

## #6: Fake Fashion News



### Summary

We are bombarded with marketing that tells us how much we want to or need to buy something. This stuff will make our lives better. We will be happier, have more friends, look better, be more successful if we buy what they are selling. Lots of companies are using sustainability as a marketing tool – they are telling their customers how good they are at looking after other people and their planet. As consumers we need to be critical of this and look closely at what exactly they are doing. Sometimes brands don't do all they say they do or make promises that aren't always actioned.

**Around half of children are worried that they can't identify fake news. Here's an activity to help.**

### At the end of this activity learners will

- develop critical literacy skills and navigate the digital world to question information found online
- be aware of ways to ask brands for information about their sustainable credentials
- be familiar with the Transparency Index and how to use it to help identify brands who are supporting more sustainable ways of making clothes.

### Time frame

45 minutes

### Lesson format

- Ask the question. How do you work out if companies are making clothes in sustainable ways?

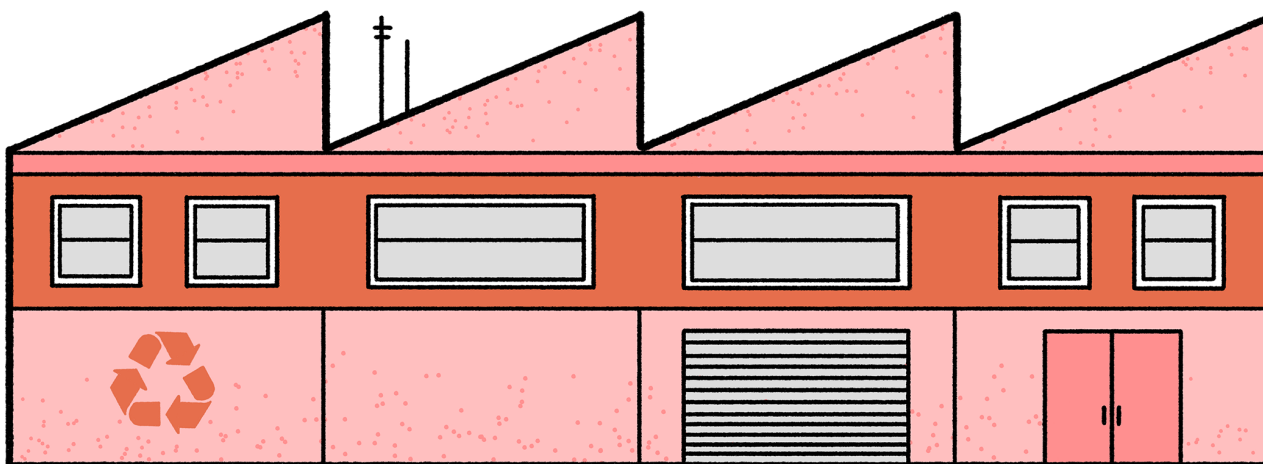


- Learners research a well-known high street clothing brand of their choice. They review and compile adverts for this brand and think about what messages about sustainability are included in these adverts.
- Learners search for the sustainability policy for the brand and use Good on You to continue their research.
- Learners compare brands using the Fashion Transparency Index.
- Learners contact a clothing brand and ask questions about sustainability.

**Note:** You may like to read more information about helping young people navigate fake news and misinformation here <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/fake-news-teacher-resources/zfv7kty>. You might also want to look at <https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/family/2021/12/talking-to-kids-about-advertising>. We also suggest that you look on Good on You to see the range of brands that are rated, to ensure that the brand chosen by the group can be researched using this resource.

## Key resources

- Good on You rating <https://goodonyou.eco/category/rated/>
- Fashion Transparency Index 2021 <https://www.fashionrevolution.org/about/transparency/>



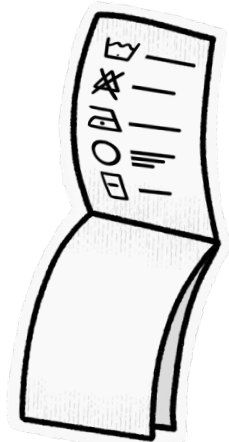
## What to do

1. Ask the question. How do you work out if companies are making clothes in sustainable ways?
  - Lots of companies are using sustainability as a marketing tool – they are telling their customers how good they are at looking after people and planet. As responsible consumers we need to be critical of this and look closely at what exactly they are doing
2. Slide 2: **Task 1** – As a group, choose a high street clothing brand to research.
  - You could do this by looking back at Section 1: What's on a label? and choosing from the brands you looked at there
  - You could choose a brand you know, wear or have heard of in the news or in recent advertising campaigns
  - You could choose a brand that has a selected lines that they advertise as a more

sustainable choice. Searching for the brand and 'sustainable', 'ethical', 'eco-friendly' and a brand name might help you to choose



3. Slide 3: **Task 2** - Once you have decided which brand to look into, look for adverts for that brand. Look online, in magazines, on social media and at videos. Collect these together in a way that makes sense to you, on a noticeboard or by collecting links to webpages together.
4. Slide 4: **Task 3** - What do the adverts tell us? Think about the following:
  - What is the advert trying to sell?
  - What image is being portrayed?
  - Does the advert make you feel anything? What? Happy? Sad? Like you belong? Something different?
  - Does the advert link the product with an idea? What?
  - What messages about ethics / sustainability / personal values are they using within the advert?
  - Remember to think about any music, spoken words or written text and colours used within the advert
  - Think about the name of the line that is being advertised as a more sustainable choice. What message does the name of that line or range communicate?
5. Slide 5: **Task 4** - Discuss:
  - What else do you want to know about how these clothes are made?
  - Is there anything the company isn't telling you, the consumer in the adverts?
  - Make a list of other information that you would like to know. Think back to Section 2 What's behind a label? to help
6. Slide 6: **Task 5** - Search for a sustainability policy written by the brand you are researching. This is often available on their website. Read the policy. Does it contain the information you wanted to know after looking at the adverts?
7. Slide 7: **Task 6** - Visit Good on You <https://directory.goodonyou.eco/>

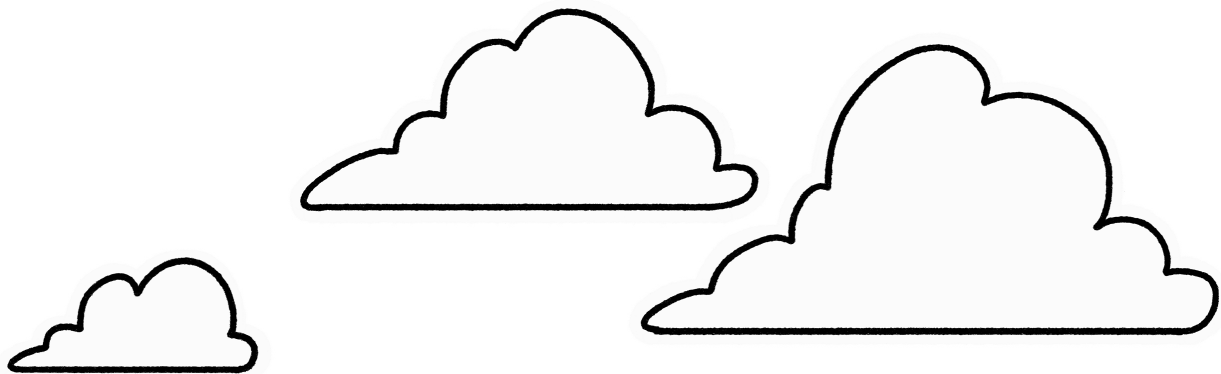


Good on You rates fashion brands around the world, and states that 'Everything we do as a team contributes to UN Sustainable Development Goal **12**: "Ensure sustainable production and consumption patterns". Our recognised and trusted

ethical rating system, advice and information are a part of this global mission, leading the way towards a more sustainable and fair fashion industry. Our work is also influenced by goals: [5](#), [13](#), [14](#) and [15](#).' (You can visit <https://globalgoalscentre.org/the-goals/> to find out more about the Sustainable Development Goals, or click on each hyperlink in the text above.)

- Search for the brand on Good on You <https://directory.goodonyou.eco/> and read the review
- Visit <https://goodonyou.eco/category/rated/> and search for the brand you are researching. You could use 'ctrl and f' on your keyboard to speed up your search within the 'Rating' webpage

(**Note:** You may choose to split the article between small groups within your class or group, with smaller groups reading about environmental impact, labour conditions and animal welfare then feeding back to the whole group.)



8. Discuss: How do you feel about everything you have looked at? How do the adverts you have looked at compare to the information in the review and the article you found on Good on You?
9. Ask the question: How can I see how different brands compare?
  - Introduce the Fashion Transparency Index and what it is
  - As a response to the Rana Plaza factory disaster (see Section 3), a campaign group called Fashion Revolution was started. They say that they 'campaign for a clean, safe, fair, transparent and accountable fashion industry. We do this through research, education, collaboration, mobilisation and advocacy.' (Find out more by visiting <https://www.fashionrevolution.org/>) Each year Fashion Revolution compiles their Transparency Index, a tool designed to help consumers be critical of what brands are telling them. The Transparency Index reviews and ranks 250 of the world's largest fashion brands and retailers.
  - Fashion Revolution explains that 'Transparency is the public disclosure of information that enables people to hold decision makers to account. For the fashion industry, it means sharing information about supply chains, business practices and the impacts of these practices on workers, communities and the environment. Transparency is crucial for connecting the dots of the problems in the fashion industry and understanding how to fix them. Transparency is vital for holding major brands accountable for their human rights and environmental impacts across their supply chains.' <https://www.fashionrevolution.org/about/transparency/>
10. Slide 8: **Task 7** - Go to the Fashion Revolution Transparency Index and look at the final scores on page 38. <https://www.fashionrevolution.org/about/transparency/>

- Which brand names do learners recognise and how well did they do?

Slide 9 - Discussion points:

- No brands scored over 80%.
- 20 brands scored 0%. Why do you think this is?
- How could high street brands improve their rating? What actions do brands need to take?

11. Ask the question: how can I get more information?

- If we want to be responsible consumers and make sustainable choices with the clothes we buy, then we need more information. The more people ask brands for information the more they are likely to become more transparent – and not just make pledges



### Extension ideas

- Write to brands and ask them for more information or where they are at with a pledge they have made public. This could be a formal letter or a tweet

### Further Resources

- Good on You directory <https://directory.goodonyou.eco/>
- Good on You rating <https://goodonyou.eco/category/rated/>
- Fashion Transparency Index 2021 <https://www.fashionrevolution.org/about/transparency/>
- Article about avoiding greenwashing from Vogue <https://www.vogue.co.uk/news/article/greenwashing-in-fashion/amp>

