

A BOAT *made of* BOTTLES

▶ 40

1 A boat with a difference
The *Plastiki* looks similar to many other boats in Sydney Harbour. It's eighteen meters long, six meters wide, and it weighs about twelve thousand kilograms. It carries a crew of six people and has an average speed of five knots.¹ However, once you get near the *Plastiki*, you realize there's a big difference: It's made of twelve thousand five hundred reused plastic bottles.

2 How did the *Plastiki* begin?
David de Rothschild is an environmentalist who has crossed Antarctica and explored the Ecuadorian Amazon. One day, he was reading some information about all the plastic in the seas and oceans. He couldn't believe what he was reading. For example, humans throw away four out of every five plastic bottles they use, and plastic trash causes about eighty percent of the pollution in the ocean. In addition, scientists think that around one million seabirds die every year from plastic pollution. De Rothschild decided he wanted to get involved in the fight against ocean pollution. To help more people understand the problem, he started building a boat made of plastic bottles.



3 Designing the *Plastiki*
In addition to building the boat with recycled plastic, it was important to make the boat environmentally friendly and user-friendly. The boat uses renewable energy, such as wind power and solar energy. The crew can make meals with vegetables from the small garden at the back of the boat. They can take a break from work and get some exercise by using the special exercise bicycle. The energy from the bike provides power for the boat's computers. And if anyone needs to take a shower, the boat's shower uses saltwater from the ocean.

4 The journey
De Rothschild sailed the *Plastiki* across the Pacific Ocean from San Francisco to Sydney. That's more than fifteen thousand kilometers. On the way, he took the special boat through the "Great Garbage Patch." This is a huge area in the Pacific with 3.5 billion kilograms of trash. You can see every kind of human trash here, but the worst problem is the plastic. It kills birds and ocean life.

5 How well did the *Plastiki* survive the journey?
The journey wasn't always easy, and de Rothschild and his crew had to take care during storms. There were giant ocean waves, and winds of over one hundred kilometers per hour. The whole journey took one hundred and twenty-nine days. Originally, de Rothschild thought the boat could only travel once, but it lasted so well that he is planning to sail it again one day.

Word focus *take*

4 Work in pairs. Find and underline five expressions in the article with the word *take*. Then match the expressions with the uses (1–4).

- 1 transportation: *take a taxi*, _____
- 2 daily routines: *take a walk*, _____
- 3 lengths of time: *take a few days*, _____
- 4 idioms: *take time*, _____

5 Complete the sentences with the correct form of *take* and the words in the box.

a-break many days care a plane

- 1 The work was tiring, and the crew sometimes needed to take a break and relax.
- 2 The journey across the Great Garbage Patch was longer than expected—it _____.
- 3 Most people _____ from San Francisco to Sydney, so they don't know about the pollution in the ocean.
- 4 _____ of the environment is a global responsibility.