

Fashion & Globalization □□ - ANSWER KEY

English in Context 7 | Topic 4 | SOLUTIONS

A) Reading Comprehension

1. What percentage of global carbon emissions does the fashion industry produce?

10% of global carbon emissions

(More than all international flights and maritime shipping combined)

2. How much water is needed to produce one cotton T-shirt?

Approximately 2,700 litres of water

(Enough drinking water for one person for 2.5 years)

3. What was the Rana Plaza disaster and why was it significant?

The Rana Plaza disaster was a garment factory collapse in Bangladesh in 2013 that killed over 1,100 workers. It was significant because it brought international attention to the unsafe working conditions and exploitation in the fast fashion industry.

4. According to the text, why do fast fashion brands release new collections so frequently?

To encourage consumers to constantly update their wardrobes / to make people buy more clothes more often.

(Brands release new collections every few weeks)

5. What is meant by "circular fashion"?

Circular fashion means creating clothes that can be fully recycled at the end of their life / designing fashion in a way that materials can be reused in a continuous cycle.

B) Critical Thinking (Sample Answers)

6. The text mentions that sustainable fashion is more expensive. Do you think this is fair? Why / Why not?

Sample answer: Yes, it is fair because sustainable fashion reflects the TRUE cost of production – fair wages, safe conditions, and environmentally friendly materials. The low prices of fast fashion only exist because of exploitation and environmental damage. Workers deserve fair pay.

Alternative view: No, because it makes ethical fashion only accessible to wealthy people, creating a two-tier system where only the rich can afford to be ethical consumers.

7. What solutions does the text suggest for reducing the negative impacts of the fashion industry?

- Using organic or recycled materials
- Ensuring fair wages and safe working conditions
- Producing clothing designed to last
- Embracing circular fashion (fully recyclable clothes)
- Buying fewer, higher-quality items
- Caring for clothes properly to make them last longer

8. The text says "the cheapest option isn't always the most economical." Explain what this means using examples from the text.

This means that although fast fashion items cost less initially (e.g. €5 T-shirt vs. €30 sustainable T-shirt), they need to be replaced more frequently because they are lower quality. The text mentions people now keep clothes for "half as long." If you buy a sustainable T-shirt that lasts 5 years vs. buying 5 cheap T-shirts that wear out quickly, the sustainable option may actually cost less overall. Additionally, the "hidden costs" – environmental damage and human exploitation – are paid by society and future generations.