

The 1970s

The late 1960s and 1970s were turbulent years in the United States. The breadth of political and social unrest at times seemed endless.

Politically, Lyndon Johnson chose not to run for re-election, Spiro Agnew resigned as Richard Nixon's vice president, and, in 1974, Richard Nixon resigned the office of President of the United States in the wake of the Watergate scandal. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy were assassinated, and George Wallace was paralyzed in a failed attempt on his life.

The country was deeply divided over the Vietnam War. Anti-war unrest intensified, students protesting the war at Kent State University were killed by National Guard troops, and some opposed to the conflict burned their draft cards or fled to Canada. There was increasing awareness of, and concern for, the environment, an energy crisis, and gas shortages. Women and black Americans were fighting for a more inclusive society.

Yet at the same time Richard Nixon signed SALT I (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty), and the SALT II talks began in 1974. Earth Day was celebrated on an international scale and Richard Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency. Astronauts Armstrong and Aldrin were the first to walk on the moon. The Detroit Tigers won the World Series. Disco was popular, as were mood rings and pet rocks. Americans listened to the Beatles on 8-track tapes and watched "The Graduate," "Saturday Night Fever," "Mary Tyler Moore," and "Lawrence Welk."

It was in this context that, on August 9, 1974, Gerald R. Ford of Grand Rapids, Michigan was called on to lead the United States as its 38th President ... to heal her conflicts and restore her confidence.

The 1970s exhibit features a light-hearted, multi-media re-creation of popular culture in that tumultuous period of our nation's history - leisure suits and all!

Gallery One Activity

The 1970s

Then and Now Discovery Sheet Activity Description

METHOD

Make copies of the *Then and Now Discovery Sheet* for your students. The information they gather at the Museum can be used to write a short narrative (journal, paper, or story) about life in the 1970s.

Prior to visiting the Museum, teachers should discuss the issues, concerns, and cultural trends of the 1970s era with students. The students may be asked to comment on what they expect to see while visiting the Museum. Are there some trends that are similar? Are there differences?

SUGGESTED PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Possible discussion topics:

- What war was the U.S. involved in during the 1960s and early 1970s?
- Who were Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr.?
- How do you think Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin felt when they stepped on the moon?
- Who said "I have a dream?" What does it mean?

SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

- Complete the "2000s" portion of the *Then and Now Discovery Sheet* either in class or as a homework assignment.
- Have students research and write about one of the many topics introduced in "The 1970s" Gallery. Some examples include: Vietnam War protests, Environmental Protection Agency or Earth Day, Space Flight, or Equal Rights.

Gallery One: The 1970s
Then and Now Discovery Sheet

THE 1970s

THE 2000s

MUSICIANS

MUSICIANS

FILMS

FILMS

TRENDS

TRENDS

ISSUES

ISSUES

Gallery One: The 1970s
Then and Now Discovery Sheet- ANSWER KEY

THE 1970s

THE 2000s

MUSICIANS

MUSICIANS

JANIS JOPLIN	ARETHA FRANKLIN
JIMI HENDRIX	ROLLING STONES
MARVIN GAYE	THE BEATLES
JEFFERSON AIRPLANE	JOHN LENNON AND YOKO ONO
DONOVAN	GORDON LIGHTFOOT

FILMS

FILMS

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER	PATTON
STAR WARS	MASH
THE GODFATHER	LOVE STORY
EASY RIDER	MIDNIGHT COWBOY
THE GRADUATE	AMERICAN GRAFFITI
BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUNDANCE KID	

TRENDS

TRENDS

LEISURE SUITS	TIE DYEING
STREAKING	8-TRACKS
PLATFORM SHOES	COLOR TELEVISION
MINI SKIRTS	WOODSTOCK
PET ROCKS	MOOD RINGS

ISSUES

ISSUES

VIETNAM WAR	PATTY HEARST
KENT STATE	BLACK PATHERS
ENERGY CRISIS	EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (ERA)
ATTICA PRISON RIOTS	

Gallery One Activity

The Culture of Two Decades *Venn Diagram Activity Description*

METHOD

Make copies of the Venn Diagram for each student. The “Then” portion should be completed at the Museum. The rest of the diagram can be done as a follow-up activity at school or home.

Prior to visiting the Museum, teachers should discuss the issues, concerns and cultural trends of the 1970s era with students. The students may be asked to comment on what they expect to see and compare with today’s culture. Are there some similar trends, or differences?

SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

- Complete the “Now” and comparison sections of the Venn Diagram either in class or as a homework assignment.
- Have students research and write about one of the many topics introduced in “The 1970s” Gallery. Some examples include: Vietnam War protests, Environmental Protection Agency or Earth Day, Space Flight, or Equal Rights.

Gallery One: The 1970s
The Culture of Two Decades
Entertainment, Trends and Issues

Then
Gallery Activity

Now
Classroom Follow-up

A Venn diagram consisting of two overlapping circles. The left circle is labeled 'Then Gallery Activity' and the right circle is labeled 'Now Classroom Follow-up'. Each circle contains ten horizontal lines for writing. The overlapping area in the center also contains ten horizontal lines for writing.

Gallery One: The 1970s
The Culture of Two Decades – ANSWER KEY
Entertainment, Trends and Issues

Then
Gallery Activity

Now
Classroom Follow-up

