



Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

The Life of a T-Shirt

An activity of "Why going around in circles is the way forward"

The article, "Why going around in circles is the way forward" (page 11, *What's Up* April 2022) explains the circular economy. In that context, have you wondered about the life cycle of everyday objects — like your T-shirt? If you were to divide a T-shirt's life cycle into five stages, what would happen at each stage? Let's find out!

Step 1: Watch this YouTube video.

➤ https://youtu.be/BiSYoeqb_VY

The life cycle of a t-shirt by Angel Chang (2017) TED-Ed

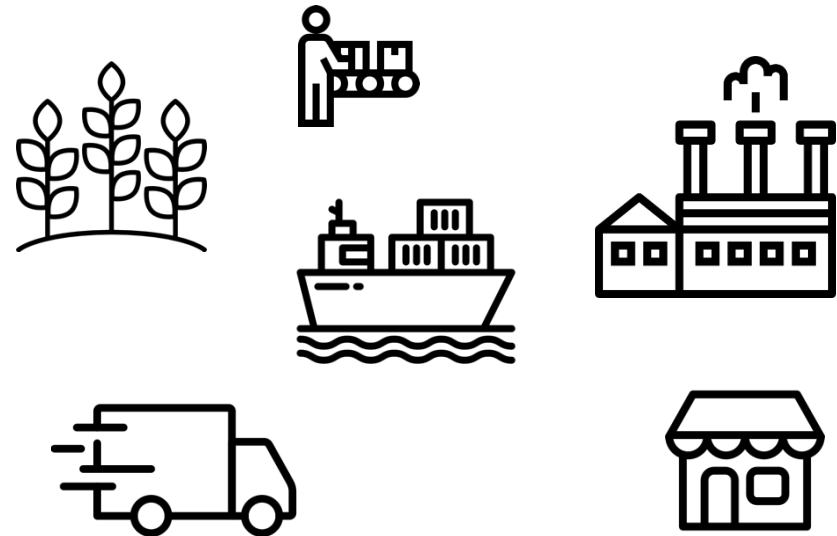
Step 2: In small groups, discuss the video's key points. Fill in the table on Page 2. Here are some tips to help you with your discussion.

Materials used: What are the materials used?

Consider not just the T-shirt, but also the machines and everything else that is required.

Energy used: How are the machines powered? What about the factories, vehicles, ships, and workers?

Waste and emissions: What happens to the waste? What is released into the environment?



Step 3: On your own, answer the reflection questions on Page 3.

STEP 2: Life Cycle of a (Plain)* T-Shirt

	1. Material extraction	2. Manufacturing	3. Packaging and transport	4. Use	5. End of life (thrown away)
Materials used					
Energy used					
Waste and emissions					

*Imagine how much more goes into making a T-shirt that has buttons, zippers, and other accessories!



Step 3: Reflection

1. Think of your favourite T-shirt. How much did you pay for it?

2. Now that you know what goes into making a T-shirt, do you think it was a reasonable price? Why or why not?

3. What do you think is a reasonable price for a T-shirt? Why?

4. How can you take better care of your T-shirt to extend its life?

5. When your T-shirt cannot be worn any longer, what can you do with it to extend its life before throwing it away?

6. How could the T-shirt be redesigned or created differently to reduce its negative impacts?

7. As a consumer, what could you do to make better choices?

