

Our teacher told us to Watch the Netflix documentary *Buy Now: The Shopping Conspiracy* and make a video essay about it

Help me make an essay and use these points

- Summarize the main message of the documentary. (EMPHASIZE THE 5: 1. SELL MORE, 2. WASTE MORE, 3. LIE MORE, 4. HIDE MORE, 5. CONTROL MORE)
- Discuss one key insight or theme that resonated with you the most. (Marketing, buy now, and fast fashion. I personally like shopping clothes online especially now that there are many trending designs are available and suits my taste. I also keep seeing ads about it. Im also the type of person that every occasion needs new clothes, I don't like repeating clothes as much as possible. When ordering I only think of how much my money would be left without seeing the bigger picture- its effect on the environment. I actually bought 5 different dresses dedicated for the holidays but now that Im filming this video, I just wore 1 out of 5 clothes. Although I will still wear it but the thought process is a bit concerning. I felt guilty and there are still many clothes I havemt worn yet. I feel guilty because I think Im tolerating these big companies into producing more and didn't even think its effects to the environment. I also bought dress from shein and it was not that even good, the price doesn't reflect with its quality, I think it was just overhyped. I felt sad when I saw on the video that clothes (even branded ones) ARE BEING THROWNED ON THE SEA because there is too much clothes. The population doesn't match with what is being produced. This documentary has become an eye opener.
- Reflect on how the documentary has influenced your perspective on online consumer habits or online advertising practices.
- Share your thoughts on how this applies to your own experiences or society in general.

#### ABOUT THE DOCUMENTARY:

It explores the tactics and strategies used by major brands to encourage constant consumerism. Some of the key themes it covers include:

- Planned obsolescence: How products are designed to have a limited lifespan, forcing consumers to buy replacements.
- Marketing and advertising: The ways companies use persuasive techniques to create desire and encourage purchases.
- The environmental impact of consumerism: The vast amount of waste generated by our constant buying habits.

The documentary aims to make viewers more aware of the forces that influence their shopping decisions and to encourage more conscious consumption.

#### MAIN MESSAGE OF THE DOCUMENTARY:

The main message of *Buy Now: The Shopping Conspiracy* is that our current culture of hyper-consumerism, driven by manipulative tactics from large corporations, is unsustainable and has devastating consequences for the environment.

Here's a breakdown of the key points that contribute to this message:

- We are being manipulated into buying more than we need: The documentary exposes how companies use targeted advertising, planned obsolescence, and other strategies to create a constant desire for new products, even if we don't truly need them.
- This constant consumption has a massive environmental impact: The film highlights the huge amount of waste generated by our shopping habits, particularly plastic waste and e-waste, and the damage it causes to the planet.
- The responsibility for change lies with corporations: While individual consumers can make more conscious choices, the documentary argues that the primary responsibility for breaking this cycle of overconsumption lies with the companies that produce, market, and sell these products.

Essentially, *Buy Now: The Shopping Conspiracy* wants viewers to understand that our shopping habits are not just personal choices, but are influenced by powerful forces that have serious consequences. It encourages us to be more aware of these forces and to demand change from the corporations that drive this unsustainable system.

SOME NOTES I HAVE TAKEN WHILE WATCHING THE DOCUMENTARY:

amazon- one click buying

as a user i can say buying things gives me satisfaction

hazardous waste

customer contribute to their own demise

1. Sell more

fast fashion- they keep producing more designs

gap- 12k

h&m - 25k

zara- 36k

shein- 1.3M

it doesn't align with the population, they keep on producing more, a single person doesn't need bunch of clothes

"BUY NOW"

Amazon- design right elements color products that make customer buy

'To sell more, we must produce more'

going to physical stores is impractical, but if all you have to do is push a button and it appears on your front door, of course you're gonna buy more

when we throw away, "away" doesn't exist, it ends up somewhere else in the earth and it has consequences

## 2. waste more

Lightbulb - maximize lives to encourage frequent replacement, every bulb was reduced from 2500 hours to 1000 hours

creating unnecessary ways

"planned obsolescence" (has been a successful cornerstone for every company)

making product designed to break or be rapidly discarded has been common in almost every industry

apple- sell product- buy product- gets used- turns into waste

13M phones thrown out everyday

companies make their products hard to repair- back cover is tamperproof- change their screws

dumpster diving - corporate waste

they have issue that homeless gets their product so they destroy their product before disposing them (they don't want to be branded for homeless people)

planet warming emissions

climate change

so if you throw stuff before even using it once, that's insane

## 3. Lie more

lying labels

recyclable labels

rules around packaging are lax

plastic #6

consumer understanding: this product can be used again and again

real meaning: this product will be collected, then get sorted, before likely getting buried or burned

store drop off

consumer understanding: take a bit of extra to be a good citizen

real meaning: store will collect recycling. then will then pass items on likely to get buried or burned

so these symbols are meaningless but they help consumer feel better and not guilty about buying things

"greenwashing" - companies pretend to care about sustainability

environmental damage

#### #4 Hide more

when companies create product, waste never enters communication

they transfer waste

to take advantage to exploit weaker economies in exchange of money

but they're paying not with money, they're paying with health

ingredients of electronics are heavy metals, cadmium, lead, mercury, brominated flame retardants — cancer, reproductive disorders

"Consumption will always generate waste"

"oh i gave my clothes away" — they imagine that "away" is something abstract

#### 5. Control more

- companies should take responsibility for the end of life

Here's a structured 5-paragraph video essay draft for your assignment:

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### **Introduction: The Main Message of *Buy Now: The Shopping Conspiracy***

The Netflix documentary *Buy Now: The Shopping Conspiracy* exposes how major companies manipulate consumer behavior and perpetuate hyper-consumerism. The documentary focuses on five main points: **Sell More**, **Waste More**, **Lie More**, **Hide More**, and **Control More**. These tactics drive people to buy excessively, create waste, mislead consumers with false claims, conceal the environmental impact, and maintain control over markets. The documentary emphasizes how these practices are unsustainable and calls for more conscious consumption to counteract the harm caused by these strategies.

### **Insight: Marketing and the Fast Fashion Industry**

One key insight that resonated with me was the role of fast fashion and marketing in driving overconsumption. I personally enjoy shopping for clothes online and find myself influenced by ads showcasing trending designs. For example, during the holidays, I purchased five dresses, but I've only worn one so far. Watching the documentary made me reflect on the environmental consequences of my habits, especially when I learned that unsold and discarded clothes often end up polluting the sea. It's heartbreaking to think that even high-quality clothes are thrown away simply because there's too much being produced. This eye-opener made me feel guilty about supporting these wasteful cycles, especially when my purchases don't always meet expectations, like a disappointing dress I bought from Shein.

### **Reflection: How the Documentary Changed My Perspective**

The documentary has significantly shifted my view on online shopping and advertising. I realized how companies use psychological tactics, like offering "one-click buying," to make shopping seamless and addictive. While I used to think of shopping as a harmless source of satisfaction, I now see how it contributes to waste and environmental damage. Companies design products to break quickly or become obsolete, forcing consumers to buy replacements. This manipulation has made me rethink my shopping habits and become more cautious about falling for trends and ads.

### **Application: Personal and Societal Implications**

This issue doesn't just apply to me but reflects society's broader struggles with consumerism. Many people, like me, buy items for the thrill of owning something new without considering the environmental cost. The waste generated from fast fashion, electronics, and packaging harms the planet and disproportionately affects vulnerable communities. Companies need to take responsibility for their environmental impact instead of shifting the burden onto consumers. As individuals, we can also make better choices by buying less, supporting sustainable brands, and repairing items instead of discarding them.

### **Conclusion: The Need for Conscious Consumption**

*Buy Now: The Shopping Conspiracy* serves as a wake-up call to rethink how we shop and consume. Its five key points—Sell More, Waste More, Lie More, Hide More, and Control More—show how corporations prioritize profits over sustainability. For me, the documentary was an eye-opener about the hidden costs of fast fashion and the manipulative power of advertising. Moving forward, I plan to make more mindful choices and advocate for corporate accountability. If we all take small steps to change, we can reduce waste and demand a more sustainable future.

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Let me know if you'd like any adjustments or additions!

Here's a draft for your video essay:

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## **Video Essay: Reflections on *Buy Now: The Shopping Conspiracy***

### **Introduction and Summary**

The documentary *Buy Now: The Shopping Conspiracy* reveals the manipulative tactics used by big corporations to fuel endless consumerism, presenting a framework of five key ideas: Sell More, Waste More, Lie More, Hide More, and Control More. These corporations design products to fail or become obsolete ("planned obsolescence") to push consumers to replace them constantly. They overproduce, especially in industries like fast fashion, with alarming statistics—Shein alone produces 1.3 million designs annually, far exceeding the needs of the population. The amount of production does not match the population's actual demand, creating unnecessary waste. Companies also deceive consumers through greenwashing and obscure the environmental damage caused by waste, often shifting their burden to less developed countries. This cycle of hyper-consumerism has severe implications for the planet and society, urging viewers to rethink their consumption habits.

### **Key Insight: Fast Fashion and Personal Connection**

One theme that resonated deeply with me was fast fashion and online shopping. Like many others, I enjoy buying clothes online because it's convenient and offers trendy designs that fit my taste. I realized, however, that my habits contribute to this cycle of overproduction and waste. For example, I purchased five dresses for the holidays but only wore one, leaving the rest unused. I know it's wrong, but I still feel the need for a new outfit for every occasion—I don't like repeating clothes if I can avoid it. Watching this documentary made me confront the guilt of supporting companies that overproduce, exploit resources, and harm the environment. Additionally, seeing footage of clothes being discarded in the sea was heart-wrenching. It showed that what I thought was just a personal choice has far-reaching consequences, both environmentally and socially.

### **Reflection on Consumer Habits**

The documentary opened my eyes to how companies manipulate consumer habits. From "one-click" buying on platforms like Amazon to the constant flood of ads that spark unnecessary desire, I've been a victim of these strategies. I never considered how my habits contribute to wasteful practices until I learned that 13 million phones are discarded daily. Companies deliberately design products to be hard to repair, ensuring they become waste quickly. This realization has made me more cautious about the products I buy and more skeptical of the convenience that online shopping provides.

### **Broader Societal Implications**

This documentary isn't just about individuals—it's about the system we're all part of. Corporations should bear responsibility for the end-of-life of their products. Instead, they pass that burden to consumers and less developed countries, leading to health and environmental crises. The film highlights the need for collective action to demand stricter regulations and corporate accountability. As consumers, we must also become more conscious of the long-term impact of our choices, especially in a world where convenience often blinds us to the consequences.

### **Conclusion and Call to Action**

*Buy Now: The Shopping Conspiracy* has been an eye-opener for me, exposing how deeply embedded corporate manipulation is in our lives. Its message encourages viewers to rethink their habits, demand transparency from companies, and support sustainable practices. Personally, I'll strive to shop more mindfully, considering the true cost of what I buy—not just the price but its

environmental and ethical implications. Together, we can challenge the culture of hyper-consumerism and advocate for a more sustainable future.

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Feel free to tweak or personalize this further! Let me know if you'd like adjustments.

## Video Essay Script: Buy Now: The Shopping Conspiracy

### Introduction

The Netflix documentary *Buy Now: The Shopping Conspiracy* 😊 delivers a powerful message about the dangers of hyper-consumerism and its impact on the environment. It breaks down the manipulative strategies of corporations into five main tactics: 😊 sell more, waste more, lie more, hide more, and control more. 😊 These methods are designed to keep consumers trapped in a cycle of constant buying, often without realizing the environmental or ethical consequences. This documentary encourages viewers to rethink their shopping habits and demand systemic change.

### Main Message of the Documentary

The film emphasizes that consumer culture is carefully engineered to make us buy excessively. 😊 Corporations use tools like planned obsolescence to shorten product lifespans, targeted advertising to create artificial desires, and greenwashing to mislead consumers about sustainability. 😊 While this benefits companies financially, the consequences for the planet are devastating. 😊 The amounts of waste, from clothing to electronics, far exceed what humanity can handle. The documentary argues that change must start with corporations taking responsibility for their products' entire life cycles.

### Personal Reflection on Fast Fashion

😊 One key theme that resonated with me was fast fashion. 😊 As someone who enjoys online shopping and follows trends, I found this especially eye-opening. I've often purchased clothes impulsively, 😊 like the five dresses I bought for the holiday season but ended up wearing only one. I also have a habit of feeling the need for new clothes for every occasion because I dislike repeating outfits. Watching the documentary made me realize that my habits contribute to a larger problem. The video revealed that SHEIN alone, one of the brands I shop from, produces 1.3 million designs annually, far exceeding what any individual could reasonably need. 😊 Seeing mountains of discarded clothes, including branded ones, being dumped in the ocean left me feeling guilty. This awareness has made me reconsider how my choices align with the unsustainable practices of fast fashion.

### Environmental and Ethical Concerns

The documentary revealed shocking facts about waste. 😊 It was stated that 13 million phones are discarded daily, and 😊 companies often destroy unsold products to protect their brand image. Beyond the environmental impact, these practices have significant societal and community effects. 😊 Materials like plastics and electronics are often shipped to weaker economies, where they pollute the environment and harm local communities. These regions pay the price with health issues caused by exposure to toxic substances like heavy metals and microplastics, leading to cancer, reproductive disorders, and other severe conditions. Additionally, the resources consumed and wasted in overproduction could instead be directed toward addressing critical global needs like poverty or access to clean water. 😊 It's disturbing to think that even recyclable labels often mislead consumers, resulting in products being burned or buried instead of reused. This culture of waste not only damages the planet but also reinforces inequality, making it clear that systemic change is urgently needed to protect both people and the environment.

### Impact on My Perspective

😊 After watching the documentary, I became more conscious of how online advertising influences me. The convenience of one-click buying and tailored ads often leads to impulsive decisions. It's clear



that companies are optimizing every aspect of their platforms to minimize critical thinking during purchases. Recognizing this manipulation, I now want to adopt more intentional shopping habits, focusing on quality over quantity and reducing waste.

## **Conclusion**

*Buy Now: The Shopping Conspiracy* is a wake-up call for all of us. It highlights how deeply embedded consumerism is in our lives and its far-reaching consequences. On a personal level, it made me reflect on my own habits and how they contribute to this unsustainable system. On a societal level, it stresses the need for greater accountability from corporations and a shift toward conscious consumption. This documentary has inspired me to think critically about what I buy and its true cost—not just to my wallet, but to the planet.