

The Story of Stuff worksheet

Watch the video download **“The Story of Stuff”** with Annie Leonard and answer the following questions to check your listening and understanding:

1. Copy the sketches of the 5 stages of the materials economy

Extraction	Production	Distribution	Consumption	Disposal

2. How much of our natural resources have been trashed in the last few decades?

3. How many planets are needed to support current rates of consumption in the US and Australia?

4. How many trees are being lost in the Amazon each minute?

5. What is being added to the production system that is created dangerous waste products?

6. What food is at the top of the food chain and threatening the health of future generations?

7. What is meant by “externalising costs of production”?

8 Who is paying for the real cost of cheap electronic equipment (i.e. the \$4.99 radio)? List three groups at least.

9a. How much material is still in the system after 6 months? _____%.

9b. Where have the remaining materials gone?

10. When did the modern consumer economy come into being? Why?

This project was funded by the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

A Victorian Government initiative



11. According to Annie Leonard, what are some of the social and community interests being neglected while we are busy consuming “stuff”?

12. What do these terms mean? Give an example of each.

- “planned obsolescence” _____

For example _____

- “perceived obsolescence” _____

For example _____

13a. What is happening to the levels of measured happiness?

13b. What reasons are given?

14. Draw or summarise the steps in the treadmill.

15. One solution which many countries use to deal with increasing waste is to burn it. What problem is associated with burning rubbish?

16. How does recycling help?

17. Why is recycling not enough? (Clue: How many rubbish bins are needed to produce one bin of recycled materials?)