

UNIT 6, FAST FASHION-SUMMARY

PART 1

According to the writer of the article fast fashion makes it difficult to appreciate and keep wearing our clothes because of the constant availability of new styles. However, before taking advantage of sales, **the writer suggests** that we should consider its environmental impact. This industry prioritizes speed and low costs, often leading to pollution, textile waste, and the use of toxic chemicals. Many bright colors and prints are created with harmful substances, making textile dyeing a major water polluter. Greenpeace's Detox campaign has pushed fashion brands to eliminate hazardous chemicals from their supply chains, as some of these substances are toxic, hormone-disrupting, and even carcinogenic.

PART 2

The writer informs us that polyester is the most commonly used fabric in fashion, but washing polyester clothes releases microfibres into waterways. These tiny plastic particles pass through wastewater treatment systems, polluting oceans and threatening marine life. They can enter the food chain, eventually reaching humans.

Cotton production also has environmental challenges. It requires large amounts of water and pesticides, which can be problematic in developing countries. While genetically modified cotton reduces pesticide use, it can lead to "superweeds" that require even stronger chemicals, harmful to both animals and people.

The documentary *The True Cost* highlighted the dangers of toxic pesticides, linking them to health issues such as brain tumors and birth defects. Although interest in organic cotton is growing, it still makes up less than 1% of global cotton production.

PART 3

The writer also informs us that fast fashion has significantly increased textile waste, as consumers buy more clothes but discard them quickly. Retailers constantly introduce new styles, persuading shoppers that their existing clothes are outdated. With rising disposable incomes and busy lifestyles, repairing garments has become less common, as buying new ones is often cheaper and more convenient. Additionally, the decline in sewing skills has reduced the motivation to mend clothing.

Supermarket fashion and frequent sales have reinforced the idea that clothing is disposable. Although there is growing interest in sustainable practices, textile recycling rates remain low. In the UK, despite charity shops and in-store recycling programs, most unwanted clothing is still thrown away rather than reused or donated.

PART 4

Finally, the writer states that reducing the environmental impact of fast fashion is challenging, as all fabric types have pros and cons. While natural fibres may seem like a better choice, factors such as production, dyeing, and transportation also affect sustainability. Organic fabrics reduce chemical use but still require large amounts of water, and dyeing them can have a greater impact than dyeing synthetics.

Recycled materials are often the most eco-friendly option, as they reduce waste and reliance on new resources. Brands like Patagonia have embraced this approach by using recycled polyester and cotton. Initiatives like *Love Your Clothes* provide guidance on making sustainable choices, from buying wisely to repairing, upcycling, and responsibly disposing of garments. Ultimately, the most effective way to reduce fashion's impact is to keep clothes in use for longer and buy less.

