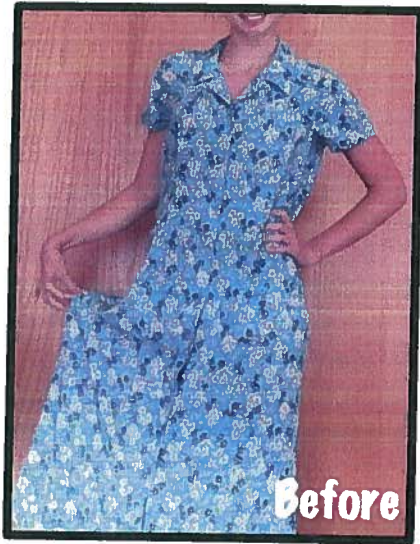


Upcycled

#1005



Name:

Age (As of January 1 of current year):

Club:

Advisor:



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Pssst... the dress on the cover was turned into two different tops. It was cut in half and the top half was taken in at the front and side seams to give it more of a fitted shape. The button-up front was kept. The sleeves were taken off to make it a tank. The hem was rounded for added style. The bottom half of the dress flared out giving more fabric to work with. The button-up front was sewn off to create one whole circular piece of fabric. An old tank was used as a pattern and traced onto the dress fabric. The tank was cut out of the dress fabric and sewn. Extra fabric at the bottom was used to make the straps and the bottom edge was re-hemmed.

Overview

Welcome to *Upcycled!* This project is for advanced level members who are looking to take something old and make something new. This project requires basic knowledge of clothing construction, as there is no pattern to follow. During this project the member will choose an outdated article of clothing and turn it into something stylish again. This book references other project books for basic clothing construction. Happy thrifting!

Project Guidelines

Step 1: Complete all five project areas.

Step 2: Take part in at least three learning experiences.

Step 3: Participate in at least two leadership/citizenship activities.

Step 4: Complete a project review.

Project Areas & Activities

Project Activities	Date Started	Date Completed	Helper's Initials
Activity 1: <i>Stuff I Like</i>			
Activity 2: <i>Let's Go Thrift Shopping</i>			
Activity 3: <i>Assessing Your Clothing</i>			
Activity 4: <i>Ready, Set, Upcycle!</i>			
Activity 5: <i>Project Review</i>			



This dress originally had a dropped waist, a blue sash tie, blue satin straps, and a wide skirt with netting under it to make it stand out. The dress was cut in half and the flare of the skirt was taken in and the waist was brought up. The straps were covered in black and a beaded belt found on a clearance shelf at a craft store was sewn across the front to give it a more modern look.

Learning Experiences

Learning Experiences are activities meant to compliment the project *Upcycled*, and to give you the opportunity to do more in the subject area you are interested in. Here are some ideas of Learning Experiences you could participate in or you could come up with your own. Complete **at least three** learning experiences and record what you did in detail here. Have your project helper initial next to each one when you finish.

- » Visit at least two different thrift stores
- » County Judging
- » County Style Review
- » Club Demonstration
- » Tour your local thrift store

Plan To Do	What I Did	Date Completed	Helper's Initials

Leadership/Citizenship Activities

Choose **at least two** of the leadership/citizenship activities listed below (or create your own) and record what you did in the space provided. Ask your project helper to initial next to each one when you finish.

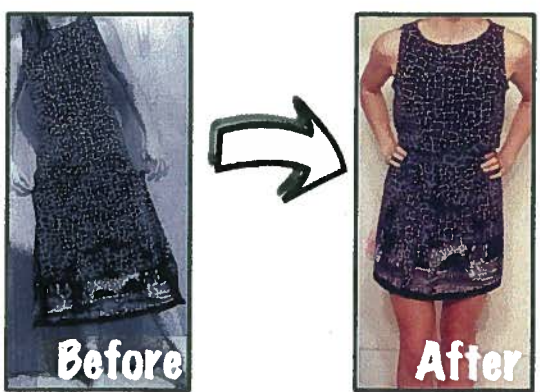
- » Donate clothing back to your area thrift store
- » Organize a clothing drive for your 4-H club and collect things to donate to a local thrift store or homeless shelter
- » Encourage another member to upcycle some of their old clothing
- » Organize a repurposing activity for your club
- » Encourage another member to take *Upcycled*

Plan To Do	What I Did	Date Completed	Helper's Initials

Activity 1: Stuff I Like

You never know what you're going to find when you go thrift shopping, but having a general idea of what you want to look for is never a bad idea. Use this time to look through your closet or magazines or online to decide the types of clothing you like to wear. What styles look best on you? Do you like warm colors or cooler colors? Are there any fabrics you particularly like wearing? Use the table below to help assess your current style that way you'll have an idea of the things to look for while thrift shopping.

Styles I Like	Colors I Like	Fabrics I Like



This dress had an interesting border at the bottom but the length was outdated. It also had slits up both sides. The slits were sewn together and the dress was cut in thirds. The top and bottom thirds were sewn back together to shorten it. A piece of elastic was sewn into the waist seam to cinch the waist. The middle section was cut up and made into a belt that tied around the waist.

Activity 2: Let's Go Thrift Shopping

Shopping for clothes to upcycle and shopping for clothes at a retail store are completely different processes. After years of shopping for clothes at department stores we've trained our eyes to judge an article of clothing by a strict set of rules. We take into consideration its color, style, fabric, and design. We try it on to make sure it fits our body in a flattering way, and if everything adds up we purchase it. Thrift shopping for clothing to upcycle follows a different set of rules. These are some tips to keep in mind while thrifting for your *Upcycle* project.

- **Focus on the fabric, not the fit.** One of the hardest things about shopping for clothing to upcycle is ignoring the style of the outfit. An outdated outfit is easy to skim over when browsing, but remember, you can always change its style so try to focus instead on any fabric that catches your eye.



Bigger is always better. Another shopping rule you need to break for upcycling is looking for clothing that fits you. The bigger the outfit is, the better. You can always take seams in, but it's very hard to make something bigger. So making sure the outfit you want to upcycle is baggy on you means that it has plenty of fabric to play with and will be easier to upcycle.

- **Don't completely ignore the design.** Sometimes you'll find an outfit that has a fabric you like and that's plenty big on you, but busy design elements like pleats and elaborate embellishments can be hard to work around.
- Look for outfits with a simpler construction and add your own detailing.



Go in open-minded. You may have decided on the type of outfit you want to make, but the clothing you found to upcycle is made from a material that is not suited for the design you were planning on. Instead, try to first find a piece of clothing with a fabric that you like, and then decide what design of clothing that fabric would be good for. For example, thin, sheer fabrics are better for outfits with a looser fit, and heavier fabrics are better for more form fitted and constructed outfits.

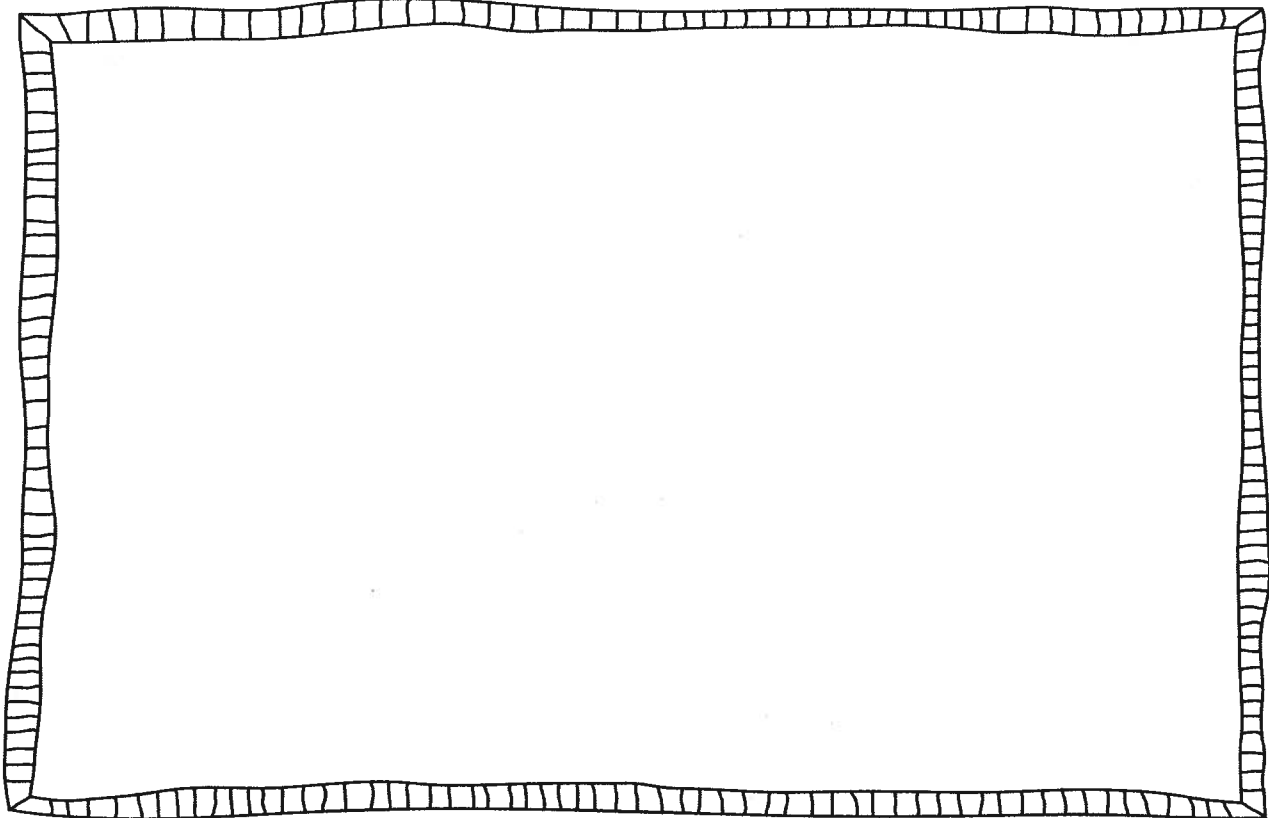
▪ **Get creative with it.** Think outside the box. Turn the piece of clothing upside down and see what you could make out of it by viewing it from a different angle, turn a dress into a shirt, a skirt into shorts, pants into leggings.

▪ **Dresses are easiest to upcycle.** A big, plain dress leaves you with lots of fabric to work with.

▪ **Keep it comfortable.** Make sure the design elements in the clothing you choose are things you are comfortable working with. Upcycling isn't a good time to experiment with new techniques and fabrics. You should be comfortable with the fabric you are working with because there is no pattern to follow so your project is something you need to design and carry out on your own.

With these tips in mind, head out to your local thrift store or look online for thrift stores in your area, maybe there's one you haven't been to. Spend some time browsing until you find that one piece of clothing you want to upcycle. Use this space to journal about things you found while shopping and to start brainstorming what you want to make with the clothing you found.

Use this space to start to sketch possible designs for your upcycle project.



Activity 3: Assessing Your Clothing

Now that you've chosen the piece of clothing you want to upcycle, here are some questions to answer to help you better plan your outfit make over.

What fabric is the clothing you found made out of? _____

Have you worked with this fabric before? _____

What article or articles of clothing are you planning on turning the old outfit into? _____

List a few different styles of clothing that this material would be well suited for.

Are there any detail elements that you don't like and if so, how do you plan to work around them? _____

Does your clothing have a zipper, buttons, or elastic? If so, how will you incorporate those into your final product, or do you plan to remove them completely? _____

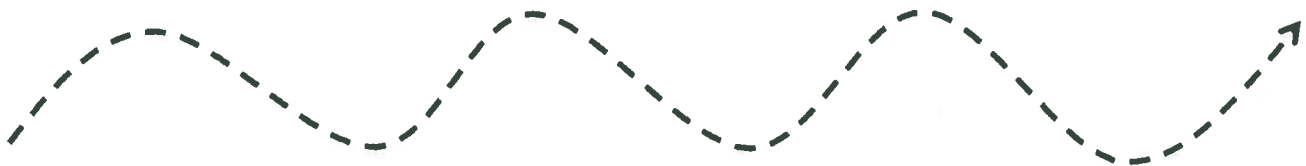


This A-line dress was taken in to make a pencil shape. The dress was taken in at the front seams as well as the side seams. This allowed for the front seams to remain straight and parallel as opposed to pulled off to the sides. The extra fabric at the bottom was fashioned into a *peplum* (the flared flap that sits on the waist and creates an hourglass silhouette).

Activity 4: Ready, Set, Upcycle!

It's time to upcycle your project. Hopefully by now you have thought out and planned how you want to remake the clothing you found. There are no patterns to follow for this part but here are some helpful construction tips to follow to aid in your redesigning....

- » **Make sure you have a good seam ripper.** Upcycling is a lot of trial and error. Sometimes you'll sew a seam multiple times before you get the fit just right. Be patient with it and don't be afraid to rip and re-sew
- » **Baste first.** Pin the seam where you want it and try it on for fit. Adjust what you need to and baste the seam in place and try it on again. That way if you need to make adjustments it's easier to rip basting stitches than regular stitches. Once you get it just how you want it sew over the basted seam with regular stitches to secure it.
- » **Trace something you already own.** Sewing something without a pattern to follow at all takes a lot of practice to get good at it. Tracing a piece of clothing similar to what you want to make helps get the fit down. If you wanted to make a shirt, for example, and you own a shirt that you want to mimic the fit of for your upcycle, laying the old shirt over your project shirt and tracing the seams is sometimes helpful. Remember to leave room for a seam allowance when you trace.



Upcycling Resources...

Check out the blog www.refashionista.net for good ideas and tips!

For additional help on hems refer to:

- » *Dress Up Outfit* pages 22, 23, 27, & 28
- » *Sundresses and Jumpers* page 22

For additional help on seams refer to:

- » *Dress Up Outfit*: pages 21, 22, 25, & 26
- » *Sundresses and Jumpers* page 22

For tips on repairing clothing refer to:

- » *Clothes for High School and College* pages 22-25

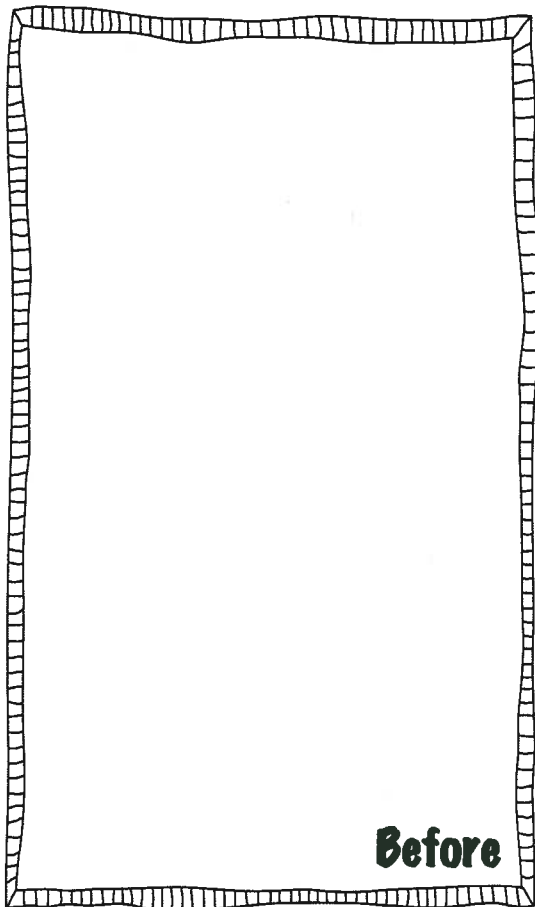
Activity 5: Project Summary

Cost of outfit you upcycled: _____

Cost of a piece of clothing similar to the one you made if you had bought it new in a department store: _____

Amount of money you saved by upcycling: _____

Summarize how you upcycled your clothing item. What changes did you make? Did you run into any unforeseen problems? Anything you would do differently? Did you learn any new techniques? Where do you plan to wear your new outfit? Do you plan to upcycle more clothing in the future? _____



Make your own before and after photo comparison here!

