

# idea corner

ments that I will make, you may be sitting down and getting up several times.”

Then make these statements:

1. If you *did not* search for and read the entire label describing the fiber content of the clothing item, sit down.
2. If, when you bought your newest dress or big ticket apparel item, you examined the inside *carefully*, stand up; if you didn't, sit down and make a vow to do it next time.
3. If, when you tried on the last garment you bought, you checked the fit by sitting down with it on and also tested your comfort in reaching, stand up. If you didn't, sit down and think about the comfort of the clothing that you're wearing today.
4. If, when you made your most recent purchase of apparel, you examined the number of stitches per inch and the quality of thread used, stand. If not, sit down and count the ripped seams you know about.

## Stand Up for Quality Clothing

Today's fashion experts encourage "investment" dressing to save time, money, and energy. Clothing is an investment to be measured by how long it will last and how often you wear it. Quality clothing will last longer than inexpensive togs, even though you will wear it more since it looks and often feels better.

The following exercise is a group activity that an Extension agent or specialist can use to loosen up an audience and increase awareness of quality aspects in clothing. You begin by saying to the audience, "Okay, everybody stand and think about your most recent clothing shopping experience. As you listen and then respond to the state-



5. If you have ever decided *not to buy* an apparel item because the quality and price weren't in balance, stand. If not, sit down and count on your fingers the number of times you have been disappointed in the wearlife of your garment purchases.
6. If you have decided to purchase an unknown brand of prepackaged items and then asked the salesclerk to let you see a sample garment from a broken package, stand. If not, sit down and make a promise to demand your consumer right to examine quality the next time.
7. If, within the past three years you have returned a garment to the store because it didn't meet your quality expectations, sit down. If you're standing, pat yourself on the back for always checking out the quality features of a garment before you leave the store.
8. If you considered the number of times you would wear the garment, stand; if not, sit down and think about the balance needed between number of wearing times and quality needed.

Bring the activity to a close by saying:

"If you never got the chance to stand or if you were sitting most of the time, you may want to examine your shopping lifestyle and take some steps to reduce your high-risk behaviors.

If you went up and down like a yo-yo, then some of your positive behaviors are cancelled out by your negative behaviors.

If you remained standing the entire time, you deserve a round of applause!"

Take these thoughts seriously and prevent having white elephants in the clothes closet! Examination of garments and comparison of prices are two of the most useful techniques in judging the quality of wearing apparel.

**BEATRICE KALKA**

*Associate Professor  
Extension Clothing and  
Textiles Specialist  
VPI and State University  
Blacksburg, Virginia*