

Part 1: Fill in the Blanks

Remember to transform the words (1 – 10) to fit into the sentence, they all need to be changed in some way.

Article url: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/15/can-we-fix-it-the-repair-cafes-waging-war-on-throwaway-culture>

1. Determine

2. Confront

3. Litter

4. Cheerful

5. Competent

6. Use

7. Profession

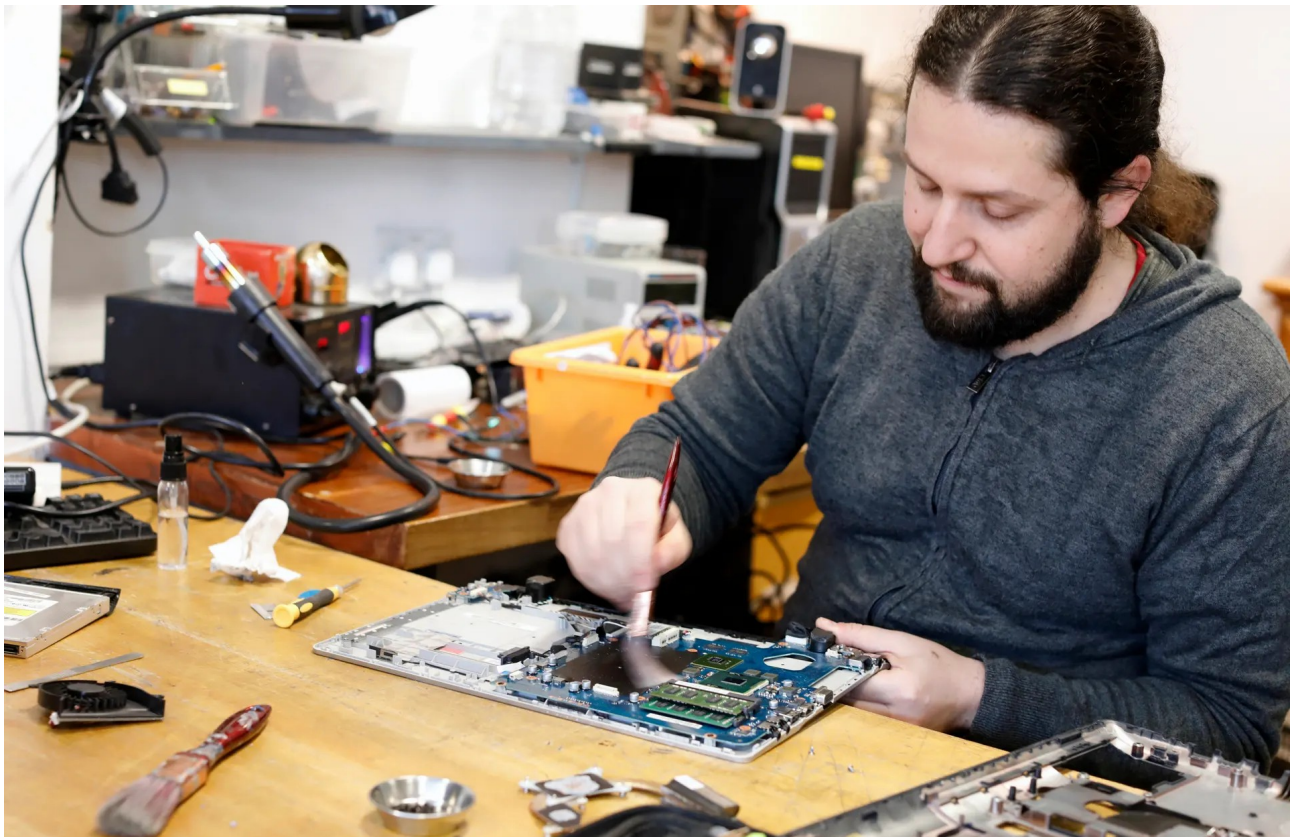
8. Month

9. Screw

10. Throw

Can we fix it? The repair cafes waging war on throwaway culture

When fixing items is actively discouraged by manufacturers, recycling becomes a political act, say Repair Cafe volunteers



The Edinburgh Remakery workshop.

A vacuum cleaner, a hair straightener, a laptop, Christmas lights, an e-reader, a blender, a kettle, two bags, a pair of jeans, a remote-control helicopter, a spoon, a dining-room chair, a lamp and hair clippers. All broken.

It sounds like a pile of things that you'd stick in boxes and take to the tip. In fact, it's a list of things mended in a single afternoon by British volunteers (1) to get people to stop throwing stuff away.

This is the Reading Repair Cafe, part of a burgeoning international network aimed at (2) a world of stuff, of white goods (3) dumps in west Africa and trash swilling through the oceans in huge gyres.

The hair clippers belong to William, who does not want to give his surname but (4) describes himself as “mechanically (5)”. He has owned them for 25 years, but 10 years ago they stopped working and they have been sitting (6) in his cupboard ever since.

He sits down at the table of Colin Haycock, an IT (7) who volunteers at the repair cafe, which has been running (8) for about four years and is a place where people can bring all manner of household items to be fixed for free. In less than five minutes, Haycock has (9) and removed the blades, cleaned out some gunk from inside the machine, oiled the blades, and screwed it all back together. The clippers purr happily.

William looks sheepish; Haycock looks pleased. “I wish they were all that simple,” he says.

Today, the repairers will divert 24kg of waste from going to landfill and save 284kg of CO₂. Some items can't be fixed on the spot – notably a hunting horn split in two, which requires soldering with a blow torch – but very little needs to be (10) away. [...]

Part 2: Discussion

Read the rest of the article & think about examples of how you try to reduce your carbon footprint.

Sophie Unwin, the co-founder of the Remakery in Brixton and the founder of Edinburgh Remakery has been inundated with inquiries about setting up similar enterprises abroad. An estimated 300,000 tonnes of clothing was sent to landfill in the UK in 2016 and a report from Wrap puts the average lifespan for a piece of clothing in the UK at 3.3 years.

Globally, the amount of e-waste generated is expected to hit 50m tonnes by the end of 2018. This is partly driven by consumers' eagerness for new products, but there are also concerns about built-in obsolescence, in which manufacturers design products to break down after a certain amount of time and are often difficult or expensive to fix.

In December, Apple admitted to slowing older models of phones, though it claimed it did this for operational not obsolescence reasons.



Repair cafe volunteer Stuart Ward says that when fixing items is actively discouraged by manufacturers, repair becomes a political act. He is vehement about the “right to repair”, a movement opposed to the practices of companies like the machinery company John Deere, which, under copyright laws, doesn’t allow people to fix their own equipment or take them to independent repairers. [...]

Since it opened in 2012, the Remakery has diverted 205 tonnes of waste that would have ended up in landfill. But the Remakery is unique in that, unlike much of the repair movement, which is volunteer-led, it is a viable business, employing 11 staff and 10 freelancers. Last year the shop had an income of £236,000 – 30% from grants, 70% generated through sales of furniture and electronics, workshops and repair appointments.

The financial viability of the shop makes it attractive as a model. In the last year, Sophie Unwin, the co-founder of the Remakery in Brixton and the founder of Edinburgh Remakery is setting up the Remakery network to replicate the work internationally. [...]

The network will provide toolkits and advice to groups who want to recreate what she has done in Edinburgh. Unwin hopes that these resources will allow other groups to do in two years what it has taken eight years of trial and error and extremely hard graft to achieve.

For repairers, fixing things is a way of doing something about an obsession with consumerism that Unwin calls “a kind of sickness in society”.

“This is our little attempt to push a little bit in this direction,” says Ward. “To say, we can fix this, we can repair things, don’t give up hope.”

Discussion ideas:

- Have you used a repair shop? What was your experience like (worth/not worth it)?*
- What methods do you practice to reduce your own waste and what more could/should you do?*
- What other examples of 'built-in', or, planned obsolescence can you think of?*
- Do you agree that repairing items is a political act?*
- Is consumerism a 'sickness' of society? Does the article/repair cafe provide hope?*

PART 3: Video

Watch the video below and answer the following questions:

<https://youtu.be/5qx2WFpNTPs>

- 1) What makes up 10 % of US discarded waste?
- 2) What does roughly 29 % of US green house gas emissions come from? (3 points)
- 3) What does the recycling manager at the University of California Irvine say is more important than recycling?
- 4) What policy did the food delivery apps Seamless & Grubhub introduce?
- 5) How effective was this policy for Seamless?
- 6) How have the UCI reduced the use of single use water bottles by 3 million/year?

Part 4: Essay Question

Choose one of the questions below and write an essay on the topic of recycling & waste. Focus on ONE questions only. (Your essay should be no more than 250 words.)

Q1: Should recycling be mandatory? (Why/why not?)

Q2: What more could your university do to reduce it's carbon footprint?

Remember to give examples, but not too many. It's better to focus on one or two, giving more detail.