



How can we
support students
towards more
sustainable costume
realisation
practices?

Action Research Project by Florence Meredith

Who am I?



Costume Practitioner and Educator

Specialist costume technician at Central Saint Martins

Supporting performance students to realise costume outcomes

Costume designer and maker

Specialism in dance

An interest in sustainable practices

White, middle class, university educated woman

Why this research question?

- Unethical purchasing, wasted resources
- Mirroring of industry hierarchies
- Missed critical thinking
- Stress
- Climate crisis issue
- Feminist, anti-racist issue
- Student attainment
- Student experience

“The climate emergency is the most serious challenge humanity has ever faced”

Action Research Plan

Initial plan

Initial reading
Initial intervention designs

Staff interview
Focus group

Synthesis and evaluation of initial data
Redesign of interventions

Implementation of interventions
Staff interview

Synthesis and evaluation and analysis of data

How it went

Initial reading
Initial intervention designs

Staff interview
Focus group

Synthesis and evaluation of initial data
Redesign of interventions

Implementation of interventions

Staff interview

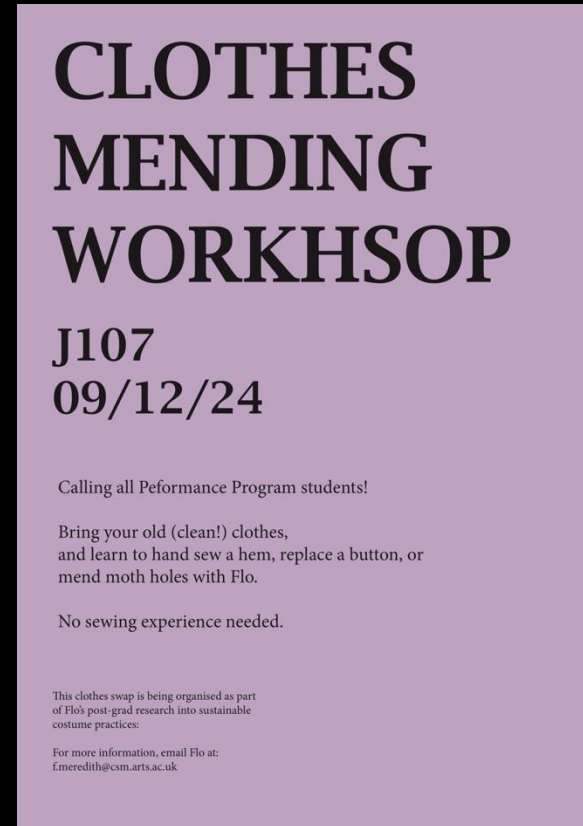
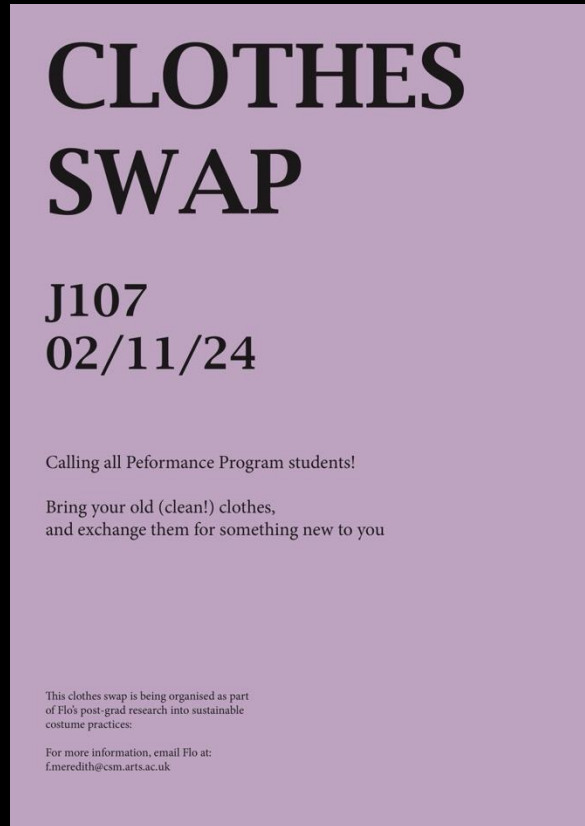
Additional data collection

Additional secondary data collection

Synthesis and evaluation , and analysis of data



Intervention idea 1: holding workshops or events unrelated to costume, that highlight sustainable practice and bring students into the space



“Eco-efficiency has traditionally been focused on a quantitative approach to measurement and procurement (mechanistic worldview) without activating social, cultural and environmental potential (ecological worldview)”

Intervention idea 2: creating sustainable suppliers lists which are more visual and accessible

CHAIRTY SHOP MAP (LONDON TUBE)



North London

Shop one (near xxx station)
Traid (near xxx station)
Morley's (near xxx station)
Red Cross (Remnant store, near xxx station)
British Heart Foundation (near xxx station)
Scope (near xxx station)
Age UK (near xxx station)

North East London

Shop one (near xxx station)
Traid (near xxx station)
Morley's (near xxx station)
Red Cross (Remnant store, near xxx station)
British Heart Foundation (near xxx station)
Scope (near xxx station)
Age UK (near xxx station)

East London

Shop one (near xxx station)
Traid (near xxx station)
Morley's (near xxx station)
Red Cross (Remnant store, near xxx station)
British Heart Foundation (near xxx station)
Scope (near xxx station)
Age UK (near xxx station)

West London

Shop one (near xxx station)
Traid (near xxx station)
Morley's (near xxx station)
Red Cross (Remnant store, near xxx station)
British Heart Foundation (near xxx station)
Scope (near xxx station)
Age UK (near xxx station)

South East London

Shop one (near xxx station)
Traid (near xxx station)
Morley's (near xxx station)
Red Cross (Remnant store, near xxx station)
British Heart Foundation (near xxx station)
Scope (near xxx station)
Age UK (near xxx station)

Central London

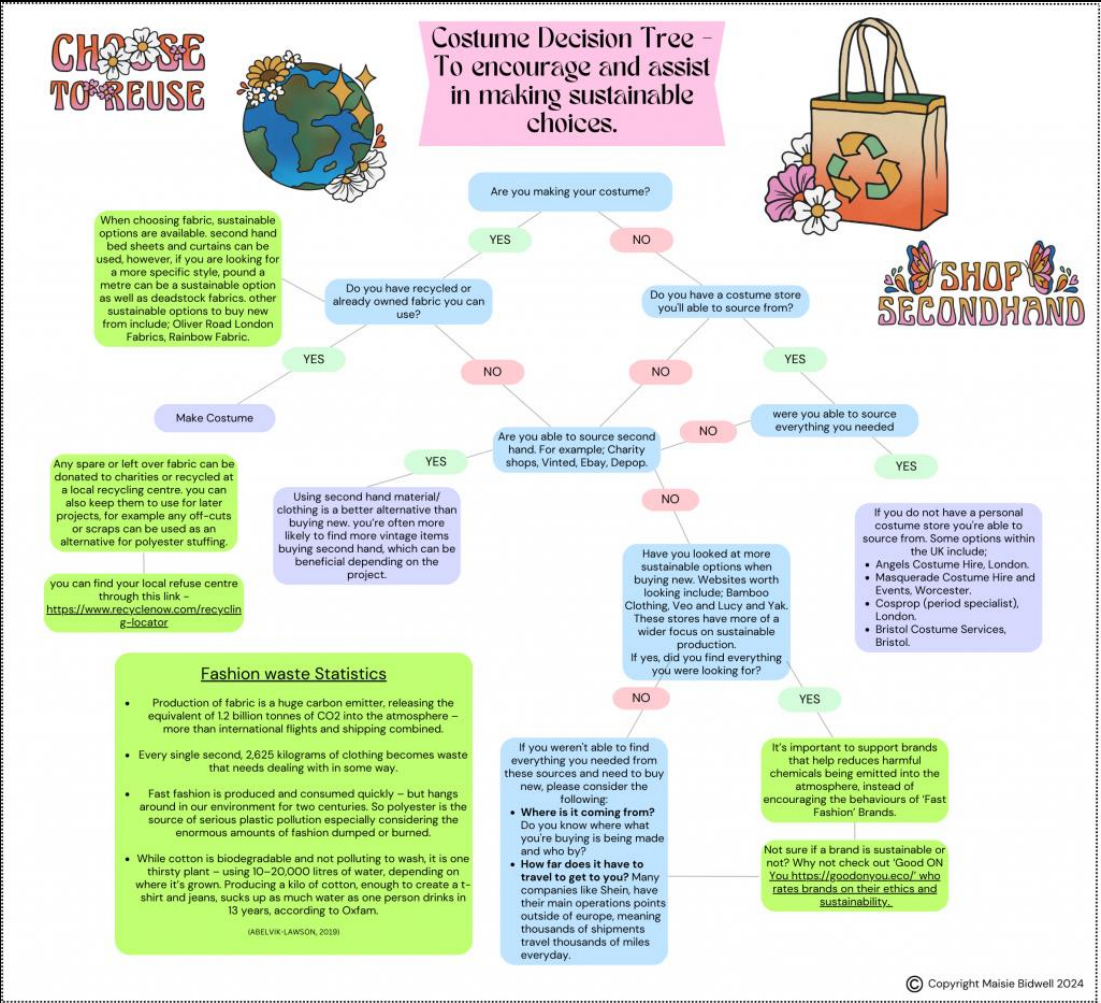
Shop one (near xxx station)
Traid (near xxx station)
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Red Cross (Remnant store, near xxx station)
British Heart Foundation (near xxx station)
Scope (near xxx station)
Age UK (near xxx station)

“This emphasis on the new and disposable in theatre practice has largely mirrored the consumptive habits of the modern era”

Intervention idea 3: the production of variety of project planning sheets to be used at templates within a planned or unplanned tutorial

Monday 4th November	Tuesday 5th November	Wednesday 6th November	Thursday 7th November	Friday 8th November
Planning Take performers measurements	Fabric/materials sourcing	Initial costume store pieces selected Find rehearsal items for performers	Charity shop shopping	Pattern cutting
Monday 4th November	Tuesday 5th November	Wednesday 6th November	Thursday 7th November	Friday 8th November
Making for first fitting	Making for first fitting	Final costume store pieces selected Making for first fitting	First fitting	Alterations Last charity shop shopping
Monday 11th November	Tuesday 12th November	Wednesday 13th November	Thursday 14th November	Friday 15th November
Final fittings	Final alterations	Install	Get-in	Dy Tech

Intervention idea 4: the display of sustainable decision-making resources



Focus group

12/11/2024

In person

Semi-structured, localist, romantic style

Approximately 32 minutes

Participants - 2

“...elicit a greater, more in-depth understanding of perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and experiences”

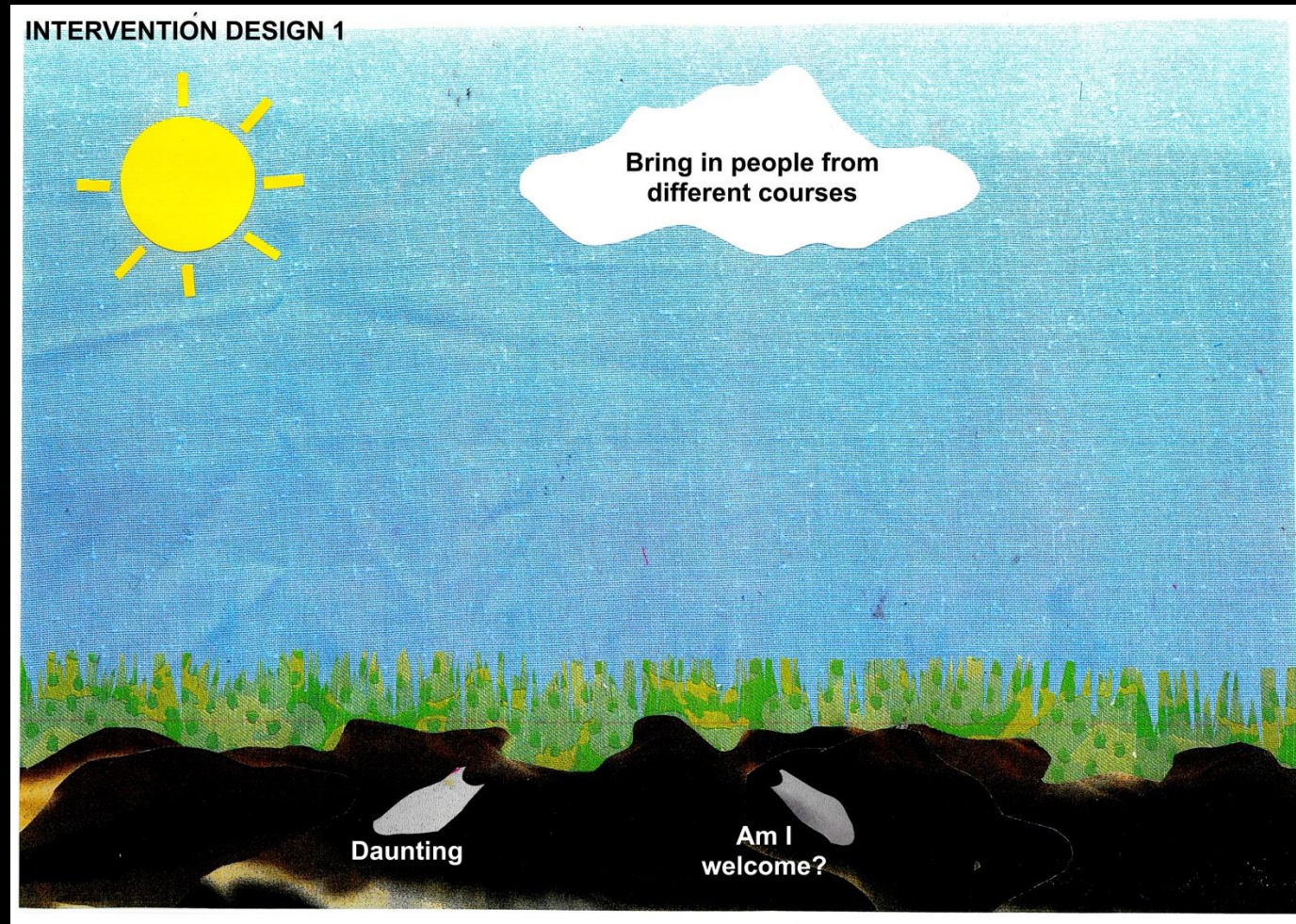
Focus group coded data

Intervention idea 1: Holding workshops or events unrelated to costume, that highlight sustainable practice and bring students into the space

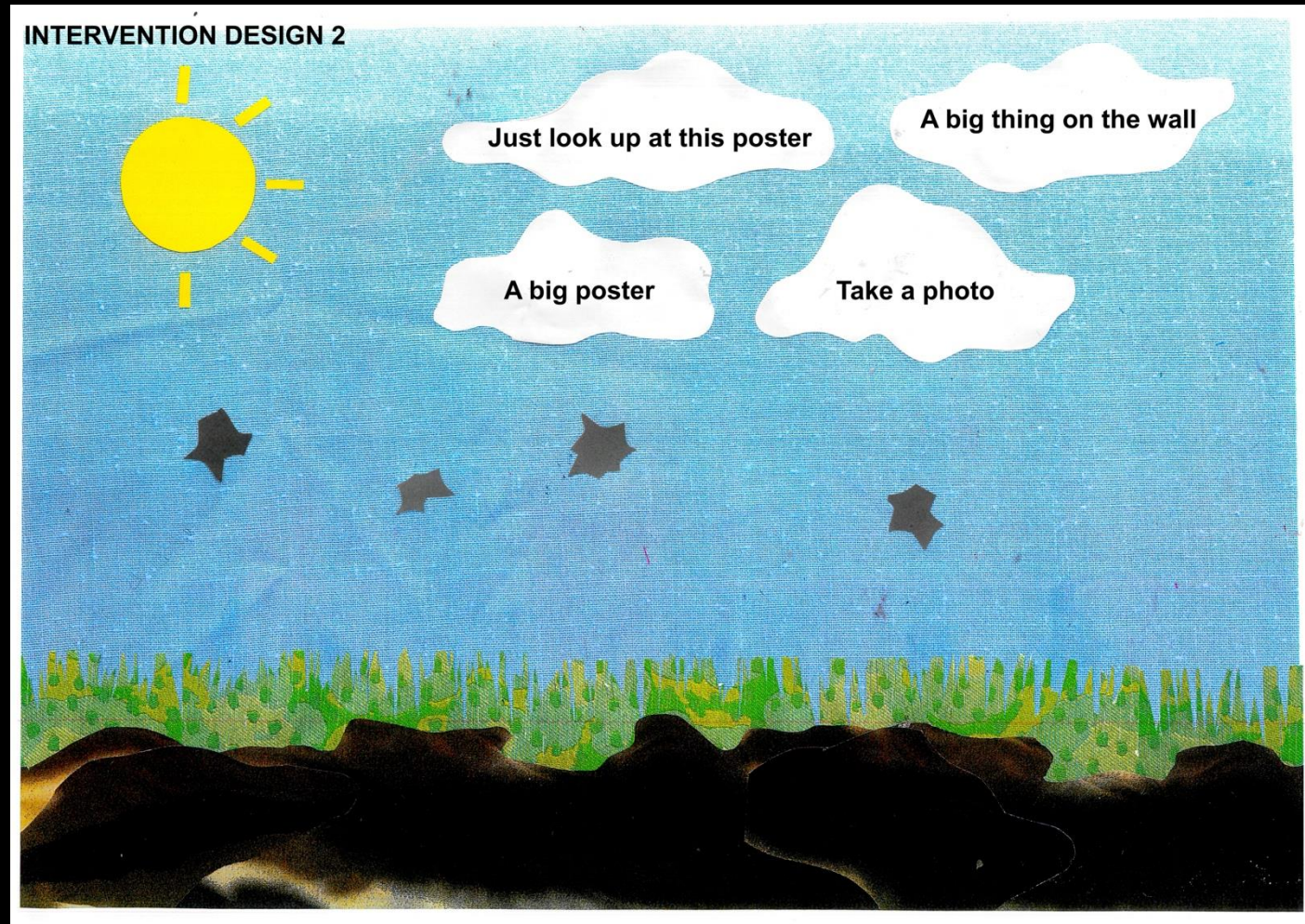
Response type	Phrases used	Number of remarks
Positive	So interesting Love it Great People would show-up Get my friends to come It would be nice Good	7
Negative		0
Ideas	Bring in people from different courses	1
Feelings about the underlying issue	Daunting Am I welcome?	2

“...focus, capture, and distill meaning”

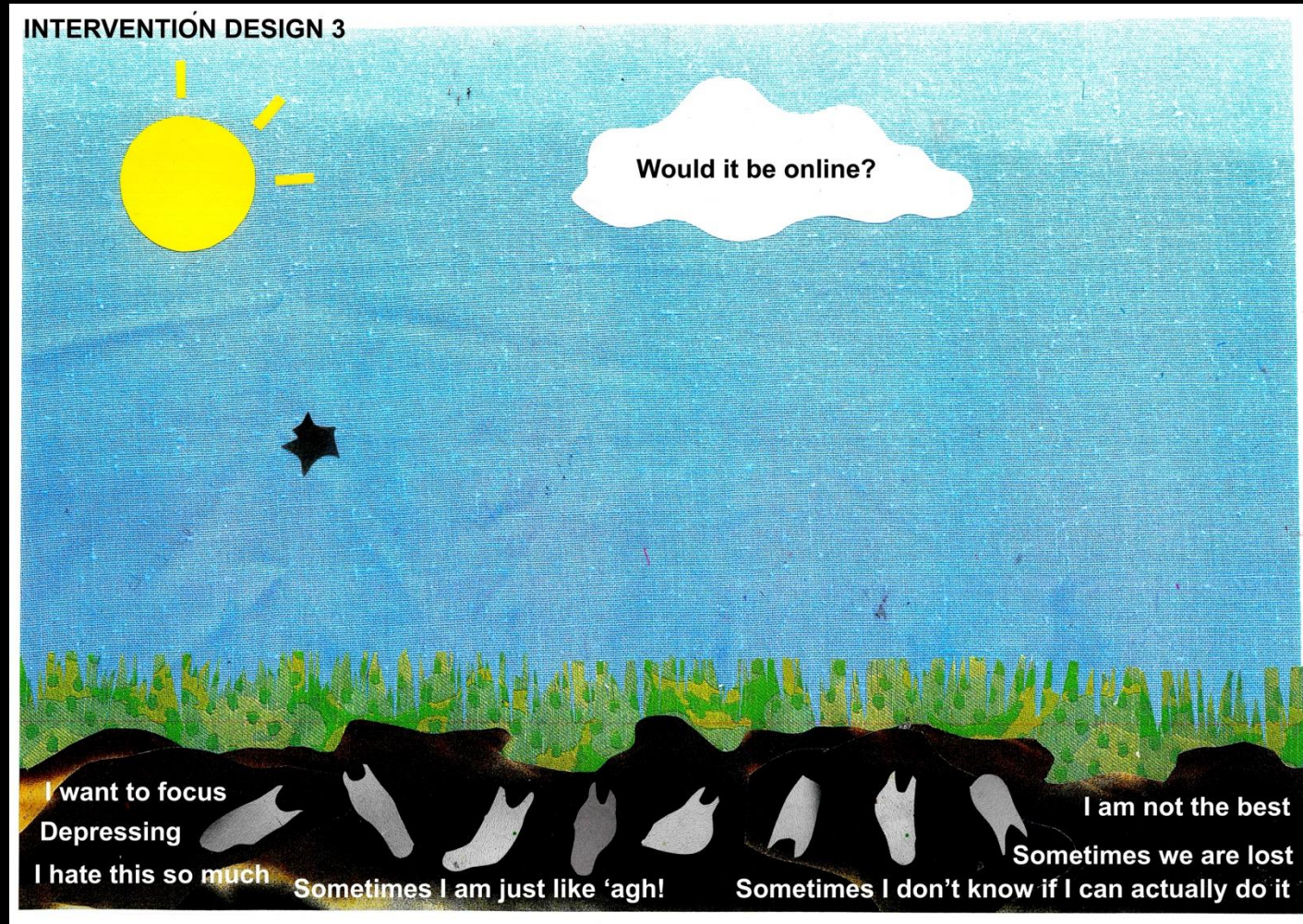
Intervention idea 1: holding workshops or events unrelated to costume, that highlight sustainable practice and bring students into the space



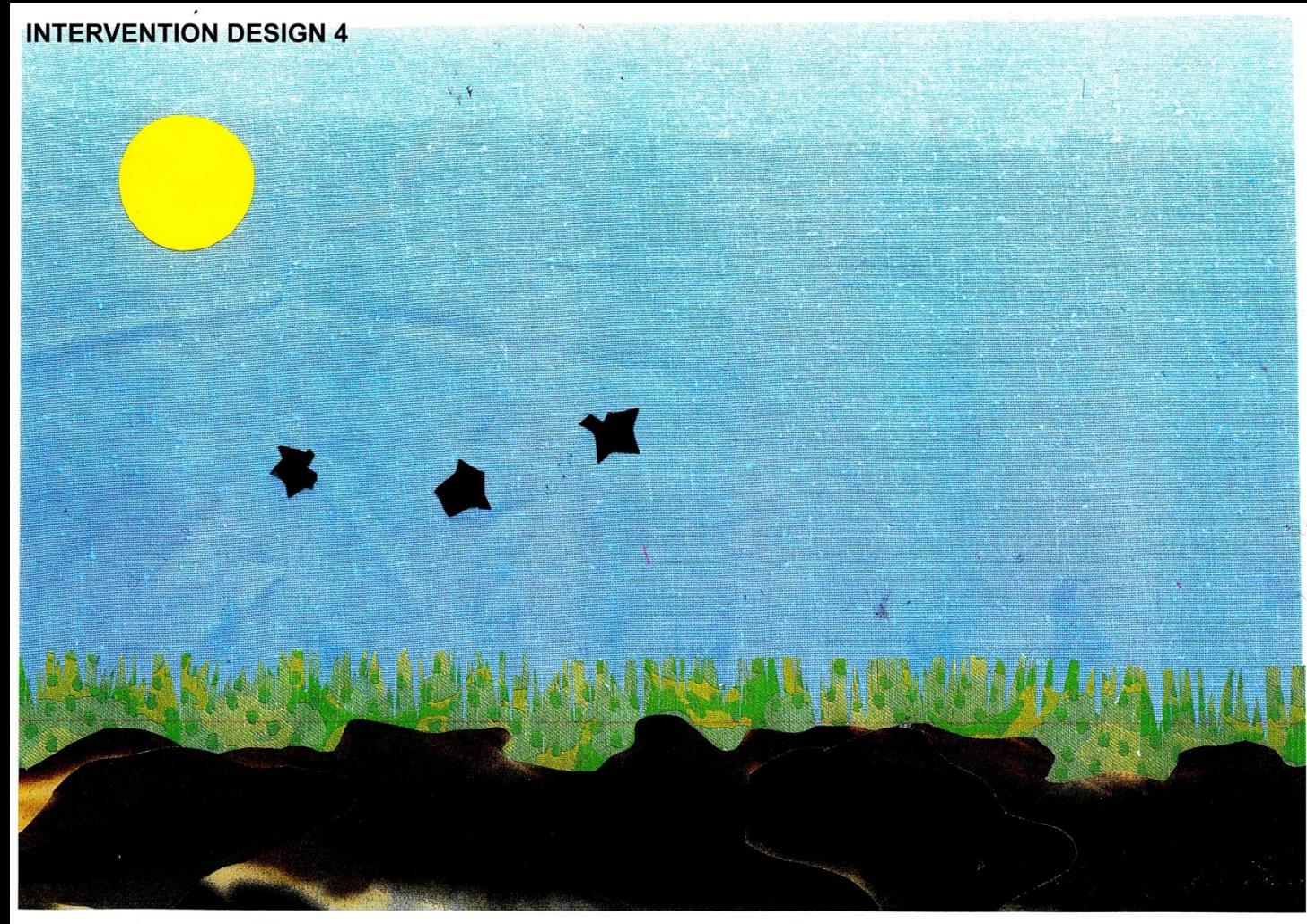
Intervention idea 2: creating sustainable suppliers lists which are more visual and accessible



Intervention idea 3: the production of variety of project planning sheets to be used as templates within a planned or unplanned tutorial



Intervention idea 4: the display of sustainable decision-making resources



Workshops

Clothes Swap

2/12/2024

No data collected

Participants - 0

Easy Clothes Repairs

10/12/2024

1.5 hours

Questionnaires

Interactive display

Participants - 2

EASY CLOTHES REPAIRS & ALTERATIONS

J107

10/12/24

17:30 - 19:00

CALLING ALL PERFORMANCE
PROGRAMME STUDENTS

Does that jacket still have a loose button?

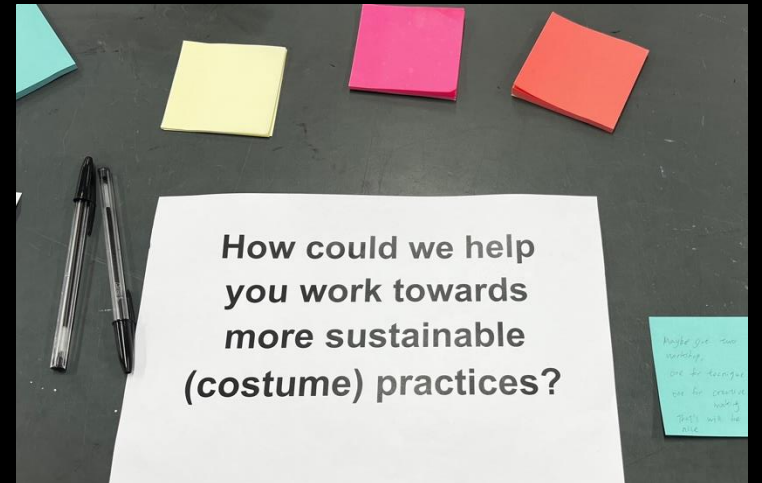
Does that top have a tear?

Keep tripping over your trousers?

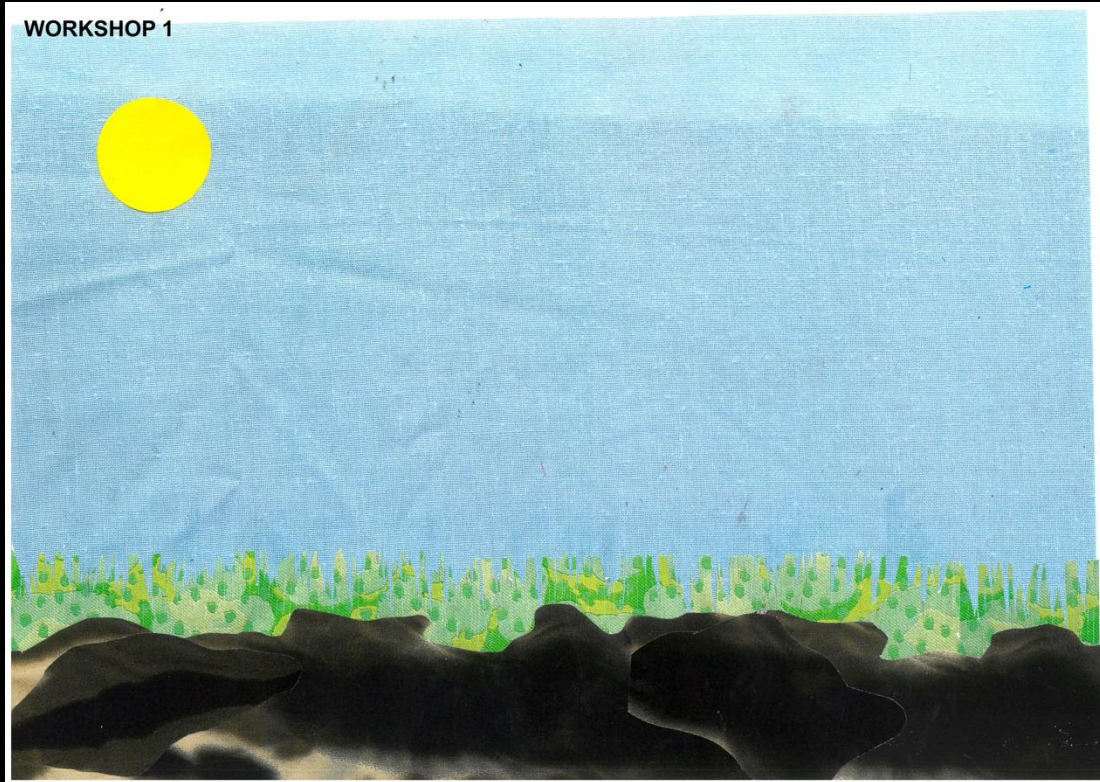
Learn some basic repair and alteration techniques - feel free to
bring clothes that need work along with you!

NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

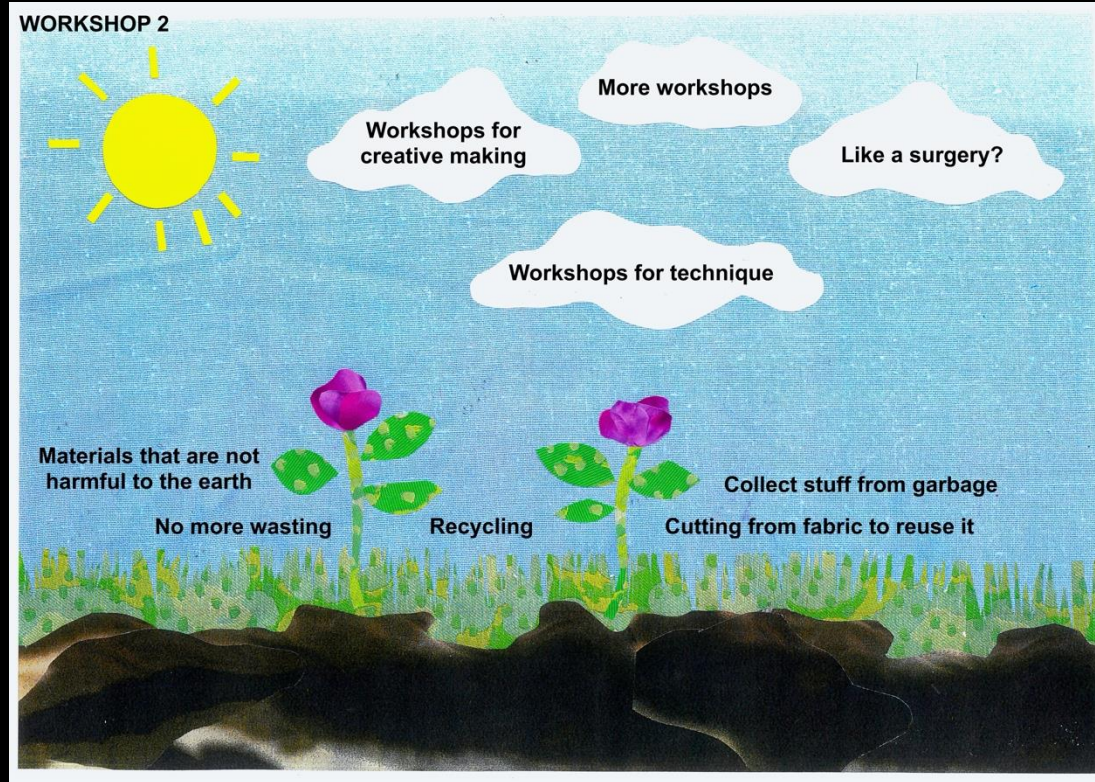
This is being organised as part of Flo's
post-grad research into sustainable cos-
tume practices. For more information,
email Flo at: f.meredith@csm.arts.ac.uk



WORKSHOP 1

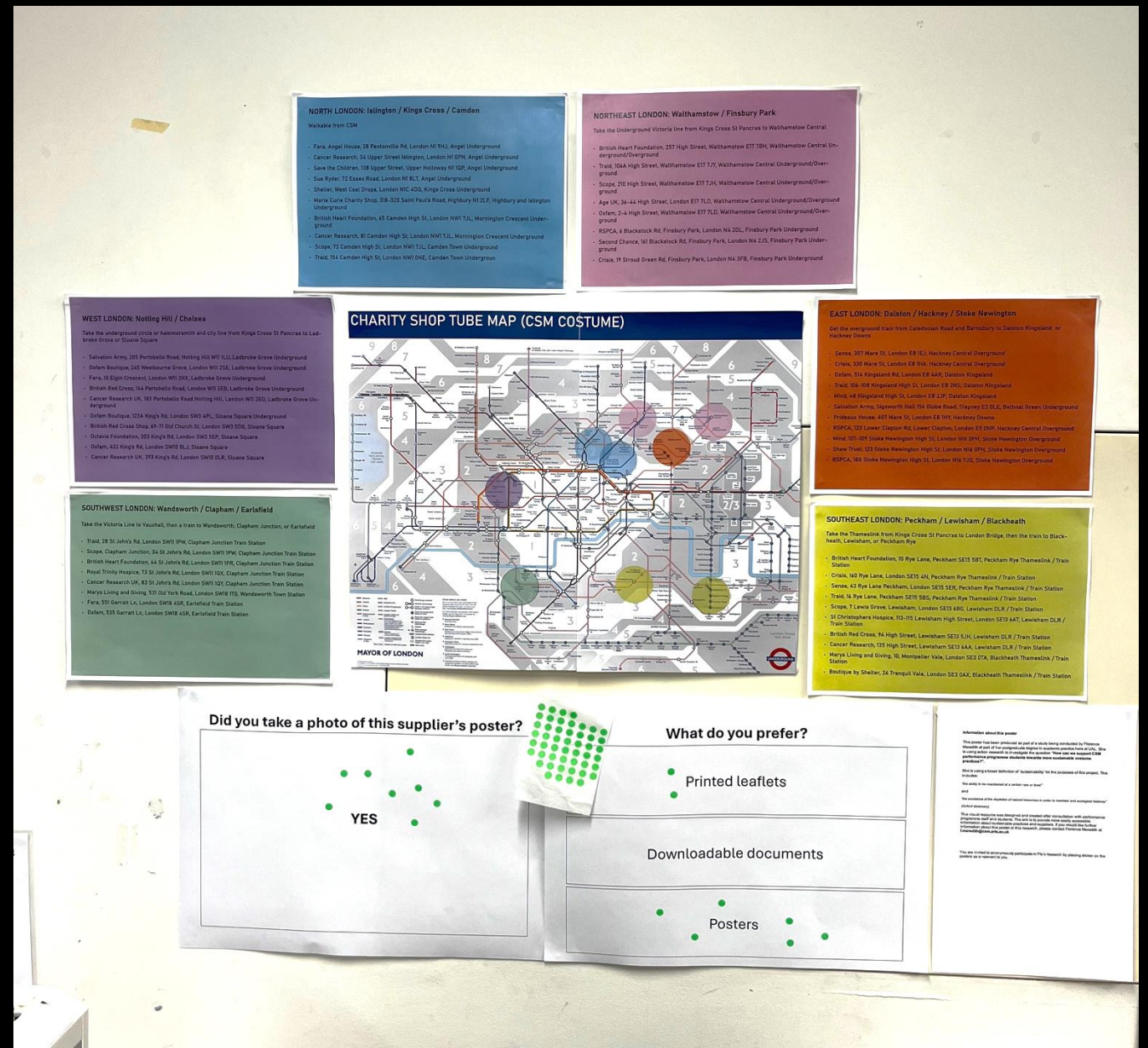
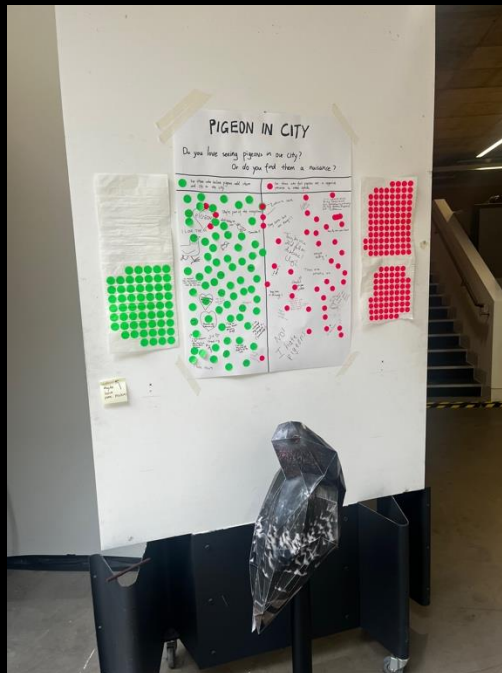


WORKSHOP 2



Poster Display

Poster display
9/12/24 – 13/12/2024
Interactive stickers
Participants - 8



Additional Data

Digital resources

9/12/24 – 13/12/2024

Interactive stickers

Interactions – 1.7



DIGITAL RESOURCES



Handouts

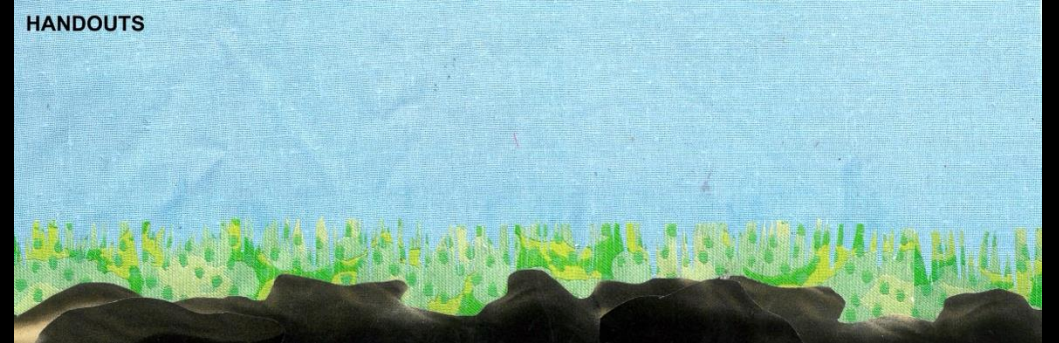
9/12/24 – 13/12/2024

Interactive stickers

Interactions - 0



HANDOUTS



Poster display

9/12/24 – 13/12/2024

Interactive stickers

Interactions - 8



POSTER DISPLAY MAP



Key findings

1. Students are (probably) more likely to engage with a sustainable suppliers poster or display than physical handouts or digital downloads of sustainable suppliers lists.
1. Students reported interest in and enthusiasm for practical sustainability skills workshops
2. Students who attended sustainable practices workshops expressed positive engagement with sustainable costuming practices
3. Students reported a lack of confidence in their own skills and abilities, which may prevent them from entering the space, and/or accessing technical support in sustainable costume realisation processes

Evaluation and moving forwards

Data overwhelm
Participation



Time management
Planning

“Action research is open ended”

References

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Vaughn, S. Schumm, J, S. Sinagub, J. (2013) Focus Group Interviews in Education Psychology in *Sage Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, Inc

Thank-you