

## A good night's sleep the ultimate status symbol

### Level 3 • Advanced

#### 1 Warmer

Put these creatures in order based on how much they sleep per day.

dogs

humans

horses

cats

cows

most sleep

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

least sleep

#### 2 Key words

Fill the gaps in the sentences with these key words from the text.

attribute  
pod

sensor  
taxing

errand  
rebranding

adversary  
norm

wimp  
monitor

1. A \_\_\_\_\_ is someone who is not strong, brave or confident.
2. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a piece of equipment that reacts to physical changes.
3. A nap \_\_\_\_\_ is a small space specifically designed for people to rest or sleep in.
4. A \_\_\_\_\_ is something that is usual or expected.
5. If you \_\_\_\_\_ something, you check it regularly in order to find out what is happening.
6. An \_\_\_\_\_ is a small job that involves going to collect or deliver something.
7. If work is described as \_\_\_\_\_, it is difficult and requires a lot of effort.
8. If you \_\_\_\_\_ a problem to something, you believe that it is the result of a particular situation or event or to someone's actions.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ is the process of giving a product or an organization a new image.
10. An \_\_\_\_\_ is an enemy or an opponent.

#### 3 What do you think?

Choose the best answer to these questions. Then, check your answers by reading the text.

1. How many hours' sleep is the 'ultimate status symbol'?
  - a. seven
  - b. eight
  - c. nine
2. Who sleeps longer?
  - a. white Americans
  - b. African Americans
3. Who gets the most sleep and the best quality of sleep in America?
  - a. poor white shift workers
  - b. rich white women
4. Who sleeps longer?
  - a. humans
  - b. giraffes

## A good night's sleep the ultimate status symbol

### Level 3 • Advanced

#### How a good night's sleep became the ultimate status symbol

*Arianna Huffington espouses the virtues of eight hours and luxury products promise rejuvenating rest but who can really afford to sleep safe and sound?*

**Arwa Mahdawi**

**1 June, 2016**

- 1 Sleep deprivation used to be a badge of honour: a sign you were busy and important and very much in demand. Snoozing was losing and sleep was for wimps. Now, however, Arianna Huffington's *The Sleep Revolution*, a 'call to bed' that promises to transform your life "one night at a time", is a *New York Times* best-seller and Huffington is urging people to "sleep their way to the top".
- 2 Meanwhile, the sleep industry has woken up big time and a whole range of start-ups are reinventing where, when and how we sleep, as well as how much we're prepared to pay for it. For the more upmarket snoozer, luxury hotels are offering "sleep retreats"; more than \$1,000 gets you dinner and a movie about sleep. And, if you're staying home, you can upgrade your bedroom with everything from a mattress cover with a sensor that tracks your sleep (\$249) to a brainwave-monitoring sleeping mask that lets you nap more efficiently (\$299).
- 3 Sleep hasn't just been corporatized – it has infiltrated corporations. A number of companies already have nap pods and Huffington predicts that nap rooms in offices are going to become "as common as conference rooms" in the next two years. So, how did this happen? How did sleep, something humans have done since long before Huffington awoke to it, suddenly become so fashionable?
- 4 Getting enough sleep is a natural fit for the sort of lifestyle in which paying \$10 for green juice and \$34 for a SoulCycle class is the norm. Then, there's the rise of the quantified self through wearable technology. Our bodies have become input/output devices that we monitor and optimize for greater efficiency and sleep has become another data set to be tracked. What Huffington emphasizes about sleep, after all, is not that it rests you but that it *restores* you. Sleep, she says, is the ultimate performance enhancer and getting eight hours of rest has become the ultimate status symbol.
- 5 You know how Arianna Huffington gets her eight hours? Well, for one thing, she has "nine or so" assistants, according to a recent *New York Times* profile. Huffington calls them her "A-Team"; they do everything from running her errands to planning her travel to loading *The Huffington Post* on her computer in the morning. According to the *Times*, most of the A-Team can only endure about 12 months of the work because it's so taxing. The low pay also means many of them take second jobs. Basically, they don't sleep so that Huffington can ... and can sell books about it.
- 6 Getting enough sleep isn't just a question of valuing sleep enough to go to bed at the right time; it's a question of going to bed in the right neighbourhood and in the right body. Numerous studies show that you're more likely to sleep poorly if you're poor. It's hard to sleep if you're worried about your safety or haven't had enough to eat. It's hard to sleep if you're one of the 15 million American shift workers who work irregular hours. Research has also found that there's a black/white sleep gap. One study shows that, while white people sleep an average of 6.85 hours, African Americans sleep an average of 6.05 hours. They also have a lower quality of sleep. Researchers have attributed this, in part, to the stress of discrimination.
- 7 Want to know who gets the most sleep and the best quality of sleep in America? Wealthy white women. Which, if I'd hazard a guess, is probably the same demographic Huffington is targeting her book at. Huffington describes her promotion of sleep as a "revolution" but, really, it's a rebranding. The very real sleep crisis we face isn't down to a few rich people thinking it's a waste of time; it's down to the 99% not being able to afford to spend time sleeping.
- 8 While sleep is currently enjoying a moment, it will probably be short-lived. Sleep may be a performance enhancer but it's an inefficient one. The real prize is finding a way to negate sleep deprivation so humans can function on less sleep. Unsurprisingly, the military is at the forefront of this research. In 2008, the Pentagon published a report called "Human Performance" which examined the possibility of a future in which soldiers could perform at their peak with only a couple of hours' sleep. "Suppose a human could be engineered who slept for the same amount of time as a giraffe (1.9 hours per night).

## A good night's sleep the ultimate status symbol

### Level 3 • Advanced

This would lead to an approximately *twofold* decrease in the casualty rate. An adversary would need an approximately 40% increase in the troop level to compensate for this advantage.” The report goes on to look at the effects of ampakines, a class of drugs that modulate neurotransmitters in the brain, to remove the effects of sleep deprivation.

9 Eventually, humans will figure out a way to get rid of sleep. Spending a third of your life unconscious won't be a luxury anymore; it'll be something only the poor will be forced to do. At which point, we may need a whole new sort of sleep revolution.

© Guardian News and Media 2016

First published in *The Guardian*, 01/06/16

### 4 Comprehension check

Choose the best answer according to the text.

- What is the message of Arianna Huffington's book, *The Sleep Revolution*?
  - that sleeping eight hours a night is a badge of honour
  - that sleep helps to restore the human body
  - that sleep is a question of going to bed at the right time
- Why do some members of Huffington's 'A-Team' take second jobs?
  - because their work is so taxing
  - because of the low pay they receive
  - because they don't get enough sleep so they can do extra work at night
- Which institution is leading research into negating sleep deprivation?
  - the Pentagon
  - The Huffington Post*
  - the US military
- How have corporations responded to the 'sleep revolution'?
  - They have installed special nap pods so that employees can rest at work.
  - They have recommended that their employees sleep at least eight hours a night.
  - They have replaced conference rooms with nap rooms.

### 5 Key terms

Match these phrases from the text with their meanings.

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. sleep deprivation    | a. a new small business                                    |
| 2. performance enhancer | b. in a leading or important position                      |
| 3. badge of honour      | c. a substance that makes you stronger, faster etc         |
| 4. start-up             | d. a situation in which you do not get enough sleep        |
| 5. at the forefront     | e. something that is seen by some people as an achievement |

## A good night's sleep the ultimate status symbol

### Level 3 • Advanced

#### 6 Verb + noun collocations

Match the verbs in the left-hand column with the nouns and noun phrases in the right-hand column.

- |               |                          |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| 1. run        | a. the moment            |
| 2. enhance    | b. a demographic         |
| 3. work       | c. errands               |
| 4. target     | d. irregular hours       |
| 5. enjoy      | e. a way to do something |
| 6. figure out | f. performance           |

#### 7 Word-building

Fill the gaps in the sentences with the correct form of the word in brackets at the end of each sentence.

- How did sleep become so \_\_\_\_\_? [FASHION]
- \_\_\_\_\_ technology enables people to monitor their bodies. [WEAR]
- Researchers have attributed the fact that African Americans sleep less to \_\_\_\_\_. [DISCRIMINATE]
- Sleep is actually an \_\_\_\_\_ performance enhancer. [EFFICIENT]
- Ampakines are drugs that remove the effects of sleep \_\_\_\_\_. [DEPRIVE]
- People are more likely to sleep \_\_\_\_\_ if they are poor. [POOR]

#### 8 Discussion

Discuss the statements.

- No one needs eight hours' sleep a night. Six is more than enough for most people.
- The 'sleep revolution' is just another way of making money.
- Eventually, humans will invent a way of avoiding sleep altogether.

## A good night's sleep the ultimate status symbol

### Level 3 • Advanced

#### KEY

#### 1 Warmer

1. cats (12.5 hours)
2. dogs (10.5 hours)
3. humans (8 hours)
4. cows (4 hours)
5. horses (2 hours)

#### 2 Key words

1. wimp
2. sensor
3. pod
4. norm
5. monitor
6. errand
7. taxing
8. attribute
9. rebranding
10. adversary

#### 3 What do you think?

1. b
2. a
3. b
4. a

#### 4 Comprehension check

1. b
2. b
3. c
4. a

#### 5 Key terms

1. d
2. c
3. e
4. a
5. b

#### 6 Verb + noun collocations

1. c
2. f
3. d
4. b
5. a
6. e

#### 7 Word-building

1. fashionable
2. wearable
3. discrimination
4. inefficient
5. deprivation
6. poorly