

# Section 1

## #1: Opening paragraph

### Strengths:

- Your opening creates a clear picture that readers can relate to by describing a common shopping experience
- The transition from the shopping scene to the main message works well, building curiosity about the "real price"

**Lack of Depth in Hook** → Your opening successfully draws readers in with a relatable scenario, but it could be strengthened by adding more specific details about why cheap clothing appeals to shoppers. Phrases like "It looks fashionable, fits perfectly, and seems like a great deal" tell us the shirt is appealing, but don't explore the emotional pull or the reasons why people repeatedly make these purchases despite potentially knowing the consequences. Consider expanding on the psychological or economic factors that make fast fashion so tempting.

**Exemplar:** *You might walk into a store or browse online and spot a trendy shirt for just ten dollars—less than the cost of lunch. It looks fashionable, fits perfectly, and promises to keep you on-trend without emptying your wallet. For many families watching their budgets, this feels like smart shopping.*

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## #2: Body paragraphs (environmental and human cost)

### Strengths:

- Your use of concrete statistics, such as the water consumption figure, helps readers understand the scale of the problem
- The connection between environmental damage and human suffering shows you understand how these issues relate to each other

**Underdeveloped Cause-and-Effect Connections** → Whilst you present important information about water consumption and worker exploitation, your writing sometimes lists facts without fully explaining how one problem leads to another. For example, you mention that "dyes and chemicals used in textile production often flow into rivers" and that these pollute ecosystems, but you don't explain what happens next to the communities or how this pollution affects their daily lives. Similarly, when discussing workers in developing countries, you state they "are trapped in cycles of poverty" but don't clarify how low wages specifically prevent them from improving their situations.

**Exemplar:** *These labourers often work long hours with little rest just to meet the world's growing demand for cheap, trendy clothing. Because their wages barely cover basic needs like food and shelter, they cannot afford to save money, access education, or move to safer employment—keeping them locked in poverty even as they work constantly.*

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### #3: Consumer behaviour paragraph and conclusion

#### Strengths:

- Your statistic about people buying 60% more clothing demonstrates changing shopping habits clearly
- The solutions you suggest are practical and achievable for everyday readers

**Limited Exploration of Consumer Responsibility** → Your writing identifies that "consumers tend to buy more than they actually need" and offers solutions, but it doesn't fully examine why this behaviour continues or what makes change difficult. The jump from stating the problem to suggesting solutions feels sudden because you haven't explored the barriers people face when trying to shop more sustainably—such as higher costs, limited availability, or social pressure to keep up with trends. Your conclusion's statement that "cheap clothes may seem like a bargain, but the true cost is far greater than ten dollars" effectively summarises your main point, but it could be more powerful if it acknowledged the complex choices consumers face.

**Exemplar:** *To reduce this hidden cost, we can make small but meaningful changes—buying fewer, higher-quality pieces, supporting sustainable brands, or shopping secondhand. Whilst these choices may require spending more initially or taking extra time to find options, they ultimately help protect both people and the planet. Even small shifts in our shopping habits can create real change.*

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■ Your piece presents an important topic with clear organisation and relevant evidence. The structure follows a logical path from introducing the problem to explaining its impacts and offering solutions. However, your writing would benefit from deeper exploration of the connections between ideas. Additionally, try developing the "why" behind the facts you present—not just what happens, but how and why it matters to real people. Your paragraphs sometimes feel like separate blocks of information rather than a flowing argument. Work on creating stronger bridges between your environmental discussion and your human rights discussion, showing readers how these problems feed into each other. The paragraph beginning with "Because these items are inexpensive" could also be expanded to explore why disposal happens so quickly and what alternatives exist for clothing that's no longer wanted.

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## Section 2

### #1 The Hidden Cost of Cheap Clothes

You might walk into a store or browse online and spot a trendy shirt for just ten dollars. It looks fashionable, fits perfectly, and seems like a great deal. Without thinking twice, you add it to your cart just like millions of other shoppers around the world. But the truth is, that shirt costs far more than its price tag suggests. The real price is paid by the environment and by the people who make it.

#2 The fashion industry is one of the most resource-intensive industries on the planet. It consumes vast amounts of water and energy to produce the clothing we wear. In fact, it is the second-largest consumer of water globally, and producing a single cotton T-shirt can require enough water to meet one person's drinking needs for two and a half years. Dyes and chemicals used in textile production often flow into rivers, polluting ecosystems and harming communities that depend on those water sources.

Beyond environmental damage, there's also a human cost. Many fast fashion brands rely on factories in developing countries where workers are paid extremely low wages and endure unsafe conditions. These ~~laborers~~ [labourers] often work long hours with little rest just to meet the world's growing demand for cheap, trendy clothing. ~~While~~ [Whilst] consumers in wealthier nations enjoy affordable fashion, the people making the clothes are trapped in cycles of poverty.

#3 Because these items are inexpensive, consumers tend to buy more than they actually need. The average person today buys 60% more clothing than 15 years ago but keeps each item for only half as long. Most of these garments end up in landfills or are burned, creating even more pollution.

To reduce this hidden cost, we can make small but meaningful changes—buying fewer, higher-quality pieces, supporting sustainable brands, or shopping secondhand. When we choose to value quality over quantity, we help protect both people and the planet. Cheap clothes may seem like a bargain, but the true cost is far greater than ten dollars.