Assignment #1

Heuristic Evaluation

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TWR2012 – Assignment #1: Heuristic Evaluation

Product

**5” Folding Firebox Campfire Stove (Gen2)**: This a portable campfire stove, meant to provide heat for boiling water and cooking for two people. Folded flat, it will fit in a cargo pant or jacket pocket, and burns found twigs and small branches, avoiding the need to carry fuel. The stove is about $100 CDN in stainless steel, or $215 CDN in titanium at roughly half the weight.

A picture containing sky, nature

Description automatically generated

Personal Experience

I have used mini and micro camping stoves for canoe and camping trips for over 40 years. These stoves used various fuels, including liquid propane gas, butane-propane mixes, naphtha, alcohol, solid fuel tablets, charcoal, and wood.

In general, the larger and heavier systems are the quickest, and most convenient to use. They also require a lot of space, are heavy to carry, and you must decide how much fuel to drag along, making sure there is extra in case it is needed. My own preference is to take as little as possible and be prepared for extra time or unexpected fuel needs. This makes a tiny, folding stove which burns found twigs and branches ideal for me.

There are other portable wooden stoves, but I like the compactness, the solid structure, and the versatility of this micro model. I can also throw it into a backpack or pocket last minute without any fuel and know I could use it if I wanted to. Aside from one competitor (**BushBox**), others I have seen are too lightweight for quite hot fires and heavy pots of water.

Critical Analysis

I have found the pros and cons of the *Firebox Campfire Stove* to include:

Pros

* Very compact (folds to 19 cm x 13 cm x 1cm)
* Can boil water in a few minutes
* Allows easy access to feed fire indefinitely, through the top or with continuous feed by longer sticks
* Sturdy enough for large pots and pans, but can hold small pots or mugs as well
* One piece folding design easily set up and taken down
* Burns wood or alcohol burner, charcoal, solid fuel tablets
* Versatile configurations for various uses
* Good air flow and control (with some experience)

Cons

* Requires some expertise to light and maintain under different conditions of wood and weather
* Takes time to setup and light
* Requires fuel collection
* No control over natural fuel availability
* Restricted use during fire bans
* More expensive than most

The main purpose of any camping stove is to cook meals and boil water, and this stove does that quite well. As a micro stove it can meet the needs of three or four people if they are not in a hurry and can handle heat for long stretches without warping.

Similar stoves tend to be less portable, less sturdy, and are less versatile than this stove. Most others are made with thinner metal and will warp if the fire gets too hot or goes on too long. The most similar, and heavy-duty competitor is **BushBox**, which must be assembled and disassembled rather than folding up and requires an extended cooldown period before being taken apart. The alternative gasifier micro stoves like **Solo** and **Bushbuddy** burn more efficiently but burn too hot for cooking and do not fold flat.

The ease of setup and takedown, compact storage, and ability to supply the heat needed for either quick boiling of water, or slower pan cooking, allow the Firebox to meet the primary goals of most users. The main downside is the learning curve involved for anyone new to wood stoves, which is true for all wood burning micro stoves.

Third Party Literature

This stove, and many competitors have a substantial number of online articles, blogs, and YouTube channels reviewing them. Below are

Blog Review: FireAndSaw

<https://fireandsaw.com/firebox-stove-review/>

This review was quite positive, despite the stove’s weight of 944 g. He particularly liked how much heat it could put out and maintain, as well as the control provided by the damper. The other key feature highlighted was its fuel flexibility. Aside from the various wood configurations it allows (Swedish fire torch method, continuous stick feed, and traditional pre-loading), he pointed out it could be used with including charcoal, alcohol burners, solid fuel tablets, and sterno gel canisters.

YouTube Review: PaleoHikerMD

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3Cq0FB0XjY>

This YouTube reviewer specializes in wood burning micro stoves and has many reviews available. He asks the question whether this stove is worth the money, and concludes its sturdiness, performance, and compactness definitely make it worth the cost. He also notes it is heavy compared to others (944 g), and that there is a titanium version at half the weight (and double the price).

YouTube Review & Comparison: Kent Survival Gear & Review

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vaxdA34MA28>

This YouTube reviewer uses this gear review channel to discuss the equipment used on his primary survival channel. This video compares six brands of twig stoves, along with a few of their variations. His conclusions for the **Firebox** are quite positive, though his preference in general leans toward the expensive titanium options, which gives the **Firebox** an advantage since its stainless-steel weight is one of its biggest drawbacks.

References

Dan. (September 7th, 2021). *Firebox Stove Review: Is This The Best Folding Camp Stove?* Fire and Saw. <https://fireandsaw.com/firebox-stove-review/>

PaleoHikerMD. (March 5th, 2021). *The Stainless Steel Gen 2 5-Inch FIREBOX Folding Wood Stove Worth the MONEY?* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3Cq0FB0XjY>

Kent Survival. (February 27th, 2022). *Wood Burning Camp Stoves Compared – My Collection*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vaxdA34MA28>