

Lesson 2 The Fast Fashion Dilemma

PLANNING

Subjects	English Personal Development Employability Geography
Learning Outcomes	Pupils will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• discuss the meaning of sustainable fashion;• explore the alternatives to Fast Fashion; and• explore the consequences of Fast Fashion.
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Focus	Pupils will have opportunities to develop skills in: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• listening actively and sharing ideas and opinions (Working with Others);• making links between cause and effect (Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making); and• finding and presenting information (Managing information).
Attitudes and Dispositions	Pupils will develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• community spirit; and• concern for others.

SUGGESTED TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

LAUNCH

Lead a class discussion, using prompt questions and effective questioning techniques:

- Fast fashion affects the planet as a pollutant, but what are its other negative effects?
- Consider the labour involved in making a garment.
- How much do pupils pay for fast fashion clothing?

Recap the elements of **Fast Fashion**: trend replication, rapid production, low quality, competitive pricing and the large impact on the environment and the people involved in its production. Nowadays, fast fashion brands produce about 52 micro-seasons a year. This means at least one new collection every week.

Possible answers and discussion points:

Waste – as a pollutant, fashion is an environmental and social emergency. The fashion industry produces nearly 20 percent of global wastewater. It also emits about ten percent of global carbon emissions – more than the emissions of all international flights and maritime shipping combined.

The clothing and textile industry is the second largest polluter in the world (the oil industry is first).

It is estimated that less than 2 percent of the people who make our clothes earn a living wage.

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DEVELOPMENT



ACTIVITY 1

Share this four-minute long video [How much water goes into the cotton clothes we buy?](#) with the class.

Summary: cotton may be perceived as a good purchase. This video gives the facts about how much water goes into cotton clothing. Over 15,000 litres of water are needed to grow enough cotton to make one pair of jeans.

Encourage your pupils to explore available ethical alternatives such as [What is organic cotton?](#) or [Patagonia's organic cotton.](#)

Encourage feedback from the class.

Lead class discussion. Are they surprised with what they have learned about cotton?

Ask your pupils, in pairs, to research where organic cotton is grown and what part it plays that region's economy.



ACTIVITY 2

Share this seven-minute video [The True Cost of Fast Fashion](#) with the class.

Encourage the class to explore the alternatives to fast fashion.

30,000 tons of clothes end up in landfill each year. Ask the class to consider the alternatives: renting, buying once and buying well, reconsider **fast fashion**?

Ask the class to vote with a show of hands for alternatives.

- Who would rent?
- Who would swap?
- Who would buy second-hand?
- Who would buy once and buy well?

Sustainable Fashion

All garments have at least some negative impact on the environment.

Sustainable or ethical fashion is sometimes referred to as slow fashion. It takes into account the full lifecycle of the product — from the design, sourcing and production processes to the eventual disposal — and looks at everyone and everything affected by it, from the environment, to the workers and communities where it's produced to the consumers who purchase it.

Explore the [20 Best Sustainable Fashion Brands](#) from the Good Housekeeping website.

Ask the class, in pairs, to define sustainable fashion and decide what brands they think are sustainable.

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ACTIVITY 3

Share the twenty three-minute long video [The End of Fast Fashion](#) (BBC 30 Oct 2020) with the class.

Summary

Bangladesh is the second largest manufacturer of garments in the world, employing 4 million people. The workforce is 85 percent women. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many well-known high street outlets have cancelled their orders and many workers have lost their jobs. The owner of one manufacturing company has done his best to look after his staff, but it has been challenging.

The dilemma: if there is no fast fashion, will these people have no work? Which is best: no fast fashion taking advantage of workers and polluting the planet or continuing to provide livelihoods for the workers?

Consequence Wheel

Ask your pupils to think of one of the negative issues associated with **fast fashion**. Draw a circle and then write the issue in the centre. Then, ask your class to think of as many direct consequences as possible. Encourage them to sort the consequences into short term or long term, colour coding them as positive or negative.

Extension activity

Discuss the feelings of the company owner in the documentary: despair, hopelessness

Ask your pupils to think of the negative issue associated with **no Fast Fashion**: loss of jobs. Draw a circle and then write the issue in the centre. Then, ask your class to think of as many direct consequences as possible. Encourage them to sort the consequences into short term or long term, colour coding them as positive or negative.

DEBRIEF

Ask the class to sum up **Fast Fashion** and sustainable fashion.

Possible answers may include:

- **Fast Fashion** trend replication, rapid production, low quality, competitive pricing
- sustainable or ethical fashion is sometimes referred to as slow fashion. It takes into account the full lifecycle of the product – from the design, sourcing and production processes to disposal – and looks at everyone and everything being affected by it, from the environment, to the workers and communities where it's produced, to the consumers who purchase it.