

Appropriating and Globalizing Technology— Labels, Labor and Shoes

Context

Shoes have for some time, been an important part of the total fashion outfit for teens and older adults. “Ath-leisure” fashion has been a hot trend over the past three decades, Companies such as Nike are prospering within this larger revolution against formality in dress codes. Coolness and rebellion are connected to hats, shirts, or shoes with Freshjive, Nike, Quicksilver and other labels. Wearing a brand label is now the fashion norm in countries like Canada and the USA. The average person remains unaware of the practices of global companies and the harsh conditions under which laborers produce branded clothes or shoes.

Problem

Design and construct an “appropriate” pair of shoes (cross trainers).

Design Constraints

- The shoes can be any size and must be cross trainers.
- One pair of cross trainers must be constructed.
- There is no constraint on cost of new materials, but: a) you must account for all money spent, and b) you must provide details for the resource stream of the materials you purchase.
- Must use recycled soles.
- Uppers must be assembled from pieces.
- Must not involve offensive labels.
- Must not include dangerous materials.
- Must be a design that is original (but can be modeled after big name brands).
- Must be accompanied by a “Labor Behind the Label” report.

Design Considerations

- Pay close attention to form of materials, economy, ecology, simplicity, and unity.
- Ductility and durability are important considerations for materials.
- Consider the parts that can be made by machine and parts that will be assembled by hand.
- Ecology and economics are more important than style.
- The designs of DC, Etnies, Nike, and Vans are good examples, but do not design an identical duplicate of these.
- For design of shoes and Labor Behind the Label report, use information on advertising, labor, and production practices of Nike (see web sites on Nike practices and child labor)

Construction Sequence

- Collect information on shoe designs.
- Sketch your designs and choose appropriate forms, materials and patterns.
- May use 2D computer aided design (CAD) techniques to lay out patterns.
- May use 3D CAD to work out details of color and form.
- Locate recycled materials or new materials.

- Cut materials to forms on patterns.
- Use glue to temporarily hold pieces together for assembly.
- Final assembly.

Management Issues

- End of Day 2 or 3: Approval of design sketches.
- End of Day 4 or 5: Approval of forms, materials and patterns.
- End of Day 13: Submit “Labor Behind the Label” report.
- End of Day 15: Submit finished shoes.

Related Studies

- Accounting
- Home economics
- Materials science
- Social Studies

Honest Self (Group) Evaluation

1. We stayed within the design constraints and deadlines _____ out of 5 marks
 2. Our shoes are unique in their design _____ out of 5 marks
 3. Our shoes have design features that are improvements over existing designs _____ out of 5 marks
 4. The materials used are local and recycled _____ out of 5 marks
 5. Our use of materials was economic and efficient _____ out of 5 marks
 6. Our shoes can be reproduced by people working for fair wages under healthy conditions (Labor Behind the Label report) _____ out of 5 marks
 7. Our report explains how the design and production of our shoes is an improvement over practices of big name brands _____ out of 5 marks
- Total** _____ out of 35

Assessment

Group’s Self Assessment	_____ Total/ 35
Design Principles	
Features and Form	_____ out of 10
Originality	_____ out of 10
Economics and Ecology	_____ out of 10
Craft and Quality	_____ out of 10
Working parts	_____ out of 15
Deadlines, Safety and Participation	_____ out of 10
Total	_____ out of 100