

Guidance for Teachers

Sustainability *first*

nationalgrid

PRINCIPAL PARTNER
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE UK 2021
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

Great Science Share for SCHOOLS

Learning about Clothing Waste

Sustainability *first*

Equipment:

- Device to share video
- Pencils, paper and/or computers for pupils' to write questions, comments, concerns etc.

Main concepts:

- What is clothing waste?
- Why do we produce waste?
- What are the impacts of clothing waste on people and the planet?
- How can we use creativity and care to produce less clothing waste?

Curriculum Linking:

England

- Key Stage 2 Science: Pupils should be taught to recognise that environments can change and that this can sometimes pose dangers to living things.

Scotland:

- Social Studies: I can discuss the environmental impact of human activity and suggest ways in which we can live in a more environmentally responsible way. SOC 2-08a
- Health and Wellbeing: I can understand how advertising and the media are used to influence consumers. HWB 2-37a

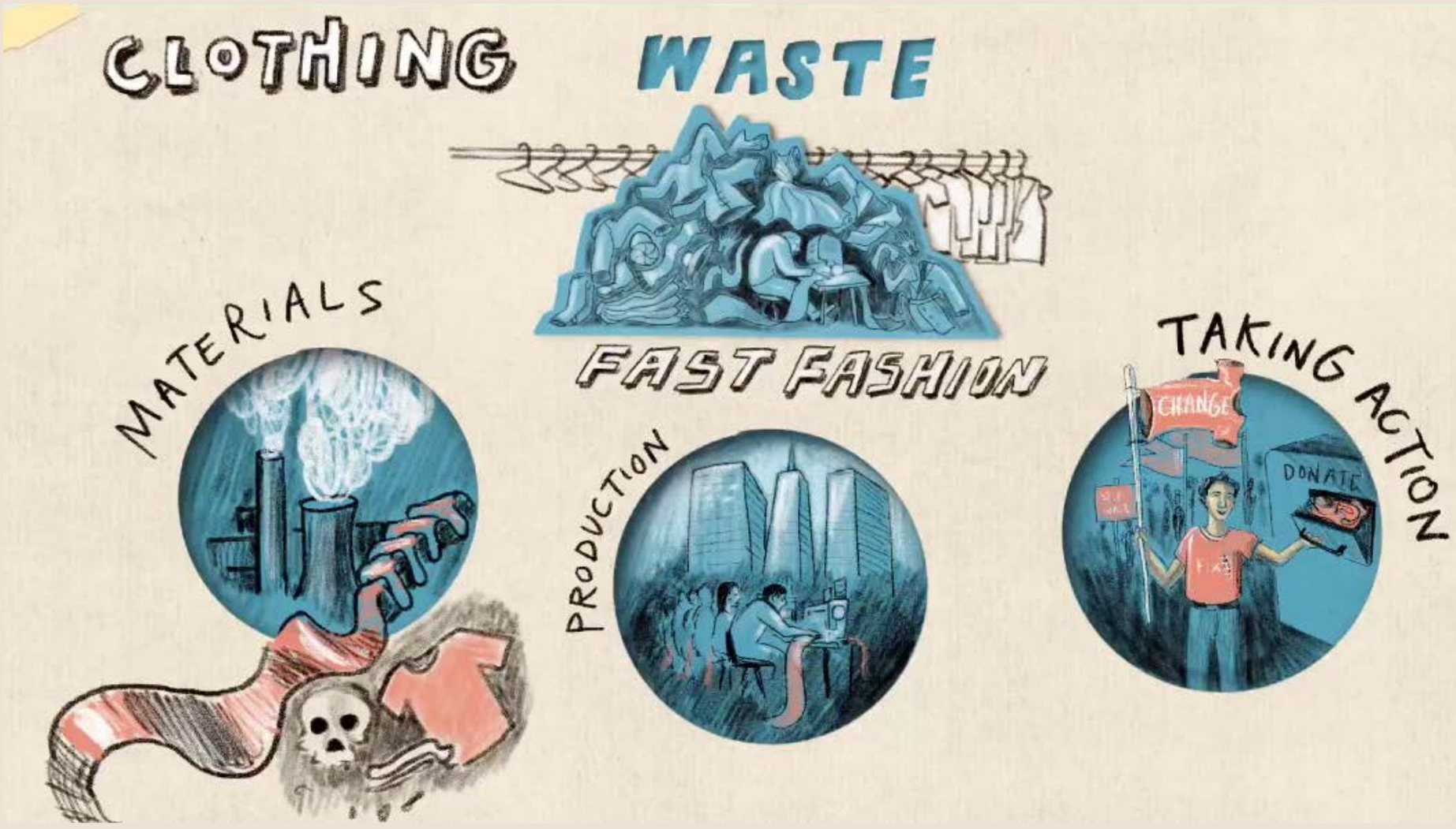
Wales

- Geography: Pupils should be given opportunities to describe the causes and consequences of how places and environments change, e.g., by season; from past to present; the need for sustainability.
- Science: Pupils should use and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding by comparing the Earth with other planets, investigating materials around them and considering the importance of recycling.

nationalgrid | PRINCIPAL PARTNER UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE UK 2021 IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY | Great Science Share for SCHOOLS

Step by Step Guidance:

- Watch the video and encourage pupils in groups, or as a class, to consider whether they produce clothing waste, or contribute to fast fashion
- Submit questions, comments and/or concerns in the uploader form here.



Share with us so we can learn with you!

Make sure to upload your work here so we can learn with you and share your work widely with waste experts at our June 15th pupils' assembly and with the older people who have written these statements!

DISCLAIMER: This activity sheet was written for The Great Science Share for Schools, Sustainability First, their sponsors (National Grid) and the Great Science Share for Schools are not liable for the actions of activity of any persons who uses this resource or in any of the suggested further resources. We assume no liability with regard to injuries or damage to property that may occur as a result of using this information. These activities are designed to be carried out by children working with an adult. The adult is fully responsible for ensuring the activity is carried out safely. You can access further H&S advice from www.cleapss.org.uk

Learning about clothing waste transcription

Now, I want to talk about a type of waste that we might not think of as waste. Think about what you're wearing – your jumper, your trousers... what will happen to these items of clothing when you outgrow them, or no longer want them?

In the UK, we buy a lot of clothes. According to WRAP, in one year, 1, 245,000 tonnesof clothing are purchased, which is around 17 kgof clothing per person! Again, what will happen to all these items of clothing when we no longer use them?

Well, in the UK, most of these items end up in a landfill – £140 million worth of clothing(The Guardian) ! And, depending on the material they are made out of, they could sit in a landfill for around 200 years before they disintegrate (EPA) .200 years! Can you imagine what the world will be like 200 years from now? My jumper may still be around then!

The way we buy clothing has been changing in the past few decades. We buy so many clothes, and trends change so quickly, the clothing industry now makes lotsand lots of cheap clothes very quickly - we call this Fast Fashion. But what happens when we throw our clothes away to buy new ones? Like all waste, this impactsboth the planet and society.
In order to make clothes quickly and cheaply, companies need to use cheap materials and,often, these materials aren't great for the environment. For example, synthetic fabrics, which over 63% of clothes are made out of, are cheap, but they use fossil fuels, like oil and gas in their production and they stay in landfills for over 200 years!

Other materials like leather and cotton use a lot of our natural resources, like water. Making leather and cotton also takes up a lot of land that can be used to grow food or can be and homes for wildlife! Because of this, when we use clothes for a short while and then throw them away, and then buy new clothes, we're using a lot of resources which has an impact of the environment.
Fast Fashion also impacts people. In order to sell clothes quickly and cheaply, companies often pay the people who make our clothes very little.In India and Bangladesh, where many of the clothes people in the UK wear are made, workers in clothing factories are paid much lower than what they need to live comfortably, while clothing brands make lots more money.

The way to take actionagainst Fast Fashion and clothing waste is to value and love our clothes more and to value the people who have made our clothes as well, so that we want to take care of our clothes, for example by sewing up holes and sewing on buttons that have fallen off, so that we can wear our clothes for longer. Also, if we value our clothes and the people who make them, after a while, if we don't want to use certain items of clothing, we can donate our clothes to people who may need them, or give them to younger siblings or cousins, instead of throwing them away! I'm sure most of you do this already! Zero Waste Scotland recommends recycling clothes at textile banks – these are specific drop off bins you can find near supermarkets or local carparks. Textile banks and charity shops take your clean, unwanted clothes, socks and shoes and properly recycle the material.
Another way to take actionagainst Fast Fashion and clothing waste is to get creative! Do you want a new jumper? Why not learn to knit one! Knitting a sweater means that can you make sure your yarn is made in a way that doesn't harm the environment. When you knit your own sweater, your sweater doesn't have to travel hundreds or thousands of miles in a truck or plane, which release greenhouse gases, to get to you – because you've made it right in your own home! It's also so fun to get to wear one of your own creations and show the world your brilliant work. If we think back to our previous conversation about how we can minimisewaste, we discussed repurposing things.We can take old clothes and turn them into new things: for example, we can make a bathmat with old t-shirts, or tea towels with linen shirts. I don't know about you, but these sound like excellent Christmas presents to me!
Like with all waste, it may be overwhelming to think about changing our habits and daily lives so that we produce less clothing waste. But if we slowly start to see clothes as valuable things that can keep us warm and help us show the world our creativity and unique personality, instead of something we wear for a short while and then throwaway, then that's an excellent step to reducing clothing wast