

Unit 8

The Hidden Costs of Our Clothing

Used Clothing Causing Problems

Every year, people in the United Kingdom donate their old clothes, shoes, and accessories to different charities. What may be surprising to some is that only a small amount of these items actually end up being sold in second-hand stores in the UK. In fact, according to Oxfam, over 70 percent of all the clothing that is donated around the world ends up in Africa.

In the early 1980s, many countries in Africa had their own textile industries, so clothes were made and sold locally. However, things changed after the World Bank made it easier for many African countries to import used clothing. This soon led to a growing demand for used Western clothing, which was seen to be more fashionable and of better quality.

From then on, the African country of Kenya imported tons of used clothing and accessories every year, and a large number of them actually comes from charities that have sold these items to textile merchants. The textile merchants, in turn, sell containers full of used clothing to sellers in Kenya, who resell these items in second-hand clothes markets and stores in the country's bigger cities. Many of these sellers are able to make a comfortable living, with some hiring full-time employees or just casual workers to help unload and sort through the clothing.

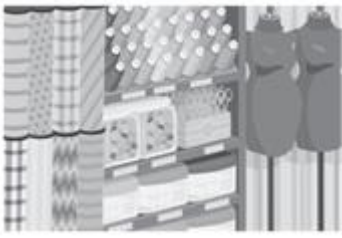



In 2015, government officials in east African countries like Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, however, started to consider putting a ban into place, so that it will no longer be possible to import foreign second-hand clothing. They hope by doing this, they will be able to **revitalize** the local textile industries in their countries step by step.

Choose the best answer to each question.

- _____ 1. Which of the following statements is TRUE?
- (A) Many African countries import clothing because they have no local textile factories.
 - (B) British people give away used clothes to charities with the intentions of helping the less fortunate.
 - (C) Less than one-third of the second-hand clothes go to fashion markets.
 - (D) African people like recycled clothes since they put great emphasis on environmental protection.
- _____ 2. Why is Western clothing so popular in Africa?
- (A) It is stylish and cheap.
 - (B) It is cheap and colorful.
 - (C) It is free and trendy.
 - (D) It is exotic and expensive.
- _____ 3. What does the word “**revitalize**” in the fourth paragraph probably mean?
- (A) Review.
 - (B) Replace.
 - (C) Repay.
 - (D) Restore.
- _____ 4. What can we infer from the passage?
- (A) Second-hand clothes may help create jobs in Kenya.
 - (B) Western people donate clothes for poor people to sell in containers.
 - (C) African people like to do business with Western people very much.
 - (D) Some African countries reject foreign clothes, for there's no place to store them.
- _____ 5. What's the purpose of this passage?
- (A) To warn western people about the potential danger of fast fashion.
 - (B) To inform people of the fact that donating used clothes to charities may not be a smart move.
 - (C) To make public the fact that old clothes are banned in East African countries.
 - (D) To encourage western people to invest in fashion markets in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania.

According to the passage, please put the four pictures of how used clothes end up in the

market in the right order.

(A)		(B)	
(C)		(D)	

_____ → _____ → _____ → _____