

Take sleep seriously!

- 1 Research projects, assignments, presentations ... how do you cope? When there's work to be done, it's easy to cut back on sleep and do without breaks. Have you ever said any of these things? Compare your answers in pairs.



I chatted with friends on Facebook.

I research information on my iPad in bed before I go to sleep.

I stayed up so late working on this project!

When I get to the end of a piece of work, I have a treat or go out for a walk.

So long as I get a good night's sleep I can handle anything.

I've worked so hard on this. I was on the computer for six hours yesterday!

- 2 Look at this article about sleep. Is the article easy to read? Why? / Why not?

Sleep Training

Research suggests that many teenagers are getting just five hours of sleep a night. Teachers report teenagers falling asleep in class and many keep their energy levels up with sugary drinks and snacks. But it's not just teenagers. The recommended number of hours of sleep for adults is seven to nine, yet a survey conducted by the National Sleep Foundation in the US found 39% of people in the UK and 66% of Japanese people slept for less than seven hours on work nights. The cortex – the part of the brain which controls thinking, speech and memory – needs time off at the end of the day. Without sleep, we become forgetful, less able to maintain conversations and find it harder to concentrate. Long-term sleep loss makes us more vulnerable to illness and mood swings. A study of the sleeping habits of 12 to 18 year olds shows that those that sleep less than five hours a night are 70% more likely to suffer depression. So why do we do it? In today's society we are constantly pushing

ourselves to achieve more, and cutting into our sleeping time is inevitable. Many of us are using our smartphones way into the night to keep in touch, keep up-to-date and not miss out. Stimulants like caffeine and sugar are delaying our sleep at night. Believe it or not, there's now a thing called sleep-training. And their advice is: get some exercise during the day and don't nap in the afternoon. Eat a full meal in the early evening and avoid eating chocolate or drinking coffee before bed. Don't text, use a computer or watch TV for half an hour before going to bed and sleep somewhere which is not too warm and not too bright. In short, it's time we started to look after ourselves and take sleep seriously.

