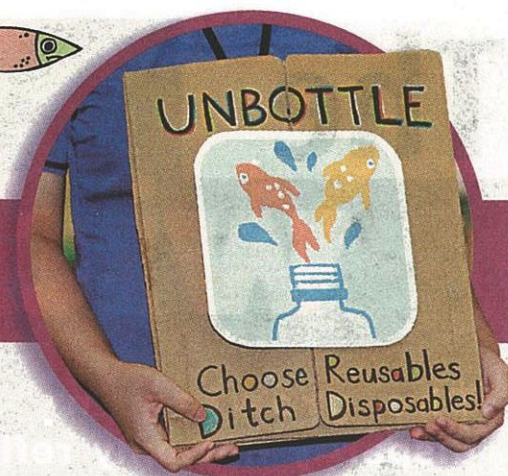




Green speech wins over audience

Five Form 6 students from Ying Wa Girls' School (YWGS, 英華女學校) help conserve the environment with their handy app named 'UnBottle'



IN June, the team from YWGS defeated nine outstanding teams and won the 'Best Presentation Award' in the Green Ambassador Pitch English Speaking Contest, revolving around the theme of 'Act on climate change – together, now'. The team was not only concerned about the environment, but also spoke eloquently enough to persuade the audience to help combat climate change with small moves.

"When people think of [being] green or environmentally-friendly, they think of sacrifice. But switching from disposable water bottles to reusable ones is actually a simple and easy step," said Woo Sing-yi (禹星怡).

To spread the message across Hong Kong, the team introduced 'UnBottle' – a mobile app helping users to foster a habit of eliminating plastic bottles in daily life. It is an incentive-driven app, in which users can earn a stamp by not using any plastic bottle that day. Users can then share their results on social platforms to increase peer-to-peer influence. App users can also learn about environmental fun facts to further raise their awareness.

When asked why they designed an app to engage the public, Ashlynn Ong Mae (王梅) said, "Technology is often seen as harmful to the environment, like e-waste. Yet, technology is about convenience, and we want to show that technology can indeed help protect the environment."

Though the idea of UnBottle is currently only on paper, it serves as a prototype on how easily the public can help mitigate climate change – from cutting the use of plastic bottles

to encouraging our friends and family members on social media to join the battle.

"We try to make it easier for everyone to contribute," Kwok Wing-kei (郭泳琪) explained on the rationale behind UnBottle.

Convince yourself and others

APART from feasibility and creativity, the teams' presentation skills were also judged. The five Ying Wa girls – with some of them being veteran debaters and public speakers – delivered a compelling speech with visually-attractive props. Here are some of their presentation tips.

1. Well-presented statistics

FIRST, big figures grab the audience's attention. They also present a quantified and comprehensive picture of how alarming the plastic bottle issue is. Here is what the YWGS team presented.

- One-tenth of the one hundred million tons of plastic produced every year goes to the seas.
- Some plastics take up to 20 years to start degrading.
- 330,000 barrels of oil are needed to manufacture all plastic bottles used in Hong Kong in a year.

Second, the statistics were presented chronologically. "We have to be creative and make figures memorable. We don't want the audience to just sit there listening to all the numbers but end up remembering nothing," said Sabrina Chan Hiu-ying (陳曉盈).

2. Emotional connection

FEELING are important. Throughout the presentation, 'fish' is often used to link up the evidence and arguments. To let the audience know how urgent it is to tackle the plastic issue, the girls appealed to the audience's emotions and asked them to picture fishes being killed by the plastic bottles we dump in oceans.

3. Believe in your speech

DO not deliver the speech mechanically, and stuff too much information into it. "It never works if you just Google on how to make an emotional speech," Kailee Poon Hoi-kiu (潘愷翹) said, "You have to first convince yourself before doing the same with others."



Sustain the impact

THE team even created an infographic of their stunning statistics and uploaded them onto the internet to stop people from using disposable water bottles.

goo.gl/jGuBU8



Green Buildings in Hong Kong

THE Green Ambassador Pitch was one of the highlights on engaging the public to conserve the environment. To boost public awareness on a green lifestyle, there are regular guided tours to some local green buildings. For example, at the Jockey Club Museum of Climate Change in CUHK, the Eco Park in Tuen Mun, the Green Hub in Tai Po, and many others. Visit www.hkgbc.org.hk for more details.

Vocabulary

eloquently (adv) 雄辯地
eliminate (v) 摒除

incentive (n) 誘因
prototype (n) 雛型

mitigate (v) 緩和
veteran (n) 資深的人

