

Unit Planner: Consumerism & Personal Consumption Economics

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> Week 29 - Week 30

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Consumerism & Personal Consumption

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Big Ideas / Enduring Understandings

Personal consumption impacts ourselves, our communities, and our environment.

Consumption and consumerism surround us in myriad ways, and becoming aware of their presence in our lives is the first step to critically analyzing their effects on the planet.

We can utilize our skills as students to write companies in a professional manor regarding the environmental impact of their business practices and product packaging.

Essential Questions

How do we connect our personal consumption habits to wider environmental and economic challenges?

How do personal choices affect larger impacts?

How can we raise self-awareness and make incremental changes in our own lives that reflect a deeper understanding of consumption and conservation, both environmental and economic?

Common Core Standards and Indicators

NYS: CCLS:English Language Arts 6-12

NYS: Grades 11-12

Writing

Text Types and Purposes

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

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1d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

2e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated

question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Speaking & Listening

2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

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Language

Knowledge of Language

3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

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NYS: CCLS: Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, & Technical Subjects 6-12

NYS: Grades 11-12

Capacities of the Literate Individual

Students Who are College and Career Ready in Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, & Language

They demonstrate independence.

They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.

New York State P-12 Learning Standards (New York State Education Department, used with permission)

Content

"The Story of Stuff" video & website
"The Story of Electronics" video
How to write a business letter guidelines
NPR radio story and transcript "In Trendy World Of Fast Fashion, Styles Aren't Made To Last"
Five Gyres organization's video of Sargasso Sea gyre's contents and explanation of plastic pollution's effects on sea life
NPR report about microbeads in the Great Lakes, Obama's legislation to ban them in 2017
Environmental Working Group's Skin Deep & Food Scores consumer guides' databases

Skills / Strategies

note-taking practice for college utilizing video contact as "practice" for college lecture format
developing business letter format and content
research into specific product and production practices

Key Terms / Vocabulary

consumption
consumerism
carbon footprint
Five steps of the Story of Stuff:
extraction, production, distribution, consumption, disposal
externalized costs
"toxins in, toxins out"
perceived obsolescence
planned obsolescence
takeback laws

gyres

Learning Plan & Activities

Please include Theatre Modalities when appropriate

- Watching, analyzing, and note-taking about the "Story of Stuff," "Story of Electronics," and Five Gyres research expedition video documentation
- Individual selection of an item that each student, as a consumer advocate, wants to write a particular company to suggest changes
- Researching for, drafting, formatting, editing, peer reviewing, and actually sending a professionally formatted business letter to a specific company addressing a problem with packaging, consumption, disposal or another environmental or health aspect of a particular product

Assessments

[Depth of Knowledge \(DOK\) Levels](#)

Resources

Websites and Web-tools used

storyofstuff.org

Focus

- Whole class

Websites and Web-tools used

How to write a business letter:

 <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/653/01/>

Focus

- Whole class

Websites and Web-tools used

 <http://www.ewg.org/skindeep>

Focus

- Group
- Research

Texts Used (fiction, non-fiction, on-line, media, etc...)


Radio story:

 <http://www.npr.org/2013/03/11/174013774/in-trendy-world-of-fast-fashion-styles-arent-made-to-last>

Focus

- Whole class
- Guided reading

Texts Used (fiction, non-fiction, on-line, media, etc...)

 https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/microbeads-soon-will-be-banned-from-toothpaste-soaps-shampoos/2016/01/07/254166a8-b4c1-11e5-a842-0feb51d1d124_story.html

Focus

- Whole class

- Research

Texts Used (fiction, non-fiction, on-line, media, etc...)

 <http://www.npr.org/2014/05/21/313157701/why-those-tiny-microbeads-in-soap-may-pose-problem-for-great-lakes>

Focus

- Whole class

Websites and Web-tools used

 <http://www.5gyres.org/>

Focus

- Group
- Research

Materials Used

 <http://storyofstuff.org/movies/lets-ban-the-bead/>

Focus

- Whole class
- Group

Materials Used

 <http://storyofstuff.org/movies/story-of-electronics/>

Focus

- Whole class

