Lesson objective

In this lesson students start to explore the environmental impacts of consumer fashion choices, by investigating the concept of 'fast fashion'.

Students will have the opportunity to:

- develop an understanding of how people can change and impact on places through their choices, in this case, fast fashion

- pose complex questions of significance designed to challenge and expand understandings of fast fashion issues

- demonstrate a growing understanding of the ways in which production and consumption affect different places.

Lesson focus

The focus of this lesson is to encourage students to adapt their knowledge of what they currently know about fashion production and consumption to incorporate an understanding of the impacts of the fast fashion phenomenon on the places that produce the raw materials, make the product, and receive the wastes at the end of its life.

Setting the context

The fashion industry is the second most polluting industry world-wide (*The True Cost*, Andrew Morgan), with Australians being the second largest consumer of fabric and textiles per person in the world. (*Fashion waste*, Behind the News).

This lesson provides opportunity for students to develop a working definition of fast fashion, which will encompass early understandings of the human and environmental implications of consumer choices. As a working definition it will be refined and re-worked across the lessons in this learning sequence.

Introduction

To tune students into the idea of fashion consumption before introducing the concept of 'fast fashion', start the lesson by generating discussion around students' current fashion choices.

Consider asking question such as:

- How many items of new clothing have you purchased during the past three months? (Consider providing a range of options to choose from — e.g. less than three items, 3–5 items, more than five items.)

- Have you any items in your wardrobe you have not worn more than three times?

- What happens to your clothes when you no longer wear them? (If necessary, prompt students with the following options —discard in rubbish, pass onto friends, siblings or second-hand clothing stores, recycle as rags).

- Do you make conscious decisions about your fashion purchases? (Ask those who respond positively to explain their decision-making process).

Explain to students during the next few lessons they will be investigating the phenomenon of fast fashion.

Following on from the initial discussion, ask students to write their own definition for 'fast fashion'.

Spend time reviewing and collating students' initial thoughts.

Body of lesson

1. Provide each student with the *5-3-1 Fast fashion* worksheet.

2. Explain that you will be watching three videos that explore the concept of 'fast fashion' and its impact both on the people and places that produce the fashion items and the places that manage the waste produced at the 'end of life' for each garment.

3. Ask students to record their observations on their *5-3-1 Fast fashion* worksheet as they watch the videos. Ask students to record five facts, three insights and one question for each video.

4. You may wish to discuss the difference between open and closed questions, and how can we design open-ended questions to prompt greater depth of thought.

5. Share with students the following videos and read the article *Slowing down Fast Fashion* in the June 2018 edition of Beyond the Bale:

   - Behind the News: Fashion Waste (3 min 19 sec)

   - The Feed — Fast fashion: Sweatshops (5 min 34 sec)

   - WAR ON WASTE: Fast fashion (Climate change) |Full documentary | Reel Truth (0.00 —12.50 min and 30.15 —42.00 min)

6. Use a think-pair-share (T-P-S) activity as a reflective strategy using the information collected on their *5-3-1 Fast fashion* worksheet.

7. Break students into pairs to discuss their facts, insights and questions. Ask each pair to share with the class two points of interest from their discussion about the videos.

8. Explore the questions recorded on the 5–3–1 worksheets and group according to the focus. Return to these questions later in the learning sequence to see what insights and understandings have developed during this learning sequence.

9. To extend the class discussion **after** sharing key ideas from the 5-3-1, consider the following:

    •   What is fast fashion? How are our definitions extended or challenged by these videos?

    •   What are the pros and cons of fast fashion?

    •   What are the human, geographic and environmental issues highlighted by these short films? (These may need drawing out and exploring further through the discussion).

    •   Why is addressing fast fashion challenging?

    •   Who can make a difference?

Encourage students in each group to discuss what they are drawing and why.

Conclusion

To conclude the lesson, ask students to prepare a fast fashion mind map graphic organiser demonstrating their understanding of key issues of fast fashion including:

•   the environment

•   geographic locations (in particular similarities or differences between where fashion is produced and where it is consumed)

•   what happens to people along the fast fashion supply chain.

Links to the Australian Curriculum:

•   The effects of the production and consumption of goods on places and environments throughout the world and including a country from North-East Asia (ACHGK068)

•   Develop geographically significant questions and plan an inquiry that identifies and applies appropriate geographical methodologies and concepts (ACHGS063)

•   Represent multi-variable data in a range of appropriate forms, for example scatter plots, tables, field sketches and annotated diagrams, with and without the use of digital and spatial technologies (ACHGS065)

•   Reflect on and evaluate findings of an inquiry to propose individual and collective action in response to a contemporary geographical challenge, taking account of environmental, economic, political and social considerations; and explain the predicted outcomes and consequences of their proposal (ACHGS071)

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Extension activity 1: Peer survey

Allocate students into small groups and ask them to design a survey to collect, collate and present data about fashion consumption and the awareness of the impacts of fast fashion among their peers.

Explain that each group will be asked to present the results of their survey to an audience (class, assembly, year groups or school newsletter) in a format of their choice (e.g. poster, infographic or oral presentation), but each presentation needs to incorporate both quantitative and qualitative data.

Discuss with students the importance of careful question design in collecting, analysing and presenting meaningful data.

Encourage students to include a range of 'structured' or 'closed' and 'non-structured' or 'open' questions.

Students may like to use the online survey tool — SurveyMonkey — to develop and distribute their survey and collect and collate their feedback.

The SurveyMonkey website contains a range of useful resources to guide students in developing a meaning survey.

Note: Infographics are a visual representation of data. When students create infographics, they are using information, visual, and technology literacies.

There is a variety of freely-available tools to create infographics online, such as Canva. Most online infographic tools provide templates students can use for their own purposes. Students can adapt available infographic templates and add their own content, images, designs, etc.

The following article from EducationHQ Australia provides more information on using infographics in the classroom: https://educationhq.com/news/using-infographics-in-class-33589/ (Accessed 4 June 2018)

Conclusion

Ask students to reflect on their survey and results, specifically in terms of collecting information from secondary sources and presenting it in meaningful ways. Ask them to consider ethical protocols involved with data collection (such as confidentiality, informed consent, citation and integrity of data), the quality of their questions and the insights gained, the value of data in terms of numbers of responses etc. and the way in which their findings have been communicated.

Focusing on aspects of their data collection and communication of findings, ask students to organise their reflections according to what:

- they would remove or do differently — **Stop**

- they would like to do next time (that they didn't do this time) to improve the quality of their data collection and how they shared their findings — **Start**

- they believe they did well — **Continue**

Links to the Australian Curriculum:

- Develop geographically significant questions and plan an inquiry that identifies and applies appropriate geographical methodologies and concepts (ACHGS063)

- Evaluate sources for their reliability, bias and usefulness and select, collect, record and organise relevant geographical data and information, using ethical protocols, from a range of appropriate primary and secondary sources (ACHGS064)

- Represent multi-variable data in a range of appropriate forms, for example scatter plots, tables, field sketches and annotated diagrams, with and without the use of digital and spatial technologies (ACHGS065)

- Interpret and analyse multi-variable data and other geographical information using qualitative and quantitative methods, and digital and spatial technologies as appropriate, to make generalisations and inferences, propose explanations for patterns, trends, relationships and anomalies, and predict outcomes (ACHGS067)

- Present findings, arguments and explanations in a range of appropriate communication forms, selected for their effectiveness and to suit audience and purpose; using relevant geographical terminology, and digital technologies as appropriate (ACHGS070)

- Reflect on and evaluate findings of an inquiry to propose individual and collective action in response to a contemporary geographical challenge, taking account of environmental, economic, political and social considerations; and explain the predicted outcomes and consequences of their proposal (ACHGS071)

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Extension activity 2: Jigsaw activity

Note: This extension activity is based on the full-length (92min) documentary *The True Cost*, directed by Andrew Morgan. There is a small cost (AU$9.99 as at 5 October 2020) associated with downloading and viewing this film. A short free-to-air trailer can viewed on The True Cost website.

Filmed in countries all over the world, from the brightest runways to the darkest slums, and featuring interviews with the world's leading influencers including Stella McCartney, Livia Firth and Vandana Shiva, *The True Cost* is an eye-opening journey around the world and into the lives of the many people and places behind our clothes.

Use a Jigsaw co-operative learning activity to help students digest the key messages from *The True Cost* film.

If you are unable or unwilling to purchase this film, students can use a range of other resources to research their area of expertise. These resources are listed at the start of the unit or on the resource panel of the LEARN ABOUT WOOL lesson plan page.

The Jigsaw technique is designed for cooperative learning in small groups. Students have the opportunity to become 'experts' in a particular subject, and share their knowledge with their peers. This technique promotes both self and peer teaching, which requires students to understand the material at a deeper level and engage in discussion, problem solving, and learning.

Organise students into five groups in preparation for the activity. Give students in each group an identifying item (one per student — e.g. a coloured dot, sash, popsicle stick etc). Explain that this group is their 'expert' group and each 'expert' group will be researching a given topic relating to fast fashion. Following the research phase students will be required to circulate and share their expertise with students from other groups.

Allocate each expert group with one of the following topics relating to fast fashion:

- **Background information and context**, for example, important ideas and terms used, key facts and figures, data that helps to illustrate the issues, general information about the fashion industry (consumption rates, further defining what fast fashion is etc.)

- **Geographic factors** — students will explore the 'supply chain' from raw material through to final product and investigate potential impacts relating to geography.

- **Human factors** — for example, this may include information about health, living conditions, breakdown of family units, violence, and death resulting from working in the fashion supply chain. Of particular note will be the implications in developing countries.

- **Economic factors** — students will explore issues relating to economic factors, for example the variation in income for people involved in each stage of the supply chain, from raw material to consumption and waste management.

- **Environmental factors** — students will explore the impacts of fast fashion on the environment at various stages along the supply chain.

In groups, allow students to watch *The True Cost*, encouraging students to record and discuss their observations relating to their topic. This may require several lessons due to the length of the film.

As a group encourage students to determine how they will explain their topic to other groups — support groups to ensure each group member feels confident they can share their 'expertise', with others from other groups. Explain that they will have a maximum of five minutes to share their key points with others in the next step.

Create new groups, ensuring each new group has a least one member from the original 'expert' group. Students can check if they have completed this step correctly by making sure they have an identifying item from each original group represented.

Allow students enough time to share their expertise and ensure all members of the group have a shared understanding of each topic. Ask students to connect the various pieces of the fast fashion jigsaw to see how they interact.

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Conclusion

The film used many primary and secondary sources of information to create and share an understanding of the fashion industry and the implications of the issues associated with fast fashion. You may wish to spend some time discussing what bias is and why it can be a challenge in presenting ideas and arguments, as well as ensuring students have a consistent understanding of the difference between primary and secondary sources of information.

Initially through class discussion, assist students to think deeply about:

- the range of information sources used, both primary and secondary, and how they were used

- whether they were given a balanced view of the fashion industry issues and fast fashion throughout this film

- if the filmmakers presented a wide range of views. Support students to consider the range of views presented and consider if any perspectives were missing.

- whether the sources of expertise and information used were reliable and unbiased

- if all the issues were explored in an objective way.

Ask students to complete a reflection, focusing the strengths and weaknesses of the film in terms of presenting a complex issue in an informative and balanced way. This may be presented as a table.

Links to the Australian Curriculum:

- Develop geographically significant questions and plan an inquiry that identifies and applies appropriate geographical methodologies and concepts (ACHGS063)

- Evaluate sources for their reliability, bias and usefulness and select, collect, record and organise relevant geographical data and information, using ethical protocols, from a range of appropriate primary and secondary sources (ACHGS064)

- Represent multi-variable data in a range of appropriate forms, for example scatter plots, tables, field sketches and annotated diagrams, with and without the use of digital and spatial technologies (ACHGS065)

- Reflect on and evaluate findings of an inquiry to propose individual and collective action in response to a contemporary geographical challenge, taking account of environmental, economic, political and social considerations; and explain the predicted outcomes and consequences of their proposal (ACHGS071)

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