



Fast Fashion and Its Environmental Impact

February 2025 Lesson Plan: Elementary

Grade Level: Elementary School

Duration: 60 minutes + Extension Activities

Objective: Students will understand the concept of fast fashion and how reusing and repurposing clothing helps the environment.

Materials Needed

- Pictures of clothing production and waste (printouts or slides)
 - Sample thrifted or repurposed items
 - Art supplies (markers, scissors, fabric scraps, glue, etc.)
 - Large paper for group activities
 - Music for the fashion show
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Lesson Outline

Introduction (10 minutes)

1. Warm-Up Question:

- Ask: "Where do your clothes come from?" and "What do you do with clothes you don't wear anymore?"

2. Introduce Fast Fashion:

- Explain:
 - Fast fashion is when clothes are made quickly and cheaply so people can buy a lot of them.
 - This can be bad for the Earth because it creates too much trash, uses a lot of water, and sometimes people who make the clothes aren't treated fairly.
 - If appropriate, play a video from YouTube that illustrates the issue: [The Fast Fashion Problem - Behind the News](#) (This video is probably best for 4th and 5th graders).
- Show pictures of landfills filled with clothing and factories where clothes are made.

Main Activity: Learning About Reuse (20 minutes)

1. Discussion:

- Why is it better to reuse clothes or buy second-hand?



- Less trash in the Earth
- Saves resources like water and energy
- Helps people get creative and unique outfits

2. Hands-On Group Activity:

- Divide students into small groups.
- Give each group fabric scraps, markers, and paper.
- Challenge: Design a piece of clothing or accessory using the materials. Draw or create a small prototype.

Eco-Challenge: Second-Hand Fashion Show (25 minutes)

1. Preparation:

- Each student or group brings in a thrifted or repurposed clothing item from home or uses provided materials.
- Decorate or style the item with a creative twist.

2. Showcase:

- Students explain their creations:
 - "I used this because..."
 - "This helps the Earth by..."
- Hold a mini-fashion show in class, playing music as students walk and show their designs.

Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

1. Closing Discussion:

- Ask: "What did you learn today about clothes and the Earth?"
- Reinforce: Reusing clothes helps the planet, and everyone can make a difference by being creative and thoughtful.

2. Extension Idea:

- Encourage students to share the lesson at home by helping their families donate clothes or visit a thrift store.

Optional Extension Activities

- **Art Project:** Create posters promoting thrift shopping or upcycling.
 - **Math Connection:** Calculate how much water is saved by reusing a shirt instead of buying a new one.
 - **Literature Tie-In:** Read books like *"What a Waste: Trash, Recycling, and Protecting Our Planet"* by Jess French.
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Assessment

- Participation in the discussion and activities.
- Creativity and effort in the Eco-Challenge fashion show.
- Students' ability to explain how their designs help the environment.