

Clothes Are Like Birds

Catalina Arenas

Clothes are like birds;
a thousand species
exist with different colors.



Catalina Arenas is from Mexico. She is a student at the Riverside branch of The New York Public Library, English for Speakers of Other Languages Program. She is pictured here with her dog Shiro.



Write your own short poem. Use a simile as Catalina Arenas does in the above poem. Pick a form of fashion, such as clothes, tattoos, piercings, or hairstyles. The first line of the poem should state a simile. (E.g. "Tattoos are like ...") The next two lines should explain the simile.

Do You Decorate Yourself?

What adjectives do you use to describe how you look? What adjectives do you hope others will use to describe how you look?

How do you decorate yourself? Do you have piercings? Do you exercise to make your body look a certain way? Do you wear make up? Fix your hair? Why?

Watch this 8-minute video about the cosmetics industry at <storyofstuff.org/cosmetics>.

View the stunning body art of the people of the Omo Valley in Ethiopia. (Go to www.youtube.com and search for Hans Silvester, whose photography documents a sometimes playful, sometimes disturbing, and always stunning approach to self-decoration.)

Use face paint, costume jewelry, flowers, or other natural items to transform yourselves in class. What effect does it have on participants. See "Transforming Your Self-Image Through Body Art" a lesson plan by Lenore Balliro at <www.nelrc.org/changeagent/extras>.