

Social Responsibility: Ethics, Social Media, Fast Fashion

Unit: Fashion Merchandising

Problem Area: Fashion Retail

Lesson: Social Responsibility: Ethics, Social Media, Fast Fashion

- **Student Learning Objectives.** Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

- 1 Describe social responsibilities.**
- 2 Analyze social responsibilities.**

- **Resources.** The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

E-unit(s) corresponding to this lesson plan. CAERT, Inc. <http://www.mycaert.com>.

“14 Sustainable Fashion Facts That Will Blow Your Mind.” *Rubicon Global: Waste, Recycling, and Smart City Technology Company*, Accessed Nov. 22, 2019.

<https://www.rubiconglobal.com/blog/14-sustainable-fashion-facts/>.

“Good Business Can Change the World.” *Gap Sustainability | Global Sustainability*, Accessed Nov. 22, 2019. <https://www.gapinc sustainability.com/>.

Kozlowski, Anika. “Fast Fashion Lies: Will They Really Change Their Ways in a Climate Crisis?” *The Conversation*, Accessed Nov. 22, 2019. <https://www.theconversation.com/fast-fashion-lies-will-they-really-change-their-ways-in-a-climate-crisis-121033>.

Lewittes, Elisa. “How Fashion Brands Can Create A More Sustainable End-To-End Retail Economy.” *Fashionista*, Accessed Nov. 22, 2019. <https://www.fashionista.com/2019/02/sustainable-fashion-brands-end-to-end-retail-economy>.



Zilles, Christian. "Why Social Media Is Vital To Corporate Social Responsibility." *Social Media Explorer*, Accessed Nov. 22, 2019. <https://www.socialmediaexplorer.com/social-media-marketing/why-social-media-is-vital-to-corporate-social-responsibility/>.

■ **Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities**

- ✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
- ✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
- ✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
- ✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
- ✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
- ✓ Classroom resource and reference materials

■ **Key Terms.** The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- ▶ consumer
- ▶ corporate social responsibility (CSR)
- ▶ ethics
- ▶ fabric pilling
- ▶ fair trade
- ▶ fast fashion
- ▶ labor
- ▶ mission statement
- ▶ publication
- ▶ social media
- ▶ sourcing
- ▶ sustainable
- ▶ sweatshop
- ▶ trends
- ▶ utilitarian
- ▶ vision statement

■ **Interest Approach.** Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

Access the article "14 Sustainable Fashion Facts That Will Blow Your Mind" at <https://www.rubiconglobal.com/blog/14-sustainable-fashion-facts/>. Choose several of the facts to share with your students. Discuss students' thoughts and feelings about these facts.

CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Describe social responsibilities.

Anticipated Problem: What are social responsibilities?

- I. There are several different ways a company can be socially responsible. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a hot topic as many consumers are making buying decisions based on a company's ethical practices. A **consumer** is a person who makes purchases. **Corporate social responsibility (CSR)** is the way in which a company operates to be ethical in its practices.
 - A. Ethics: The foundation of a company's business practices are based on the company's ethics. **Ethics** are morals that guide behavior. A company's ethics may be written into their mission and vision statements. A **mission statement** is a company's collective agreement for its current purpose and practices. A **vision statement** is a company's collective agreement for its future purpose and practices.
 - B. Social Media: Companies can use social media to assist in social responsibility. **Social media** are online communities used to share information, opinions, experiences, and other content as well as for networking. Through social media a company can communicate its stance on different topics. They can also encourage their customers to do the same. Companies can also use social media to encourage their own employees and business partners to be more socially responsible.
 - C. Fast Fashion: **Fast fashion** is apparel and accessories that are rapidly produced to adhere to the latest trends. A **trend** is the direction an idea, product, or fashion has gone or is going. The fashion industry has long pushed the idea that people need to quickly change the style of their clothing and accessories. Rather than being utilitarian the fashion industry has suggested that styles must be updated throughout a season and not repeated from year to year. **Utilitarian** is practical or useful.

Teaching Strategy: Many techniques can be used to help students master this objective. Use VM-A to introduce lesson. Assign LS-A.

Objective 2: Analyze social responsibilities.

Anticipated Problem: Why are social responsibilities important?

- II. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is often talked about in fashion industry publications. A **publication** is forum or printed bulletin used to express ideas. Publications include books, newspapers, magazines, websites, and blogs. It is not only a fashion industry trend, but common in many corporations today. The fashion industry has had a long history of being socially irresponsible especially when it comes to materials and labor. Materials include the fabric (textiles), thread, buttons, etc. **Labor** is the work that is done.
 - A. MATERIALS: Because meeting the needed of fast fashion has been the common production method, attention to how and where materials are sourced has been ignored. **Sourcing** is locating, choosing and securing products to purchase. Today companies are realizing, and consumers are demanding, that sourcing needs to be thoughtful and purposeful. Where raw materials come from and how they are processed need to be considered.
 1. Sustainable and Fair-trade Materials: Choosing to use sustainable materials is at the forefront of CSR. **Sustainable** is utilizing materials that are renewable and not depleted by utilization. The clothing company GAP has promised to only use sustainable cotton by 2021. **Fair-trade** is an arrangement in which a developed country agrees to pay an ethically reasonable price for goods from an underdeveloped country.
 2. Ethical Production: Producing textiles to be used to make garments is also an issue that needs to be addressed. If a company is to be considered socially responsible, they must choose fabrics that do not harm the planet.
 - a. Fleece and Microfibers: Fleece and microfiber fabrics are made from plastic. When the fabric pills, the particles enter the waterways which is very harmful. **Fabric pilling** is tiny balls of material on clothing that form over time from wear. The wildlife that lives in the water is harmed and the particles can remain in the water even after filtering which means people might be drinking them. Patagonia is the first company to choose to make all of its fleece out of recycled plastic water bottles rather than making new plastic.
 - b. Manufacturing Processes: Companies need to be aware of how textiles are made. Cotton, although renewable, takes a great deal of water to grow and turn into thread to weave into fabrics. According to Rubicon the apparel and footwear industries account for a combined estimate of 8% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, and fashion is the third highest-polluting industry in the world.
 - B. LABOR: As with materials, labor selection needs to be thoughtful and purposeful. When it was brought to light that some companies were hiring people in underdeveloped countries to work long hours and for little pay, many other companies and consumers were outraged. Many companies now publically

recognize that the use of sweatshops to produce clothing is unethical and inhumane. A **sweatshop** is a manufacturing business that makes its employees work long hours, without breaks, in very poor conditions. Companies such as Columbia, Nike and Target now make public their sourcing and production information so that consumers can make choices based on this data.

Teaching Strategy: Many techniques can be used to help students master this objective. Use VM-B to further understanding of the lesson. Assign LS-A if it has not been done so previously.

- **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle. If a textbook is being used, questions at the ends of chapters may also be included in the Review/Summary.
- **Application.** Use the included visual master(s) and lab sheet(s) to apply the information presented in the lesson.
- **Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

■ **Answers to Sample Test:**

Part One: Matching

1. f
2. a
3. d
4. b
5. e
6. c

Part Two: Completion

1. useful
2. express
3. work
4. choosing
5. renewable
6. wear
7. poor

Part Three: Short Answer

1. Answers may vary, but should be similar to: a mission statement is a company's collective agreement for its current purpose and practices whereas a vision statement is a company's collective agreement for its future purpose and practices.
2. Answers may vary, but should be similar to: fair-trade is an arrangement in which a developed country agrees to pay an ethically reasonable price for goods from an underdeveloped country.

Social Responsibility: Ethics, Social Media, Fast Fashion

► Part One: Matching

Instructions: Match the term with the correct definition.

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| a. corporate social responsibility (CSR) | d. ethics |
| b. social media | e. fast fashion |
| c. trend | f. consumer |

- ____ 1. A person who makes purchases.
- ____ 2. The way in which a company operates to be ethical in its practices.
- ____ 3. Morals that guide behavior.
- ____ 4. Online communities used to share information, opinions, experiences, and other content as well as for networking.
- ____ 5. Apparel and accessories that are rapidly produced to adhere to the latest trends.
- ____ 6. The direction an idea, product, or fashion has gone or is going.

► Part Two: Completion

Instructions: Provide the word or words to complete the following statements.

1. Utilitarian is practical or _____.
2. A publication is forum or printed bulletin used to _____ ideas.
3. Labor is the _____ that is done.
4. Sourcing is locating, _____ and securing products to purchase.



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a hot topic as many consumers are making buying decisions based on a company's ethical practices. CSR is the way in which a company operates to be ethical in its practices.



UNETHICAL PRACTICES: SWEATSHOPS

Many companies now publically recognize that the use of sweatshops to produce clothing is unethical and inhumane. A sweatshop is a manufacturing business that makes its employees work long hours, without breaks, in very poor conditions.



Which Companies Are Socially Responsible?

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to discover companies' social responsibility practices.

Objective

Research companies to discover their social responsibility practices.

Materials

- ◆ lab sheet
- ◆ pen or pencil
- ◆ device with Internet access

Procedure

1. Access the internet.
2. Choose three companies to research.
3. Complete the chart below with the company names.
4. Research the companies to locate their CSR practices.
5. Complete the chart below with the information you discover.
6. Answer the reflection question.
7. Turn in your completed lab sheet to your teacher.



Company Name	CRS Practices
1.	
2.	
3.	

Reflection Question:

Which company do you believe is the most socially responsible? Explain why.