BreakingNewsEnglish - Many online quizzes at URL below

Amazon Alexa to answer questions on health

12th July, 2019



Technology has taken another step in helping us with our healthcare. We can now ask the digital device Alexa for advice if we are worried about our health.

Alexa is a virtual assistant created by the website Amazon.com. It is capable of listening to people and answering their questions. As well as voice interaction capabilities, Alexa can make to-do lists, play music upon voice request, and give us the latest news. Now Alexa can answer our health queries. Amazon has linked up with the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK to add a health advice capability to the software. Alexa will be able to search the NHS website for information and find an answer that is agreed on by many health experts.

Alexa's new health advice capability has been met with a mixed response. The UK Health Secretary said: "Technology like this is a great example of how people can access reliable, world-leading advice from the comfort of their home, reducing the pressure on our hardworking doctors and pharmacists." He added: "We want to empower every patient to take better control of their healthcare." Other people say we need to be careful about trusting the advice of a piece of software. They say we must go to a human doctor if we have serious health problems. Other people concerned about privacy. The group Big Brother Watch is worried about hacking. It said: "It's a data protection disaster waiting to happen."

Sources: thesun.co.uk / bbc.com / theguardian.com

Writing

It is very dangerous to use software to get healthcare advice. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

technology / step / healthcare / virtual / assistant / capabilities / software / experts / advice / response / reliable / pharmacists / patient / software / doctor / protection

True / False

- The article said healthcare has taken a step towards helping technology. T / F
- b) We won't be able to ask Alexa for health advice. T / F
- c) Amazon teamed Alexa up with the UK's national health service. T / F
- The article said Alexa will search the world's health service databases. T / F
- Everyone praised the new Alexa health advice function. T / F
- Alexa could reduce pressure on doctors who are hardworking. T / F
- People said we should see a doctor for serious health problems. T / F
- h) A data protection group said Alexa could be a disaster for privacy. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

1. step

a. trustworthy

2. worried

b. specialists

3. latest

c. major

4. linked up

d. advance

5. experts

e. reaction

6. response

f. stress

7. reliable

g. concerned

8. pressure

h. most recent

9. serious

.

10. disaster

i. catastrophe

combined

Discussion - Student A

- a) What do you know about Alexa?
- b) How useful is technology in healthcare?
- c) Where do you go for healthcare advice?
- d) Would you ask Alexa for health advice?
- e) What problems are there in asking Alexa for health advice?
- f) What is on your to-do list for today?
- g) When was the last time you asked for health advice?
- h) Do you ever use the Internet for health advice?

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Phrase Match

- 1. Technology has taken another
- 2. if we are worried
- 3. listening to people and answering
- 4. give us
- 5. an answer that is agreed on by
- 6. met with a mixed
- 7. people can access reliable, world-
- 8. We want to empower
- 9. be careful about trusting
- 10. It's a data protection disaster

Discussion - Student B

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) Do people need health advice from their home?
- c) Do doctors need less pressure?
- d) Will software be better than doctors one day?
- e) What is healthcare like in your country?
- f) What do you think healthcare will be like in the future?
- g) Would you worry about your privacy if you used Alexa?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Alexa?

Spelling

- 1. Alexa is a ilrvaut assistant
- 2. baapecl of listening to people
- 3. play music upon voice esqurte
- 4. answer our health queiser
- 5. caehsr the NHS website for information
- 6. agreed on by many health sterxpe
- 7. met with a mixed nseropse
- 8. access aeiebllr, world-leading advice
- 9. from the omrfcot of their home
- 10. reducing the puessrer
- 11. Other people are concerned about ypvcair
- 12. a data octenotrpi disaster

Answers - Synonym Match

1. d	2. g	3. h	4. j	5. b
6. e	7. a	8. f	9. с	10. i

- a. many health experts
- b. response
- c. waiting to happen
- d. every patient
- e. about our health
- f. the latest news
- g. step in helping us
- h. the advice
- i. their questions
- j. leading advice

Role Play

Role A - Health Advice

You think health advice is the best use for digital devices. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their uses. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): home security, homework or exercise.

Role B - Home Security

You think home security is the best use for digital devices. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their uses. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): health advice, homework or exercise.

Role C - Homework

You think homework is the best use for digital devices. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their uses. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): home security, health advice or exercise.

Role D - Exercise

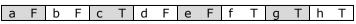
You think exercise is the best use for digital devices. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their uses. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): home security, homework or health advice.

Speaking - Digital Devices

Rank these with your partner. Put the things digital devices are best for at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- health advice
- telling the time
- · videos of cats
- home security
- managing money
- playing music
- homework
- exercise

Answers - True False



Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.