



Small objects of desire

Old water in new bottles?

THEO:

The design that I've chosen today for you is ... just a water bottle. But it's not any water bottle. It is a water bottle that filters the water as you drink water. And you just need to open the spout, filling the water. Obviously, as you can see, the filter is integrated with the spout, and literally filters the water as you drink. Obviously, I guess the reason that the designers did that is they're trying to find an alternative of single-serve plastic bottles, I think, I guess, in order to reduce maybe the consumption of plastic bottles around the world. That's what I think. And that's my object.

GEORGY:

That's very neat, isn't it? And these filters are replaceable, Theo?

THEO:

Yes. Every two months, I think, you have to replace the filter.

GEORGY:

So environmentally, that's quite a nice design.

THEO:

I guess that's the intention.

ROBIN:

What's it made of?

THEO:

I think it is PET.

GEORGY:

I'm going to look it up. Let's see.

THEO:

Actually, it is free from PVC and...

GEORGY:

...BPA and all the chemicals that you really want to avoid. I mean, that's the problem with one-use plastic bottles is although they look as if they'll go on forever, it turns out that there's chemicals leeching from them. And so after two or three uses, it's not a good thing for your health, generally speaking.

JEFF:

It's actually worse than that, because, worldwide, there are billions and billions of these bottles produced every day and thrown away. And the pollution problem is absolutely horrendous. So there are areas of the sea which have millions of these bottles floating around in them, which is just very bad for the environment. So if you've got one of these, you're using many, many less bottles.

ROBIN:

But the other thing, which is, in a way, more important than the polluting, or just as important, is the fact that the water is being transported all around the world, which is a very, very heavy item and it uses a lot of fuel. I mean, some water actually comes as far as from New Zealand.

THEO:

Yeah, yeah.

JEFF:

I was just wondering what the cost of this bottle is?

GEORGY:

The small one is £9. That's quite a lot. I mean, although it's probably only the equivalent of maybe eight bottles of bottled water when you're out and about, the psychological impact of having to spend out that much on a bottle—

THEO:

Yeah. I'm not sure about that because if you think that you buy this bottle for forever, essentially—

JEFF:

But you don't know that's going to last forever. It might only last a month or two months.

THEO:

Yes.

JEFF:

Then why is it so much more expensive than the 60 pence bottle of water, which is also a container?

THEO:

Because of the filter. The filter is a major factor, I guess. Because of the design. Why do the designers choose to have this wavy and bubbly form? Why do you think they chose to go down that route?

JEFF:

I think that's for strength.

ROBIN:

I think it's for easy holding in the hand.

GEORGY:

Yeah, I would agree with Robin. I think it's probably both of those things.

THEO:

Probably both, but also I think, personally, I think that this wavy and bubbly form creates associations with water waves or water bubbles. I think, I would suspect that, so it makes a clear association with the content of this bottle and the form.

JEFF:

It's interesting because you've got this indentation here, and you can get your fingers to lift the spout. For me it's disappointing that ... or can you? You can't stand it up.

THEO:

That's a good point. You know how I'm struggling with that every time that I'm trying to fill in water, the cap is rolling around?

ROBIN:

Well, you could put the cap the other way around so it didn't roll over.

GEORGY:

But then there's this issue of hygiene. I wouldn't like it I don't think.

JEFF:

But also I think it's a missed opportunity, because you could use that as a kind of a cup, a container that you would pour it in.

THEO:

Yes. It's a bit too small, but if it was a bit bigger.

JEFF:

Well, even at that size. It depends if you like drinking out of bottles, which I don't, or if you prefer a cup, which I do.

ROBIN:

I think it's that shape for aesthetic reasons, so it fits in with the overall rounded form of the bottle.