JAPAN'S CAPSULE HOTELS

I
Strange ideas for hotels around the world are not unusual these days. The Japanese capsule hotels, however, are the ones that most stretch the imagination . The very first capsule hotel was opened in 1979 in Osaka and was designed by Japanese architect Kisho Kurokawa, who also designed the first Capsule Tower in Tokyo in 1972. This building offered 140 tiny apartments to businessmen who worked in central Tokyo during the week and lived far away. It also appealed to single men who were looking for low-price accommodation. Each apartment contained a bed, a folding desk and even a bathroom all squeezed into a space of just 10 square meters.

II

The capsule hotel, designed a few years later, is Japan's solution for cheap accommodation for guests who want a place to sleep and nothing else. Capsule hotels are one of Japan's best known and unique types of lodging. They are usually found around major train stations in large cities and are suitable for individuals looking for a low-budget hotel. Capsule hotels provide their guests with a bed, a small table, .TV and radio, and self-controlled air conditioning for less money than regular or business hotels. The sleeping quarters consist of capsules that are approximately the size of a refrigerator and are stacked one on top of the other. When a guest gets the top capsule he has to climb some steps to get there.

III

A separate section of the hotel has public bathing facilities, lockers for personal belongings and in some cases a restaurant or a vending machine .It is also common to find men-only or women-only capsule hotels, although they are mostly used by men, especially Japanese businessmen who need to stay another day in the city. This is why these hotels sell shirts, pants, belts and ties to people who didn't plan on spending the night away from home.

IV
Guests who want to use the hotel have to follow a few very strict rules, such as leaving their shoes in a shoebox, getting a sleeping capsule number and getting a locker for their luggage, since the capsule is too small to contain any luggage.

V
Despite the fact that the first capsule hotel was designed more than 30 years ago, they are still popular throughout Japan today. This type of hotel accommodation, however, is not recommended for those who suffer from claustrophobia!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1. What do we learn about the first Capsule Tower in Tokyo from paragraph I?
PUT A BY THE TWO CORRECT ANSWERS.
..... i)What made its apartments unique.
..... ii)How many unmarried men lived there.
..... iii) How much each apartment cost.
..... iv)Why businessmen chose to live there.
..... v)Why it had 140 apartments.
..... vi) Why it was opened in 1979.
(2x8=16 points)

2. COMPLETE THE SENTENCE.
According to paragraph II, regular business hotels are .....
..... .
(8 points)

3. Why does the writer say that the capsules are “the size of a refrigerator”? (lines 15-16)
ANSWER: ..... .
(8 points)

4. How are the Capsule Tower and capsule hotels similar according to paragraphs I and II?
CIRCLE THE CORRECT ANSWER.
i)They were both designed in the same year.
ii)They both have a refrigerator.
iii) They were designed only for people with a low salary.
iv) They both offer very basic amenities.

5. COMPLETE THE SENTENCE.
From paragraph III we learn that, unlike men, women .....
..... .
(7 points)
6. COMPLETE THE SENTENCE ACCORDING TO PARAGRAPH III.
When businessmen need to unexpectedly spend another day in the city, they can
..... .
(8 points)

7. CIRCLE THE CORRECT ANSWER. (Paragraph IV)
Guests who stay at the capsule hotels are asked (–).
i) not to enter their capsule barefoot
ii) to take a sleeping pill
iii) not to be so strict
iv) to follow hotel policy

LIVEWORKSHEETS

8. CIRCLE THE CORRECT ANSWER. (Paragraph V)
Although many years have passed since the first capsule hotel was designed (–).

i) famous people continue to recommend it

ii) many people keep on staying there

iii) only local guests may stay there

iv) only people with fear of small spaces should stay there

LIVEWORKSHEETS