

# Monkey Business

## and the Cost of Clothing

### Requirements

- Redeeming the Ruin - the art of consumption website
- World map
- Atlas
- Internet access
- Digital camera

VELS Level 6 - Year Levels 8&9

Australians spent around \$14 billion on new clothes in 2006. Production of the cotton, wool and other materials that go into our clothing requires significant resources as does the process of making these materials into clothing. Each new item of clothing requires water, energy and chemicals (such as pesticides and fertilisers) to produce. (ACF Consumption Atlas). To create just one T-shirt takes 1.5kg of harmful chemicals.

Find the photo and artist statement of Mona Ryder's work *Head Hunters, Corporate Body Series* and consider the phrase; clothes make the man or woman. Photograph and build a profile of your favourite piece of clothing and decide what they say about you and environmental sustainability by answering the following.

- Why is this piece of clothing your favourite?
- Find the brand displayed on your favourite piece of clothing.
- Enter the brand name as a search term and find out more about what you wear such as the manufacturer's country of origin.
- Check the label to see which country the clothing was made in.
- Where did you buy the clothing?
- Mark these locations on your map of the world
- How far did the clothing travel before it was bought by you?



Mona Ryder  
*Head hunters, Corporate body series, 2007. Detail.*

Considering artist Simon Horsburgh's *Untitled Monkey Business* statement about gorging on a one time plentiful resource:

- Read the label on the piece of clothing and find out what material it is made from and then find out what natural resource was used to create that material.
- Is the natural resource your favourite piece of clothing is made from derived from a plentiful, renewable, scarce or finite resource? How is that resource harvested?
- What other resources may have been used to make your favourite clothing? Is water one of them?
- What type of energy was used in the making of the piece of clothing? Find out what natural resources were used to create that energy. Include the energy used to transport the clothing to point of sale. What emissions were created as a result of the manufacturing and transportation of the piece of clothing?

### Alternatives:

Considering that cotton crops have some of the highest water demands in Australia. Find out what other plant crops could be used to make clothing?



Simon Horsburgh  
*Untitled monkey business, 2007. Detail.*

## Key Terms:

**Sustainability** is the characteristic of a process or state that can be maintained at a certain level indefinitely.

The term in the **environmental usage**, refers to the potential longevity of vital human ecological support systems, such as the planet's climatic system, systems of agriculture, industry, forestry, and fisheries and human communities in general and the various systems on which they depend.

**Embodied energy** is the quantity of energy required to manufacture and supply to the point of use, a product, material or service.

A **Resource** is a material which is found naturally in the environment and is used for food or energy or to produce other materials.

A **renewable resource** is a natural resource which can be replaced once it is used up, or used over and over again. A finite resource such as oil cannot be replaced once it is used up.

**Raw Materials** are unprocessed substances, or resources used to make new products.

Source: WWW - Wikipedia and Ollie Saves the Planet 07

## Think

- Interview a friend and ask them what your favourite clothes say about you.
- Estimate how long your favourite clothes remain your favourite before you may think of buying new ones?

## Design and Create

- Using a map of the world create a flow chart showing the raw material source and transportation associated with your favourite clothing from point of manufacture to point of sale.

## Learning – I Can...

- Name the raw material source of common forms of clothing
- Explain the difference between renewable and non renewable resources
- Explain what is meant by the term embodied energy.

Useful Websites:  
• [www.rethink.vic.gov.au](http://www.rethink.vic.gov.au)  
• [www.sustainability.vic.gov.au](http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au)  
• [www.Visy.com.au](http://www.Visy.com.au)  
• [www.acfonline.org.au](http://www.acfonline.org.au)  
See ACF Consumption Atlas

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Above  
**Julie Shiels**  
*Sunday best – afterlife*, 2007  
Reproduced courtesy of the artist



Above  
**Giuseppe Romeo**  
*Never the less*, 2006  
Reproduced courtesy of the artist  
Photographer: Elio Rulli



Above  
**Glenys Hodgeman**  
*Gift of art, Social ties*, 2007  
Reproduced courtesy of the artist, Helen Gory Galerie, Melbourne and Felicity Johnston Gallery, Perth  
Photographer: Glenys Hodgeman



Above and right  
**Mona Ryder**  
*Head hunters, Corporate body series*, 2007  
Reproduced courtesy of the artist  
Photographer: Richard Glover



Above  
**Simon Horsburgh**  
*Untitled monkey business*, 2007  
Reproduced courtesy of the artist

