

individual choices  
unit two

# ask

What are the impacts of my lifestyle choices?

## acquire

- PowerPoint presentation
- Websites
- Teacher and student handouts
- Materials: Class set of laptops or access to a computer lab

## explore

- Interactive PowerPoint presentation
- Websites

## analyze

- Comparison of Footprints exercise
- GIS activity

## act

- Reflective paragraph
- Participation in class Town Hall meeting

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## U2L1 | Conscious consumer

This lesson will guide students in a process of reflection and understanding of their own consumption patterns and the impact their choices have on our planet.

**subjects:** Geography, Civics, English

### timing: Activity 1

Throw-Away Society | **60 minutes**

**Note:** Follow-up with Activity 5

### Activity 2

How BIG is my Footprint | **60 minutes**

**Note:** follow-up with Activity 3 & 4

### Activity 3

Analyzing Our Ecological Footprints | **30 minutes**

### Activity 4

Understanding the Ecological Footprint Calculator | **30 minutes**

### Activity 5

Changemakers | **30 minutes**

### Activity 6

Lifeblood of a Modern Society | **75 minutes**

## learning goal

Students will reflect on their patterns of consumption and the impacts of their lifestyle on our earth.

## success criteria

- Completion of 'Story of Stuff Handout.'
- Participation in classroom discussion and compilation of list of everyday waste.
- Completion of one page reflection or cartoon on 'Change Maker' Personality type.
- Completion of Ecological Footprint Calculator.
- Completion of Ecological Footprint Analysis.
- Participation in the Stakeholders Meeting.

## ask

- How do my consumption patterns compare to other Canadians? Other nationalities?
- What are the impacts of my lifestyle choices?
- Who are the stakeholders in the Canadian Tar Sands and what are the factors that impact each of them?

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## U2L1 | Conscious consumer

### acquire

#### PowerPoints

- Ecological Footprint
- Fossil Energy
- Oil Sands

#### Websites

- [www.storyofstuff.org](http://www.storyofstuff.org)
- [www.chrisjordan.com](http://www.chrisjordan.com)
- [ifitweremyhome.com](http://ifitweremyhome.com)
- [www.footprintnetwork.org](http://www.footprintnetwork.org)
- [www.panda.org/lpr/gfootprint](http://www.panda.org/lpr/gfootprint)

#### Teacher and student handouts

- Story of Stuff Handout
- Ecological Footprint Calculator Handout
- Ecological Footprint Analysis Handout

#### Materials

- Class set of laptops or access to a computer lab
- Activity 1: Story of Stuff Handout
- Activity 2: Ecological Footprint Calculator Handout
- Activity 3: Analysis of Footprint Handout
- Activity 4: Handout
- Activity 5: Story of Stuff Changemaker
- Activity 6: Town Hall Meeting Handout

### explore

#### Activity 1 | Throw-Away Society

This activity will help students to self-examine their consumption patterns.

- Visit [www.chrisjordan.com](http://www.chrisjordan.com) to have a visual of the numbers of 'stuff' that is thrown away.
- Students will watch *The Story of Stuff* (21 minutes) and complete the accompanying handout. Students will learn about the five major steps of the materials economy: Extraction; Production; Distribution; Consumption and Disposal.
- Students will list all the things they have thrown into the garbage or recycling/compost in the past 24 hours, and then compile a master class list.
- Ask students in small groups 'What factors they think drive consumption?' Share each group's findings with the class.

#### Activity 2 | How BIG is my Footprint

This activity will review the term 'Ecological Footprint' and calculate their own ecological footprints.

- Ask students what they did before they arrived in class today? Ask students to associate the activities they did prior to arriving in class to how the Earth provided the resources they needed to do this task.
  - For example:
    - I brushed my teeth. Where did the ingredients come from to make the paste?
    - Think about the water that you used to rinse.
    - The materials needed to make your toothbrush
- Review the idea of the ecological footprint—SLIDE SHOW
- Students will complete the Ecological Footprint Calculator Handout ([Footprintnetwork.org](http://Footprintnetwork.org))

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### analyze

#### Activity 3 | Analyzing our ecological footprints

This activity will have students compare their ecological footprints with their classmates and make country comparisons.

After students complete the Ecological Footprint Calculations Worksheet, students should compile their results as a class and then compare their results with those from other countries.

- Students will complete ANALYSIS OF FOOTPRINT HANDOUT
- **Option 1:** Students will visit [ifitweremyhome.com](http://ifitweremyhome.com) and compare Canada to any other country. They will choose two of the comparisons and hypothesize why these differences are present.
- **Option 2:** Complete the GIS Ecological Footprint Activity (see handout part 2).

### act

#### Activity 4 | Understanding the ecological footprint calculator

This activity will have students focus on one factor used to calculate the ecological footprint.

Choose one of the following factors used to calculate your ecological footprint.

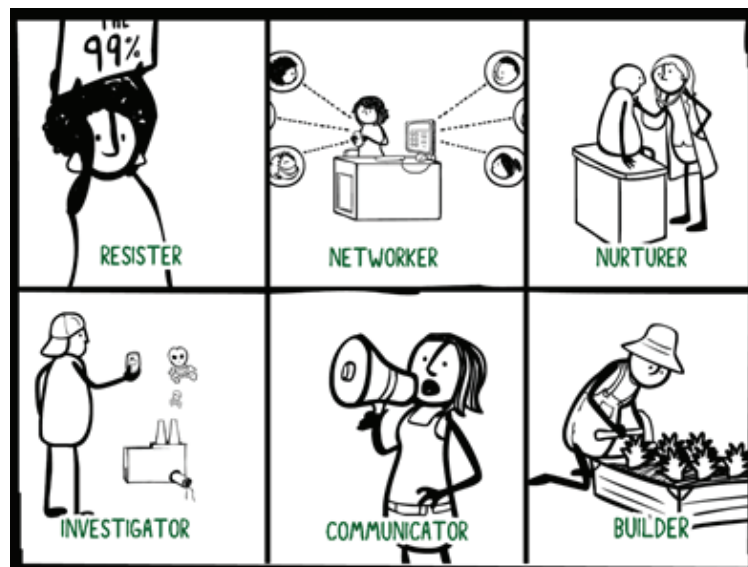
- diet
- common mode of transportation
- type of shelter
- consumption of electronics
- electricity use

And complete a one page explanation of why that factor is taken into consideration when calculating your ecological footprint and how it might vary from Canada to another part of the world.

#### Activity 5 | Changemaker

This activity will have students reflect on how they might contribute to reducing their community's consumption patterns.

The Story of Stuff (SOS) has become a movement of people who have watched *The Story of Stuff* by Annie Leonard and have joined forces to express how they can become 'change makers.' In the SOS they categorize ordinary citizens into the following categories:



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### Option 1

Which changemaker are you? Write a one page response describing which category or categories fit your personality the best. Give concrete examples of why you fall into this category and how your personality can lend itself to creating positive change. How could you in your role make change in your consumption patterns?

### Option 2

Draw a cartoon that illustrates one type of changemaker. Your cartoon should include at least five cartoon boxes that clearly tell how this type of person is creating change in their community.

### Activity 6 | Lifeblood of modern society

This activity will have students learn about the fossil fuel industry globally and within Canada.

- Review images and graphs in Powerpoint: Fossil Energy.
- Students should create a t-chart in pairs that lists the pros and cons of developing the tar sands in Alberta.

Pros: creating jobs, infrastructure, investment in Alberta, strengthen relationship with USA

Cons: destruction of environment, contaminating water, breaking treaty agreements, supporting oil dependency

- Students should watch PowerPoint presentation: Oil Sands
- Host a Town Hall Meeting for the stakeholders
- Students are given roles:
  - Oil Company Executive working in Alberta
  - First Nations Leader in Northern Alberta
  - Government of Alberta
  - Skilled Labourer working in the Oil Sands
  - Environmentalist
  - Albertan Farmer

Students will break into five groups and each group will represent a stakeholder in the Oil Sands.

Class will participate in a Town Hall Meeting.

Students will write a journal reflection on the following questions:

1. What did you learn from this activity?
2. How did your ideas about the topic change during this activity, if at all? Explain what caused your ideas to change or why you think your ideas did not change at all.
3. What does perspective mean? Where does our perspective come from? How does our perspective shape how we see the world?

## references

(n.d.). Retrieved February 18, 2015, from [www.chrisjordan.com](http://www.chrisjordan.com)

Story of Stuff. (n.d.). Retrieved February 18, 2015, from [storyofstuff.org](http://storyofstuff.org)

Changemaker Personality Quiz - The Story of Stuff Project. (n.d.). Retrieved February 18, 2015, from [storyofstuff.org/changemaker](http://storyofstuff.org/changemaker)

(n.d.). Retrieved February 18, 2015, from <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/>

Footprint Interactive Graph. (n.d.). Retrieved February 18, 2015, from [www.panda.org/lpr/footprint](http://www.panda.org/lpr/footprint)

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## U2L1 | Conscious Consumer

### U2L1A1 | Throw away society | TEACHER ANSWER KEY

#### overview

This lesson will help you to self-examine your consumption patterns.

#### learning goal

- To gain a better understanding of your own consumption patterns and what drives them.

#### success criteria

- Compile a master list of what you have thrown away, recycled or composted in the past 24 hours, discuss what drives your consumption, and watch *The Story of Stuff* and complete the below questions.

#### Inquiry question

- What are my consumption patterns and what is driving them?

Watch the video *The Story of Stuff* by Annie Leonard and answer the following questions:

- 1. Briefly describe the five stages of the materials economy.**
  - a EXTRACTION:** removing natural resources (chopping down trees, mining, etc.)
  - b PRODUCTION:** use energy to change the natural resources into products (usually mixing toxic chemicals with natural resources)
  - c DISTRIBUTION:** moving the products to the consumers (trying to keep prices low and profits high for producers)
  - d CONSUMPTION:** citizens buy the products (shopping and more shopping)
  - e DISPOSAL:** throwing products out (landfill)
- 2. What is meant by ‘externalizing the costs of production?’**

The real costs of making stuff is not captured in the price because producers do not pay workers fairly, loss of health for workers and local people are not accounted for and the cost of environmental destruction and later clean up is not taken into account.
- 3. Why did the modern consumer economy come into being?**

After WW2 governments were looking at how to ramp up the economy and decided they needed citizens to consume more (capitalism). For our economic system to function the production, consumption, and disposal of ‘stuff’ must constantly increase.
- 4. What are some of the social and community interests being neglected while we are consuming ‘stuff?’**

Time for friends, family, leisure, and building community.
- 5. What is happening to the levels of measured happiness? Why?**

It is declining. People have less time because they are working more. Constant bombardment from advertising to buy more.
- 6. Summarize the steps in the treadmill.**

Buying, disposing, buying more, more production, more consuming....