






Conscious Consumption Quest

Unveiling the impact of global supply chains

THINKING | Systems Thinking

→ What you will need:

-  8-50
-  Individual & group
-  2 hrs preparation
-  3 hrs execution
-  Flip-charts, sources on supply chain structure of specific products

→ Menu:

- I. Overview
- II. Learning Activity
- III. Assessment
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“Consumption increasingly causes sustainability challenges. Consumers that understand the effects of their consumption patterns and buying behaviour are more likely to include sustainability in buying decisions. Use this tool to teach students how to analyse the complex structure of global supply chains and assess the impact create with the products that we buy.”

—Roelof Jousma





I. Overview

The significance of consumption in the current sustainability challenges we face cannot be overstated. Regrettably, as consumers, we frequently overlook the impact of our actions. Nonetheless, it is vital for us to understand the consequences of our consumption patterns and buying behaviors, and recognise the potential for making more conscious choices.

Through this learning activity, students will develop an understanding of how their purchasing decisions contribute to the sustainability of products and the global supply chains they are derived from. This will lead to a heightened awareness among students regarding the complex intricacies of these supply chains and their impact on people and the planet.

Learning outcome

- ✓ The student has increased awareness of the systemic complexity and impact of global supply chains





II. Learning Activity

In collaboration, students research the global jeans supply chain by identifying the actors, analysing the supply chain structure and identifying the impact of buying a new pair of jeans.



1. "Genaaid" ⌚ 30 mins

Please note, this step includes a homework assignment prior to class.

Ask students to look at the television programme "Genaaid" (in Dutch) of BNN Vara to prepare for class. Give freedom to watch all episodes, but let them focus on Episode 1 'Genaaid: Fast Fashion' and 2 'Genaaid: Spijkerbroeken en T-shirts'.

In class, ask the students to discuss their experience in small groups, guided by the following questions:

- Were you aware of the extent of the complexity and sustainability impact of the jeans supply chain before watching the television programme?
- How did it impact your perception of the fashion industry?

Tip: please be aware and prepared that students may experience feelings of guilt, helplessness, or being overwhelmed.



2. Research the Supply Chain ⌚ 30 mins

Introduce supply chains and their steps.

In small teams of 3 to 5 people, students choose a specific part of the supply chain to investigate further. For instance, sourcing raw materials and processing steps such as



dyeing or manufacturing to final product delivery.

Homework assignment:

Dive deep into your chosen focus area. Conduct thorough research to understand the processes and actors involved in the selected part of the supply chain. Explore industry publications, academic resources and case studies to gather relevant information.

Tip: provide information on the steps for a supply chain for producing jeans and some tips.



3. Present Analysis 60 mins

In class, all teams share the results of their analysis.

Ask the class to provide feedback to the student teams, guided by the following questions:

- What challenges did you encounter during the research?
- Did you reach a thorough understanding of the complexities and interdependencies within that specific area?
- Do you feel you included all actors?

Afterwards, student teams have the time to integrate feedback and insights into their analysis.



4. Sustainability Impact 10 mins

Instruct the students on the following **Homework Assignment:**

Each team analyses what impact each actor in their chosen part of the supply chain experiences. Consider the SDGs and other relevant sources when assessing the impact. The impact includes ecological, societal and economic aspects; and can be positive or negative. For example, include the impact of responsible sourcing, fair labour practices and environmentally friendly manufacturing processes.



Collect data, conduct research and gather information to support the analysis.



5. Presentation 60 mins

All teams present the results of their analysis. Encourage a plenary discussion to enhance awareness of the complex route a pair of jeans has travelled and its impact on people and the planet.

After the plenary discussion, invite students to self-assess their learning progress individually.

Please note, as part of assessment *as learning*, students reflect using the reflective questions.





III. Assessment

After completing the learning activity, students assess their awareness of the complexities and impacts of global supply chains by answering reflective questions. The assessment is focused predominantly on metacognitive reflection for the student (thinking about thinking).



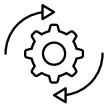
Purpose

Assessment *as learning* aims to strengthen the learning process and the development of metacognitive skills. It empowers students to direct their learning and to become independent, critical self-assessors.



Roles

Self-assessment



Characteristics

Self-regulated learning



Materials

Reflective questions





Assessment

Reflective questions

1. Does knowledge of the complexity and impact of supply chains influence your personal values and beliefs regarding sustainability, ethics and social responsibility? Please elaborate.

2. Did you experience emotional and psychological effects when learning about the complexity and impact of supply chains? How can you manage feelings that may arise?





3. Has developing awareness of this topic sparked any new questions or areas of curiosity for you? If so, what steps do you plan to take to find answers or explore those interests?

4. Reflect on any personal biases or assumptions you may have held prior to this exercise. Have they changed? Did you take steps remain open-minded and receptive to new information? Please elaborate.

5. Does this exercise influence your consumer behaviour? Please elaborate.





IV. Key Advice

Information on the steps for a supply chain for producing jeans and tips (Step 2) can be downloaded below.





Key Advice

Steps for a supply chain for producing jeans

1. Research and Understand the Supply Chain

Start by researching and understanding the typical supply chain for jeans. Learn about the different stages, from raw material sourcing to manufacturing, distribution, and retail.

2. Identify Key Stakeholders

Identify the key stakeholders involved in the supply chain, such as cotton growers, fabric manufacturers, garment factories, distributors, retailers and customers.

3. Map the Flow of Materials

Create a flowchart or diagram to map the flow of materials from the raw materials stage to the finished jeans. Identify the processes and locations involved at each stage.

4. Determine Manufacturing and Sourcing Locations

Decide where the jeans will be manufactured and sourced. Consider factors such as cost, quality, sustainability and ethical considerations.

5. Establish Supplier Relationships

Identify and establish relationships with suppliers for raw materials, fabrics, trims and other components needed for jeans production. Ensure that suppliers meet quality and sustainability standards.

6. Plan Production and Inventory Management

Develop a production plan, including production volumes, lead times and inventory management strategies. Consider factors like demand forecasting, order management and production scheduling.

7. Coordinate Logistics and Distribution

Determine the most efficient logistics and distribution channels to transport jeans from manufacturers to retailers. Consider factors such as transportation modes, warehousing and fulfilment centres.

8. Implement Technology and Data Management

Explore and implement digital tools and technologies to facilitate the flow of information and data within the supply chain. This may include using supply chain management software, inventory tracking systems and electronic data interchange (EDI).





9. Monitor and Improve Performance

Continuously monitor the performance of the supply chain. Measure key performance indicators (KPIs) such as lead times, delivery accuracy, inventory turnover and customer satisfaction. Identify areas for improvement and implement corrective actions.

10. Consider Sustainability and Ethical Practices

Integrate sustainability and ethical considerations throughout the supply chain. Promote responsible sourcing, fair labour practices and environmentally friendly manufacturing processes.

Examples of actors in the jeans supply chain are:

- Retailer
- Jeans brand company (design styles)
- Jeans manufacturer (cutting and sewing)
- Denim manufacturer
- Denim dyer
- Denim weaver
- Yarn spinner
- Cotton trader
- Cotton farmer
- All the traders and transporters that connect the above actors

Note 1: Differentiate between owners and workers.

Note 2: An extensive way of viewing actors is to include:

- *Land quality*
- *Water quality (rivers – seas/oceans)*
- *Biodiversity (use of pesticides and dyes)*
- *Air quality*





V. References

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