

**ST. JOSEPH’S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE-27**

**END SEMESTER EXAMINATION**

**IV SEMESTER BSc/BA/BSW/BCom/BBA/BVC/BCA AUGUST–2022**

**GE 418 - General English (Regular Paper)**

**Time: 2 ½ hours Max. Marks: 70**

**THIS PAPER CONTAINS FOUR PRINTED SHEETS**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. This question paper is for the students who have taken the General English Regular course.
2. Please adhere to the word limit.
3. You are allowed to use a dictionary during the exam.
4. **Read the following excerpt from *Can fashion ever be sustainable?* by Snezhina Piskova.**

“For years I was obsessed with buying clothes,” says Snezhina Piskova. “I would buy 10 pairs of very cheap jeans just for the sake of having more diversity in my wardrobe for a low price, even though I ended up wearing only two or three of them.”

When it comes to resisting the lure of fashion, Piskova faces a tougher challenge than most. As a copywriter for a company in the fashion industry she’s surrounded by fashionistas. And it’s been easy to go along with the tide. But conversations about the climate crisis made Piskova consider the impact that the industry and her own shopping habits were having.

Biocouture, or fashion made from more environmentally sustainable materials, is increasingly big business. Some companies are looking to use waste from [wood](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-46598387), [fruit](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-41570540) and other natural materials to create their textiles. Others are trying alternative ways of dyeing their fabrics or searching for materials that biodegrade more easily once thrown away.

But the carbon footprint of our clothing can also be reduced in other ways, too. The way we shop has a big impact. Some research has suggested that online shopping can have a [lower carbon footprint](https://ctl.mit.edu/sites/default/files/library/public/Dimitri-Weideli-Environmental-Analysis-of-US-Online-Shopping_0.pdf) than [travelling to traditional shops](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1361920919302639#b0160) to buy products, particularly if consumers live far away. But the rise of online shopping has also driven changes in consumer behaviour, contributing to a fast fashion culture where consumers buy more than they need, have it delivered to their door and then [return a large proportion of their purchases](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-46279638) after trying them on.

Piskova has tried to move away from the fast fashion culture herself by learning to appreciate what she already has rather than what she could have. But detaching herself from a fashion-obsessed mindset hasn’t been easy. To help, Piskova resists going to places where she feels pressure to consume, such as shopping malls. She also periodically swaps clothes with her friends, which not only allows them to refresh their own wardrobes but also helps them feel closer to each other. And she has also learned to embrace small blemishes on her clothes, rather than seeing these as an excuse to buy more.

“People are so careful with their clothes, to not have any scratches on them or have any holes or whatever,” says Piskova. “But then when you think about it, that’s part of the clothes. You remember that one time when you went to a festival, where you ripped your shirt or something like that, and it’s a nice memory.”

The number of times you wear an item of clothing can make a big difference too in its overall carbon footprint. Buying less also means caring for clothes more. Websites like [Love Your Clothes](https://www.loveyourclothes.org.uk/), set up by UK recycling charity WRAP, offer tips on repairing and extending the life of clothes, which can reduce the carbon footprint of the clothes.

“A lot of the things that we purchase fulfil some kind of function in ourselves – particularly fashion items,” says Mike Kyrios, a clinical psychologist who researches mental disorders at Australia’s Flinders University. People who have lower self-esteem or worry about their status are especially likely to use overspending as a route to feel like they “belong”, he explains. As are people who are sensitive to rewards – indeed the reward centres in the brain are those most [activated by impulse shopping](https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20161123-shopping-a-sale-gives-you-the-same-feeling-as-getting-high).

Online shopping also means that the impulse to buy is harder to control, as internet stores are open 24/7 – including, as Kyrios says, the times “when your decision-making capabilities are at their minimum”.One solution might be to simply ration the time you spend looking at clothes online, but perhaps a better approach is to find less wasteful ways of achieving the sense of reward that over-spenders are seeking. Mainstream consumers can scratch their itch for new clothes by buying from vintage and second-hand clothing shops.

“Second-hand clothing is giving clothes a second life and it's slowing down that fast-fashion cycle,” says Fee Gilfeather, a sustainable fashion expert at charity Oxfam. “So, I would say second-hand (clothing) is actually one of the solutions to the overconsumption challenge.”

Cutting down on washing can also help to [further reduce the carbon footprint of your wardrobe](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/green-living-blog/2010/nov/25/carbon-footprint-load-laundry), while also helping to lower water use and the number of microfibres shed in the washing machine.

“You don’t need to wash clothes as often as you might think,” says Gilfeather. She hangs some of her dresses out to air, for example, rather than washing them after each wear. “Reducing the amount of washing that you need to do is the best way of making sure that the plastics don’t get into the water system.”

How you dispose of the clothes at the end of their useful life is also important. Throwing them away so they end up in landfill or being incinerated simply leads to more emissions. Perhaps the best approach is to pass them on to friends or take them to charity shops if they are still good enough to be worn. However, individuals should be careful not to use this as a way of clearing space simply to buy new clothes, which Wilson’s research suggests is common.

Where clothing has been worn or damaged beyond repair, the most environmentally sound way of disposing them is to send them for recycling. Clothing recycling is still relatively [new for many fabrics](https://www.wrap.org.uk/node/199665/) but increasingly cotton and polyester clothing can now be turned into new clothes or other items. Some major manufacturers have now started using recycled fabrics, but it is often hard for consumers to find places to take their old clothes.

Many of the changes needed to make clothing more sustainable must be implemented by the manufacturers and big companies that control the fashion industry. But as consumers the changes we all make in our behaviour not only add up, but can drive change in the industry, too.

**I.A. Answer the following questions in 4 – 5 sentences each: (5X5=25)**

1. Why do you think Snezhina Piskova would buy ten pairs of jeans but use only two or three of them? Do you have a similar habit of purchasing and not using the product?
2. Piskova feel closer when she shares clothes with her friends. How do you feel when you share clothes? If you don’t like sharing, explain why?
3. Provide three other ways of reducing carbon footprint which are not mentioned in the article.
4. What are the environmentally friendly ways of disposing clothes?
5. Have you shopped online? Do you think online shopping has been environmentally sustainable?

**I.B. Answer the following questions in about 150 words each: (3X10=30)**

6. Do you prefer online shopping over traditional shopping? Provide reasons for your choice.

7. Gilfeather says that one need not have to wash clothes as often as we might. Do you agree / disagree with him? What are the perks of not washing clothes often?

8. Piskova feels that the stains or holes may have nice memories. Do you associate such memories with clothing? Narrate one such memory.

**I.C. Answer ANY ONE of the following questions in about 200 words: (1X15=15)**

9. “People who have lower self-esteem or worry about their status are especially likely to use overspending as a route to feel like they belong.” Do you agree / disagree with the above statement? Provide reasons for your stance.

10. Phool is an organisation that aims to solve the flower-temple-waste problem. It collects tonnes of floral waste from temples, which is handcrafted into charcoal-free incense, organic vermicompost, and biodegradable packaging material through their ‘flower cycling’ technology. If you were to start one such organisation, what would you recycle? Explain the choice of the product for recycling. What would you name the organisation as?