

Springboard

into
Comprehension

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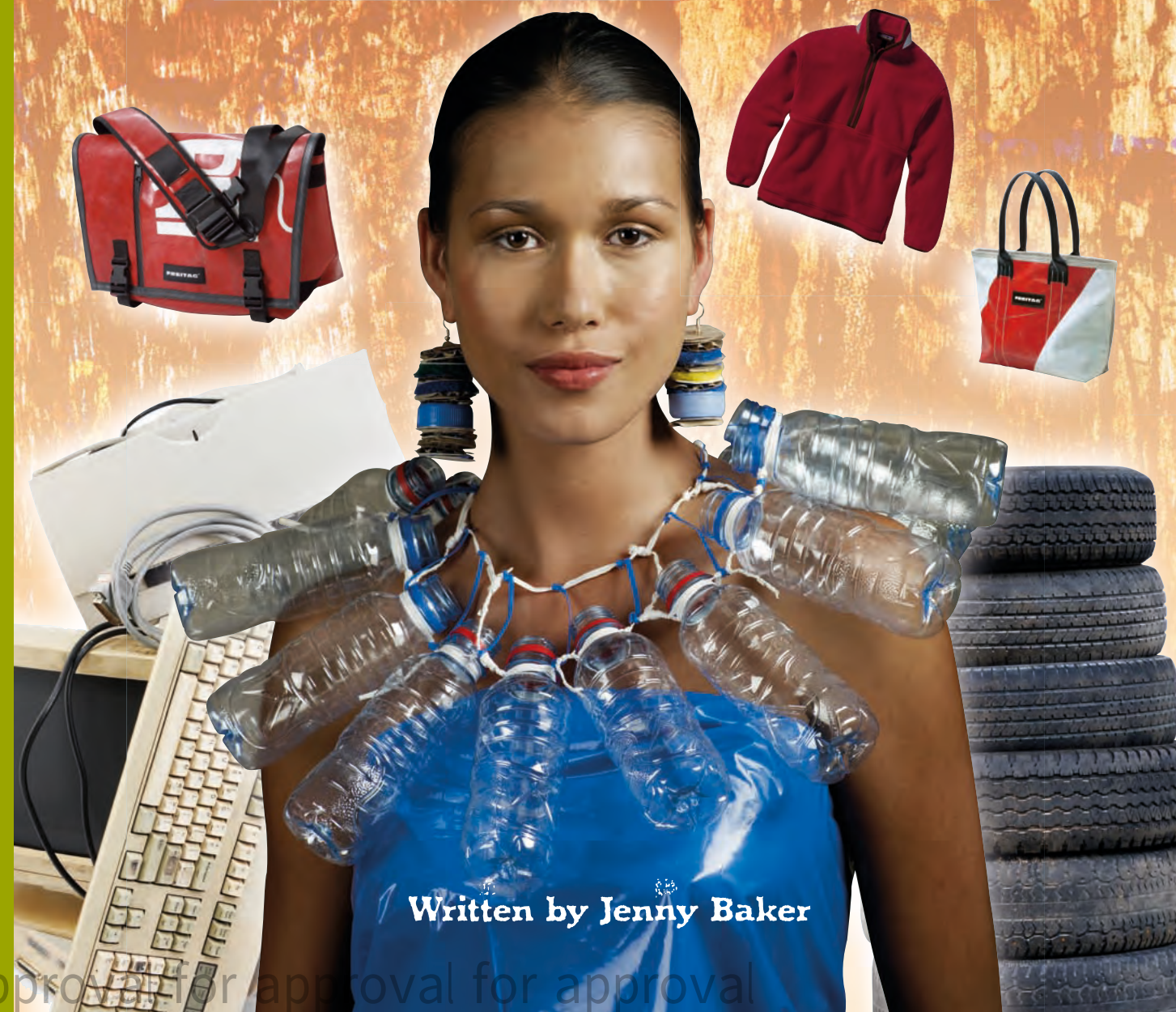
Main Idea	Number 15 Orchard Street Piracy in the Modern Age
Compare and Contrast	Back from the Brink Two Dying Seas
Fact and Opinion	What's the Real Story? On the Ball
Cause and Effect	Use It, Wear It
	Inventions by Women
Bias and Prejudice	My Way or the Highway? Whaling
Figurative Language	The Book of Banjo Paterson Gold in the Hills

RA 11.5–12.5



Explanation

Use It, Wear It



Written by Jenny Baker

Use It, Wear It

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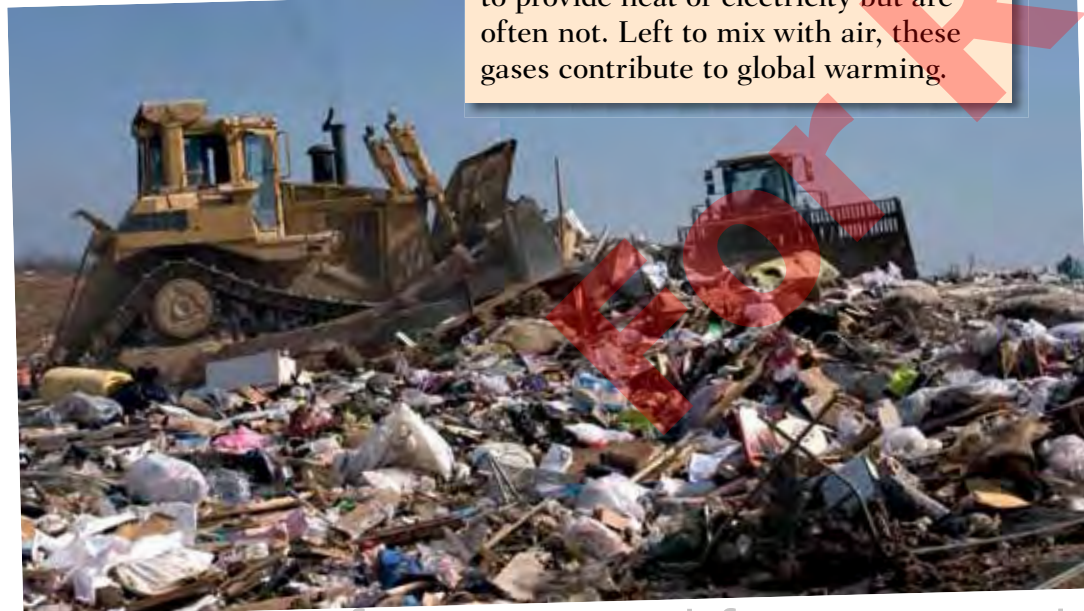
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Introduction

More and more people are creating more and more rubbish. What can be done with these mountains of waste? In the past, people put all their waste in one bin. The waste removers put this waste in large rubbish dumps that eventually got covered with layers of earth, called **landfills**. As a result, huge areas of land are now covered with old landfill sites. The waste often poisons the soil, water, and air around the site. In places where there is not enough space for landfills, waste is transported to special buildings for burning waste, or **incineration plants**. The problems with incineration plants are similar to those of landfills. Toxins may pollute the air and also end up in the water and soil.

Many councils now encourage people to reduce and recycle waste. This reduces the need for landfills and incineration plants. Councils often provide separate bins for recycling, compost, and other waste. Many products now carry a special logo to show people that they are recyclable. Some councils make people who produce more waste pay more for their waste removal. This encourages people to reduce their waste, compost their foodscraps, and recycle their paper, glass, plastic, and metal.

Landfills emit gases that could be used to provide heat or electricity but are often not. Left to mix with air, these gases contribute to global warming.



Most people now know to re-use and recycle. One way to re-use or recycle waste is to make it into wearable items such as clothes, shoes, and accessories such as belts, bags, and jewellery. More and more people buy and use certain wearable items specifically because they are made from waste. Consequently, wearing items made from waste is becoming a fashion trend. Other people use waste to make wearable items because it is cheaper than making items from new materials.

This craftsperson is using material made from recycled newspaper to create fashionable shoes.



Re-used or Recycled Fashion

This new fashion trend has many names, such as repeat chic or eco-chic, but it is most commonly called **eco-fashion**. Eco-fashion includes fashion produced from environmentally friendly new materials. This book, however, looks at eco-fashion produced using re-used or recycled materials.

Fashion is a huge industry. Every year, thousands of tonnes of clothes are produced – much more than people need. At the end of a season, shops often have sales to make space for the new season's clothes. When people buy the latest fashion, they often throw out the clothes that are old or out of fashion. All this causes a lot of waste. Estimates say that over a million tonnes of clothes and fabric end up as waste every year.

Currently between 20 and 25 per cent of clothes and fabric are recycled in countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom. However, more than half of the clothes and fabric that end up in the rubbish could be re-used or recycled.

These models are wearing fashion made from recycled media materials such as magazine covers and music CDs.



There are different ways of reducing this waste. In many places, people can put clothes they no longer need in special bags. They can then drop these bags into big metal containers called clothes banks. Charities collect these bags from the clothes banks and store them in special warehouses called **clothing donation centres**. People can also drop off surplus clothing directly at the clothing donation centres. The charities sell the clothes to make money to help people. Charities also give second-hand clothes directly to people who cannot afford to buy their own clothes.



A typical clothes bank in the United Kingdom



These clothes are being sorted for recycling at a charity warehouse in the UK.

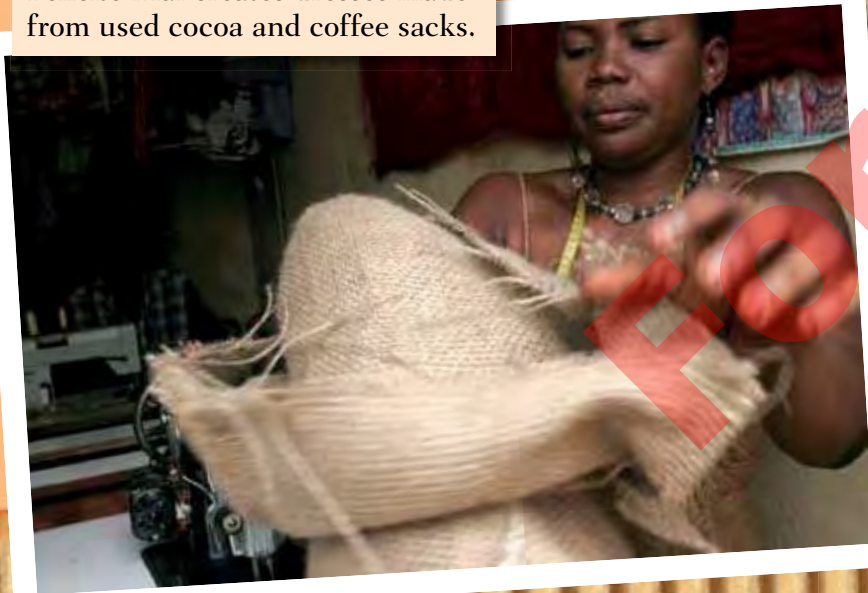
What happens to the clothes depends on the condition they are in. Clothes in good condition can be re-used. They can be sold or given away as second-hand clothes, or even cut up and reworked into new clothes.

The clothes that are in bad condition need to be recycled. Recycling includes an industrial process that makes new materials out of used ones. Wool and cotton can both be shredded to make new fabrics. Some businesses specialize in making cleaning rags or carpets from old clothes.

These models in Côte d'Ivoire are dressed in clothing made from used cocoa sacks.



Ivorian fashion designer Felicite Mai creates dresses made from used cocoa and coffee sacks.



Both re-using and recycling fabrics reduce waste. There are other advantages, too. The materials are not coming all the way from their original source. For example, fewer sheep need to be shorn for their wool. This leads to savings of energy as well as raw materials, or **natural resources**.

Many businesses now specialize in using waste materials to create fashion items. They re-use or recycle materials such as plastic, wood, glass, or metal to create new fashion items. More people have started thinking of ways to create eco-fashion. The outcome is an ever greater range of cool and amazing eco-fashion items.

A model posing in clothes made from bamboo and recycled cashmere

