

## DESCRIPTION AND SUGGESTED USES

A product of the Victorian Dress Reform Movement, which advocated for more practical and comfortable clothing, the “bloomer” suit featured pants beneath a long skirt. Julia Archibald Holmes would have worn a suit such as this for her famed hike up Pikes Peak in 1858. This bloomer suit is from the 1880s. Artifact courtesy of the Colorado Springs Pioneers’ Museum.

## SUGGESTED USES

This particular “outfit” is exceptional for a discussion of women, women’s rights and the emergence of women in society. Suggestions for use include:

1. Compare and contrast the “Bloomer Suit” with the Civil War dress, the Victorian Dress, the Edwardian Dress, and those from the 1940s and 1950s. Suggested comparisons would include the amount of time to make the dresses, who made the dresses, amount of freedom offered in wearing each of the dresses, time involved in “getting dressed.”
2. Compare and contrast the “Bloomer Suit” to dresses from other cultures: the Navajo Dress, the Jingle Dress, the China Poblana Dress, the Ute Dress. All are from the West. Why so different? Why did certain cultures make their clothing from certain materials? What is similar throughout? Ask the same questions as in “1,” but apply to each of the cultures involved.