

From Cotton Plant to T-Shirt

Put the product steps in order and tell how cotton changes.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Part 1: Put the cotton T-shirt process in order

Directions: Look closely at the four original classroom picture cards. They are mixed up. Write the card letters in the order that cotton becomes a T-shirt. Then choose a category word for each step.

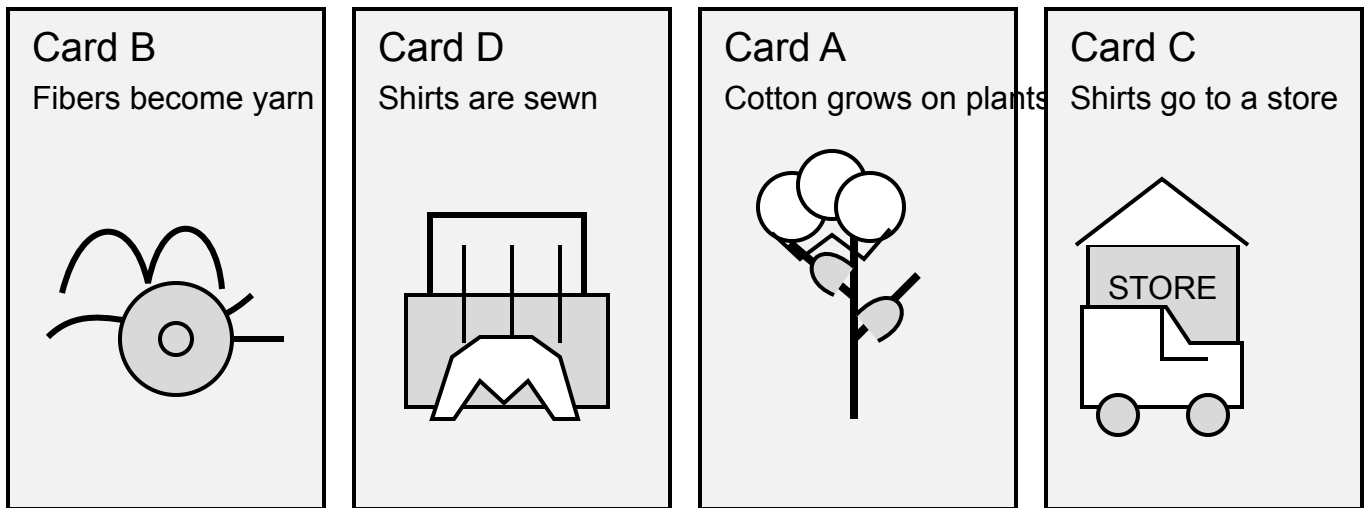
Category words

raw resource - a material that comes from nature

processing - changing a natural material so it can be used

manufacturing - making a product in a factory or workshop

distribution - moving a finished product to a place where people can buy it



Original classroom process cards. Each card shows one real step in making and getting a cotton T-shirt.

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Part 1: Put the cotton T-shirt process in order (continued)

Order	Card letter	Category word
1		
2		
3		
4		

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Part 2: Explain the changes

Directions: Use your ordered cards from Part 1. For each step, explain what changes. Include a product word such as cotton, fiber, yarn, cloth, T-shirt, truck, or store.

1. Raw resource: What does nature provide?

2. Processing: How is the cotton changed so it can be used?

3. Manufacturing: How does the material become a T-shirt?

4. Distribution: Where does the finished T-shirt go, and how does it get there?

Check: Draw an arrow by each answer that shows something changing or moving:
cotton -> yarn -> T-shirt -> store.

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Answer key and teaching notes

Materials: Print and supply all student pages, keeping teacher-key pages separate. Each student needs a pencil. Optional: clipboard or hard surface for writing. The original classroom picture/process cards, arrows, category word bank, and response boxes are supplied on the student pages; no external cards are needed.

Exact setup: Before students arrive, print the student task. Keep this key out of student view. Place students where they can see their own Part 1 card strip and have room to write. Do not cut apart the cards; students record letters in the table.

Teaching script: Say: “Today we will trace one product from nature to a place where people can buy it. Cotton is a natural resource because it grows on a plant. Look for what happens to the material next. Some work changes cotton into usable material. Some work makes the shirt. The last step moves the finished shirt to a store. Write the card letters in order, then explain the change at each step.” Read the category-word definitions aloud if needed. Say: “Your own words can be different from a classmate’s words, as long as they describe the change correctly.”

Observation method: While students work, use a four-item checklist for each student: (1) points to Card A as the material from nature; (2) places B after A; (3) places D after B; (4) places C last and explains that the finished item moves to a seller. Prompt once only: “What is being changed or moved in this picture?” Record independent, prompted, or not yet.

Answers: 1. Part 1 order: A, B, D, C. Categories: A = raw resource; B = processing; D = manufacturing; C = distribution. Reasoning: cotton grows on a plant; fibers are cleaned/spun into yarn; fabric is made and cut/sewn into shirts; finished shirts are transported to a store.

2. Part 2 sample acceptable responses: Raw resource: “Cotton grows on a plant and is picked.” Processing: “Cotton fibers are cleaned and spun into yarn.” Manufacturing: “Workers or machines use yarn/cloth to make and sew a T-shirt.” Distribution: “A truck takes finished T-shirts to a store so people can buy them.” Accept equivalent age-appropriate wording. A student need not name every machine. Require the correct material change or movement at all four steps.

Quick rubric: 4 = correct sequence/categories and accurate change or movement in all four explanations. 3 = correct sequence and three accurate explanations. 2 = some correct order but confuses one or more stages. 1 = needs guided reteaching with the cards. For reteaching, have the student physically trace a finger from cotton plant to yarn, shirt factory, and store while saying what changes.

Source credit: Original classroom instructional illustrations and text created for this worksheet. Product pathway reflects the general cotton-textile process: cotton plant -> fiber/yarn preparation -> garment making -> delivery to retail.