

THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2106/210601-wellness-chambers.html>

Amazon wants to help its workers with stress and mental health problems. The company plans to put special booths in its warehouses to help workers relax. They are called "wellness chambers". The booths are part of a new scheme called "WorkingWell". Workers can sit inside a booth and watch videos about relaxation. Amazon has said the chambers are part of a system called "AmaZen". Zen is a practice whereby people meditate and focus on being calm. The company said: "During shifts, employees can visit AmaZen stations and watch short videos featuring easy-to-follow well-being activities, including guided meditations...and calming scenes with sounds."

Not all was calm and Zen-like on social media after Amazon shared a video of the AmaZen chamber on its Twitter account. Many social media users criticised the video and the idea of the wellness chamber. Most of the criticism was because of working conditions at Amazon's warehouses. Britain's Independent newspaper reported on an Amazon worker who said the chambers would not work. The worker described his experiences of working at Amazon. He said: "You don't get treated like a person. They work you like a robot... You don't have time to...get water. You don't have time to go to the bathroom." Amazon said: "The health and safety of employees is [our] number one priority and has been since day one."

Sources: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-57287151>
<https://finance.yahoo.com/news/amazon-rolls-zenbooth-warehouse-employees-135253883.html>
<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/amazon-amazen-union-alabama-warehouse-b1855408.html>

VOCABULARY MATCHING

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1. stress | a. The customary or expected way of doing something. |
| 2. booth | b. The state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy. |
| 3. scheme | c. Mental tension from bad, worrying or negative situations. |
| 4. practice | d. A plan for reaching a particular object or putting an idea into action. |
| 5. meditate | e. A very small room where a someone sits separated from other people. |
| 6. focus | f. Think deeply or focus one's mind for a period of time in silence for religious or spiritual purposes or to relax. |
| 7. well-being | g. Put all one's efforts onto a particular thing or action. |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 8. calm | h. Talk about the faults or bad things about someone or something. |
| 9. criticised | i. The state of something with regard to its appearance, quality, or working order. |
| 10. condition | j. A person employed for wages or salary; a worker. |
| 11. warehouse | k. Of a person not showing or feeling nervousness, anger, or other emotions. |
| 12. treated | l. The fact or condition of being regarded or treated as more important. |
| 13. employee | m. Behaved toward or dealt with in a certain way. |
| 14. priority | n. A large building where raw materials or manufactured goods may be stored before their export or distribution for sale. |

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2106/210601-wellness-chambers.html>

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

1. Amazon plans to sell "wellness chambers" from its warehouses. **T / F**
2. The wellness chambers are part of a scheme called "FeelingWell". **T / F**
3. Workers can watch videos about relaxation in the wellness chambers. **T / F**
4. Workers can get advice on meditating while in the wellness chambers. **T / F**
5. Many social media users think the wellness chambers are a great idea. **T / F**
6. An Amazon worker feels he's treated more like a robot than a human. **T / F**
7. An Amazon worker said he has plenty of time to go to the bathroom. **T / F**
8. Amazon says the health of its workers has always been its top priority. **T / F**

2. SYNONYM MATCH: (The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. stress | a. method |
| 2. chambers | b. circumstances |
| 3. system | c. tranquil |
| 4. focus | d. workers |
| 5. calming | e. regarded |
| 6. criticised | f. rooms |
| 7. conditions | g. pressure |
| 8. treated | h. concern |
| 9. employees | i. concentrate |
| 10. priority | j. found fault with |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. help its workers with stress and | a. priority |
| 2. put special booths in | b. on being calm |
| 3. people meditate and focus | c. sounds |
| 4. easy-to-follow well- | d. like a person |
| 5. calming scenes with | e. one |
| 6. Many social media users criticised | f. mental health problems |
| 7. working | g. the video |
| 8. You don't get treated | h. its warehouses |
| 9. our number one | i. conditions |
| 10. since day | j. being activities |

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2106/210601-wellness-chambers.html>

1. Where will Amazon put its special anti-stress booths?
2. What is the name of the scheme the booths are part of?
3. What can workers watch videos about?
4. When can Amazon employees visit the AmaZen stations?
5. What can workers receive guidance on?
6. Where did Amazon share a video of its AmaZen chamber?
7. What was most of the criticism Amazon received about?
8. What did a worker say Amazon worked people like?
9. What did the worker say he didn't have time to get?
10. Since when has workers' health and safety been Amazon's priority?

MENTAL HEALTH DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'stressed'?
3. How stressed are you?
4. What do you think of the company Amazon?
5. Would you like to work for Amazon?
6. What do you know about mental health?
7. What do you think of the wellness chambers?
8. What do you do to relax?
9. What do you think of meditation?
10. What can make the workplace stressful?

Amazon creates 'AmaZen' booths for stressed workers – 1st June, 2021
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MENTAL HEALTH DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'worker'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. What things make you stressed?
15. What do you do to relieve your stress?
16. Are you always calm?
17. Would you use an AmaZen?
18. Will robots replace all humans in workplaces?
19. What is your number one priority?
20. What questions would you like to ask Amazon's boss?