

From Corgi to Code: How a Dog Inspired Amazon's New AI Assistant

Amazon has recently introduced a new AI assistant named Rufus. This might seem like an odd choice, especially considering that many AI assistants have more high-tech-sounding names. For example, Amazon's first AI assistant, Alexa, was named after the ancient Library of Alexandria, symbolizing knowledge and learning. However, Rufus has a unique context that makes the name special.

The name "Rufus" dates back to Ancient Rome, where it was used to describe people with red hair. It was also a nickname for William II of England, who had a red complexion. Today, the name is often associated with dogs, especially because it sounds like a bark. It's surprising that Amazon chose this name for a digital assistant, but the story behind it is more meaningful than you would expect.

Rufus was named after Amazon's first office dog, a Welsh corgi who became a treasured part of the company's early days. In the late 1990s, when Amazon was just starting, Rufus would spend his days playing in the office, keeping the other employees company. After the beloved dog passed away in 2009, the company named one of its



buildings in his honor. Rufus was also the inspiration behind Amazon's latest AI assistant that launched this year.

This AI assistant is designed to help customers make better purchasing decisions. The name Rufus represents not just a dog, but the friendly, helpful spirit that Amazon wants its customers to experience.

Rufus brought about many positive changes in Amazon. The canine helped kick-start Amazon's dog-friendly workplace culture, with more than 10,000 dogs officially "working" at Amazon's offices around the world. The company has dog parks and plenty of treats for pets who visit.

While Rufus is gone, his legacy lives on in the company's culture and in the AI assistant that now shares his name.

Reading Comprehension

- () 1. What is the passage mainly about? (main idea)
- (A) How the name of Amazon's new AI assistant honors William II of England.
 - (B) The features of Amazon's latest AI assistant, which is named after a dog.
 - (C) Why Amazon's new AI assistant, Rufus, will take the place of Alexa.
 - (D) The lasting impact that Amazon's first office dog left behind.
- () 2. From (A) to (F) below, choose the **ONES** that are true according to this passage. (多選題)
- (supporting details)
- (A) Rufus the dog used to assist Amazon employees in making decisions within the company.
 - (B) Rufus the dog was part of Amazon's early days and inspired their first AI assistant.
 - (C) Amazon's latest AI assistant is designed to help customers with purchases.
 - (D) Alexa, another AI assistant created by Amazon, was not named after a canine.
 - (E) The name "Rufus" is commonly associated with people who have curly hair.
 - (F) Amazon's dog-friendly workplace culture came to a halt after Rufus' death.
3. Which word in the second paragraph means "to make a connection in one's mind between two things or two people"? (填充) (words in context)
- _____
4. 請根據文章內容，從文章中找出最適當的單詞 (word) 填入下列句子空格中，並視句型結構需要做適當的字形變化，使句子語意完整、語法正確，並符合全文文意。每格限填一個單詞 (word)。
- (填充) (words in context)

The name of Amazon's latest AI assistant was _____ (A) _____ by the company's first office dog, a Welsh corgi that passed away in 2009.

(A) _____

Vocabulary and Phrases

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Welsh corgi <i>n.</i> 威爾斯柯基犬 | 4. complexion <i>n.</i> 膚色，氣色 | 7. launch <i>v.</i> 推出，發起 |
| 2. code <i>n.</i> 程式編碼 | 5. keep someone company <i>phr.</i> 陪伴某人 | 8. purchase <i>n.</i> 購買 |
| 3. symbolize <i>v.</i> 象徵，代表 | 6. beloved <i>adj.</i> 深愛的 | 9. kick-start <i>v.</i> 促使……開始 |

Rebuilding With Earth: A Fire-Resistant Solution

In the western United States, people are looking for new ways to rebuild homes destroyed by wildfires. In particular, Melanie Glover and her family have decided to use a unique material derived from nature to create a safer home. After losing their house in a terrible fire in 2021, they wanted to ensure their new home would 1 strong against future fires.

The Glover family's story began in Superior, Colorado, when fierce winds fueled a fire that ruined their neighborhood. Although they escaped 2, the experience left them shaken. Determined to rebuild, they turned to earthen materials that have been used for centuries around the world. This method is known for its strength and energy efficiency.

Earthen homes are made from natural materials like soil and water, mixed to form solid blocks. A common type of earthen material is a mixture of clay, sand, and straw that dries in the sun to create sturdy bricks. Research suggests that these blocks can withstand high temperatures and might even become stronger when exposed to fire. In fact, when 3 with extreme heat, the blocks transformed into a



hard, clay-like material, demonstrating their fire-resistant qualities.

Melanie's new home features 4 walls and energy-efficient windows, designed to survive intense weather and fire. Unlike traditional houses, the construction minimizes exposed wood, which helps reduce fire risk.

While earth homes are still uncommon in the U.S., they 5 a promising alternative for fire safety. As more families consider earth blocks for their homes, builders are working to create standards that make these constructions more accessible. With growing interest in eco-friendly building methods, earth homes may become a popular choice for those looking to rebuild safely in fire-prone areas.

Fill in the Blanks

(A) unharmed

(B) stand

(C) offer

(D) thick

(E) tested

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Vocabulary and Phrases

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. rebuild <i>v.</i> 重建 | 4. derive <i>v.</i> 取得，得到 | 7. withstand <i>v.</i> 承受 |
| 2. resistant <i>adj.</i> 耐……的 | 5. earthen <i>adj.</i> 泥土製的 | 8. accessible <i>adj.</i> 可得到的 |
| 3. wildfire <i>n.</i> 野火 | 6. sturdy <i>adj.</i> 牢固的 | 9. -prone <i>suffix</i> 較常碰到……問題的 |

譯 從柯基犬到程式編碼：一隻狗如何啟發亞馬遜最新的人工智慧助理

亞馬遜最近推出一個名為 Rufus 的新人工智慧助理。這個名字可能聽起來有些奇怪，尤其是考慮到許多人工智慧助理的名字通常更具高科技感。例如，亞馬遜的第一個人工智慧助理 Alexa 是以古代亞歷山卓圖書館命名，象徵著知識和學習。然而，Rufus 擁有獨特的背景，使這個名字與眾不同。

「Rufus」這個名字可追溯到古羅馬，它用來形容擁有紅色頭髮的人。它也是英國國王威廉二世的暱稱，因為他有著紅潤的膚色。現今，此名字經常與狗被聯繫在一起，尤其是因為它聽起來像狗叫聲。亞馬遜選擇這個名字來命名一個數位助理，確實讓人感到驚訝，但其背後的故事比預期的更具意義。

Rufus 是以亞馬遜的第一隻辦公室狗命名的，它是一隻威爾斯柯基犬，並成為公司早期珍貴的成員。1990 年代末，當亞馬遜還在創業初期，Rufus 在辦公室裡陪伴其他員工來度過牠的日子。這隻深受喜愛的狗於 2009 年去世後，亞馬遜公司將一座大樓以牠的名字命名。Rufus 也是亞馬遜今年推出的最新人工智慧助理的靈感來源。

這個人工智慧助理的設計目的是幫助顧客做出更好的購買決策。Rufus 此名字不僅代表一隻狗，它更象徵著亞馬遜希望其顧客體驗到的友善與互助精神。

Rufus 為亞馬遜帶來許多正向的變化。這隻狗促使亞馬遜開始他們寵物友善的職場文化，現在全球有超過 10,000 隻狗被正式認可為「在員工」，並在亞馬遜的辦公室中「工作」。公司還設有狗公園，並為來訪的寵物提供豐富的零食。

雖然 Rufus 已經不在了，但牠的遺澤依然在公司的職場文化中，以及以牠命名的人工智慧助理而得以延續。

譯 以泥土重建：一種防火的解決方案

在美國西部，人們正在尋找新的方法來重建被野火摧毀的房屋。特別是梅蘭妮·格洛弗 (Melanie Glover) 和她的家人，他們已經決定使用一種取自自然的獨特材料來創造更安全的家。在 2021 年一場嚴重的火災中失去房屋後，他們希望確保新家能夠抵禦未來的火災。

格洛弗一家的故事始於科羅拉多州的蘇必利爾市，當時猛烈的風助長火勢，摧毀了他們的社區。儘管他們成功逃脫且未受傷害，這次的經歷讓他們深感震驚。決心重建家園的他們，決定使用全球各地具百年歷史的泥土製的材料。這種建築方式因其強度和節能效率而聞名。

泥土製的房屋由天然材料，如土壤和水混合而成，會形成堅固的磚塊。常見的泥土建材種類是由黏土、沙子和稻草混合而成，並在陽光下乾燥，製成牢固的磚塊。研究表明，這些磚塊能夠承受高溫，甚至可能在暴露於火焰時變得更加堅固。事實上，當這些磚塊接受極高溫的測試時，它們轉變為堅硬的類似陶土的材料，展示了其防火特性。

梅蘭妮的新家設有厚重的牆壁和節能窗戶，旨在抵禦極端的天氣和火災。與傳統住宅不同，這種建設盡可能減少裸露的木材，因而降低火災風險。

儘管泥土製的房屋在美國仍較為罕見，但它們為防火安全提供一個有希望的替代方案。隨著越來越多的家庭考慮使用泥土磚來建造房屋，許多建商正努力制定標準，使這些建築方法更加普及。隨著對環保建築方法的興趣日益增長，泥土房屋可能會成為那些希望在火災易發地區安全重建的人的熱門選擇。

閱讀測驗解答： 1. D 2. CD 3. associate(d) 4. inspired

文意選填解答： 1. B 2. A 3. E 4. D 5. C

Acknowledgments

“From Corgi to Code: How a Dog Inspired Amazon’s New AI Assistant” by Catherine Ruth Harrington／審者：蘇文賢

“Rebuilding with Earth: A Fire-Resistant Solution” by Catherine Ruth Harrington

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