



How Designers Figure Out What People Actually Need

KS2 DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

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What Do Designers Actually Do?

Designers are people who create things we use every day — from chairs and water bottles to apps and websites. But before they start drawing or building anything, they need to answer one really important question: **What problem are we actually trying to solve?** Sometimes we think we know what people need, but we're completely wrong!

Asking People What They Want

The first thing designers do is **talk to real people**. They might run **surveys** (questionnaires that ask lots of people the same questions), have **interviews** (one-on-one conversations), or watch people using existing products to see where they struggle.

Think of it like being a detective. You don't just guess what happened — you interview witnesses, look for clues, and piece together the real story.

For example, a designer making a new school lunch box might interview **100 students** to find out: Is it hard to open? Is it big enough? Do kids actually like it? These answers help them understand the real problem.

Finding Patterns and Real Needs

When designers collect lots of information, they look for **patterns** — things that many people mention again and again. Maybe **75% of students** say their lunch gets squashed, or everyone complains that their water bottle leaks. That's when designers know they've found a genuine problem worth solving.

Think of it like reading reviews on a game. If 1,000 people say the controls are confusing but 1 person says they don't like the colour, the controls are probably the real issue to fix.

Testing Ideas Before They're Final

Good designers don't just make something and hope it works. They build **prototypes** (early versions) and test them with real people. They might give **10 different designs** to test groups and watch which ones actually work best. This is called **user testing**.

They ask questions like: Can you open this easily? Do you understand how to use it? Would you actually buy this? The answers help them improve their design before spending lots of money on the final version.

Why This Matters

When designers skip this **research phase**, they often create things nobody wants. But when they listen carefully to real people and test their ideas, they solve actual problems and make things that are genuinely useful.