



ACTIVITY

PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS

Time: 180-240 minutes

Days of Implementation: 3-4 days

Grade Level: Lower Secondary

Designed by: Lucía Vázquez

Alignment with STEAM subjects

Science and technology: Understanding decarbonization, the impact of the exploitation of natural resources, and how this is significantly linked to climate change.

Engineering: Designing and constructing working models.

Arts: Discussing artistic images and designing presentation materials.

Mathematics: Calculating the carbon footprint.

Related or achieved SDGs

- SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production: Promotes awareness on alternative methods of producing and consuming goods
- SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals: Fosters teamwork, collaboration, and analysis on cultures, identities, societies, and how to work together.

Objectives

By the end of the class, students will be able to:

- Explore how consumer culture influences our sense of identity.
- Understand the principles of responsible consumption.
- Design a creative solution or product that promotes sustainable production and consumption in their community.
- Test, analyze, and refine prototypes to improve efficiency.
- Present their findings and reflect on the real-world applications of their projects.

Materials Needed

- Research tools (tablets, books, printed career sheets)
- Cardboard, tape, glue, blueprint templates
- Padlet, Google Forms for research sharing

Lesson Plan

Introduction

Our buying choices and consumption patterns often shape our identities and lifestyles. However, historically, identity was closely related to lifestyles like hunting and gathering, or various cultural traditions. In this activity, students discover that responsible consumption goes beyond just products; it includes the values and cultures that shape society.

1. Inquiry & Exploration

Begin by displaying a thought-provoking image, such as [Barbara Kruger's *I Shop, therefore I Am*, 1987](#). Encourage students to reflect on how our identities are often defined by what we buy and consume.

Discussion Questions:

- Ask the students:
 - What is good and bad about our society, and what would you change?
 - What does the sentence '*I shop, therefore I am*' mean to you?

2. Investigation & Research

- Facilitate student investigation of responsible consumption and production worldwide. Some sources to start with:
- [UN SDG Website](#): Explore the SDG12 targets and discuss actions students can take as consumers.
- [SDG Index](#): Use the interactive SDG map to compare the progress of different countries on SDG12, including exploring a specific country's profile.
- [Carbon Footprint Calculator](#): Ask students to calculate their carbon footprint or that of the school.
- Look for examples of how everyday items—from clothes and cars to electronics—are created through processes that heavily rely on fossil fuels, contributing to climate change.

Defining the Challenge:

- Divide the students into small groups.
- Task them with brainstorming creative ideas, products, or actions that could encourage responsible consumption and production. These could be simple daily actions (e.g., using less plastic, reducing waste) to more comprehensive projects (e.g., designing a waste management strategy or organizing a school-wide awareness campaign)
- Examples of challenges to spark student discussion include: a lack of waste separation; food waste in the school cafeteria; excessive use of processed snacks that generate waste; or insufficient water refill stations to reduce plastic bottle use.

3. Implementation & Design

- Have the students select one idea to develop further in order to encourage responsible consumption and production.
- Then, define clear roles and responsibilities within their groups.

Developing an Action Plan:

- Each group should create a step-by-step action plan outlining the implementation phases to advance their idea, ensuring that responsible consumption and production are achieved within the school (e.g., reducing plastic waste in the school). This action plan should include specific tasks for each group member, as well as a timeline for prototyping and testing the idea.
- Here is an example of an action plan. The **objective is to develop a school-based program that promotes reusable alternatives to reduce plastic consumption.**

Week	Phase	Task	Person in charge
1	Research and Planning	Conduct a survey at the school to investigate plastic consumption and assess how/if the school community is prepared to use reusable products.	
2	Research and Planning	Identify and work together with local suppliers to find affordable reusable alternatives.	
3-4	Design and Development	Design and develop either a poster or commercial to raise awareness of the benefits of reducing single-use plastics.	
5	Design and Development	Analyze the data and research collected in the previous steps to design the implementation of a school-based program that reduces consumption.	
6-7	Implementation	Via the school-based program, conduct workshops and seminars that educate students on the importance of practicing sustainable consumption.	
8-10	Evaluation	Evaluate the project's impact on reducing single-use plastic consumption across the school and report findings to the class, peers, and/or the school leadership.	

4. Testing & Reflection

Students can design a product, create an informational campaign, or plan an event depending on the chosen idea. Afterward, students present their results back to their class, reflection on the outcomes of the project and on what they have learned.

Reflection Questions: (students ask themselves)

- What worked well?
- What challenges did you face?
- How could this prototype be used in real life?
- How is it connected to SDG 12 and SDG 17?

Criteria

- Prototype or Solution Functionality (20%)
- Stating the Correctly Achieved or Related SDGs (20%)
- Research and Explanation (20%)
- Teamwork and Collaboration (20%)
- Presentation Skills (20%)

Reflection

- Encourage students to reflect on how exploring responsible consumption has influenced their understanding of identity and society.
- Discuss how SDG12 connects to other SDGs:
 - Is it possible to combat climate change without sustainable consumption?
 - How do responsible consumption practices relate to protecting our natural resources?