

The background features a dark navy blue field with several overlapping geometric shapes. On the left, there is a large blue parallelogram and a light green parallelogram, both tilted at an angle. These shapes overlap each other and the dark background. The text 'Unit 6 - Fast Fashion' is written in white, sans-serif font across the middle of the image, partially overlapping the green shape.

Unit 6 - Fast Fashion

Writing a solutions to a problem essay



What is fast fashion?

“Inexpensive clothing produced rapidly by mass-market retailers in response to the latest trends.” Oxford online dictionary

3 characteristics:

- It's cheap
- It's trendy
- It's disposable




Fast fashion has a negative impact on:

- people and society
- the environment



The negative impact of fast fashion on people and society

- **Violation of human rights:**
 - workers' rights: underpaid, hazardous working conditions, long hours, no social security
 - (*Fact: in 2013, the Rana Plaza clothing manufacturing complex in Bangladesh collapsed, killing over 1,000 workers*)
 - women's rights: sexual harassment, no maternity leave
 - children's rights: child labour
- **Health hazards:**
 - for farmers and workers (use of toxic chemicals to prevent crop failure or for textile dyeing) and
 - for consumers who wear these clothes
- **Poverty – exploitation of people in developing countries**



Note: You don't need to mention all of these negative effects. You can focus on the ones you think are the most important, e.g. you can only talk about the violation of human rights. In this case, your **topic sentence** could be something like this:

Fast fashion industry violates a number of basic human rights.



b) The negative impact of fast fashion on the environment

- **Water and air pollution:**
 - toxic chemicals used in textile dyeing and agriculture (e.g. for growing cotton) pollute seas and rivers
 - increasing levels of plastic in the oceans – microfibres: serious threat to aquatic life - make their way up the food chain
 - gas emissions: fast fashion industry produces 10% of the world's carbon emissions
- **Water consumption:**
 - 2nd largest consumer of the world's water supply (cotton requires high amounts of water)
- **Textile waste:**
 - textile waste occupies nearly 5% of all landfill space
 - 85% of all textiles end up in landfills each year
 - 15% of our clothing only are recycled or donated



How can we deal with this problem?

- What can governments do?
- What can consumers do?



a) What can governments do:

- Enforce laws or introduce stricter laws:
 - regulating working conditions in clothes factories (e.g. safety regulations and working hours) and carry out frequent inspections
 - to protect vulnerable groups which are often exploited, e.g. refugees, children and women
- Implement penalties for companies violating workers' rights or other human rights
- Increase minimum wages so that people can make a decent living
- Reward and fund responsible fashion companies



b) What can consumers do:

- buy less
 - buy according to your real needs
 - keep your clothes longer
- buy second hand
 - lots of second hand online shops
 - low priced, great condition
- think twice before you throw away:
 - mend, swap or donate unwanted clothes
 - recycle instead of throwing away
- buy better quality
 - buy clothes sustainable brands
 - choose clothes that last longer
 - choose organic fibers and natural fibers that do not require chemicals to be produced



“Less is always more.”



Topics for writing

1. You have had a class discussion about **fast fashion**. Write an essay to describe the **negative effects** of fast fashion on **people and societies** and suggest ways in which **governments** can deal with this problem.
2. You have had a class discussion about **fast fashion**. Write an essay to describe the **negative effects** of fast fashion on the **environment** and suggest ways in which **consumers** can deal with this problem.

Write 150 - 200 words.



A) Brainstorming

1. write down 3 negative effects of fast fashion on society / the environment
2. write 3 suggestions for what governments/consumers can do to deal with the problem



B) Planning your essay

Use the following plan:

Paragraph 1: Introduction: state the facts (What do we mean by fast fashion? What is the problem?)

Paragraph 2: Negative effects of fast fashion on society/ the environment

Paragraph 3: Suggestions – solutions to the problem

Paragraph 4: Conclusion – briefly restate the problem and the solutions offered – which of these solutions do you think would be more effective?