

Student Name:

Leah Knowles

Student Number:

2004208

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Lecturer:

Delyth Lloyd-Evans.

Reduce, Reuse & Recycle.

Introduction

A brief background of this writing is to analyse three words backed up by a minimum of three images, in connection with three visual artists. Collecting research will piece together the three keywords reduce, reuse, and recycle to create an overall question for my independent research for this following year, studying in areas of my interest, composing of nature, colour, and pattern. These will be represented in the visual artists including Karen Boone (Reduce), Raxenne Maniquiz (Reuse), and anastasiaKovaleva (Recycle) these with Include a range of present day and past research. In this research I intend to connect everything to my practice which is to create a produce and packaging that is sustainable and biodegradable.

Reduce.

“Reduce simply means using less. It’s nearly impossible to eliminate plastic from our lives entirely”. (Terry, 2012)

The word reduce can be explored in multiple different ways. In the world of packaging, the word can be described as waste and pollution. With the word waste and pollution in consideration, it then led to researching into the *“Great Pacific Garbage Patch”* (Ever, 2019), which led to further research into the book titled *“Reducing Waste”* (Flounders, 2014). Upon researching into the book, not all waste can be reduced, it was found that

“In the Pacific Ocean, swirling currents have brought together pieces of plastic garbage. The Garbage comes from Asia and North America. The whole mess is often referred to as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch” (Flounders, 2014)

It can be seen that *waste* has a substantial connection with the word *reduce*. Logically by reducing the amount of packaging that is used worldwide, there will be less wastes.

Reducing packaging can be proven to be difficult due to its importance, it is suggested that *"Packaging help to protect products and can help food last longer"* (Partnership, 2017).

Further research led me to biodegradable material, biodegradable materials can be used in many different ways such as *boxes with lids* (2008), *packaging with silver* (2016), *bags* (2010), and *Biodegradation and composting* (2008) (Ivankovic, 2017). It has come to mind that Biodegradation and composting has a substantial impact on the climate and its wildlife due to its results, stated by Ivankovic, *"there is a degradation of polymers to biobased as fast as the others decomposition or organic waste, resulting in a water, carbon dioxide and compost"*. (Ivankovic, 2017).

Biodegradable packaging is becoming more come due to positive effects on the global climate crisis. Although biodegradable materials may be useful it still has its problems. For example, biodegradable plastics doesn't decompose in the ocean unless the temperature of the water is at least 50C, it's stated on The Guardian, *"It's well-intentioned but wrong. A lot of plastics labelled biodegradable, like shopping bags, will only break in temperatures of 50C and that is not the ocean"*. (Vaughan, 2016). This could be a challenge as buy plastic products that are non-biodegradable has proven to be cheaper than those that are made of biodegradable plastic, a statement made by Ladapo mentions, *"Some biodegradable materials are two to ten times more expensive to produce than comparable non-biodegradable materials"*. (Ladapo, 2022). With this in mind for a produce to be successful it needs to be affordable, as most people can agree they love a deal or something that is in their price ranges. In some cases when it comes to materials or food, some people have

chosen to make or grow their own supplies, using natural ingredients collected from nature itself.



Karen. Boone (2020) Rockies [Painting] 24" x 18" (Accessed 2nd May 2022)

For example, Boone is an artist that like to collect her ingredients from nature to make her art Supplies, Boone states that *"I find little bits of clay in creek beds and along roadsides which is far less toxic or demanding on the earth's resources than if I buy synthetic paint. A handful a handful of clay or charred wood makes a lot of pigment"*. (Boone, 2020). It is believed that colourful pigments can be made from flowers and fruit, this is supported by

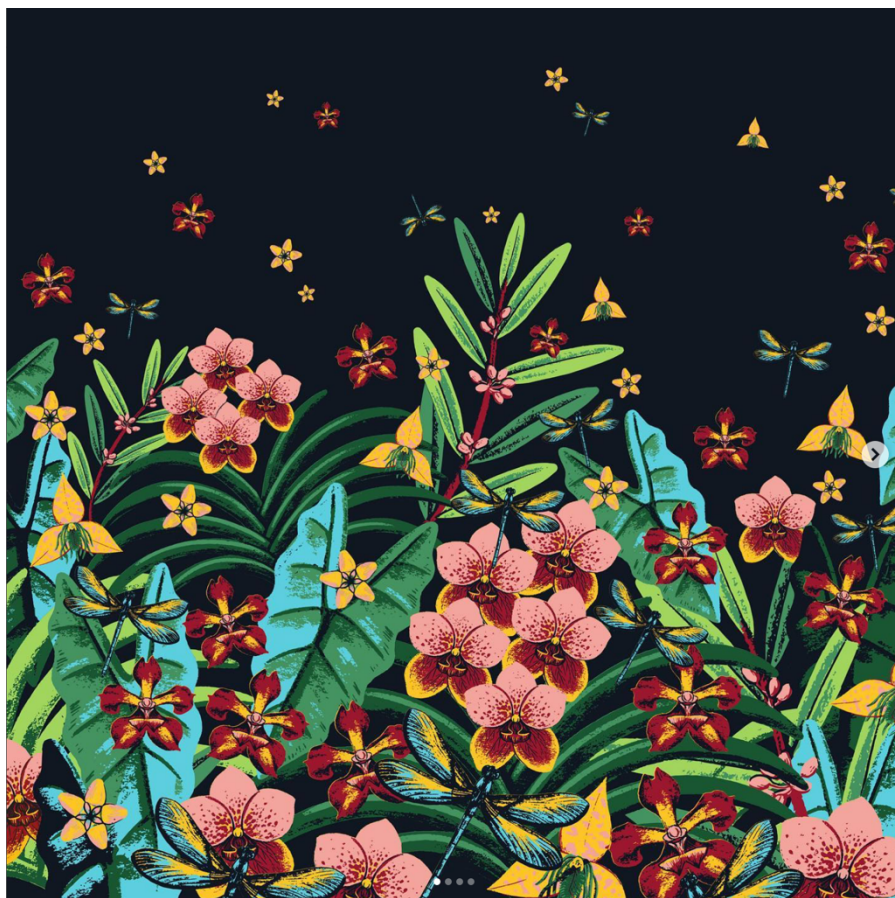
Michaela Schmid who teaches people to make their own paints on her YouTube channel (Schmid, 2020). The idea of using natural ingredients led to researching into natural inks due to most packaging has labelling and illustrations on them to make them look more pleasing and exiting for the customer. A company called Living Ink has achieve this by creating an ink that is sustainable and biodegradable, they stated *“the majority of pigments use within industry are derived from petroleum, such as carbon black. We are changing the way pigments are made by using algae as colorants for eco-friendly Algae Ink”*.

(Steve, 2013). In the beginning exploration into the key word reduce, has led to researching into the eco-friendly side of packaging and what can be done to help reduce. By creating biodegradable packaging, when decomposing majority of the material goes back to nature causing less harm to its environment and its inhabitants. All this research has aided into exploring that best approach to create the most eco-friendly packaging and the problems that could generate within the proposal.

Reuse

“When we reuse anything, we’re taking something that was designed for one purpose and putting it into another. It is handy when you have a material or object that is still in good condition and can be reuse” (Khan, 2022)

Beginning this research, it is believed that the word reuse has a few meanings, for example reusing bottles, jars, plastic tubs, plastic bags, and yogurt tubs which are great for growing plants in the garden. The word that I want to research into more is bottles.



Raxenne. Maniquiz (7th August 2021) Ochid (texted drawing) [Accessed 2 May 2022]

Raxenne Maniquiz is a graphic designer and illustrator from the Philippines, a big percentage of her work has been featured on people and brands such as, M.A.C cosmetics, Jordan, Waterdrop and a book called *“The Last Cuentista”* by Barba Higuera (Higuera, 2021). As noted, Maniquiz has worked with a company called Waterdrop. Upon further research

Into the company Waterdrop they state Waterdrop is *“a conscious approach to the environment and sustainable way of working are essential. With out solution we save up to 97% of packaging and CO2 by eliminating unnecessary transport”*. (Murray, 2017)



Martin. Murray (24th July 2021) VIBE Glass 400ml,600ml & 1L [Accessed 3rd May 2022]

The VIBE Glass designed by Maniquiz is a sustainable glass bottle designed to help people drink more water. The majority of the bottle designs are illustrated with themes of colour and nature, which fits the overall idea very well. The idea of sustainable bottle led to researching into sustainable and reusable cups, a company that is well known too most people that are hoping to achieve this is Starbucks, they state

“Our goal by 2025 is to create a cultural movement towards reusables by giving customers easy access to personal or Starbucks provided reusable cup for every visit

making it convenient to reuse wherever customers are enjoying their Starbucks experience". (Schultz, 2022)

This idea of a reusable bottle that can be personalised seems like a good idea as "million Bottles are bought around the world every minute and *"between 5m and 13m tonnes of plastic leaks into the world's oceans each year to be ingested by sea birds, fish and other organisms"*. (Laville, 2017) following on from the previous idea personalised reusable bottle would be successful as it would be unique to your person, excluding that even creating something that is one time purchase would do well especially when it is visually pleasing. Returning to Waterdrop, it can be agreed that they have the right idea and what they are doing could help the environment and help people become healthier. However, it could be argued that Waterdrop's bottles are quite expensive, as the cheapest glass bottle is £23.90 with the most expensive being an aluminium bottle £36.90.

Starting the research for the key word reuse, it can be agreed that everyone can reuse materials in many different ways and that it is easy to do. Further investigation led to the benefits of having a reusable bottle, which is better for the environment and its inhabitants, even though most people think that plastic pollution isn't having an effect on us, in reality, a study by the University of Newcastle *"every week we eat – in average – on Lego brick; every year a dinner plate (100,000 tiny pieces of plastic); every decade a life buoy"*. (Bonfiglio, 2020) Therefore, having a bottle which is both sustainable and reusable, which in time helps reduce plastic pollution. All of this research helps toward the overall idea and how reusable products can be used in the proposal.

Recycle.

“Whether it’s plastic, paper, or aluminium, the products and materials that can be used after they fulfil their original purpose are far from worthless. In fact, most materials have great recycling value”. (Koop, 2021)

Starting of this research it is believed that recycling is by far the most important word out of the 3r’s (reduce, reuse, and recycle). When I come to recycling everyone can do it and that it is something that should be done world-wide. An artist called Anastasia Kovaleva has taken and used the word recycle as inspiration in their work.



Anastasia. Kovaleva (7 January 2014) Black Garden, Natural materials (28x39 inches)
[Accessed 4th May 2022]

Kovaleva is an artist that likes to use nature material in her work and also enjoys using recycled materials in her work, Kovaleva states,

“My natural pictures consist from recycled cardboard, onion skin and egg shell, paper and other natural elements. Each material used in this work has found other life. My mixed media recycle artwork can broaden intellectual understanding; help engender an intuitive appreciation of the environment”. (Kovaleva, 2014)

To be able to recycle materials to create something beautiful is quite remarkable.

The word recycle doesn't have many meanings, but on the other hand, the way we recycle does. By recycling at home *“stops tonnes of waste being buried in landfill. In the UK, recycling saves about 10-15 million tonnes of carbon emissions a year”*. (Hill, 2014)

Recycling at home help with the current problem's global climate crisis. There are some issues that do need to be faced with recycling, for example *“We don't recycle much plastic because it's hard to sort the different types of plastic and there aren't many factories that recycle plastic”*. (Undrill, 2015) This explains why most packaging is made using materials like cardboard and paper because its biodegradable and easy to recycle. With this all-in mind a question has generated, what are the recycling systems that are put in place in public?

How are people recycling in public?

It is said that *“People chiefly have problems recycling when out of home as 83% of respondents said they always or often put their drinks packaging in the recycling bin when home”*. (Heuverwyn, 2020) This statement proves that there aren't enough recycling bins put in place for the public, which identify where a big problem lays outside of homes.

Another question that has come to mind is, what happen if people recycle wrong?

Researching into this led to finding out that most recycled material go to factorise to be sorted, in this research we learn that

“non-recyclable materials can cause the equipment to jam up or break down. Items such as plastic bags, hoses, wire hangers and string lights can work their way into the belts and joints of the machinery. Even things like small pieces of broken glass can cause danger as our employees have to hand-pick them. (Vogel, 2019)

To solve the problem of recycling properly the UK have put a colour themes in place to aid people to correct their recycling, although this may seem like a good idea not all bins are labelled causing confusion for the elderly and children. To overcome this problem, another theory came to mind. Is packaging colour coded to help people? What's striking is that packaging doesn't have colour codes on them to help people recycle properly. Most packaging that is recyclable only has the recycle symbol on them. What if in the proposal there could be a recycling logo, but colour coordinated to the bin the waste should be in. The performance of recycling allows for a better environment and helps toward the global crises. From the research that has been gathered so far, it is important that both packaging and produce should be recyclable. The idea of using a colour coded symbols seen like an idea that could be very successful, especially in the long run.

Upon exploring the three keywords (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle) has led to a variety of questions, for example, what can be done to be more eco-friendly? How can we be more sustainable? and what is already being done? It can be agreed that the words reduce, reuse, and recycle (The 3 R's) all have a very strong connection. Which then connects to the proposal of sustainable and biodegradable packaging and produce. Researching into biodegradable packaging help gain a lot of knowledge to on 'how to create eco-friendly packaging?'. Alongside, also looking into what can be used for labelling and illustrating on packaging was also acknowledging. Knowing all this is, possible to make eco-friendly packaging and with the idea of colour coded symbols, the packaging would be extremely

eco- friendly. When researching into produce, it was also diverse giving many ideas, but what stood out the most was the glass bottle, due to our ongoing problem with plastic bottle, the idea to create a glass bottle that is illustrated to your liking came to mind. This idea seems very good, due to most people like personalised thing and something that is unique to you, alongside this glass is one of the materials that is easiest to recycle. The idea use the same colour symbol would be place underneath the bottle so I would be soon. The working question is still being thought through, but as of far it believes that this project proposal seems pretty solid, and could work well in the long run, there are still questions like why sustainable and biodegradable materials is so expansive, but this is something that could be looked upon in the independent research in the following year.

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