

No One Wants Your Used Clothes Anymore



Part1: warm up

Ex1. Complete the crossword with the correct items of clothing which you can find in the pictures.

1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  6.  7.  8.  9.  10. 

source: Wielojęzyczny Słownik Wizualny WILGA

Ex2. Discuss the following questions with your partner:

1. Are you interested in fashion? Are clothes an important part of your life?
2. Where do you buy clothes?
3. Do you have any favorite brands?
4. Are quality and durability of your products important to you?



Part2: reading

Ex3. Read the article below about second hand clothes and answer the questions:

<https://getpocket.com/explore/item/no-one-wants-your-used-clothes-anymore>

No One Wants Your Used Clothes Anymore

For decades, the donation bin has offered consumers in rich countries a **guilt-free** way to unload their old clothing. In a virtuous and profitable cycle, a global network of traders would collect these garments, grade them, and transport them around the world to be recycled, worn again, or turned into **rag**s and stuffing.

Now that cycle is breaking down. Fashion trends are accelerating, new clothes are becoming as cheap as used ones, and poor countries are turning their backs on the secondhand trade. Without significant changes in the way that clothes are made and marketed, this could add up to an environmental disaster in the making.

Nobody is more alert to this shift than the roughly 200 businesses devoted to recycling clothes into **yarn** and blankets in Panipat, India. Located 55 miles north of Delhi, the dusty city of 450,000 has served as the world's largest recycler of woolen garments for at least two decades, becoming a crucial outlet for the \$4 billion used-clothing trade.

Panipat's mills specialize in a cloth known as shoddy, which is made from low-quality yarn recycled from woolen garments. Much of what they produce is used to make cheap blankets for disaster-relief operations. It's been a good business: At its peak in the early 2010s, Panipat's shoddy manufacturers could make 100,000 blankets a day, accounting for 90 percent of the relief-blanket market.

In the early 2000s, though, **cash-flush** Chinese manufacturers began using modern mills that could produce many times more blankets per day than Panipat's, and in a wider variety of colors. Ramesh Goyal, the general manager of Ramesh Woolen Mills, told me that Chinese manufacturing has become so efficient that a new polar **fleece** blanket costs a mere \$2.50 retail -- compared to \$2.00 for a recycled blanket. This has made China the preferred manufacturer of relief blankets worldwide, costing Panipat most of its export market.

So Panipat is changing. In 2013, nobody in town made new fleece blankets. Today, about 50 mills do. Ramesh Woolen Mills added a Chinese-built line in 2016, and thereby boosted its production from 7,000 kilograms a day to 12,000, two-thirds of which is polar fleece. Consumers appreciate the quality, variety and fast production times.

But what's good for Panipat and its customers is bad news for donors and the environment. Even if Panipat were producing shoddy at its peak, it probably couldn't manage the growing flood of used clothing entering the market in search of a second life. Between 2000 and 2015, global clothing

production doubled, while the average number of times that a garment was worn before disposal declined by 36 percent. In China, it declined by 70 percent.

The rise of "fast fashion" is thus creating a bleak scenario: The **tide** of secondhand clothes keeps growing even as the markets to reuse them are disappearing. From an environmental standpoint, that's a big problem. Already, the textile industry accounts for more greenhouse-gas emissions than all international flights and maritime shipping combined; as recycling markets break down, its contribution could soar.

The good news is that nobody has a bigger incentive to address this problem than the industry itself. By raising temperatures and intensifying droughts, climate change could substantially reduce cotton **yields** and thus make garment production less predictable and far more expensive. Industry executives are clearly concerned.

The question is what to do about it. Some brands, such as Hennes & Mauritz AB (better known as H&M) and Patagonia Inc., are experimenting with new fibers made from recycled material, which could help. But longer-term, the industry will have to try to refocus consumers on durability and quality -- and charge accordingly. Ways to do this include offering warranties on clothing and making tags that inform consumers of a product's expected lifespan. To **sate** the hunger for fast fashion, meanwhile, brands might also explore subscription-based fashion rental businesses -- such as China's YCloset -- or other more sustainable models.

None of these options can replace Panipat and the other mill towns that once transformed rich people's rags into cheap clothes for the poor. But, like it or not, that era is coming to an end. Now the challenge is to stitch together a new set of solutions.

1. What happened to clothes from donation bins in the past?
2. What do Panipat's mills specialize in? What are the blankets used for?
3. What happened in China in the early 2000's? What happened as a result?
4. How much did global production of clothes rise between 2000-2015? What was the second significant change?
5. What is fast fashion and how does it harm the environment?
6. What are some brands trying to do about the problem? What long-term solutions do we need?

Part3: vocabulary

Ex4. Look at the expressions from the text below and try to match them with their definitions:

1. guilt-free	a. old clothes
2. rags	b. extremely rich
3. yarn	c. high wave
4. cash-flush	d. to satisfy fully
5. fleece	e. not causing any guilt
6. tide	f. fibers that have been spun together (przędza)
7. yield	g. an agricultural product (plon)
8. satiated	h. a type of synthetic material (tu: polar, również runo)

Ex5. Now fill in the gaps with an appropriate expression from the previous task:

1. Kittens like to play with a ball of
2. The poor man won the lottery and suddenly he went from to riches.
3. The travel company offers trips that won't damage the environment.
4. He was wearing a green and hiking boots.
5. He drank greedily until his thirst was
6. Crop have risen steadily.
7. Americans lift U.S. retail sales unexpectedly.
8. The boat was swept out to sea by the

Ex6. Discuss the following questions with your partner. Make sure you use the key vocabulary from the previous activities.

1. Do you feel **guilt-free** when you eat unhealthy food?
2. Do you like clothes made of **fleece**?
3. Are you usually fully **satiated** after a meal or do you stop eating when you are still a little hungry?
4. Have you ever tried to make any clothes out of **yarn**? Do you know anyone who enjoys knitting?
5. Do you believe that the stories about people who went from **rags** to riches are true? Do you know any?

Part4: speaking

Ex7. After reading exchange the opinions on the following questions with your partner:

1. How often do you get rid of the clothes you don't want or need anymore? What do you do with them?
2. Have you ever donated clothes to a charity organization?
3. Do you buy second hand clothes or other products? Why/Why not?
4. Should the fashion industry be regulated?

Part5: homework

Ex8. Make sure to practice your vocabulary with some flashcards:

<https://quizlet.com/pl/611827182/no-one-wants-your-used-clothes-anymore-flash-cards/>

If you enjoyed today's article here is a longer read as a follow up:

<https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2021/jul/29/the-truth-about-fast-fashion-can-you-tell-how-ethical-your-clothing-is-by-its-price>