal about the lifestyle of those who wear the hats. For example, a cowboy hat has a broad brim, which protects the neck, ears, and face. Why? Cowboys spend long days out in the sun.

Students might also think of early trappers and pioneers and the types of hats they wore (fur caps, sun bonnets).

Have students research different types of hats worn in different cultures over time. Students should develop a timeline showing 3 different types of hats worn in the US, or in another country, during different time periods. Ask students to evaluate how effective each hat they find would be in protecting the wearer from the sun (see student worksheet).

### **Supplies**

Magazines with pictures of people in native dress  
Encyclopedia or other resource books with people in native dress

### **Web resources**

<http://dragonflydesignstudio.com/>  
<http://www.clearwaterhats.com/>



**Optional Reading for What's in a Hat :**

A hat can be the difference between life and death for a soldier.

A rancher's wide-brimmed felt often provides the only shade he may see for days.

A fisherman's yellow oilskin gives him snug comfort in the midst of bitter salt billows.

Yet a hat offers more than shelter alone.

A hat, when tipped politely, tells a pretty girl that you like the way she looks.

Held over the heart, when the flag goes by, a hat is a badge of patriotism and a strong belief in freedom.

The right hat can make a golfer feel lucky.

Celebrities often wear them to be noticed. Plainclothes police wear them to be unnoticed.

A salesman's hat can be his office.

There are hats with built-in radios, hard hats, soft hats, fur hats, paper hats, all useful in different ways to different people.

Hats have won a deserved place in the day-to-day speech of the entire world.

Secrets are figuratively kept under hats.

Politicians throw them into the ring.

Voters bet them on elections.

People promise, if wrong, to eat them.

Cocked hats are what schemes get knocked into.

Most important of all, a hat is worn in the mind as well as on the head.

When a man is seen in a hat, the whole world knows he has invested some special effort and expense in his appearance.

He has set himself apart from the lazy, the careless, and the irresponsible.

He is a man with purpose... and purpose is the making of man.

- John B. Stetson Company