



Name That Denim

Lesson Overview: This lesson is NOT directly related to the food drive, but is a general lesson on consumerism. The way we spend our money frequently determines our success in life. Current trends indicate that teens have a large amount of disposable income but are not knowledgeable about consumerism. This activity will help teens examine the motivation behind their choices more closely.

Objective: 4-H'ers will be able to state what consumerism is and choose items based on long-term value.

Materials/Preparation:

Collect at least four different types of blue denim jeans. Select two name brand pants that are popular, one store brand, and a pair of Levis or Wranglers. Fold the slacks in half and roll them up from the top down. Leave about 10 inches of the pant leg showing, but hide the name brand on top of the jeans.

Sheet of paper and a pencil for each member.

Procedure: Have club members number their paper from 1-4. Label the jeans with numbers 1-4 (masking tape works well for this). Pass the jeans around and have teens see if they can identify the type of jeans from just the look and feel of the fabric. As everyone examines the pants, he/she should write the name brand of the jeans on the paper next to the numbers.

Be careful during this discussion not to make anyone who may wear store brands feel intimidated or that they are not as good as the other members. Identify the type of jeans and see how many 4-H'ers got the right name brand.

Discussion Questions:

- \$ Did anyone get all four correct?
- \$ Does that person like to shop?
- \$ How did he/she know all the different brands?
- \$ Is it important that everyone wear name brand jeans?
- \$ Who pays for the member's clothing?
- \$ What is the correlation between who buys and what brand they buy?
- \$ Does wearing a brand name make you a better person?
- \$ Does it make you feel more accepted and self-confident?
- \$ Who benefits from the selection of jeans based on the brand name?

Discuss how it is usually important for teens to have at least one or two name brand outfits to boost their self-esteem. However, having a closet full of name brand clothing may not be the best use of one's money.

Have the members number from 1-4 on their paper, again. This time, as the jeans are passed around, have the 4-H'ers rate the jeans in order of their durability.

\$ If you could only buy one pair of jeans and it had to last for a year, which jeans would you select?

\$ Is this selection different from the one made on the basis of fashion and name brand alone?

Have members identify the jeans they think would be the most durable. Most likely, the most expensive name brand jeans will not be the most durable. Discuss how the lists are different. In early times, people wore clothing as a protection. Today most people wear clothing as a means of decoration as well, or as a declaration of who they are. Ask, "Is that really a good representation of a person?" Discussion: Everyone has limited resources. Every purchase represents a choice of how to spend money, which could be saved or spent on a different item.