

The 'wacky' office

Level

Upper-intermediate

Tasks

- Matching a set of words with their opposites
- Scanning a radio transcript to find some words from the first exercise
- Reading the transcript about work environments
- Deciding if words from the transcript are nouns, verbs or both
- Ranking facilities for a new, purpose-built headquarters

How to use the lesson

- 1 Write the word 'wacky' on the whiteboard and ask the students to explain what it means. Give examples, such as 'a wacky idea'. Hand out the worksheet. Ask students to match the words in Box A with their opposites in Box B. Which words best describe their own workplace environment or office?

Answers

cosy – spacious noisy – quiet light – dark inspiring – uninspiring
warm – cool casual – smart conventional – unconventional

- 2 Ask students to scan the transcript and underline any words from exercise one they can find in a minute.

Answers

Paragraph 1: spacious / inspiring Paragraph 2: conventional / cosy
Paragraph 3: quiet Paragraph 4: casual / formal

- 3 Students read the whole transcript. Ask them to tell you about the facilities mentioned. You may wish to look at useful vocabulary, such as: *slide / pod / capsule / extravagant / ubiquitous / sinister*.
- 4 Ask students to categorise the words into nouns, verbs or both.

Answers

Nouns: environment / inspiration / culture / agenda / trend
Verbs: encourage / suggest / remind
Both: programme / tour / waste / e-mail / question / video / work

- 5 Divide the class into small groups in order to rank the facilities. Encourage discussion. Elicit the result from each group, and ask the group to explain the reasons behind their choices. Finish the lesson by giving language feedback.

Related websites

Send your students to these websites, or just take a look yourself.

- <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/7290322.stm>
- <http://www.cnn.com/2008/LIVING/worklife/07/18/wacky.workspace/index.html>
- <https://members.microsoft.com/careers/mslife/locations/corpcampus.msp>
- <http://www.flexibility.co.uk/flexwork/offices/facilities2.htm>