BIG DEBATE CLUB

Smart School Councils

DEBATE PACK

Are you passionate about sharpening your critical thinking and speaking skills?

SHOULD WE STOP BUYING FAST FASHION?

How to Use this Debate Pack

Whether you have just a few minutes or a full lesson, this Debate Pack has got you covered. Check out the Certificates at the end too.

How to find the debate video and send to teachers

1. Log in to the [Smart School Councils platform](#) using your school details.
2. Click on the blue Class Meeting Tool button in the dashboard.
3. Click on 'Next Meeting' at the top of the page.
4. To get started, click on 'click here' to browse existing questions and options.
5. If the debate topic is part of this week's question, it will appear there. Otherwise, click 'Search All' and type in the debate topic you're looking for.

Got five minutes?

Play the debate video straight through and dive right into the debate. No need to pause at the prompts. It's a quick, engaging way to get your students thinking.

Got 10/15 minutes?

Pause at the prompts in the video to explore additional ideas your class might have. Use the additional points or Power Facts if you'd like.

Want to extend to 30 minutes or a full lesson?

Check out the lesson plan and writing tasks below. There is also a full Fact Sheet with amazing further reading if your students want to go deeper on the topic.

What do the icons in the pack mean?

This is what the presenter says on the video

This is a Power Fact to explain or prompt debate that's not in the video

This is an additional debate point that's not in the video

Introduction and Brain Gym Question

Introduction

Welcome to Big Debate Club!

My name is Becky and today we are debating the question…

Should we stop buying fast fashion?

Buying nice clothes for a small price can always be a treat and with fast fashion, it makes it easier to buy lots of clothes cheaply. Fast fashion means producing cheap clothes at high volume and high speed so people can buy the latest styles without spending much.

Fast fashion makes style affordable, offers plenty of range especially for plus size options and also creates jobs. But fast fashion has downsides - it's bad for the environment, exploits workers, and encourages wasteful buying habits. So should we stop buying fast fashion? You decide.

Brain Gym Question

Before we get started with the debate, I have a question for you…

According to the United Nations Environment Programme, the fashion industry is responsible for what percentage of global carbon emissions?

a) 2-4%
b) 5-7%
c) 8-10%
d) 11-13%

Fast fashion is a way of making and selling clothes very quickly and cheaply so that shops can keep up with the latest trends. Consumer estimates put total garments produced (and mostly purchased) at 100 billion+ items annually, and most of these are from fast-fashion brands. (Source: *Zeitgeist*, LINK)

FOR: We should stop buying fast fashion

We're going to share reasons for both sides of the debate, then it's up to you to think of the rest!

Producing so many clothes produces so much waste

You might be thinking that producing so many clothes leads to so much waste. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, a truckload of clothing is burned or sent to landfill every second. Buying fewer, better-quality and longer lasting clothes means less waste piling up.

The fast fashion industry exploits its workers

You could say that the fast fashion industry exploits its workers. A study by Human Rights Watch found that many fast fashion workers in countries like Bangladesh and Cambodia earn less than a living wage and face unsafe conditions - if we bought less, this would reduce demand and could pressure companies to improve working standards.

Can you think of another reason why you might argue that we should stop buying fast fashion? ⏸

Fast fashion means high water and resource usage

Producing just one cotton shirt can require up to 2,700 litres of water, which is enough drinking water for one person for over 2 years. The industry uses vast quantities of water and chemicals, polluting rivers and ecosystems in manufacturing regions. *(Source: American Century Investments*, LINK)

Fast fashion creates massive environmental damage

The fashion industry produces around 92 million tonnes of textile waste every year, a huge amount ending up in landfills or incinerators. Fast fashion contributes about 10% of global carbon emissions, which is more than international flights and shipping combined. *(Source: Scientific American,* LINK)

AGAINST: We should not stop buying fast fashion

Now let's change positions and consider why you might argue that we should not stop buying fast fashion.

Fast fashion means affordability for everyone

You might think that fast fashion means affordability for everyone. A 2019 report highlighted that fast fashion offers low-cost clothing options for people who might not afford more expensive sustainable brands. Stopping it entirely could limit access to affordable clothing.

Fast fashion provides so many jobs and opportunities

Or you could also say fast fashion provides so many jobs and opportunities. The International Labour Organization reports that clothes production provides jobs for over 60 million people worldwide, many of them women. A sudden stop could harm livelihoods in countries dependent on textiles.

Can you think of another reason why you might argue that we should not stop buying fast fashion? ⏸

Fast fashion creates many jobs

The global apparel trade supports millions of jobs, from manufacturing in developing countries to selling the products in wealthier markets. Cheap production helps provide employment in regions where alternative work is limited. *(Source: Cato Institute, LINK)*

Fast fashion creates global trade and economic opportunities

Fast fashion forms part of global trade and economic integration; the availability of inexpensive clothing reflects wider economic development and market access. For example, exporting garments helped reduce poverty in some countries by offering work where formal jobs were less available, although outcomes vary by region. *(Source: Cato Institute and Vox, LINK/LINK)*

FactSheet: Should we stop buying fast fashion?

Here's six key facts - three on each side - if you'd like to go a little deeper.

We should stop buying fast fashion

Fast fashion creates massive environment damage
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Fast fashion means high water and resource usage
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Fast fashion promotes a 'throw-away' culture
Fast fashion promotes overconsumption. Garments are often worn only a few times before being discarded, as they are so easily accessible and therefore not treasured and thrown away as easily as they were bought. This creates a "throw-away" culture that harms the planet. *(Source: The Repurposing life*, LINK)*

We should not stop buying fast fashion

Stopping it reduces consumer choice and freedom
Some argue that banning fast fashion would reduce consumer choice and unfairly penalise people for factors outside their control, especially when sustainable alternatives remain more expensive or less available. *(Source: Sustainable Fashion Forums,* LINK*)*

Fast fashion can create global trade and economic opportunity
Fast fashion forms part of global trade and economic integration; the availability of inexpensive clothing reflects wider economic development and market access. For example, exporting garments helped reduce poverty in some countries by offering work where formal jobs were less available, although outcomes vary by region. *(Source: Cato Institute and Vox,* LINK*/*LINK*)*

Fast Fashion creates so many jobs
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Sentence Starters

POINT

LEMON & HERB: One reason why I (agree/disagree) with this debate is because…

MEDIUM: One point I have for this debate is…

HOT: You could say that…

EVIDENCE

LEMON & HERB: One way I can prove my point is through this example…

MEDIUM: I can show this works through the fact that…

HOT: I know this because…

EXPLANATION

LEMON & HERB: The evidence I have discussed above proves my point as…

MEDIUM: This example proves my point because…

HOT: Therefore, this proves my point as…

LINK

LEMON & HERB: All together, this answers the debate question asked by…

MEDIUM: This point answers the overall question because…

HOT: These ideas answer the debate as…

BIG DEBATE CLUB

Post your debate on social media!

SHARE YOUR VOICE

We shout out the best opinions each week

#BIGDEBATECUB

TWITTER @SSCCTY

INSTAGRAM @SMARTSCHOOLCOUNCILS

WWW.SMARTSCHOOLCOUNCILS.ORG.UK

DEBATER
OF THE WEEK

We are proud to present this certificate to...

For debating fairly, respectively and persuasively. Well done!

Share a snap or video @SSCCTY on Twitter for a national shoutout and a prize!

Greg Sanderson

Founder, Smart School Councils

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Community

CLASS MEETING
LEADER OF THE WEEK
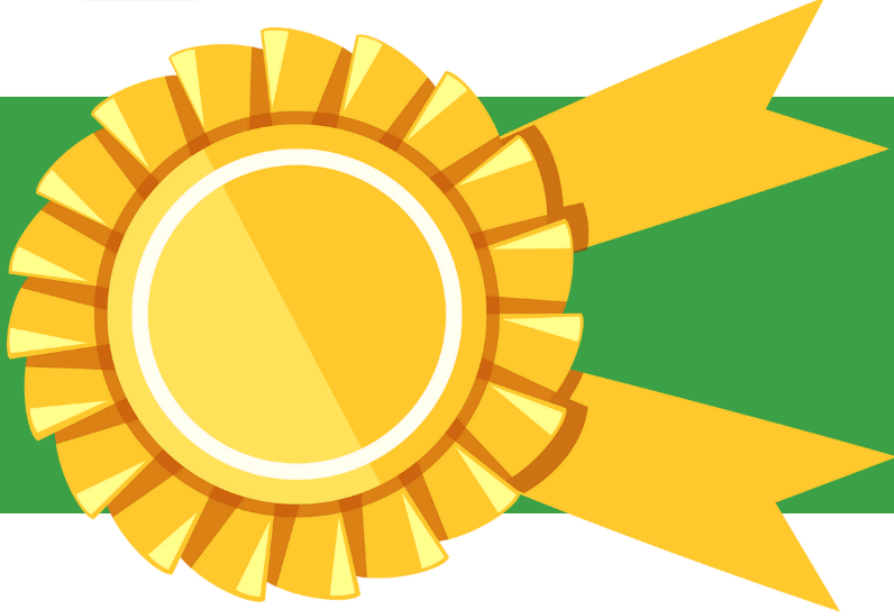
We are proud to present this certificate to...

For showing skill and confidence in leading today's Class Meeting.

Share a snap or video @SSCCTY on Twitter for a national shoutout and a prize!

Greg Sanderson

Founder, Smart School Councils

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BEST IDEA
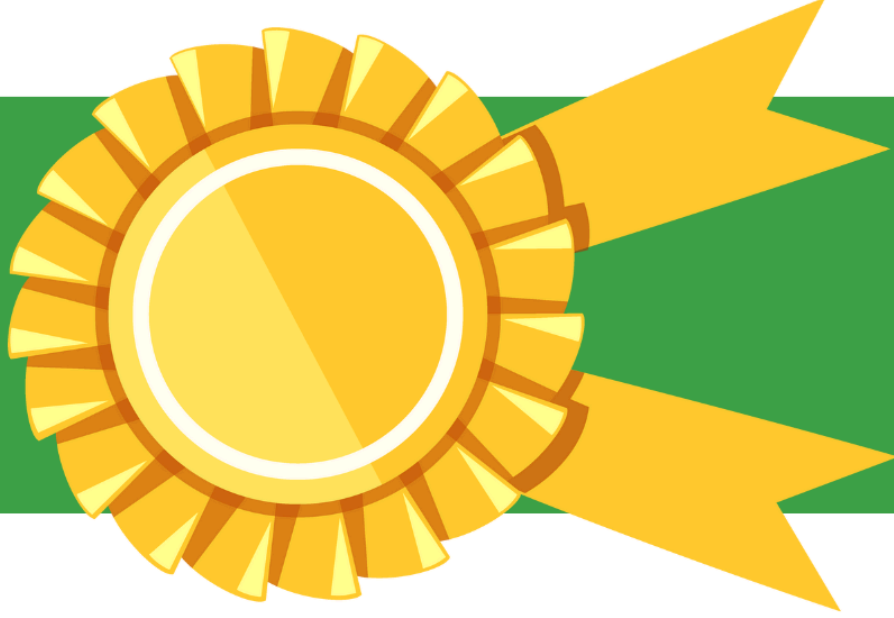# OF THE WEEK

We are proud to present this certificate to...

For speaking up with a great new idea on today's topic. Amazing.

Share a snap or video @SSCCTY on Twitter for a national shoutout and a prize!

Greg Sanderson

Founder, Smart School Councils

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