

**Be the CEO of your own ethical
and sustainable company
Lesson Plan – GCSE and above**

Skills that you'll use

- You will explore your understanding of ethical and sustainable mass manufacturing.
- You will learn more about a key designer and their design.



Materials needed

- Pencil or pen
- Some paper



+



Activity plan

Introduction (5mins)

Modern design is often said to have started around the time of Wedgwood pottery in 1759. Wedgwood also used manufacturing techniques to produce the same designs on a larger scale. Thonet, although, not the first example of mass production, it is quite often used as an example of one of the earliest effective uses.

Production lines increased the flow of a factory. In the late 1910s Henry Ford pioneered the approach of having workers doing the same tasks repetitively. This meant that the workers became faster at one single task as each car was pulled along the factory on an overhead harness. The car frame would stop at each team of workers who would add the next part until the complete car came out the other end. This technique made Ford's production line so quick that cars were being made eight times faster than before. In fact, they were being made so quickly that only one colour would dry quickly enough; Japan Black. The increased productivity allowed Ford to increase worker pay from \$1.50 per day to \$5.00 per day once employees reached three years of service on the assembly line. Ford reduced the hourly work week while continuously lowering the price of the Model T Ford car.

These days, in what is often called the third industrial revolution, new techniques such as laser cutting and 3D printing allow people to reproduce products and alter the end product themselves before it is printed or cut. This means that the end user can take a mass-produced product and tailor it for themselves.

Mass production can come at a high human cost. From sweatshops making clothes to companies clamping down on the use of unions and replacing workers with robots; mass production is really about how fast you can make a product and how many you can make.

These figures often lead to people being exploited and companies cutting corners in order to compete.

Activity plan

Discuss (10-20mins)

Talk to someone in your house, preferably an adult.

- When was the last time that you bought from a large online retailer such as Amazon or AliExpress?
- What did you buy?
- Do you know the country that it was made in?
- Do you know the country it came from to be delivered to you?
- Where do the cheapest things come from?

Research (30mins +)

Go online and research into a company that you like to buy from.

Find out where their products are made.

See if you can find what the company says about their production techniques.

Has the company been involved in any controversy around the way they treat their workers?



Activity plan

Activity (20 mins)

Imagine that you are the CEO and Chief Designer of your own company.

- What will your company make?
- What will your company be called?

Think about the emerging pressures on designers and try to incorporate as many of them into your company's 'rules/aims'. You should create at least 6 statements to form your company manifesto.

Show your company manifesto to someone in your home;

- Can you explain how you will implement your rules?
- What does the person think of your rules and would they like to work for the company?
- What would they like to be incorporated into your rules?

Design a logo for your company and think about how you can mass produce something but be fair to your workforce.

Share your logo and manifesto with the Design Museum on Twitter or Instagram using the #DesignFromHome.



Optional tasks

Extra

Think about the sort of facilities that workers would want in a factory.

Design a factory that will allow your workers to mass produce your chosen product but also have comfort and a happy working environment.

Do they have lunch and rest spaces?

Are there any initiatives available to them to make their working day better such as exercise programmes or child-care?

How can you compete on price for your product?

Should their happiness be your responsibility?

