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Assignment 1 : Affordances in Handheld Object



The sharpness of the foldable blade conveys the idea that it is the primary functional component of the artifact, and NOT where the user should physically interact with the artifact.

The size of the artifact itself suggests several possible uses. It's small size and lightweight suggest that the object is meant to be portable, and most likely not meant to be used within the home. The size of blades is usually proportional to the size of the object they are intended to cut, so the small blade provides the affordance that the artifact is used to make precise and delicate cuts.

If I had to guess, I think this artifact could function as a cigar cutter, as it seems like the ideal size to properly perform the needed cuts. This artifact may also be used in fishing as a way to remove stuck or entangled fishing lines. Both of those functions require something small, sharp, and easily transportable.

Thinking more abstractly, the artifact could be used as a small paperweight, a tiny kitchen knife (maybe for camping), or a cuticle remover.

I realized that my initial speculation on the object's functionalities was a little too "inside the box", only focusing on the sharp component of the artifact. However, there are many other affordances this device provides.

The hinge used to fold the blade flush with the rest of the artifact grants it additional affordances. It could function as a money clasp or device to group together and hold a collection of small pieces of paper. It could also function as a paper clip or clasp used to keep small plastic bags closed.

The straight edges of the artifact afford it the ability to be used as a tool of geometrical reference. It could be used to help draw straight lines, make sure items are flush, or to measure out a small, specific length.

The size and durability of the artifact grant it with the ability to function as a tremendous cleaning tool. The artifact could effectively be used to remove mud from the bottom of shoes or to scrape the crust off of an old dish.