

**Tool 5.3**

Fostering solidarity and repair

CLARITY Competence Area:

Taking collective action for climate resilience, ecosystem regeneration, and societal transformation

GreenComp Competence Area:

Acting for sustainability

Why use this tool?

Climate Change has been disproportionately affecting certain localities, regions, countries, population groups and communities already. This fosters a need for solidarity and repair that takes into account the various manifestations of climate impacts in different contexts and for different population groups. One aspect of re-imagining solidarity can be fueled by increasing our intergenerational understanding, and developing our curiosity to learn about history. This concerns both history in general, to avoid repeating past mistakes and to do better in the future, and history of individuals, learning about members of our own local communities, and beyond, to strengthen social bonds.

Activity 5.3.1

Creating an intergenerational garment

Overview

The learners are made aware of the problematic sides of fast fashion. They then approach the problem with creativity and connection by designing and sewing an intergenerational garment. The learners collect three pieces of garment, one from their own closet, one from an adult in their family/community, and one from a senior in their family/community, and redesign these into a “new” intergenerational garment. With each garment the learners collect a story, to highlight the value of taking care of our clothes, as a representation of the limited resources we have.

Curriculum linkage

Arts, Language & Literature, Civics & Social Studies, History and Mathematics

Competences built

Collaboration, accountability, care, community building and originality

Prep Work

Find a garment that means something to you personally.

Competences/activities to practice first by the teacher:

Sewing

BASIC INFO

**Age range:**

6+

Duration:

2-6h

Group size:

30

Level of difficulty:

Intermediate-advanced

Materials/space required:

Needle and thread and/or sewing machines

Location:

Arts and crafts space

Engagement of external stakeholders:

Yes, adults and elders in the learners' family/local communities



Steps in the activity

1. The stories of garments
 2. Collect garments and stories
 3. Sew an intergenerational garment
 4. Show the intergenerational garments
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Step 1: The stories of garments

1. Map the learners consumption patterns by asking them to raise their hand if they:
 - a. bought a new garment this year
 - b. bought a new garment this month
 - c. bought a new garment this week
 - d. ever bought a garment second-hand
 - e. ever got a garment handed down
 - f. ever repaired a garment
 - g. ever had someone repair a garment for them
 - h. ever received a handmade garment
 - i. ever sewed a garment themselves
 2. Introduce the challenge of **fast fashion** and how it impacts people and the planet, including environmental impacts and exploitation of workers, using concrete examples, such as:
 - a. Many workers work 16 hours every day, make very little money, and face retaliation for refusing to work overtime.
 - b. Garment workers also labor in unsafe conditions, including windowless spaces, dangerously high temperatures, violent managers, and harmful chemical exposure. In 2013 an eight-story building that housed several garment factories in Savar, Bangladesh, collapsed and killed some 1,100 laborers and injured thousands more.
 - c. The fashion industry as a whole is responsible for 10 percent of carbon emissions, uses large quantities of water, and employs dyes and chemicals that pollute the environment.
 - d. The clothing ends up in landfills around the world, including in the so-called “clothing graveyard” in the Atacama Desert, Chile.Examples from Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/art/fast-fashion>
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3. Wear a garment you really love and share a little story about why this garment is important to you and how/by whom it was made.
4. Ask the learners what makes a garment important to them. Do they know how or by whom their garment was made? Invite the learners to respond to the questions in small groups. Invite a learner from each group to share something from the conversation. When you invite the learners to share, emphasize that becoming aware of the ethical aspects of fashion can be very troubling, and we do not judge each other for what we are wearing.
5. Introduce the task of making an intergenerational garment. Highlight how making something new out of something old/existing is one way to address the problem of fast fashion in a fun and creative way by building practical skills that can empower us to make/mend our own clothes. By making a garment and realizing how much effort is required, we learn to appreciate the work invested in every piece of garment. Give the learners an assignment to collect:
 - a. a garment from their own closet
 - b. a garment from **an adult** they know and care about
 - c. a garment from **a senior** they know and care about
 - d. a real **story** about each of the garments told by themselves, the adult and the senior

Step 2: Collect stories and garment

1. The learners collect the garments and stories at home. You can give them some questions they can ask the storytellers to help them tell their story, such as:
 - a. What makes this garment special to you?
 - b. What does this garment say about you?
 - c. How/where/when/by whom was this garment made?
2. The learner writes the stories down, including their own.

Step 3: Sew an intergenerational garment

1. The learners need to make a design for their intergenerational garment. You can let them brainstorm in groups and draw their designs individually.
2. If the designs are complicated, the learners may need to make patterns out of paper, and draw the patterns onto the garments before starting to cut the garments.



3. Cut the garments into new shapes to fit the design.
4. Use pins to attach the new shapes together so they match the design.
5. Sew the shapes together by hand using needle and thread, or by using a sewing machine, depending on the skill level of the learners and the availability of machines.

Step 4: Show the intergenerational garment

1. You can organize a fashion show or another kind of exhibition for the rest of the school to show off the intergenerational garments. Include the stories in the show/exhibition.
2. If you make an exhibition, you could include a whole figure mirror with the text “here you see the world’s most sustainable garment” (meaning the one you already got).
3. The learners can make a poster with the text “How old are the garments you are wearing right now?” and a line below with numbers from 0 to 20 + older. Place a marker next to the poster so other learners can mark the age of what they are wearing.



Dos and don'ts

Do:

Check with parents that they are OK with donating garments to this project.

Don't

- Don't force learners to show their garments on a catwalk if they don't feel like it.
- Don't judge/shame learners for buying or wearing fast fashion.

Adaptations:

- **Use differentiated tools.** Provide large-handled scissors, fabric clips instead of pins, or pre-threaded needles for learners with fine motor difficulties. If sewing is too complex, allow use of fabric glue or safety pins.
- We invite you to adapt this activity to the specific needs of your learners, including by taking into account their neurodiversity. When adapting tools and activities for neurodivergent learners, please note it is not about treating others how you want to be treated, but how they want to be treated. Ask, listen, and stay open to different ways of learning and engaging.



References

This activity was designed by Climate Creativity.

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Co-funded by
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Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

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