

STOP WASTE

May the 4Rs Be With You Contest 2023

Isabelle Tandradinata, Alameda

1st Place High School Mixed Media

My 4Rs: Research, Reduce, Recreate, and Reimagine



My (Re)Generation Action Story:

Research: Educating ourselves on the fast fashion industry's negative impact on our environment is absolutely critical as the first step. In our fast paced economy, many corporations are mass producing cheaply and unethically made clothes to keep up with seasonal trends. Not only do billions of garments end up in the landfill each year, fast-fashion factory workers are often forced to work in dangerous conditions for below a living wage. I believe we collectively need to be more aware of where our clothes come from and how they were made instead of blindly following the next big fashion trends.

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Isabelle's Story Continued:

Reduce: There are many alternatives to buying fast fashion such as shopping second-hand or supporting sustainable businesses, but the most sustainable slow fashion option is simply buying less. Clothing should not be thought of as disposable and it's important to make each purchase intentionally. We can do this by thinking "Would I wear this even if it wasn't in trend anymore?" or waiting a few days to buy something to give ourselves time to think if we actually want it after the in-the-moment urge.

Recreate: A slow fashion hobby of mine recently has been crocheting! It's been super fun to be able to create my own personalized clothing whilst having a new creative outlet. By learning this craft, I've somewhat been able to place myself in the shoes of garment workers and artisans and further learned to appreciate the amount of effort it takes to make a piece of clothing. It again proved that there is almost no way clothes can be extremely cheap AND be produced without cutting corners. Additionally, there is a variety of eco-friendly yarn options to choose from and this method of slow fashion avoids contributing to wasted resources prevalent in the fast fashion industry.

Reimagine: As the regeneration, it's possible to create positive change in the fashion/textile industry as well as other high-polluting sectors if we all do our part. No one has to be perfect and individuals shouldn't be blamed for the detrimental byproducts of industry; however, the choices we make on a daily basis do make a difference. Let's reimagine a world where clothes are seen as long-term investments, a world where garment workers are treated fairly and paid a livable wage, and a world where creativity and sustainability go hand in hand.

Photo Description: Handmade crochet bucket hat and crochet mesh heart tank top (pattern from @janiesdaisies on youtube) on top of a green t-shirt that was handed down years ago from my mother.