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**FIGURE SKATING APPAREL:  
DESIGN FOR FUNCTIONAL, EXPRESSIVE, AND AESTHETIC NEEDS**

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Utilizing figure skating attire as a focus when teaching the design process stimulates student interest in a product with growing demand and develops creative problem-solving abilities for multiple purpose active wear. Several models of the design process were applied to figure skating design problems. Three different categories of attire (competitive, show, practice) provided opportunities for varying emphases as to importance of expressive-aesthetic, functional-aesthetic, or expressive-functional purposes. For example, the lady's competition dress must reflect music theme, desired figure skating image, age appropriateness, and functional concerns like mobility, warmth/ coolness, breathability, weight, stretchability and durability. Practice wear, in contrast, must meet some aesthetic criteria (attractiveness) but more emphasis is placed on such functional criteria as washability, pill resistance, durability, and warmth/coolness.

Students were shown examples from six years of garments designed for a competitive figure skater. Garments illustrated consumers' needs and designers' solutions to multiple challenges of designing for athletic performance and story theme. Stimulation of creative solutions through use of music, theater/video, book illustrations, and skater's choreography were considered in addition to the physical and self-esteem requirements of the skater, images desired, and coaches' requirements.

Students were more aware of the problem viewing garments and discussing needs with the figure skater. The product area that was new excited students.