



Fast Fashion and Its Environmental Impact

February 2025 Lesson Plan: Middle School

Grade Level: Middle School

Duration: 60 minutes + Extension Activities

Objective: Students will gain an understanding of fast fashion's environmental impact and explore how reusing, repurposing, and purchasing second-hand clothing can benefit the environment.

Materials Needed

- Photos or videos showing fast fashion production, waste, and landfills
 - Sample thrifted or repurposed clothing items
 - Art supplies (markers, scissors, fabric scraps, glue)
 - Large paper for brainstorming group activities
 - Music for the fashion show
 - Laptop/tablet for video (if applicable)
-

Lesson Outline

Introduction (10 minutes)

- **Warm-Up Question:**

Ask students:

- "What do you know about how clothes are made?"
- "What happens to clothes once we no longer want or wear them?"

- **Introduce Fast Fashion:**

- Explain that fast fashion refers to the rapid production of cheap, trendy clothing that often ends up in landfills shortly after purchase.
 - Discuss how fast fashion harms the environment by using large amounts of water, energy, and materials, and how it contributes to pollution.
 - Show photos or videos depicting the environmental impact of fast fashion, including images of landfills and overburdened factories.
 - If appropriate, play a short video on YouTube: "[The Problem with Fast Fashion - Teen Vogue](#)"
-

Main Activity: Understanding Reuse (20 minutes)



- **Discussion:**
 - Why should we consider reusing clothes or buying second-hand?
 - Reduces waste and trash
 - Saves valuable resources like water and energy
 - Promotes creativity and individuality in fashion
 - Reduces the demand for new clothing, thereby helping the planet
 - **Hands-On Group Activity:**
 - Break students into small groups (3-4 per group).
 - Provide each group with fabric scraps, markers, and paper.
 - Challenge: Design a piece of clothing or accessory using the materials.
Encourage students to think creatively about how to repurpose or upcycle the materials into a unique fashion item.
 - Optionally, allow groups to create a small prototype or sketch their designs.
-

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

- **Preparation:**
 - Ask students to bring in a thrifted or repurposed clothing item from home or use the provided materials to create a look.
 - Each student or group should decorate, style, and add a creative twist to their item.
 - **Fashion Show:**
 - Hold a mini fashion show in class.
 - As students walk the "runway" and showcase their designs, have them explain:
 - "Why did you choose this item?"
 - "How does your design help the environment?"
 - Play music to accompany the fashion show, creating an engaging atmosphere.
-

Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

- **Closing Discussion:**
Ask students:
 - "What did you learn today about fast fashion and its environmental impact?"
 - "How can reusing clothes help protect the planet?"
 - Reinforce the concept that small changes, like reusing or buying second-hand clothing, can make a big difference in reducing waste and saving resources.
-



Extension Ideas

- **Share with Family:** Encourage students to talk to their families about the lesson, help donate clothes, or visit a thrift store together.
 - **Art Project:** Have students create posters or digital ads promoting the environmental benefits of thrift shopping or upcycling clothes.
 - **Math Integration:** Calculate how much water is saved by reusing an item of clothing instead of buying a new one.
 - **Literature Tie-In:** Read "What a Waste: Trash, Recycling, and Protecting Our Planet" by Jess French to reinforce the lesson's themes.
-

Assessment

- Active participation in discussions and group activities.
- Creativity and effort demonstrated in the Eco-Challenge fashion show.
- Ability to articulate how their fashion designs help the environment.