

SESSION 3 OVERVIEW

ENTER & CONNECT – 8 MIN

- Opening prayer
- Promise Poster
- Check-in
- Homework

INTRODUCE – 2 MIN

THINK – 5 MIN

- The Story of Stuff Clip

ENGAGE – 30 MIN

- The True Cost

REFLECT – 5 MIN

- Jewish Source Text

INSPIRE - 3 MIN

- Teen Activist Story

ENACT – 5 MIN

- Action Plans

EXIT – 2 MIN

- Song and Closing

Preparing for Session Three

Facilitation Preparation

This session has a lot of reading in it. Feel free to summarize sections instead of reading them off the page. Break up the readings by asking questions periodically, like “Who can relate to that?” or, “What do you think of that?”

The heart of this session is the exercise, The True Cost. It helps students begin to see that almost all the material objects they take for granted that are produced by humans have a toxic trail. Since there isn’t much time for students to learn, prepare a presentation, and teach back what they learned to the whole group, it will be important to remind them to get to the bottom line and keep it simple. Tell them to choose only a few key points and summarize their points into single sentences that get to the heart of the matter.

Overview

This session brings the true cost of extraction and production home. In it students learn about the cost of some of their most cherished and familiar possessions: clothing, jewelry, electronics, and cosmetics. It is the first step in their journey to understand and appreciate the secret life of their stuff and the personal steps it takes to change their own habits. It is a call to action!

Goals

- Reveal the externalized costs associated with everyday household objects: clothing, jewelry, electronics, and cosmetics
- Guide students to think about where things come from before they buy them
- Light a fire of passion to make changes in their consumption habits and become environmental stewards
- Provide inspiration and guidance for making changes

Themes

Religious:

- God created the world in a beautiful harmonious order for the benefit of both humans and animals. Recent human overconsumption is destroying this order and returning Creation back to chaos causing great suffering throughout the human and non-human world.

Secular:

- We’ve externalized the true cost of producing our goods onto communities and the environment. We’re destroying the environment, displacing communities, exploiting workers and making them sick, all to make our stuff.

Materials for Session 3

- Story of Stuff clip

The True Cost Exercise

- Have extra "stuff" in case students forgot to bring their own
 - cell phone
 - clothing
 - jewelry
 - lotion or other cosmetic/body care product
- Black and white copy of map of the world (1 for each team)
- Instruction sheets (1 for each team)
- Production Summary Sheets (A different one for each team)
- Poster paper, colored paper
- Scissors
- Colored pens, markers, etc.

Hand-outs

- Session 3 Readings Sheets- 1 per student
- Jewish Source Text Sheet- 1 per student
- Session 3 Action Plans- 1 per student

Session 3 To-Do List

- Have Session Readings and Religious Text ready to hand out
- Either put up a new piece of butcher paper for the Right Stuff Action board Session 3 or delineate a section of the poster you posted for Session 2 for Session 3.
- Re-post Promise Poster on wall if needed
- Set up *The Story of Stuff* clip cued for Extraction & Production (from 2:30-8:05)
- Have extra "stuff" ready
 - cell phone
 - clothing
 - jewelry
 - lotion or other cosmetic/body care product
- Set up a materials station for The True Cost materials
- Have Action Plans ready to hand out.

Jewish Source Texts

- Genesis 1:24-31
- Genesis 2:7, 15
- Nahum S. Sarna, Commentary to Genesis 1:28
- Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Sandhedrin, 38a

Notes on Jewish Source Texts

People often assume that the Bible is a single book with a single voice. The Bible however, is a library of many books with many voices from different perspectives. Sometimes there are multiple voices even within a single book. This the case with the creation stories of the book of Genesis. Genesis Chapters 1 and 2 portray two very different stories about how the universe came into existence and what the place of humanity is in Creation.

Genesis Chapter 1 portrays the process of Creation as a harmonious development of order over chaos over the course of seven "days." As each day occurs, more and more order emerges until everything is finished and declared "very good" which is the texts way of saying not only that God was pleased with the results of Creation but that they are sufficient and ordered.

In this grand panorama, humans are created last with special characteristics. Unlike other creatures, they are declared to be created "in the image of God." They are also commanded to rule over the rest of Creation. On the surface this appears to allow humans to do anything they want with Creation but in fact this is not a correct assumption. As the passage from Nahum Sarna's commentary makes clear, human are meant to be the agents of God's power on earth, in other words, God's stewards and they are expected to only eat vegetables. Their power over the rest of Creation is only through divine grace and the implication is that this can be taken away if they overreach their power. Being created in the image of God means that we have God-like characteristics but must never act like we are God.

From an environmental perspective, Genesis 1 teaches us that we have a special place in Creation and a special responsibility to exercise our God-like characteristics in a constructive and not destructive way.

Genesis chapter 2 has a very different perspective. In this chapter, humans are created first and the rest of Creation is built around them. But here, humans are not created in the image of God, they are molded from the earth (the Hebrew word for human is adam which Genesis connects to the word for earth, Adamah) and only become living beings through the breath of God. The human (or better translated "earthling") is put into the Garden of Eden "to till it and to tend it."

Notes on Jewish Source Texts Cont.

The Hebrew word for “till” is translated as the English word “serve.” This word’s best-known appearance in the Bible is in Joshua 24:15. Joshua has gathered all the tribes of Israel to renew their covenant with God. He recounts the history of events through which God has repeatedly expressed divine love for God’s people. At the climax of his speech, Joshua states, “As for me and my house, we shall serve the Lord.”

The second verb – “keep” – is also used in ways that shed some additional light on its meaning. For example, in Numbers 6:22-27, God is teaching Moses – who has a speech impediment – to teach his brother Aaron a blessing to pronounce over the Israelites to assure them of God’s compassion and care for them. The blessing that God tells Moses to pass on to Aaron begins, “May the Lord bless you and keep you.” The connotation of the verb “keep” is clear. It’s a loving, protective act – one that expresses generous care for another. So, Genesis 2:15 offers a remarkably positive role for people in relation to Creation. “Till and tend” become “serve and keep” a rich and positive relational meaning. It’s a lovely description of what God holds our role to be.

So, Genesis 2 is telling us that we may use the earth for our benefit (till it) but we must also take care of it (tend it). If we also understand it as “serve and protect” we also see that we have an obligation to serve the earth even as it serves us. It is a lovely description of what God thinks our role ought to be.

Finally, we have included the quote from the Babylonian Talmud, tractate Sanhedrin, as a counterpoint to all of this responsibility. The order of our creation reminds us that – even evolutionarily – we humans are young and recent on the scene of this earth drama, and that we would do well to have reverence for everything that came before us.

Jewish Source Texts

Genesis 1:24-31

God said, "Let the earth bring forth every kind of living creature: cattle, creeping things, and wild beasts of every kind." And it was so.

God made wild beasts of every kind and cattle of every kind, all kinds of creeping things of the earth. And God saw that this was good.

And God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. They shall rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the cattle, the whole earth, and all the creeping things that creep on earth."

And God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

And God blessed them and God said to them, "Be fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it; and rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the living things that creep on the earth."

God said, "See I give you every seed-bearing plant that is upon all the earth, and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit; they shall be yours for food.

And to all the animals on land, to all the birds of the sky, and to everything that creeps on earth, in which there is the breath of life, [I give] all the green plants for food."

And it was so God saw all that He had made, and found it very good. And it was evening and it was morning, the sixth day.

Genesis 2:7, 15

The Lord God formed man (adam) from the dust of the earth (adamah). He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.

The Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden, to till it and to tend it.

Jewish Source Texts

Nahum Sarna, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis*, pp. 11-12 on Genesis 1:26

Human beings are to enjoy a unique relationship with God, who communicates with them alone and who shares with them the custody and administration of the world. At the same time, the pairing of the creation of man in this verse with that of land animals, and their sharing in common a vegetarian diet, focuses attention on the dual nature of humankind, the creatureliness and earthiness as well as the Godlike qualities. The mysterious duality of man—the awesome power at his command and the starkness of his utter insignificance as compared with God—is the subject of the psalmist [Psalm 8]...

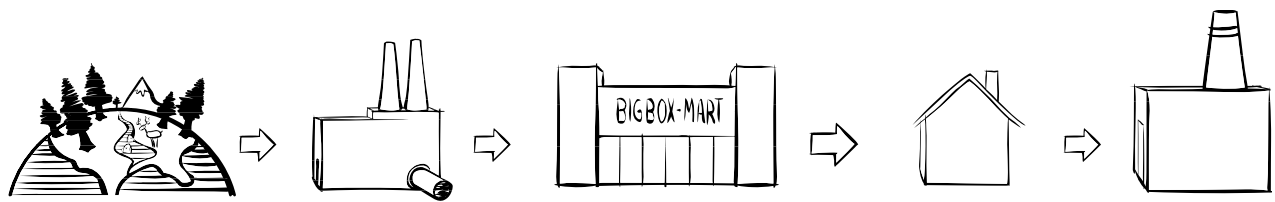
They shall rule.

The verbs used here and in verse 28 express the coercive power of the monarch, consonant with the explanation just given for “the image of God.” This power, however, cannot include the license to exploit nature banefully, for the following reasons: the human race is not inherently sovereign, but enjoys its dominion solely by the grace of God. Furthermore, the model of kinship here presupposes is Israelite, according to which, the monarch does not possess unrestrained power and authority; the limits of his rule are carefully defined and circumscribed by divine law, so that kingship is to be exercised with responsibility and is subject to accountability. Moreover, man, the sovereign of nature, is conceived at this stage to be functioning within the context of a “very good” world in which the interrelationships of organisms with their environment and with each other are entirely harmonious and mutually beneficial, an idyllic situation that is clearly illustrated in Isaiah’s vision of the ideal future king (Isa. 11:1-9). Thus, despite the power given him, man still requires special divine sanction to partake of the earth’s vegetation, and although he “rules” the animal world, he is not here permitted to eat flesh (vv. 29-30; cf. 9:3-4).

Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Sanhedrin 38a

Man was created on the eve of the Sabbath [the last of all created being]. And why? One answer: Should a man’s opinion of himself become overweening, he may be reminded that the gnat preceded him in the order of creation.

SESSION 3 – An Unfortunate Creation Story



Enter and Connect - (8 min)

Opening prayer (1 min)



God, the Creator of all that exists, you have blessed us by placing us to live in your world, a world which you love and which you recognize as good. Help us understand the ways in which our methods of making so many of the goods we use causes harm to your good Earth and to your people. And bless us with the strength to consume in ways that respect creation, now and for future generations. AMEN.

- Look at the Promise Poster together and ask students to raise the hand with the promise string on it if they intend to keep the promises during this session.
- Check-in - What was it like for you this week to live with greater awareness of *The Story of Stuff*?
- Homework Check – Ask who did their homework. In pairs (not their buddies), have them tell each other what they did and how it went. (2 min. ea.) Back in the large group, have them each say how many points they earned that week (tally the points on the tally sheet) and choose a highlight to share. Have them post any pictures they brought on the Right Stuff Action board.
- Hand out Session 3 Readings and Jewish Source Text sheets.

Introduce (3 min)

Recap the previous week, if needed.
Ask the students:

SAY THIS

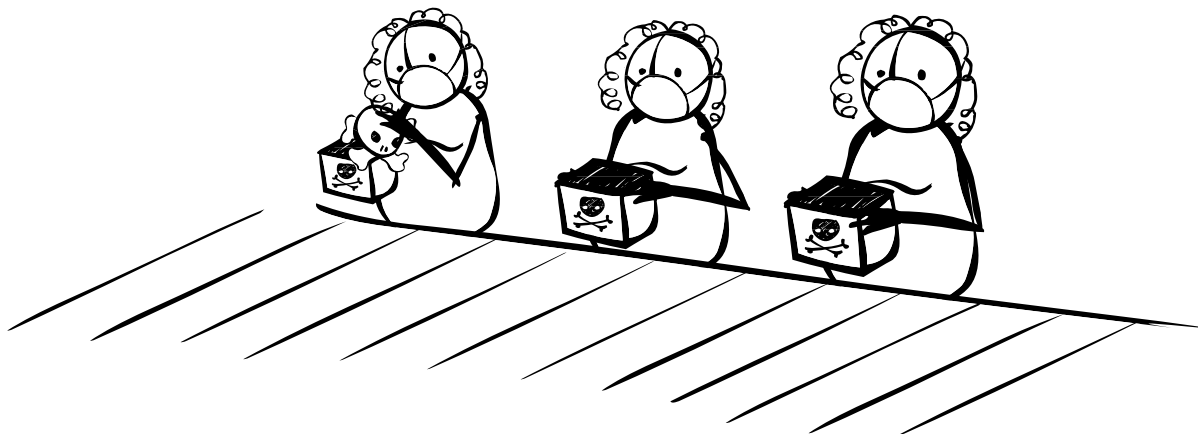
*What did we do last week?
What did we learn?*

Have students take turns reading, one reader per paragraph:

1.1 - We saw all of the things that have to happen in order for our economy to keep growing and growing, how it depends on our consuming as much as possible as fast as possible, how the way our stuff is being produced is trashing the planet, poisoning us, and how we're not having any fun while we're at it. It's not a pretty picture.

READ ALOUD

1.2 - Today we're going to learn how to start appreciating the secret life of a few more ordinary things in our lives - our clothing, books, jewelry, electronic gadgets, and cosmetics - so we can start to see the whole story behind the things that surround us. When we can really see how God's Creation is affected by our consumption habits, it becomes clear that caring for Creation requires us to change those habits. It's not easy. Our habits are deep. But together we can make changes in our lives that will offer respect to the earth and bring us greater fulfillment.



Think (5 min)

Prep: Set up Story of stuff clip on extraction and production (from 2:30-8:05)

1. Tell students they're going to watch a section of the video with the themes you'll be focusing on in this session.
2. Watch the clip.

Engage (30 min)

Activity - The True Cost

Prep:

- Have Black and white copy of map of the world (1 for each team) ready to hand out
- Have True Cost sheets (1 for each team) ready to hand out
- Poster paper, colored paper
- Have a supply station with colored pens, markers, etc.

Summary

Using the information provided in the handout sheets at the back of this Session, students will explore the first two stages of an object's life, what Annie describes in the film as Extraction and Production. Students will learn where some of the most common stuff in their lives comes from and how its made.

Students will work in teams with each team focusing on the true cost of a different object. They will study the information sheet for their object provided in the back of the session plan. Once they've had a chance to digest some of the information, they will work together to create a visual representation of the earliest stages of their stuff- where it comes from, how it got there, what it's made of, who made it, etc. They will do a short teach-back presentation to the larger group to share their information using a map of the world to help convey the international elements of our relationship with stuff. They will incorporate their visual work into the collective mural.

Instructions

1. Have the students break up into four groups by counting off by 4's (All "ones" are together, all "twos," etc).
2. Have each group find a place in the room to work together.
3. Hand out one True Cost sheet (ie, True Cost: Cell Phones) and one map to each group. These can be printed ahead of time and are the end of this section.

THINK

ENGAGE

Instructions Cont.

- Instruct students to follow the instructions on their True Cost instruction sheet. They will be teaching the other students about the places where their object has traveled as it was being produced, its impact along the way, and its true cost to people and the planet. They can use the map and any other materials they want. Encourage them to be creative, but also to get their point across. Let them know that they will have 5 minutes for their presentations and that there is more material than they will be able to fit in, so they'll have to choose what's most important. (10 min.)
- Have each group take a turn to teach the rest of the group what they learned and have them present on the "True Cost" of their item. Give a few minutes for the group to ask questions. Give each group 5 min. for their presentation. (20 min)

Reflect (5 min)**Prep: Hand out Jewish Source Text**

"The Lord God formed man (adam) from the dust of the earth. He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being."

Instructions:

- Read the passages
- Tell students



When we read the Bible, it's important to remember that it was written in a different language than English. This short passage from Genesis was originally written in Hebrew. The word "till" in Hebrew is usually translated as "serve." It's the same word the Bible uses in a famous passage when Joshua says to the Israelites, "As for me and my house, we shall serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15) And the word "keep" is used in the Bible to communicate a real sense of God's loving kindness. It's part of a famous blessing that Aaron, Moses' brother, uses when he says, "May the Lord bless you and keep you." (Numbers 6:23) So, when you read this passage from Genesis, you realize that it presents a job description for people in relation to the environment – to "serve it and care for it," not just to use it any way we want. The Hebrew Bible also often makes word associations to express relationships between two things. Here "human" (adam) and "earth" (adamah) are directly associated even as it says that God used the earth to form the earthling.

Ask students these reflection questions:



- Why do you think God asked people to take care of the garden?
- How do the people feel taking care of the Garden and knowing that others around them are taking care of the Garden?
- What do you think God feels when we do a good job of taking care of the garden?
- What about when we don't do such a good job?

Inspire (3 min)

Prep: Have students ready to read from Session 3 Readings sheets



SAY THIS

*Emma Sleeth is a Christian teen who decided to write a book called *It's Easy Being Green*, when she was 15 years old in order to help people make the shift to a lifestyle that expressed their care for Creation. She believes that we're called by God to protect the resources that were given to us. She's speaking out to her generation – that's you! – in the hopes that you will be the ones who can end global warming and restore our world to the paradise that God desires for us. Here's a paragraph from her book.*

Have a students take turns reading paragraphs from the sheets.



READ ALOUD

1.3 - "Remember when you were a young kid-playing outside and you somehow "didn't hear" your mom calling you for dinner? "Sorry, Mom, I didn't hear you screaming at the top of your lungs those, er, 25 times" seemed like a sorry excuse when she glared at you with one eyebrow raised and her hands on her hips. Don't worry, God hasn't borrowed your mother's apron, but he/she IS going to hold us all accountable for what we do or don't do to steward creation. With massive climate changes, a plethora of available information about how we are destroying the planet, and hundreds of Bible verses all pointing to our need to care for creation, saying "we didn't know" to God isn't going to cut it."

Tell students that they are going to read the story of a group of young people who haven't ignored the call!

Have students take turns reading the story, one paragraph each

Teens Turning Green, Because Looking Good Shouldn't Kill You (or the Planet)
Marin, CA
www.teensturninggreen.org



READ ALOUD

1.4 - Looking good shouldn't kill you (or the planet) and these gals are doing something about it! Outraged by the number of chemicals and carcinogens in their cosmetics and body care products, a group of teens in California created Teens for Safe Cosmetics. Educating their peers and pushing their government, this group of teens rallied against the personal care products industry and was key in the passage of California Safe Cosmetics Act in 2005, which requires cosmetics manufacturers to report information on carcinogens and reproductive toxins in beauty products. They expanded their efforts and joined in to push the Toxic Toys Bill into law. This Bill would ban the very toxic chemical category, pthalates from children's toys and bottle nipples while continuing to work for the removal of pthalates from cosmetics.



**READ
ALoud**

1.5 - Approaching the issue from all sides, the girls collaborated with Whole Foods Market to develop a safe, healthy, toxic-free line of personal care products. While they continue to advocate for state and federal policies that would regulate these toxins out of our cosmetics, they have also expanded their platform to look more broadly at various exposures to toxics in your schools and homes. Taking up the charge of a toxics-free future, Teens for Safe Cosmetics became Teens Turning Green and they are now working across the country for sustainability.

Ask students how it inspires them.

Enact (5 min)

Prep: Hand out Action Plan sheet and Action Plan Instructions.

Instructions:

Review the instructions below and have students selection actions..

Action Plan Instruction Sheet

Read and think about the actions:

- Which actions would you like to do?
- Which seem like you could do them?
- Which seem like fun?
- Which seem as if they will really make a difference?

Decide which actions to take.

- Decide which actions you will do with your buddy and which you will do by yourself.

Remember to:

- Show your parent(s)/guardian(s) your action plan when you get home and ask them to support you. Think of what support you want from them. Ask them how they want to support you.
- Check in with your buddy at least one time this week.
- You can change your action plans.
- You can catch up on any unfinished actions at anytime.
- Take pictures or document what you do so you can share it!

Exit (5 min)

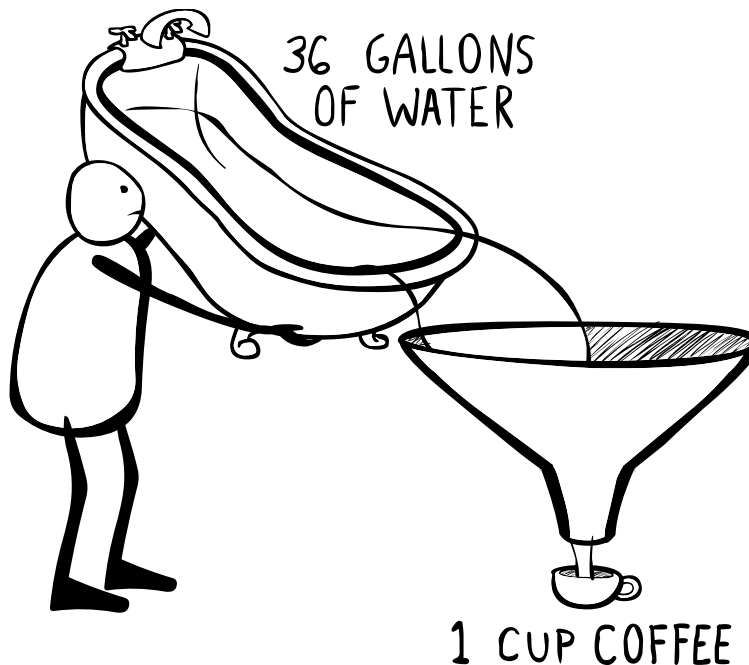
Closing Circle

Back in the circle, have them put their hands in the center again. Bring your hands to the ground and send blessings to the earth, as you raise your hands to the level of each other, bless each other and as you raise your hands up and out, send blessings to the rest of Creation.

Blessing

“
SAY THIS
”

God – you’ve blessed us with a beautiful creation and with the knowledge that we are mistreating it as well. Strengthen us to make the commitment to do the right thing for your planet – now and throughout our lives. And bless us as we try. AMEN.



WE WANNA KNOW...

Congratulations on completing Session 3! How did it go? How much time did the exercises actually take? What worked? What didn't? What do you think would work better?

Let us know at: www.storyofstuff.org/teach.php

Session 3: Readings

Introduction

1.1 - We saw all of the things that have to happen in order for our economy to keep growing and growing, how it depends on our consuming as much as possible as fast as possible, how the way our stuff is being produced is trashing the planet, poisoning us, and how we're not having any fun while we're at it. It's not a pretty picture.

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Emma Sleeth

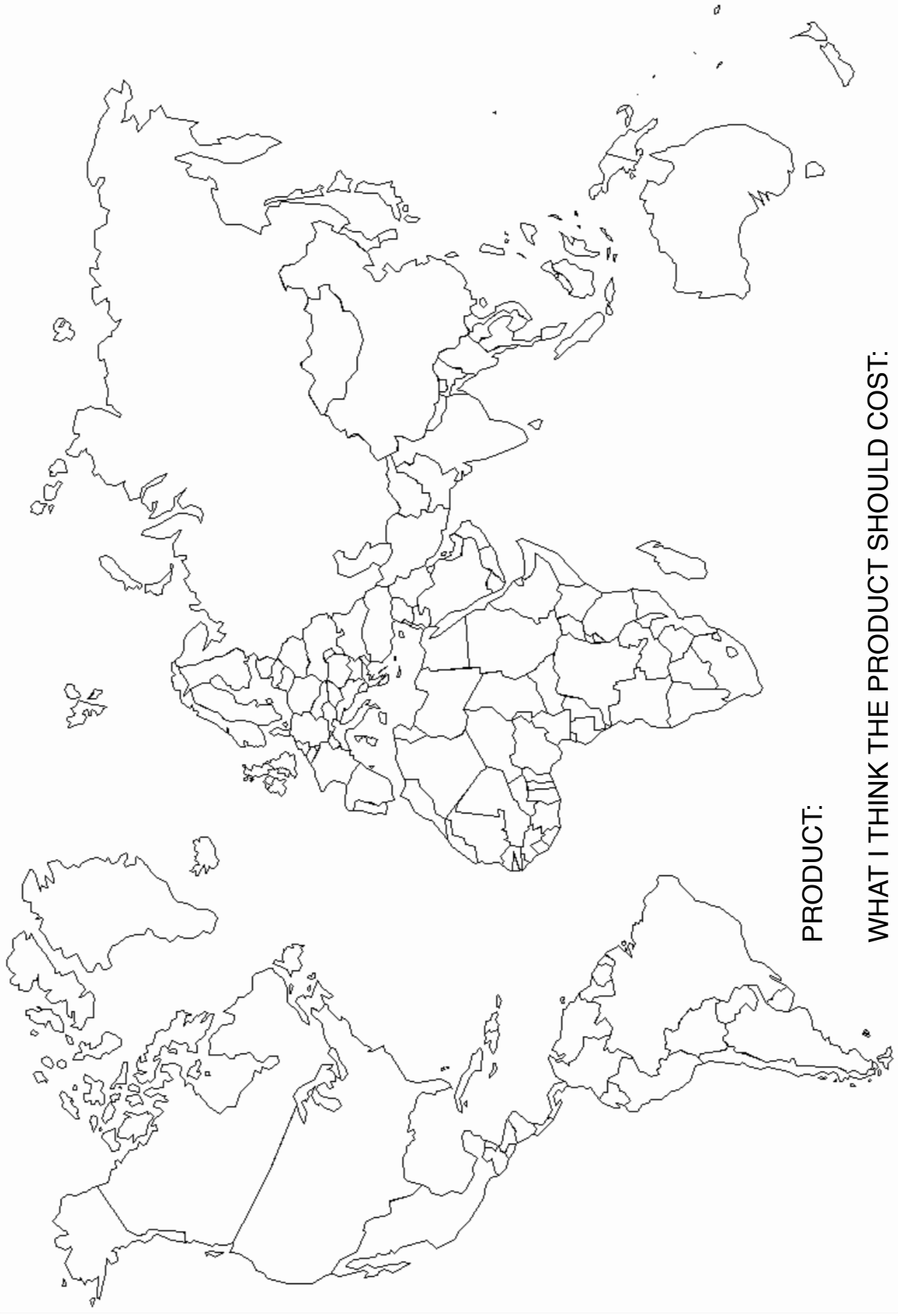
1.3 - "Remember when you were a young kid-playing outside and you somehow "didn't hear" your mom calling you for dinner? "Sorry, Mom, I didn't hear you screaming at the top of your lungs those, er, 25 times" seemed like a sorry excuse when she glared at you with one eyebrow raised and her hands on her hips. Don't worry, God hasn't borrowed your mother's apron, but he/she IS going to hold us all accountable for what we do or don't do to steward creation. With massive climate changes, a plethora of available information about how we are destroying the planet, and hundreds of Bible verses all pointing to our need to care for creation, saying "we didn't know" to God isn't going to cut it."

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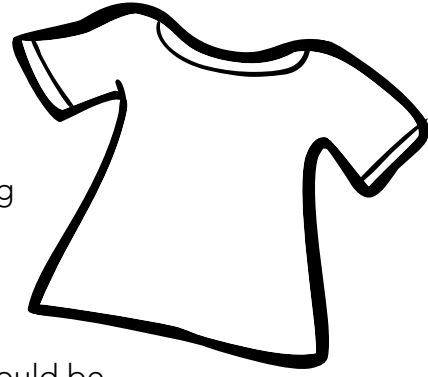


PRODUCT:

WHAT I THINK THE PRODUCT SHOULD COST:

TRUE COST MAP

Cotton T-Shirt



Instructions

1. Read through the hand-out marking key/interesting points to use in your presentation, for the cost and for the map.
2. Highlight 3 – 5 important points to convey to the group and add them to the map.
3. Estimate what you think the cost of the product should be.
4. Design your presentation for conveying the important points you chose and sharing your conclusion about the True Cost.

The journey from cotton crop to t-shirt is a long one that spans the globe and is filled with social and environmental costs that are hidden from view. These certainly don't show up in the \$5.99 price tag at Target.

To start the journey we have to look at where our cotton is grown. Right now, most cotton is grown in the US, Uzbekistan, Australia, China, India and small African countries like Benin and Burkina Faso. And we're making a ton of it, 25 million tons to be exact. Each year we produce 25 million tons of cotton globally which is enough to make 15 t-shirts for every single person on earth.

Growing all this cotton means that we are also using a ton of water. Cotton is a very, very, very thirsty crop. In fact, some communities are driving themselves into drought growing cotton for our t-shirts because it uses so much water. People aren't getting enough water to drink because the cotton crops are taking it!

Half of the water for our t-shirt obsession comes from other countries, which means we are using and polluting their water to make our Stuff. Not only are we using tons of water, but it turns out t-shirt making is a pesticide-laden business. The majority of the world's cotton crops are coated in pesticides. In fact, cotton crops use 25% of the world's insecticides. For every pound of cotton harvested, in the US, about one-third of a pound of pesticides have been sprayed on the crops.

All of the pesticides sprayed on these crops don't just kill bugs; they harm workers, the planet and neighboring communities. Cotton farm workers and neighboring communities bear the brunt of this burden. They frequently suffer from nerve diseases and vision problems because of the number of toxic chemicals they are exposed to in their work.

And all that happens before it's even turned into a t-shirt!

Cotton T-Shirt Cont.

Then you need tons of energy to take it from raw cotton to a t-shirt (which is fueled by oil drilling or dirty coal or likely something else nasty). Then you put all that cotton in the cotton gin, bale the cotton, fluff the cotton, press the cotton, and finally turn it into thread.

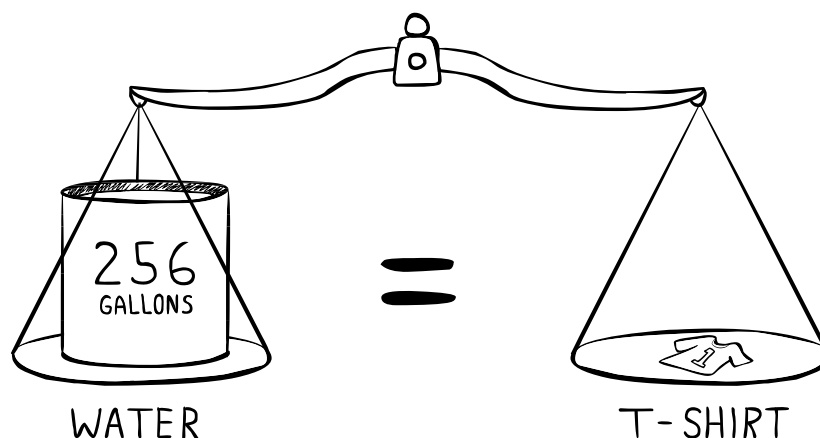
When we finally have that thread, we usually bleach the cotton even if we're going to dye it, usually using chlorine. Chlorine, bumper! Chlorine is toxic all by itself and when it leaves as wastewater it can become a neurotoxin and carcinogen. That means it causes cancer and impairs the way your brain works.

Once the cotton has been bleached and dyed and woven into fabric we want to make it as easy to take care of as possible, so we spray it down with formaldehyde (yep, like they put frogs in to preserve them before you dissect them) to make it "easy care" fabric. This use of formaldehyde might make our t-shirts soft, wrinkle-resistant, stain and odor resistant, fireproof, mothproof, and antistatic but it also causes respiratory problems, burning eyes, cancer and allergic skin reactions.

At this point, we finally have the fabric to make the t-shirt. Hooray? That fabric gets shipped to a factory or a sweatshop where folks in Haiti or China or Mexico work long days for low wages. Even with all the awareness we now have about dismal working conditions, it's still true that many factory workers are teens working 11 hour-days for 10-13 cents an hour. That's \$1.10/day. For example, in Haiti, where workers have been struggling for years for better working conditions, the legal minimum wage is still only \$3.75 a day!

Once the t-shirt has been whipped together by someone somewhere else working for next to nothing, its shipped to you in the US to find its way to you for under \$20.

What do you think the true cost of a t-shirt should be after reading the information below?



Cell Phone

Instructions

1. Read through the hand-out marking key/interesting, points to use in your presentation, for the cost, and for the map.
2. Highlight 3 – 5 important points to convey to the group and add them to the map.
3. Estimate what you think the cost of the product should be.
4. Design your presentation for conveying the important points you chose and sharing your conclusion about the True Cost.

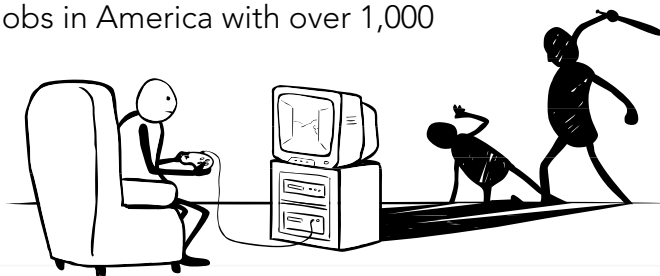
How did the world work before cell phones? While the thought may boggle the mind, equally boggling is the incredible journey that the various components of our cell phones take, and their environmental and social impact to get to us.

Just by looking at one you can probably tell that cell phones are made of plastic, metals and some other hard-to-describe stuff. To be specific, most cell phones are made of 40% metals, 40% plastics, and 20% trace materials and ceramics. All that stuff had to come from somewhere. As a cell phone is nearly half metal that means the metal had to be mined somewhere; that “somewhere” is usually Africa and South America.

One of the vital components in cell phone production is a metal called coltan, which is used in the circuit boards; 80% of the world’s supply of coltan or columbite–tantalite is found in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Like Annie mentions in the film, coltan mining in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is contributing to a continued civil war over the resource. Another metal in cell phone production is gold. That’s right, GOLD! Which is mostly mined in South American and Africa.

It might be hard to tell at first but there is enough gold in 200 cell phones to make a nice sized ring. It turns out gold mining is a pretty nasty process that pollutes water, destroys natural habitats, uproots communities, and leaches toxins into the environment. In addition to gold and coltan, most of our cell phones also have copper, beryllium, lead, nickel, and zinc, which all have to be extracted from the earth, putting both the planet and workers at risk.

Mining is a super toxic practice involving cyanide and tons of other nasty chemicals that leach into the groundwater of surrounding communities creating devastating environmental and health impacts. Mining is also dangerous to humans; it is one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in America with over 1,000 deaths in the last 15 years.



Cell Phone Cont.

Another component of the phone is petroleum-based plastics. This means that we're also tearing up the Tar Sands in Canada and destroying rainforest in the Amazon to get all the oil it takes to make all the plastic. The metal and plastics are combined to make a super tiny circuit board that makes our cell phones do all of the magical things they do. In addition to being magic it turns out those circuit boards are also...you guessed it...toxic! A number of plastics like PVC (polyvinyl chloride – one of the most toxic chemicals we know) and metals like lead (another super toxic metal) are persistent pollutants that build up in the ecosystem and in our bodies.

Eventually those circuit boards and plastic casings are snapped together with an LCD screen and a battery and voila! A cell phone! And...a ton more toxic stuff! The LCD (liquid crystal display) screens in our phones, so cool and high-tech, are made with mercury (another extremely toxic metal) and various man-made chemicals that are so high-tech we don't even know what they do.

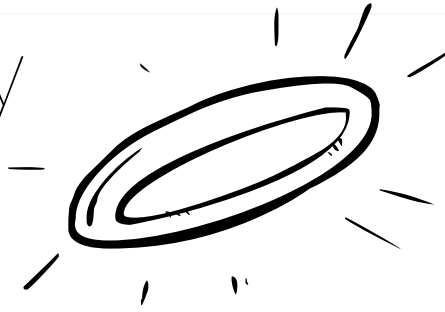
The batteries come in all different sizes and styles: lithium ion, nickel cadmium, lead acid but they all have one thing in common—they all require more mining which is just more of the same destruction, displacement, and pollution.

Cell phones are really cool. There is no denying it! But there is also no denying the fact that they are extremely toxic and contribute to all kinds of environmental destruction. With over 1.3 billion cell phones in use across the globe, it's worth pondering how we could do this better.

We can pay less than \$100 dollars for a cell phone.

What do you think the true cost of cell phone should be after reading the information above?

Jewelry



Instructions

1. Read through the hand-out marking key/interesting, points to use in your presentation, for the cost, and for the map.
2. Highlight 3 – 5 important points to convey to the group and add them to the map.
3. Estimate what you think the cost of the product should be.
4. Design your presentation for conveying the important points you chose and sharing your conclusion about the True Cost.

Our jewelry can hold a lot of meaning for us. We cherish the gold cross we might have gotten from our parents, a class ring, something from a special love. If only it were that simple. Unfortunately, in addition to the beauty and meaning our jewelry has, there is also a true cost to the planet. Let's see what it took to get those rings onto our fingers.

First we have to extract the gold. As a metal, most gold we use is mined and 75% of the gold we mine is used for jewelry. While gold is found around much of the globe, South Africa is the biggest supplier currently providing at least a quarter of the world's gold.

Mining as it's most commonly practiced is a horribly polluting and toxic process. Gold is mined in the following manner:

- The little pieces of gold (ore) are taken directly from the Earth
- Cyanide (a deadly chemical) is poured on top of a big pile of gold ore, separating the toxic metals like cadmium, lead, and mercury from the gold (any guesses where those metals go?).
- The gold is taken out of a big toxic puddle of heavy metals and cyanide
- This toxic puddle gets jumbled together with all the mining waste to create a big, toxic mess which often ends up in rivers and lakes and creates environmental and health concerns for communities living near the mines. Yikes!
- Two-thirds of the gold we use is newly mined in this super wasteful, toxic way.

Just one gold ring generates about 20 tons of mining waste. That's equivalent to four pick-up trucks or a very fat (and angry) elephant.

Not to mention the fact that mining is a dangerous job, in the top ten most dangerous jobs in the world. Workers are often put in extremely unsafe conditions.

Jewelry Cont.

While diamonds are pretty, what the diamond trade has done to Sierra Leone is not. Because of their value, they create violent social upheaval. Diamonds are sometimes referred to as “conflict diamonds” or “blood diamonds” because they create violent wars over economic resources.

The attempt to control the diamond mining (and its financial profits) played a significant role in fueling the 11-year civil war in Sierra Leone. Trade in diamonds and other natural resources has underwritten some of the worst war crimes in the past two decades.

You can buy a gold ring for under \$100.

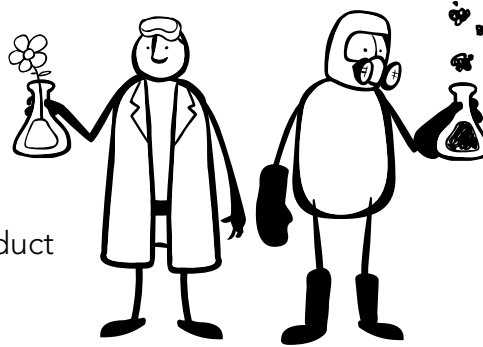
What do you think would reflect the true cost of our jewelry to the countries and land where they’re produced?



Cosmetics/ Personal "Care" Products

Instructions

1. Read through the hand-out marking key/ interesting points to use in your presentation, for the cost, and for the map.
2. Highlight 3 – 5 important points to convey to the group and add them to the map.
3. Estimate what you think the cost of the product should be.
4. Design your presentation for conveying the important points you chose and sharing your conclusion about the True Cost.



Most of us use lots of personal care products everyday. Every day the average woman uses 12 products containing 168 chemical ingredients while the average man uses 6 products with 80 different chemicals. We want to smell, look, and feel good. So we shampoo our hair, slather on sunscreen, roll on deodorant, apply mascara, and put on chapstick. But what is all this stuff we're putting on our bodies? Reading the ingredients list on any of your cosmetics or personal care products doesn't give us much of a clue? For most of us, it's just a long list of strange chemicals.

With cosmetics and personal care products, extraction is a big issue. Let's start with just the container. Most products use a petroleum-based plastic container. This means that we're tearing up the Tar Sands in Canada and destroying rainforest in the Amazon to get access to all the oil it takes to make all the plastic for those containers.

Then there is what goes in those containers, there's a huge range of products used for "personal care," and while the extraction process varies greatly for each one, the production process is pretty consistent across the board. Consistently toxic! In the US, the stuff that we slather onto our bodies to take good care of ourselves turns out to practically be poison. The chemicals in them are linked to cancer, birth defects and other serious health problems. In a study done in 2005 of thousands of personal care products, they found:

- One-third of all products tested contain at least one ingredient linked to cancer
- Almost half the tested products contained at least one ingredient that is harmful to the reproductive system
- One half include penetration enhancer that help them (and all the toxic chemicals) move deeper into the body faster

Cosmetics/ Personal "Care" Products

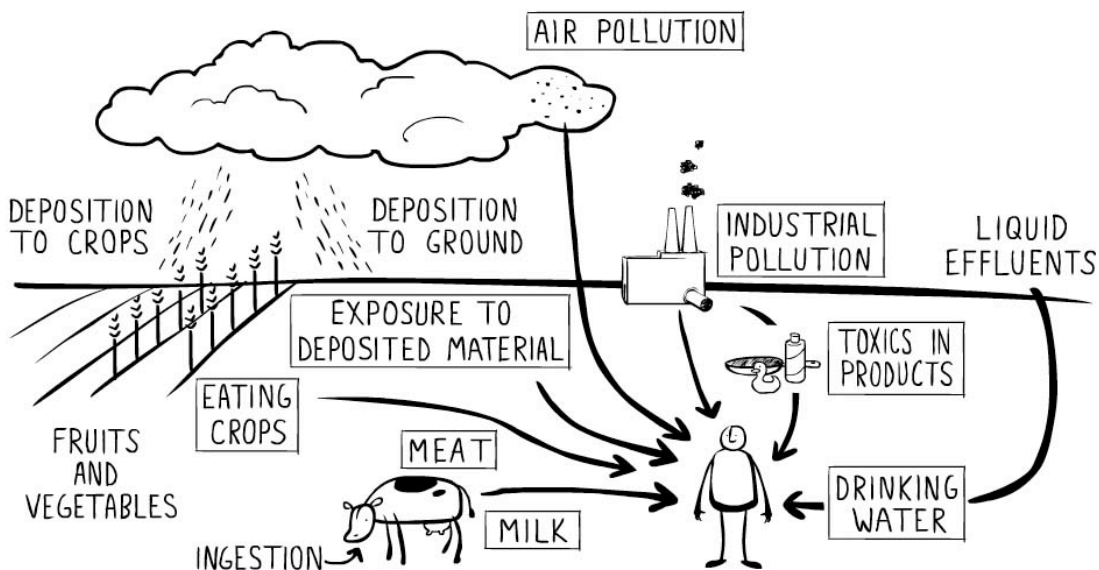
How can this be? Isn't there anybody regulating this? The answer is, "No." There is no neutral agency overseeing the cosmetic industry to insure our safety. It's a virtual free for all. The Cosmetic Ingredient Review Panel is the only organization responsible for testing the safety of these products. This panel is part of the cosmetic industry itself (you know, the ones who profit when we buy the stuff). Why should we trust them when they're the ones who profit from sales? As of 2005 CIR, had tested only 13% of the products we use daily. That means 87% of the chemicals we put on our bodies are completely untested.

You can get a bottle of lotion for under \$10.

What should it really cost?

NOTE: This is scary stuff! Luckily, thanks to the great work of some really dedicated people who started their own cosmetic watchdog organization, you can look up your products and see what's in them on the internet (go to Skin Deep and GoodGuide). The most effective way to fight against having these chemicals in our products is to make laws that keep toxics out and that keep our bodies and our families free from cancer and reproductive health issues.

EXPOSURE PATHWAYS OF TOXIC POLLUTANTS



Session 3: Action Plan

Create/Express

- Poem - Write a poem about the lifecycle of one of your favorite things. (2 pts)
- Make it up – Make a piece of art – only out of stuff you find in a recycling bin. (2 pts)

Communicate

- Talk Stuff - Talk to 3 people about where their stuff comes from, what's in it, who makes it. Write the names of the people and a note about what kinds of stuff you discussed you spoke to in your notebook. (2 pts)

Learn/Get Smart

- What's in it? - Visit to the SkinDeep Database or GoodGuide and figure out what's in the products you use every day. Make a list.
www.cosmeticsdatabase.com
www.goodguide.com (2 pts)
- Mountain Tops - Check out I Love Mountains: "What's My Connection to Mountaintop Removal?" to see whether the energy in your home, church, or school is fueled by moutaintop removal.
<http://ilovemountains.org/myconnection/> (2 pts)

Try Something New

- Stop and think - Every time you want to buy something, stop for a minute, look at the object you want, and consider the people and places that were affected by that thing. Is the real cost of having that object worth it to you? Do you really need it? What else could fill the same need but have less of an impact? Make a list of the things you didn't buy because of this. (3 pts)

Have Insights

- A new lens - Look around you at all the stuff you and your family own and think of all the people and places involved in producing it. Reflect in your journal about how it feels to know this. How would your life be different if you let yourself feel this whenever you shop. (2 pts)

Be a Leader

At home

- A Stuff audit - Do a stuff audit of your living room and mark out on a map where your families stuff comes from and hang it on the fridge for your whole family to see (3 pts)

Session 3: Action Plan Cont.

Be a Leader

In the congregation

- E-stewardship - Do a bit of research online to find an e-steward where you can responsibly recycle electronics. Talk to the people at church about making a box to collect old, broken cell phones in your church.

Check out <http://www.e-stewards.org/> (3 pts)

Tips and Tools...

- Check out your products on www.GoodGuide.com before you make a purchase to give you a better sense of the environmental, social, and health impacts of a product.
- Out on the town? Take a look at the Center for New American Dream's pocket guides to help you make decisions when you are out and about: http://www.newdream.org/marketplace/pocket_guides.php

Remember to take pictures of anything you did to share and put on the mural.

Total # of Points _____