



### BrandNew2U - Lesson Two – Fast Fashion and the Environment

<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will define fast fashion and articulate the environmental costs of producing and consuming clothes in this way.</li> <li>Students will locate the root causes and consequences of these environmental costs within our</li> </ul>
<b>Materials</b>	<i>BrandNew2U</i> – Powerpoint file Lifecycle cards (attached) – 1 copy per 5 students, cut
<b>Time</b>	Approx 60 minutes

#### Procedure

##### *Definition of fast fashion – 5 minutes*

- Students work in groups. They have 2 minutes to think of as many words as possible associated with “fast fashion”. One person in each group should write them down.
- After two minutes, ask each group to share their words.
- Read the definition of fast fashion from [goodonyou.eco](http://goodonyou.eco): *Fast fashion can be defined as cheap, trendy clothing that samples ideas from the catwalk or celebrity culture and turns them into garments in high street stores at breakneck speed to meet consumer demand. The idea is to get the newest styles on the market as fast as possible, so shoppers can snap them up while they are still at the height of their popularity and then discard them after a few wears.*
- Ask students how many of their words were in the definition you read.

##### *Lifecycle of a pair of jeans – 15 minutes*

- Distribute the cut-up cards. Ask students to arrange the cards in order and match them to the pictures.
- When the students have completed, tell them to read the facts on each card. What are the environmental costs at each stage? (e.g. water, fossil fuels, human labour, etc.)
- Ask:
  - Why does the short life of fast fashion make these costs worse?
  - Why is buying better-quality clothes better environmentally?
  - What should we do with clothes when they reach the end of their life?

### *Problems and Solutions Tree – 20 minutes*

- Show slide 5 from the Powerpoint. Tell students this will help them explore the problems and solutions involved in fast fashion. Tell students to:
  - Copy the tree. Write “fast fashion” on the trunk. This is the problem.
  - On the branches, write some of the consequences (e.g. carbon emissions from transportation, exploitation of workers, etc). These will be things you have already discussed in these lessons.
  - On the roots, write some of the root causes of the problem. Encourage them to dig deep – every root cause has a deeper cause!
  - On the leaves, suggest some practical solutions that can respond to the causes.

### *Action planning – BrandNew2U - 20 minutes*

- Present slides 6-8. These are taken from the BrandNew2U Instagram and Twitter. BrandNew2U is a Young Social Innovators project from transition year students in Colaiste Bride, that teamed up with NCBI and GAP Ireland to promote second hand clothes among young people. These photos show some of the activities they did in 2020/21. You can find more at their Instagram, @brandnew2u\_cb and their Twitter @Brandnew2UCB
  - The upcycling challenge was open to all the students in the school to create something new from something old. They gave prizes for the best 5 items.
  - In the Christmas jumper challenge, students collected Christmas jumpers from previous years, upcycled them, and opened a swap shop.
  - Students presented the project to other classes, telling them what they were doing and why.
  - Students held a fashion week with clothes from NCBI to show that you can buy good quality, good clothes from second hand stores.
  - Not pictured, but students were also invited into NCBI stores to dress their front window. NCBI stores across the country are happy to work with students on fast fashion projects.
- Ask students:
  - How do each of these actions reduce the damage caused by fast fashion?
  - Can you do something similar in your school?

Brainstorm ideas.

Use the table on slide 10 to assign roles and tasks in the project.

## Additional Materials - Lesson Two – The Lifecycle of Jeans



### Land is cleared for cotton production.

- The cotton in one pair of jeans needs 7,400 litres of water to grow. The Aral Sea in Central Asia has almost completely disappeared because of clothes production!
- Cotton growers use lots of pesticides to keep away bugs. These can poison workers, communities, run into water, and kill beneficial insects.
- Land that is growing fabric for cotton can't be used to grow food for local people.



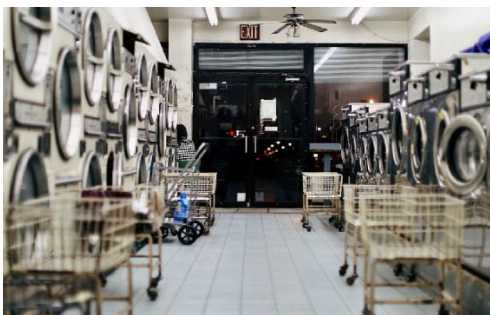
### The raw cotton is processed into fabric.

- The cotton is often grown in a different country to where the fabric is produced, which uses fossil fuels to transport.
- Chemicals used in dyeing can cause harm to workers – especially the chemical washes used for distressed denim. Chemical runoff often finds its way into local water sources – the Pearl River in China has turned indigo-blue!
- Many modern jeans are a blend of cotton and polyester, a plastic derived from oil.



### The fabric is made into jeans.

- 85% of garment workers are women who earn an average of €3 per day.
- 170 million children worldwide work within the clothes manufacturing industry.
- Conditions in garment factories are often poor, with low lighting and bad ventilation.



### The jeans are distributed to stores around the world.

- The jeans we wear in Ireland are often made far away, so require lots of fossil fuels to transport.
- Washing jeans also requires large amounts of water.
- Microfibres of polyester, woven into the cotton, can be released and find their way into water systems.



### When people are done with jeans, they don't just disappear...

- In landfill, jeans can take up to 40 years to decompose, or 200 years if they contain polyester.
- Jeans can be exported to the Global South, to be sold and worn. However, bad condition clothes can cause problems in countries that have poor waste disposal – and they take fossil fuels to transport.
- Reusing, upcycling, or buying second-hand clothes can save huge amounts of fossil fuels.