

The New Dress

Virginia Woolf

How does Woolf make Mabel's dress become a screen onto which she projects an entire social judgment?

TOTAL TIME	TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION
30 minutes	Short story - Mabel at the party and the yellow dress

TEACHER SETUP

Open the work in the Enhanced Reader and cue the span using the START and END anchors below.

START	Mabel had her first serious suspicion that something was wrong
END	the yellow button moved out of the looking-glass
PASSAGE ID	sec-woolf-newdress-01

THE MOVE

Analyze how free indirect style turns an object into a vehicle for self-consciousness.

WHY THIS PASSAGE

The dress itself changes very little; Mabel's reading of faces, mirrors, and imagined judgments changes constantly. The object becomes a focal point for a divided social self.

MARK

Underline descriptions of the dress. Circle assumptions Mabel makes about other people's thoughts. Box a moment when observation and projection become hard to separate.

NOTICE

- What facts about the dress are actually observable?
- Which judgments exist only inside Mabel's interpretation?
- How does the narration keep moving between room and mind?

THINK

Answer provisionally: How does Woolf make Mabel's dress become a screen onto which she projects an entire social judgment? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response. Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.

STRONG ANSWER

Woolf makes the dress a social mirror rather than a simple object. Through Mabel's shifting interpretations, the story shows how self-consciousness can convert neutral details into evidence of exclusion.

EVIDENCE

Use one concrete dress detail and one imagined social judgment.

WATCH FOR

Do not assume every character is actually mocking Mabel. Distinguish observation from projection.

SOLO

Read independently.

SUPPORTED

Narration + highlighting.

LISTENING

Listen; same evidence task.

STUDENT PAGE · GRADE 12 · LESSON 356

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WORK

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Your teacher will open or cue the work in the Enhanced Reader. Use the location and verbatim anchors below to confirm the assigned span.

START

Mabel had her first serious suspicion that something was wrong

END

the yellow button moved out of the looking-glass READ / LISTEN TO THE ASSIGNED PASSAGE SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration and highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the assigned passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. MARK Underline descriptions of the dress. Circle assumptions Mabel makes about other people's thoughts. Box a moment when observation and projection become hard to separate.
2. NOTICE What facts about the dress are actually observable? Which judgments exist only inside Mabel's interpretation? How does the narration keep moving between room and mind?
3. THINK Answer provisionally: How does Woolf make Mabel's dress become a screen onto which she projects an entire social judgment?
4. WRITE Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.
5. CLOSE Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.