

# Politics

**We can all be activists**

RecyCOOL Lessons

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# We can all be activists

## Description

This lesson introduces possible activist opportunities. Learners explore which NGO's are campaigning for or against issues like human rights, living wages, toxic chemicals, child labour etc.

## Learning objective

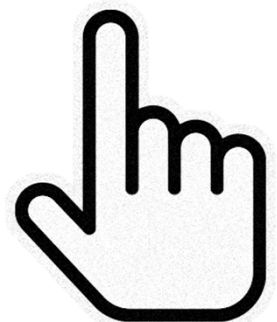
Objective of this lesson is to try to use our voice and take part in slow fashion activist campaigns and positively involve fashion brands.

## After this lesson you will be able to

- get involved in slow fashion activism to take action and raise your voice as a citizen and consumer

## Tools and materials

smart phone, a social media account (But be careful. some social media platforms are not allowed to be used until you are of a certain age. Educators should take care to follow this rule with learners taking part in the lesson activity.), a "Who made my clothes?" poster from the Fashion Revolution site



## SLOW FASHION ACTIVISM:

Taking actions towards sustainability of the global fashion industry as a citizen.

# ***SLOW FASHION***

[noun]

A commitment to reparative work and regenerative practice, that works to heal the destruction and imbalance caused by capitalism and racism. Actions that promote cooperative, interdependent and symbiotic relationships with the living communities in the social and bio spheres, to safeguard the fragile connection between them and respect their needs and limitations.

@fash\_rev  
@saint\_lovie

entry  
level  
activist

example:

*“To engage and embed slow fashion practice in a business model, brands have to be aware of their drivers, the space they operate within as well as what they have internalised. It is a continuous self and industrial audit, that requires a committed energy and a versatile attitude to the unlearning of traditional business models and structures that are historically oppressive.”*

@fash\_rev  
@saint\_lovie

entry  
level  
activist

Photo credit: [Fashion Revolution](#)

Who  
made  
my  
clothes?

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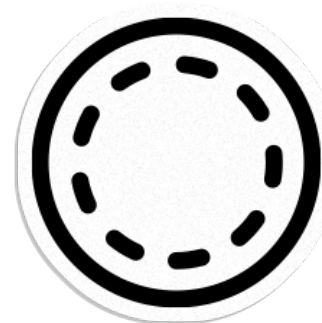
**#WHOMADEMYCLOTHES**  
**FASHIONREVOLUTION.ORG**

As we see in many good examples in business, or by some influencers, slow fashion is an attitude that can be spread around the fashion industry and by consumers as well. The values of the slow fashion movement focus on the fact that we don't need to produce and consume on such a big scale as we do now, and people and nature should not have to suffer just for constantly changing trends in fashion.

**The mainstream fashion industry is built upon the exploitation of labour and natural resources.**

Wealth and power are concerned in the hands of few, and growth and profit are rewarded above all else. Big brands and retailers produce too much, too fast and manipulate us into a toxic cycle of overconsumption. Meanwhile the majority of people that make our clothes are not paid enough to meet their basic needs, and who are living in production countries that are already feeling the impacts of the climate crisis and government inaction.

**Do you know any way to positively influence fast fashion brands? Do you know any environmental and human rights organisations that deal with fast fashion? You will find out how to change the politics of brands, and learn how much your voice as a consumer matters and has the power for change.**



## **Do you know how to be a slow fashion activist?**

**There is often more privilege in western civilisation where consumers have the power to take action as global citizens.**

**Slow fashion activists believe in a fairer fashion industry which produces clothes and accessories without pollution and exploitation. The slow fashion activist can be active not just in the slow fashion attitude to his/her wardrobe but can be active in more possible ways...**

### **• Donations**

Money is a very important tool to make all organisations work but these organisations must have integrity for the public to hold their trust in them, and have a strong ethical funding policy. That makes fundraising difficult for them. You can find on their website links to donate your money and support their work.

### **• Petitions**

Organisations aim to change the world and legislation. That needs to communicate their ideas with governments, brands and retailers to make those changes happen. One of the means of communication is a signed petition. Nowadays it is supereasy to add your signature for the things that matter most to you. You can find links to organisation and coalition's petitions and sign them online from your phone or laptop, in a very short time.

### **• Volunteering**

Do you have time or ideas to help slow fashion campaigns? Contact your local coordinator and ask how you can be active with them. It needs time and effort from you but you can meet new friends and gain experience.

## • Happenings

Being publicly visible is sometimes the best way to show your intentions. Organisations often follow this tactic with public engagement campaigns to raise awareness by using creative PR stunts. You can come to some planned events such as this, or even organise your own. These days, often these physical events are also accessible online or through social media. There are loads of organisations that focus on specific issues like fair wages, toxic chemicals and child labour.

## Some of them:

### World Fair trade organization

International initiative works with campaigning the reasons for global fair-trade business, which is important for people and the environment. Fashion brands can also get their fair trade certificate if they comply with the ten fair-trade criteria.

### Clean Clothes Campaign

This international initiative is supported by local non-governmental organisations. With their help campaigns to improve labour conditions and support human rights of workers in the global textile and fashion industry.





## **Greenpeace**

Greenpeace aims to change the environmental impact of the fashion industry with their campaign called Greenpeace DETOX.

## **PETA**

PETA has been campaigning cruelty-free fashion for years. Skin, fur and feathers belong to animals and are not always needed to use these kinds of materials because we have more sustainable alternatives.

## **Fair Wear Foundation**

Non-profit organisation is directly collaborating with brands and textile factories to improve labour conditions for garment workers. One of their tools is monitoring by independent inspections.

## **Remake Fashion**

Community of fashion lovers, women rights advocates, and environmentalists on a mission to change the industry's harmful practices on people and our planet. They make sustainability accessible and inclusive across three pillars of work: education, advocacy, and transparency. Also known for online happening #PAYUP in times of COVID-19.

## **Extinction Rebellion**

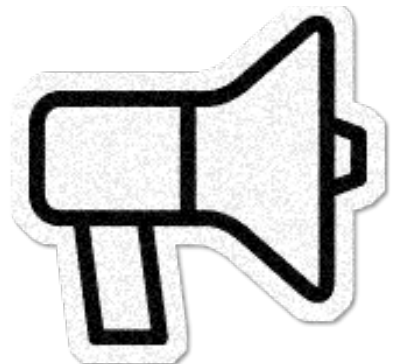
Young but visible initiative campaigning to raise the awareness of the environmental crisis. ER is known for organising radical protest, events and claims.

## Fashion Revolution

Fashion revolution was founded in the wake of the Rana Plaza disaster in 2013. Since then, it has grown to become the world's largest fashion activism movement, mobilising citizens, brands and policymakers through research, education and advocacy. Aims to build a global fashion industry that conserves and restores the environment and values people over growth and profit. Fashion Revolution sees transparency as an important tool towards sustainability. Every citizen can join to online campaign called **#WhoMadeMyClothes?**

We in Fashion Revolution ask **#WhoMadeMyClothes** to challenge brands to protect people in their supply chains and take responsibility for the human rights and wellbeing of everyone involved in the manufacturing process from farm to factory to finished garment. We also ask **#WhatsInMyClothes** to hold brands accountable for their impact on the environment, the natural resources used in their material and their waste footprint.

**Take a selfie (a picture or video) showing the label with your printed poster in your hands.** You could turn your clothes inside out to make it more of a statement, then post a picture or video of our poster on Instagram, Twitter, TikTok or whatever platform you choose to use. Tag the brand of the clothing they are wearing and ask them **#Whomademyclothes**. **The Fashion Revolution expect that the brand can answer with #IMadeYourClothes with the garment worker posing in his workplace and with his products to show the brand is transparent and has nothing to hide.**



# Reflection

How long did it take you to get involved in the [#WhoMadeMyClothes](#) campaign? Have you received the answer from your brand?

## Follow up on slow fashion activism

You can choose from the previous list of activism but don't forget – it is not necessary to be an extreme slow fashion activist as you go through this lesson. It is possible – and just as helpful – to talk to your parents, friends or just people around you why you don't spend your money on fast fashion clothes and which wardrobe attitude can bring the same or even bigger joy instead.

Go to our [website](#), find your country coordinator and get involved as a citizen. We prepared toolkits which would help you with event or educational activities.

Photo credit: [Athina Kourda](#)



# Resources

Fashion Revolution. Fashion Transparency Index 2020. 2020. Available at: <https://www.fashionrevolution.org/about/transparency/>

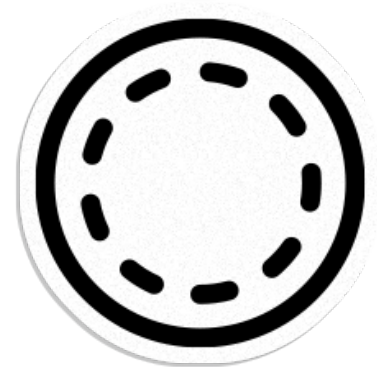
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# Partners



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