



Don't Sweat It!



Dear Educator,

High school is an exhilarating time, filled with varied experiences that shape students' values, perceptions, and preferences as they transition into adults. Cotton Incorporated and the curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired have provided this free program to support this transition with ELA and FCS standards-based activities that highlight how cotton can help students make smart choices as they face situations like preparing for a job interview or launching an independent life after graduation.

Share: We hope that you will share this program with other grade 9-12 teachers at your school.

Tell us: Let us know your opinion of the program at ymiclassroom.com/feedback-dontswheatit.

We look forward to your comments and suggestions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor-in-Chief
Young Minds Inspired



Questions? Contact YMI toll-free at 1-800-859-8005 or by e-mail at feedback@ymiclassroom.com.

Target Audience

Grades 9-12

Program Components

- this teacher's guide
- three reproducible activity sheets
- 17" x 22" poster
- a reply card

Additional resources available at ymiclassroom.com/dontswheatit:

- bonus activity
- interactive digital quiz
- online feedback form
- curriculum standards

Concepts and Skills

Planning and preparation

Life skills

Self-care

Sustainability

Reading informational text

Communication

Problem-solving

How to Use This Program

Download, photocopy, and distribute the activity sheets for students and display the poster in your classroom. Distribute coins for students to use with Activity 1.

Activity

1 PREPARE FOR NOW: Game On

Part 1: Have students play this brief game in teams of two or three to help them think about actions and items that can help prepare them to navigate their everyday situations comfortably and successfully.

Part 2: Unlike real life, advancing in the board game is based entirely on luck. Students have more influence over how they progress toward success in their day-to-day life than they might think.

Draw a long vertical line on the whiteboard to create two columns labeled *In My Control* and *Not in My Control*. Ask students to name experiences from the game that represent each type of situation and write them in the appropriate column. Then discuss how focus and preparation in their personal life and school life can help create a greater chance of success.

Activity

2 PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE: Interview Countdown

Part 1: Ask students to share any experience that they might have had with job interviews and how they prepared. Next, distribute the activity sheet and have students work in teams or individually to determine which statements are true or false. Share the answers below with the class. Discuss how keeping cool — in mind and body — can help set up students for success.

Answers:

- F.** Reviewing the company and staff is smart, but staying up late to do it isn't. A good night's sleep under airy cotton sheets is more likely to pay off.
- T.** Having good questions to ask can help you stay focused and demonstrate your interest in the company.
- T.** Cotton can be easier to wash and care for than other fabrics.
- F.** Double-check your ringer's volume to be sure it's on so you don't oversleep.
- T.** Having a detail-oriented friend review the résumé as well is another smart idea.
- F.** For the most comfortable night's sleep, go with cotton for your sheets *and* your pajamas.

- F.** Having the basics down is, well, basic. Review and master answers to questions like why you want the internship or job.
- T.** The weather or the company's office could be chilly. For ultimate comfort, bring a blazer or sweater that's soft, breathable cotton.
- F.** A pen is another basic. You'll want to be ready if you need to sign something (maybe an offer!).
- T.** Light exercise can help clear your head before sleep.

Part 2: Have students complete this section about personal challenges they've overcome, lessons learned, and how they can apply their experiences to the future. Reconvene and ask students:

- *What's exciting about challenges? What's scary about them?*
- *Why does keeping your cool matter?*
- *How would you define smart preparation? In what ways does it help move you through challenges toward success?*

Activity

3 PREPARE TO MAKE A CHOICE: A Whole New World

Life after graduation is an exciting time — a time for students to make their own decisions about how they want to "adult." From what pillowcases to bring to their dorm rooms or first apartments to supplies for their cars, to dressing well and comfortably, there are many aspects to consider as students move into their next chapter.

Distribute the activity sheet and allow students to complete Parts 1-3. Then open a discussion about the experience using these questions as prompts:

- *What are the pros and cons (or benefits and drawbacks) of embracing one mindset vs. embracing a few?*
- *What role does thoughtful research play in decision-making?*

Don't Sweat It! Digital Quiz

Challenge your students to this digital quiz and have them test their knowledge about fabrics, apparel, cotton, and more! See ymiclassroom.com/dontswheatit and let the fun begin!

Resources

- thefabricofourlives.com
- cottoninc.com/about-cotton/pressroom/did-you-know
- bluejeansgogreen.org
- ymiclassroom.com/dontswheatit

ACTIVITY 1

Prepare for Now: Game On



REPRODUCIBLE MASTER

Part 1: Play the game below. Use a small piece of paper with your initials on it as a game piece. Take turns flipping a coin to move along the board, advancing one space for heads, two spaces for tails. Tally your points along the way. Keep playing until someone reaches the final space and ends the game.



Start

<p>Left lacrosse equipment on bus -1</p>	<p>Chose synthetic gym towel -1</p>	<p>Created a quiet homework space +1</p>
<p>Studied and aced midterm A+ +1</p>		<p>Food delivery app won't let you log in -1</p>
<p>Set morning alarm +1</p>	<p>Forgot chem book in locker -1</p>	<p>Wore cool, cotton t-shirt at play auditions +1</p>
		<p>Changed into breathable cotton socks +1</p>
		<p>Ate breakfast +1</p>
<p>Recycled old jeans with the Blue Jeans Go Green™ program +1</p>	<p>Went to a career day event +1</p>	<p>Learned how to do laundry +1</p>
		<p>Made bed with cotton sheets +1</p>
		<p>Skipped breakfast -1</p>
<p>Slept through an internship interview -1</p>		
<p>Had all 5 food groups for dinner +1</p>	<p>Forgot water bottle for soccer practice -1</p>	<p>Studied with friends for finals +1</p>
		<p>Forgot to charge laptop -1</p>
		<p>Chose natural cotton pajamas +1</p>



Finish

Part 2: Once the game ends, answer the questions below on the back of this sheet.

- Did this game reflect the way high school really works? Why or why not?
- Which experiences named in the game could you control? Which are out of your control and left to luck?
- What are some other experiences that you could control by smart preparation?



Learn how cotton can help you prepare for everyday challenges at thefabricofourlives.com/the-benefits-of-cotton.



ACTIVITY 2

Prepare for the Future: Interview Countdown



REPRODUCIBLE MASTER

Job and internship interviews can seem scary. But with the right attitude and preparation, they can also be exciting.

Part 1: The Night Before

Read each statement below. Write "T" in the box for true statements and "F" for false ones.

1. Staying up late to cram on the company and staff that's interviewing me will pay off.
2. Preparing 3 or 4 thoughtful questions about the company will anchor me during the interview.
3. Choosing cotton for my interview clothes means I can wash them tonight and know they will be fresh for the interview tomorrow.
4. The ringer on my phone is always at a good volume. No need to check that it's loud enough when I set my alarm.
5. I should take another look at my résumé to make sure it does not have any typos.
6. The pajamas I wear to bed aren't cotton. But my sheets are, so I'll still stay cool and dry.
7. Prepping myself on basic questions the interviewers might ask is old-school.
8. I should bring a blazer or a lightweight sweater to the interview.
9. The world is 100% digital. I won't need to bring a pen.
10. Taking a short walk or doing some easy stretches before bed is a good plan.



Part 2: The Day Of

Interviewing is a challenge that pushes us to present ourselves at our best. But you've faced challenges before, and no doubt took away lessons you can apply to interviewing. Give yourself a private pep talk to center yourself before the interview. Identify a challenge and then answer the prompts on the back of this sheet. Once done, write a paragraph that incorporates your answers and describes how you tackled the challenge.

The challenge _____

- The way I felt before the challenge
- The steps I took to prepare for the challenge
- The way I felt after it was over
- The most important lesson I took away

Cotton is easier to care for than other fabrics, so let your washing machine save you the time and cost of dry cleaning before you go for that interview.





ACTIVITY 3

Prepare to Make a Choice: A Whole New World



REPRODUCIBLE MASTER

Part 1: Read these statements, then circle the mindset that best applies to you.



Creative

I like to incorporate my own designs into my space.



Practical

I want what makes sense in the long run.



Ecological

I consider the environment in most or all of my decision-making.



No-Hassle

I gravitate to what's simplest.

Part 2: Think about your future. Imagine it's a few years from now. Review each set of possible choices for your dorm room or apartment, car, and wardrobe. What's your mindset? Check your choice for each pair.



Part 3: Complete the prompts below or on another sheet of paper.

Was there a mindset that you embraced entirely, or was there crossover between categories?

If none of the mindsets or choices appeal to you, give examples of what would.

1. Breathable cotton sheets and towels

Colorful synthetic sheets and towels

2. Lots of edgy car bumper stickers

No car bumper stickers

3. Handmade wall art

Store-bought wall art

4. New furniture

Thrift-store furniture

5. A warm, durable cotton blanket for the car trunk (just in case)

No blanket in the car trunk

6. Consignment-store vintage cotton apparel

Trendy fast fashion



Is sustainability important to you? Remember: Cotton used in textiles is natural. It starts its life on a farm.



Don't Sweat It!

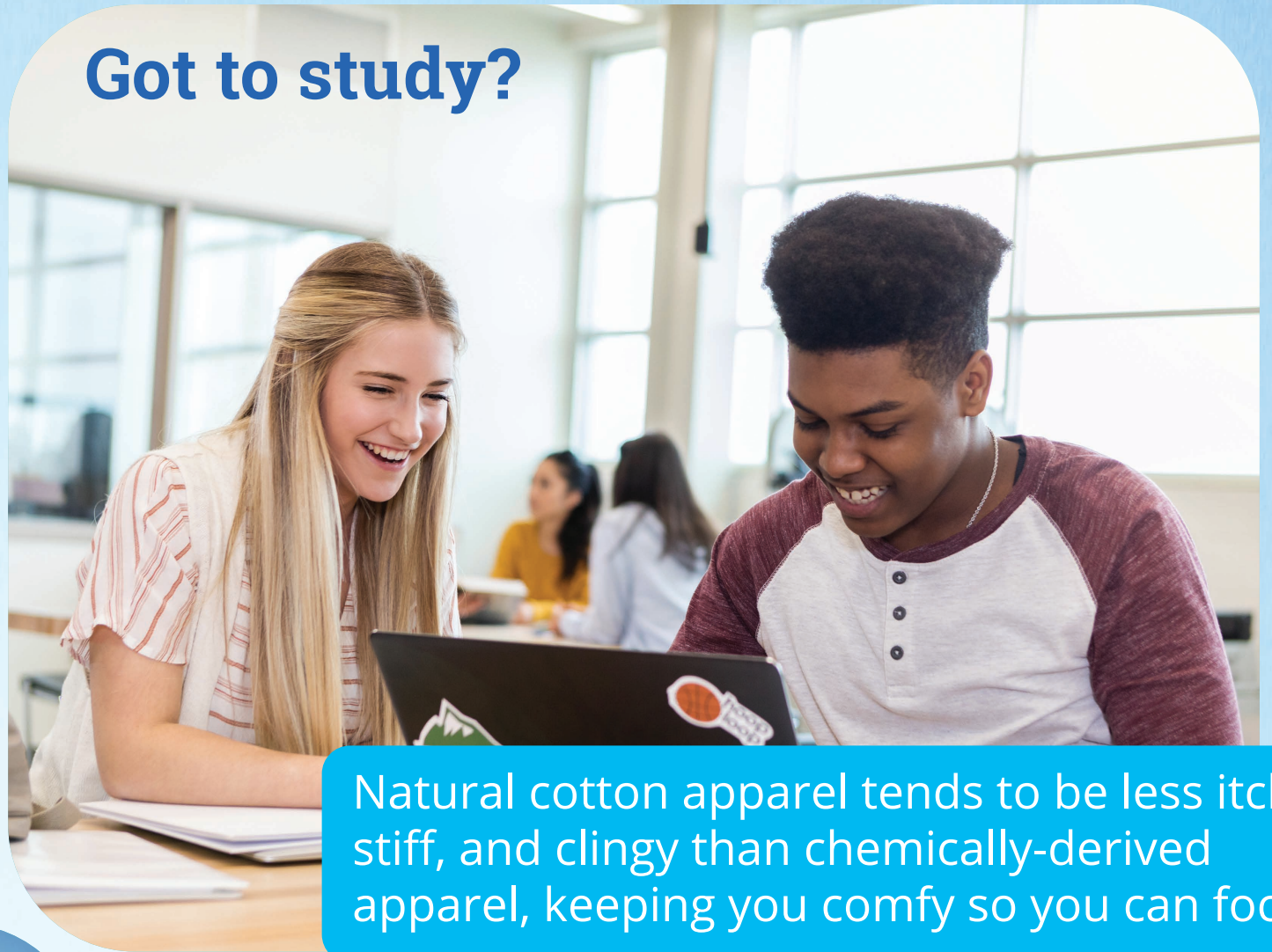
Advantage → Cotton. Check out the ways cotton can help you keep your cool.

Got to get a good night's sleep?



Cotton sheets are soft and breathable, keeping you cool and letting you dream in peace so you wake up refreshed.

Got to study?



Natural cotton apparel tends to be less itchy, stiff, and clingy than chemically-derived apparel, keeping you comfy so you can focus.

Got practice?



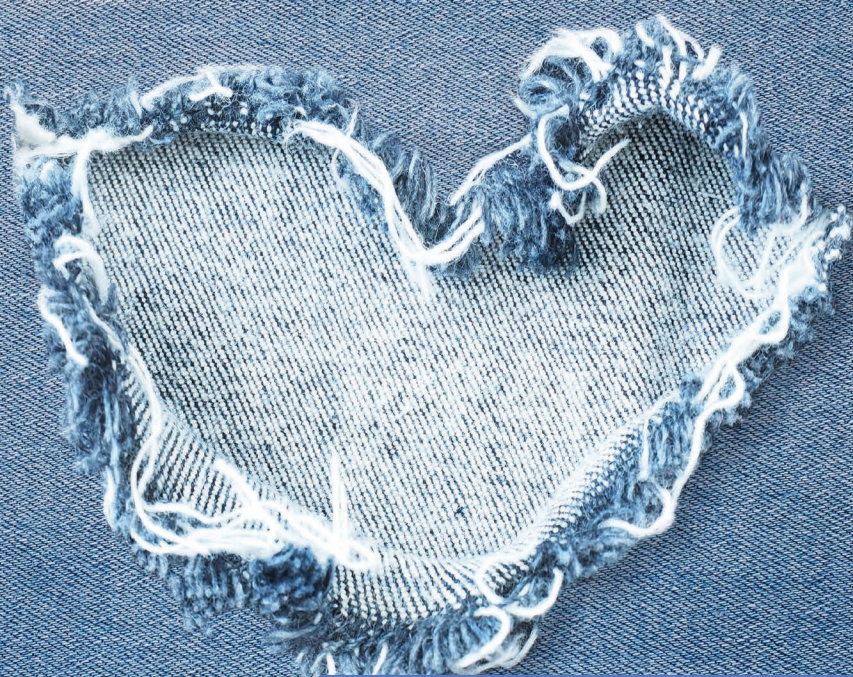
Cotton lets out odors more easily than other fabrics. Goodbye smelly workout clothes!

Got an interview?



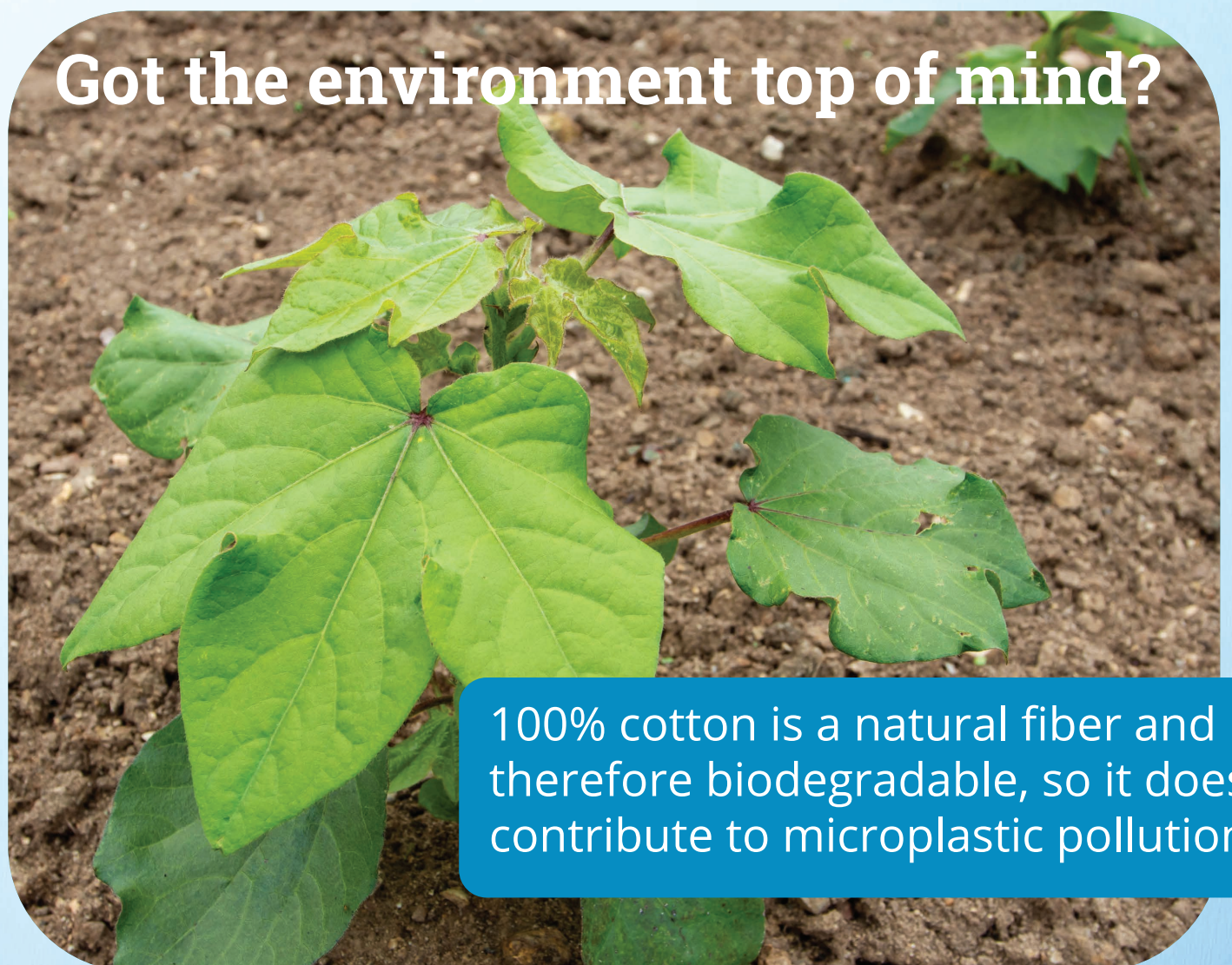
Cotton breathes better than oil-based synthetic fabrics, so you'll stay cool — even during the toughest questions.

Got worn-out jeans?



Recycle them with the Blue Jeans Go Green™ program. Learn more at bluejeansgogreen.org.

Got the environment top of mind?



100% cotton is a natural fiber and therefore biodegradable, so it does not contribute to microplastic pollution.



BONUS ACTIVITY Prepare for Success During and After High School



REPRODUCIBLE MASTER



Part 1: Then and Now

A lot of growing up can happen in four years, especially during your teenage years. Think back to the person you were freshman year and then think about the person you are now. Review the attributes below and circle those that best describe you at each stage.



Freshman Year

- ambitious shy creative friendly
- helpful curious serious
- hesitant self-assured focused



Senior Year

- ambitious shy creative friendly
- helpful curious serious
- hesitant self-assured focused

Part 2: Now and the Future

Complete the prompts below.

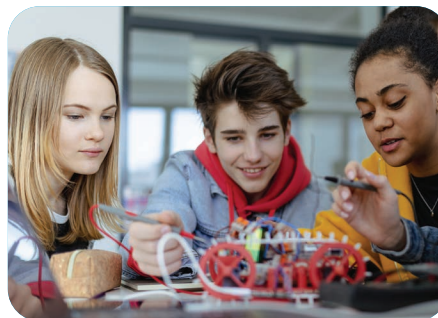
Which attributes did you possess as both a freshman and a senior?



What attributes would you add to the list?

How did you define success four years ago vs. now?

Which attributes are most likely to guide you toward your definition of success?



Why? _____

Learn how cotton can help you prepare for life's adventures at thefabricofourlives.com/the-benefits-of-cotton.

