

## THE SLEEP FACTOR:

Teacher guidance, Lessons & resources

### KS2-4

This guidance accompanies three lessons exploring the importance of healthy sleep. The lessons aim to raise awareness of the impact of quality sleep, and to equip young people with the skills and strategies they need to get better sleep.

One lesson has been designed for key stage 2, looking at changes to sleep patterns during puberty; one for key stage 3, encouraging healthy sleep habits; and one for key stage 4 – which addresses the impact of the shift in adolescent sleep patterns.

We are grateful to the Department of Children's Sleep Medicine at Evelina London Children's Hospital for their advice and support in creating these resources.

**PLEASE READ AND CONSIDER THE GUIDANCE FIRST, BEFORE DELIVERING THE LESSONS.**

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See our podcast and PowerPoints on the same topic:

[www.pshe-association.org.uk/sleep](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk/sleep)



# PREPARING TO TEACH

These lessons should be taught within the context of a planned series of lessons looking at issues around healthy balanced lifestyles. For key stage 2, this lesson may be most appropriate when introducing the physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty. For key stage 3, the lesson is aimed at supporting pupils with transition, so would be most effective with Year 7 pupils who have recently started secondary school. For key stage 4, the lesson may be sited within lessons on effective study habits or during a unit of work on maintaining a healthy, balanced lifestyle. Throughout the lessons, we have focused on habits and routines that promote healthy sleep which young people are able to take responsibility for in their own lives. The new statutory expectations regarding health education require schools to address healthy lifestyle factors including sleep. These lessons can support schools in meeting those requirements through their PSHE curriculum.

## Links to PSHE Association Programme of Study\*

Each of the three core themes of the [PSHE programme of study \(2020\)](#) contains suggested learning opportunities which provide the context through which learners can develop knowledge, essential skills and attributes. The table below shows the learning opportunities from the relevant PSHE education core themes at KS2, KS3 and KS4 which are met by these lessons. Learning should always take place within a spiral programme of knowledge, skills and attribute development, where prior learning is revisited, reinforced and extended in age and stage-appropriate contexts.

	LEARNING OPPORTUNITY FROM PROGRAMME OF STUDY	LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES
KEY STAGE 2	<p><b>H2.</b> about the elements of a balanced, healthy lifestyle</p> <p><b>H3.</b> about choices that support a healthy lifestyle, and recognise what might influence these</p> <p><b>H4.</b> how to recognise that habits can have both positive and negative effects on a healthy lifestyle</p> <p><b>H8.</b> about how sleep contributes to a healthy lifestyle; routines that support good quality sleep; the effects of lack of sleep on the body, feelings, behaviour and ability to learn</p> <p><b>H16.</b> about strategies and behaviours that support mental health — including how good quality sleep, physical exercise/time outdoors, being involved in community groups, doing things for others, clubs, and activities, hobbies and spending time with family and friends can support mental health and wellbeing</p>	<p>To learn about the importance of good sleep Pupils will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain why sleep is important for a healthy lifestyle</li> <li>• describe bedtime routines that help improve sleep</li> <li>• identify how sleep patterns and needs might change during puberty</li> </ul>
KEY STAGE 3	<p><b>H13.</b> the importance of, and strategies for, maintaining a balance between school, work, leisure, exercise, and online activities</p> <p><b>H15.</b> the importance of sleep and strategies to maintain good quality sleep</p>	<p>To learn about healthy sleep habits Pupils will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain the impacts of sleep on health and wellbeing</li> <li>• describe healthy sleep patterns and identify factors which can reduce sleep quality</li> <li>• describe a range of strategies for ensuring appropriate sleep patterns</li> </ul>
KEY STAGE 4	<p><b>H5.</b> the characteristics of mental and emotional health; to develop empathy and understanding about how daily actions can affect people's mental health</p> <p><b>H11.</b> to make informed lifestyle choices regarding sleep, diet and exercise</p> <p><b>H16.</b> how to take increased personal responsibility for maintaining and monitoring health (including cancer prevention, screening and self-examination)</p>	<p>To learn about the importance of sleep and strategies to maintain good sleep habits Pupils will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain the importance of sleep for wellbeing and brain function, particularly during adolescence</li> <li>• explain how lifestyle choices can affect sleep quality</li> <li>• describe a range of strategies for ensuring appropriate sleep patterns and suggest advice for those struggling to sleep</li> </ul>

\* Updated to match the new 2020 edition of the Programme of Study.

# Creating a safe learning environment

A safe learning environment helps pupils feel comfortable with sharing their ideas, values and attitudes without attracting negative feedback, and will help teachers to manage discussions on sensitive issues confidently. As with many topics in PSHE education, the topic of sleep may seem straightforward; but there can still be sensitivities involved for some pupils, as there may be elements at home beyond their control (e.g. overcrowding, loud environment etc.). These lessons therefore focus on habits and routines which will empower young people to make realistic and positive changes to their sleep.

## It is good practice for teachers to:

- work with pupils to establish ground rules about how they will behave in PSHE lessons, such as:
  - Everyone has the right to be heard and respected.
  - We will use language that won't offend or upset other people.
  - We will use the correct terms, and if we don't know them we'll ask the teacher.
  - We will comment on what was said, not the person who said it.
  - We won't share our own or our friends' personal experiences.
  - We won't put anyone on the spot and we have a right to pass.
  - We won't judge or make assumptions about anyone.
- offer opportunities for pupils to discuss issues in small groups as well as sharing views with the class
- make boxes available in which pupils can place anonymous questions or concerns, to avoid having to voice them in front of the class
- provide balanced information and differing views to help pupils clarify their own opinions
- be sensitive to the needs and experiences of individuals — some pupils may have direct experience of some of the issues covered
- distance the learning from pupils to discourage personal disclosures in the classroom and to keep the learning environment safe
- always work within the school's policies on safeguarding and confidentiality
- link PSHE education into the whole school approach to supporting pupil welfare
- make pupils aware of sources of support, both inside and outside the school

*\*Further guidance on creating a safe learning environment is available from the PSHE Association.*

# DEVELOPING SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE

## Changes in sleep patterns

SLEEP IN 6-12 YEAR OLDS	
ISSUE	EXPLANATION
Sleep requirements	Children of this age require about 10-11 hours of sleep per night on average, although many are averaging between 9-10 hours, due to increasing school obligations and extracurricular activities, as well as increased screen time in the evenings. Some pupils might have less need for sleep and be able to get away with less without it impacting on their sleep, whilst others may need more — sleep needs vary between individuals, just like height, so we can't expect to have the same needs as other individuals.
Common sleep problems	Children can experience a range of sleep problems at this age, such as difficulty falling and staying asleep, sleepwalking, sleep terrors, teeth grinding, nightmares or snoring.
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children of this age need a regular sleep schedule, waking up and going to sleep at the same time every day (including at the weekends). Bedtime for this age group should be before 9pm.</li><li>• Routines before bed should include calming activities such as reading and one-to-one time with a parent. The hour before bedtime should avoid screen use (e.g. TV, phones, tablets etc.) or overly energetic activities.</li><li>• Children should avoid caffeinated or high-sugar products such as fizzy drinks, tea or coffee and sweets, particularly during the afternoon and evening.</li></ul>



SLEEP IN 13-18 YEAR OLDS	
ISSUE	EXPLANATION
SLEEP REQUIREMENTS	Teenagers need approximately 9 hours of sleep per night, although many are averaging approximately 7 hours, meaning they are significantly sleep deprived. After puberty, the internal clock of an adolescent undergoes a biological shift of up to 2 hours later, meaning that a 14-year-old who used to fall asleep at 9pm could now find it difficult to fall asleep before 11pm. The time that teenagers naturally wake up also shifts by up to 2 hours later. This is why teenagers often find it difficult to wake up early and can become frustrated if advised to go to bed early.
COMMON SLEEP PROBLEMS	<p>Many teenagers try to compensate for sleep loss by sleeping in at weekends. However, this can continue to disrupt sleep patterns and make it harder to get back into a routine on Sunday night / Monday morning.</p> <p>Teenagers can suffer particularly from moodiness or irritability when sleep deprived, as well as experiencing delayed cognitive ability. Teenagers are also likely to be more impulsive, and engage in risk-taking behaviours if they are sleep-deprived.</p>
RECOMMENDATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teenagers will also benefit from a regular sleep schedule, waking up and going to sleep at the same time every day, avoiding lying in at the weekends. Teenagers should go to sleep in time to get 9 hours sleep before the required wake up time. Some people find afternoon naps helpful but they should be 15-30 minutes maximum and in the early afternoon. Naps should only be used as a technique if absolutely necessary; it is much better to try to improve the quality and length of night-time sleep.</li> <li>• The time before bed (at least 60 minutes) should allow for winding down and must avoid screen use (e.g. TV, phones, tablets etc.). It is recommended that a phone is not kept in the bedroom (or used as an alarm), as it can be very hard to self-monitor their use.</li> <li>• Teenagers should avoid caffeinated or high-sugar products such as fizzy drinks, tea or coffee and sweets — particularly during the afternoon and evening. It is also important to avoid reliance on caffeine tablets when revising or tired as a result of sleep deprivation, as these can interfere with natural sleep cycles.</li> <li>• Alcohol, smoking and drugs can have serious consequences on sleep (and other health issues). Sleeping pills should also be avoided as these can develop a dependency and lead to sleep problems returning when the use of the pills ceases.</li> <li>• Spending time outdoors every day (especially in the morning) can be beneficial to sleep as sunlight can help keep the internal body clock in check. Equally, regular exercise can help falling asleep and sleeping deeply, although it is not ideal to exercise too close to bedtime.</li> </ul>

## SIGNPOSTING SUPPORT

It is important to ensure that pupils know where they can seek help and further advice both now and in the future if they are concerned about their sleep. Teachers should remind pupils that they can always share concerns with their parents or with trusted adults at school such as their tutor, head of year, or a school nurse / counsellor.

If pupils have serious concerns about their sleep, they should also be advised to consult their GP.

**Pupils can also seek support from the following websites:**

Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) / 0800 1111 — for general advice about concerns

NHS Choices: [www.nhs.co.uk](http://www.nhs.co.uk) — for health advice and help finding local services

Specific NHS advice on sleep is available here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/how-to-get-to-sleep/>

Sleep Council: [www.sleepcouncil.org.uk](http://www.sleepcouncil.org.uk) — for sleep tips and links to other organisations

# LESSON PLAN

## Taking care of myself: Getting a good night's sleep

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### CONTEXT

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This lesson explores why sleep is so important in children's lives and how sleep patterns change during puberty. It considers what the foundations of good quality sleep are, promotes taking responsibility for bedtime routines, and reflects on how these habits can be effectively embedded. As children grow older and enter puberty, they will benefit from well established, consistent sleep patterns.

This lesson is best used within a unit of work on healthy, balanced lifestyles; preparing for transition to secondary school; or during sessions about the changes that occur to the body during puberty. The engagement of parents in this topic would be advantageous. Parents could be informed via the school newsletter, website or blog — this would enable them to be supportive of this aspect of their child's learning. *Resource 2: My sleep fact file* could also be shared with parents as part of a homework activity. There are accompanying lessons for key stages 3 and 4, which explore how to maintain good quality sleep during adolescence.

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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- To learn about the importance of good sleep

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### INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

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Pupils will be able to:

- explain why sleep is important for a healthy lifestyle
- describe bedtime routines that help improve sleep
- identify how sleep patterns and needs might change during puberty

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### RESOURCES REQUIRED

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- Box or envelope for anonymous questions
- Resource 1: *Facts about sleep*
- Resource 2: *My sleep fact file*
- Resource 3: *Sleep buster solutions*

## LESSON SUMMARY

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	TIMING
1. INTRODUCTION	Introduce or revisit ground rules	-
2. BASELINE ASSESSMENT	Pupils draw a person getting good sleep, and add ideas about what might be helping or hindering them	10 MINS
3. FACT HUNT	Pupils discover facts about sleep using posters displayed around the room	20 MINS
4. SLEEP SCHEDULE	Pupils discuss types of activities that might make going to sleep more difficult and suggest solutions	15 MINS
5. ENDPOINT ASSESSMENT	Pupils revisit the draw and write activity to capture what they have learnt about sleep. Remind pupils who they can speak to if they are worried about getting good sleep	10 MINS

## CLIMATE FOR LEARNING

Make sure you have read the accompanying teacher guidance notes before teaching this lesson for guidance on establishing ground rules, the limits of confidentiality, communication and handling questions effectively.

## INTRODUCTION

Revisit ground rules and remind pupils of the availability of the anonymous question box.

## BASELINE ASSESSMENT

Lead pupils in a draw and write activity focusing on sleep, using the following instructions:

- Draw a person getting ready for a good night's sleep — what might they be doing, thinking, feeling?
- Draw or write how this person will feel when they wake up
- Draw or write anything that is helping them to sleep well
- Draw or write anything that might make it hard for them to sleep well

It is important that pupils complete this activity individually and that you do not guide or prompt their answers. When finished, collect in their papers and explain you will revisit this work at the end of the lesson. Look through pupils' ideas to elicit an understanding of what pupils already know about the importance of sleep and routines that promote good sleep.

Introduce the learning objectives and outcomes, explaining that this lesson will explore why it is important to get good sleep, and how sleep patterns change during puberty.

10 MINS



20 MINS

Pin up posters from *Resource 1: Facts about sleep* around the classroom (depending on the size of the class, you may need more than one copy of each poster). Organise pupils into pairs and give each pair a copy of *Resource 2: My sleep fact file*. Ask them to move around the room looking at the posters and hunting the 'facts' needed to answer the questions. They can also trade and share facts with other pairs as they discover more. Pupils could be encouraged to take home their completed sleep fact file to share with parents or family members.

Take some feedback. Possible answers might include:

1. Children between the ages of 6 and 12 usually need around 10-11 hours of sleep a night and should usually go to bed before 9pm.
2. Relaxing, calming activities before bed, such as reading, meditating, etc. Exercising outside during the day, keeping to the same routine, tidy their bedroom.
3. Running around before bed (or rough play). Using electronics, game consoles, including phones, tablets, TV and computer (ideally these should not be in the bedroom at all). Drinking fizzy drinks or 'energy drinks' (which may keep us awake and make it difficult to fall asleep when we want to), eating sugary foods (which may make us feel hungry or thirsty not long after eating them).
4. When asleep, the body makes hormones needed for the changes that happen during puberty. Sleep patterns also tend to shift around 1-2 hours later and they need slightly less sleep than they did before.
5. It helps us to feel awake the next day and ready for school. We can find it easier to learn, have ideas for our school work, remember things we need to do (homework!), catch less colds and coughs, heal more quickly from injuries, perform well in tests and at sporting activities and feel well and happy.

***\*Challenge question: Sleep can also help to prevent spots and manage weight during puberty. (All answers from the previous question are also valid.)***

SUPPORT	Pupils could be paired with a more confident reader / scribe or with a teaching assistant if available. Alternatively, create a bag of objects/pictures related to sleep (or that might be found in a child's bedroom) and ask them to sort into piles — to represent if they help or hinder sleep (it is also helpful to include a "not sure/it depends" pile). Items might include: teddy bear, night light, mobile phone, pet, story book, eye mask, alarm clock, a fizzy drink can etc..
CHALLENGE	A challenge question is provided in Resource 2. Pupils could also identify three facts about sleep that they think are most important for children their age to know about, and explain why these are most important.

## SLEEP SCHEDULE

Discuss as a class the type of activities children and young people do after school — for example attending after-school clubs, sports teams, hobbies, favourite TV programmes, playing with brothers/sisters, eating dinner, chores, homework and bedtime routines (brushing teeth, washing, reading and calming down).

Working in pairs, ask pupils to consider what can get in the way of trying to get to sleep. Using *Resource 3: Sleep buster solutions*, invite them to complete the table with the headings “It is difficult to go to sleep when...” and “A solution to this might be”.

*For feedback, pupils could share their ideas regarding the challenges and solutions for getting to sleep with other pairs and compare similarities and differences. Invite the class to vote on the most helpful solutions. Pupils who undertook the challenge activity could present their ideas to the rest of the class — asking them to guess which solution their steps are designed to achieve. Some of the activities could then be shared with parents via the school website/newsletter and in school assemblies.*

SUPPORT	Pupils could design a 6 box storyboard by drawing pictures to show what a person of their age might do in the evening to get ready for bed.
CHALLENGE	Ask pupils to imagine someone their own age who needs some advice on the necessary steps to carry out their ‘sleep solution’. Ask pupils to complete the section underneath the Sleep busters solutions grid giving detailed practical instructions about how to implement their solution to ensure they get enough sleep.

## ENDPOINT ASSESSMENT

Return pupils’ draw and write sheets from the start of the lesson. Ask them to now use a different colour pen / pencil to make any additions or changes they can to their original drawing, as a result of their learning in today’s lesson.

If time allows, you could ask pupils to quietly reflect on one thing they would consider changing about their bedtime routine to help them get better sleep.

## REFLECTING ON TODAY’S LEARNING &amp; SIGNPOSTING SUPPORT

It is important to reassure pupils that finding it hard to get to sleep/not wanting to get up in the morning are all normal experiences as part of growing up and many adults can sometimes find it hard to get to sleep/wake up in the morning. Sometimes when people are worried or feel stressed about something they can find it hard to get off to sleep/not feel like getting up in the morning. It is therefore essential that they speak to their parents/a trusted adult in school if they are having trouble sleeping. Websites such as Childline provide helpful advice ‘8 tips for better sleep’

<https://bit.ly/2FAk5eo>

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## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

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### GIVE ME TEN:

Ask pupils to compile a list of 10 top tips for a good night's sleep and use this to create a 5-minute presentation to share in a whole school assembly.

### SLEEP STORY:

Ask pupils to write a short story about a character who is struggling to get a good night's sleep and include advice about how they solved the problem.



# LESSON PLAN

## Healthy sleep

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### CONTEXT

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This lesson explores the importance of good quality sleep — particularly during a time of transition between primary and secondary school, when routines, schedules and pressures are likely to change. This lesson is best used within the context of a unit of work on healthy, balanced lifestyles, or during sessions on transition. There is an accompanying lesson for key stage 2, which explores the impact of puberty on changing sleep patterns; and for key stage 4, which reinforces the importance of sleep for wellbeing and personal effectiveness.

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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We are learning:

- about healthy sleep habits

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### INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

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- I can explain the impact of sleep on health and wellbeing
- I can describe healthy sleep patterns and identify factors which can reduce sleep quality
- I can describe a range of strategies for ensuring appropriate sleep patterns

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### RESOURCES REQUIRED

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- Box or envelope for anonymous questions
- Blank postcards
- Resource 1a: *Sleep quiz*
- Resource 1b: *Teacher answers*
- Resource 2: *Sleep benefits*
- Resource 3: *Sleep scenarios*

## LESSON SUMMARY

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	TIMING
1. INTRODUCTION	Revisit ground rules and introduce learning objectives	5 MINS
2. BASELINE ASSESSMENT	Students complete a true or false quiz about healthy sleep	15 MINS
3. DIAMOND 9	Students evaluate the importance of nine benefits of sleep	10 MINS
4. SLEEP STRATEGIES	Students work in groups to suggest a range of strategies to promote good quality sleep	10 MINS
5. SLEEP SCENARIOS	In four groups, students review case studies of poor sleep and make recommendations to each character	15 MINS
6. ENDPOINT ASSESSMENT	Students complete an exit card highlighting key things they have learnt about sleep	5 MINS

## CLIMATE FOR LEARNING

Make sure you have read the accompanying teacher guidance notes before teaching this lesson — for guidance on establishing ground rules, the limits of confidentiality, communication and handling questions effectively.

## KEY WORDS

Sleep, habit, routine, caffeine

## INTRODUCTION

Revisit ground rules and remind students of the availability of the anonymous question box. Explain that this lesson will explore both the importance of, and habits to help achieve, healthy sleep, particularly during adolescence (teenage years).

## BASELINE ASSESSMENT

Hand out Resource 1a: *Sleep quiz* and ask students to complete the questions, indicating 'T' for True and 'F' for False. As this is a baseline assessment, this task should be completed individually and with minimum teacher input in order to gauge students' current understanding, beliefs and ideas about sleep. In the final column, students should add what they think is the truth for any statement that they have identified as false.

Take class feedback (this could be through holding up true/false cards, class vote or standing on different sides of the room to represent true/false/not sure) using Resource 1b to challenge misconceptions and provide additional information.

10 MINS

## DIAMOND 9

Give each pair/small group a set of Resource 2: *Sleep benefits*. Ask students to form a diamond 9 with the cards — showing the benefits they think are the most important at the top, down to those they think have less of an impact (1, 22, 333, 44, 5) and recognising that there are no absolute right or wrong answers. It would be helpful to circulate to see what students are thinking in order to inform your teaching.

SUPPORT	Hand students 5 cards and ask them to create a small diamond with fewer benefits (1, 222, 3)
CHALLENGE	Ask students to prioritise the cards in two different orders; firstly, thinking about a young person's priorities during exam time and then again during the summer holidays. Have any priorities changed?

## SLEEP STRATEGIES

10 MINS

Ask students to work in teams to generate a list of any habits or strategies that they think a person could use to promote good quality sleep. They could formulate this as a *Dos* and *Don'ts* list.

SUPPORT	<p>Some groups may need prompting through questioning (which could be displayed or discussed):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What should the bedroom environment be like for good sleep?</li> <li>• What activities should be avoided before sleep?</li> <li>• What routines might make someone feel calm, relaxed and ready for sleep?</li> <li>• What could someone do if they were struggling to fall asleep?</li> </ul>
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Take class feedback, referring back to the true and false quiz answers and the teacher guidance notes to develop discussion.

## SLEEP SCENARIOS

15 MINS

Organise students into groups and give each a different character from Resource 3: *Sleep scenarios*. Ask them to read through the scenario and identify:

1. Any habits the character has that might be preventing them from getting good quality sleep
2. What the consequences for them might be of not getting good quality sleep
3. What they could change (or do differently) to help them get better quality sleep



CONTINUED...

Take feedback, drawing out the key learning points for each character:

- *Klaudia's schedule needs reviewing — she is currently only getting 7 hours' sleep and is both eating and exercising very late, which is inadvisable. She should think about how to prioritise or reorganise her schedule so that she is able to get better sleep.*
- *Benji has very erratic sleep patterns. He should reduce his use of caffeine drinks (especially in the afternoon) and try to avoid napping and sleeping in at the weekends, but instead establish a more consistent routine.*
- *Ryan needs to focus on reducing his stress, in particular by organising his school bag in the evening before settling down to sleep. He should try to do something relaxing and calming before bed, which should help his mind switch off from worries and improve his capacity to function (and feel less stressed) the next day.*
- *Shaznay may be more affected by her phone than she thinks — regular disturbances during the night and looking at backlights before sleep lead to poorer quality sleep overall. She should remove her phone from her bedroom at night and make sure it is turned off.*

CHALLENGE	Look back at the benefits of sleep from the Diamond 9 activity — which benefits would be most helpful to persuade your character to get better sleep?
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#### ENDPOINT ASSESSMENT

Ask students to complete an exit card to hand in on their way out of the room (either on blank postcards or paper) summarising what they have learnt during the lesson.

They could use the structure:

- Three things that help promote good sleep are...
- Two benefits of good quality sleep are...
- One question I still have about sleep / today's lesson is...

**NB:** *If asking students to write questions about a topic, particularly as part of a plenary activity, it is vital that these are returned to and answered in subsequent lessons.*

#### REFLECTING ON TODAY'S LEARNING & SIGNPOSTING SUPPORT

During the assessment activity, display a range of support services for people who are concerned about sleep-related issues and leading a balanced lifestyle. These should include people in school (such as the tutor, head of year or school nurse) and websites or phone lines accessible to young people, such as Childline

([www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)) and NHS Direct (Tel: 111).

5 MINS

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## HEALTHY SLEEP CAMPAIGN

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Ask students to create an advertising campaign to promote healthy sleep. Depending on time and students' motivation for the topic, this could include some or all of the following elements:

- A tagline or slogan
- A logo
- A poster or flyer to raise awareness
- An information leaflet

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## HEALTHY SLEEP INTO ACTION

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Ask students to reflect on one thing they think they could change about their evening routine to promote better sleep — examples might include: turning off their phone, meditating, reading a book (not a screen) before bed, eating or exercising earlier, reducing caffeine drinks. Challenge them to try to stick to this change for one week; they might also be encouraged to write a short reflection about any changes they have noticed to their sleep (or other benefits) by the end of the week.

# LESSON PLAN

## The importance of sleep

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### CONTEXT

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Good quality sleep is important for the maintenance of a healthy mind and body, which, in turn, supports academic performance. This lesson seeks to help young people to expand their understanding of the impact of sleep quality in an age-appropriate context. The lesson activities aim to develop awareness of ways to address common sleep-related problems through information on getting sufficient, good quality sleep.

This lesson is best used within the context of a unit of work on healthy, balanced lifestyles. The learning builds on the key stage 2 and 3 lessons in the pack — supporting a progressive, developmental PSHE education programme.

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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We are learning:

- about the importance of sleep and strategies to maintain good sleep habits.

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### INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

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Students will be able to:

- explain the importance of sleep for wellbeing and brain function — particularly during adolescence
- explain how lifestyle choices can affect sleep quality
- describe a range of strategies for ensuring appropriate sleep patterns and suggest advice for those struggling to sleep.

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### RESOURCES REQUIRED

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- Box or envelope for anonymous questions
- Coloured pens
- Resource 1: *Helpful and less helpful sleep behaviours*
- Resource 2: *Consequences of poor sleep habits*
- Resource 2a: *Consequences answer sheet*
- Resource 3: *Managing sleep difficulties*
- Resource 3a: *Sleep difficulties answer sheet*



## LESSON SUMMARY

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	TIMING
1. INTRODUCTION	Outline the lesson objectives and outcomes. Recap ground rules. Ask how many hours of sleep year 10 students should be getting.	5 mins
2. BASELINE ASSESSMENT	Read through Abe's scenario and highlight behaviours which both help and detract from a healthy sleep pattern.	10 MINS
3. WATCH & COMMENT	Watch then share reactions to a video outlining sleep-related issues for teenagers.	5 MINS
4. CONSEQUENCES OF POOR SLEEP HABITS	Ask how different situations might be impacted by a lack of sleep.	15 MINS
5. IDEAS TO PROMOTE SLEEP	Collate class's ideas on what supports effective sleep by creating a class mind map.	5 MINS
6. MANAGING INSOMNIA CARD SORT	Sort cards into true and false when managing insomnia.	10 MINS
7. ENDPOINT ASSESSMENT	Revisit baseline scenario — write advice for Abe to help him sleep better.	10 MINS

## CLIMATE FOR LEARNING

Make sure you have read the accompanying teacher guidance notes before teaching this lesson for guidance on establishing ground rules, the limits of confidentiality, communication and handling questions effectively.

## KEY WORDS

Circadian rhythm, insomnia, sleep cycle, body clock, wind down, sleep hygiene

## INTRODUCTION

Outline the lesson objectives and outcomes. Establish or reinforce existing ground rules. Ask students how many hours of sleep they should be getting to function optimally at their age. Explain that we will be finding out the answer to this question during today's lesson.

## BASELINE ASSESSMENT

**Hand out Resource 1:** Helpful and less helpful sleep behaviours. Read through Abe's scenario and ask students to highlight behaviours which both help and detract from a healthy sleep pattern in two different colours. Circulate to observe general trends in highlighting choices.

**Discuss responses as a class:** Gauge students' understanding of the concepts introduced in the scenario (i.e., Abe getting an early night, sleeping in after the alarm had gone off, missing breakfast and late night routines). This is a baseline activity to help assess students' initial knowledge and understanding and should be used to help adapt the rest of the lesson. You may choose to explore these concepts now, or develop them during the lesson.

*\*Ensure students keep their work to one side to revisit later in the lesson.*

10 MINS

Watch then share reactions to a video outlining sleep-related issues for teenagers.

<https://www.boystownpediatrics.org/KnowledgeCenter/Videos/Pages/The-Importance-of-Sleep-For-Teens.aspx>

If preferred, the key learning point can be shared verbally instead: young people of this age group need approximately 9 hours' sleep per night. This is similar to childhood sleep requirements but importantly — around 13/14 years old — there is a natural shift to a later sleep pattern, i.e. around 11pm to sleep and 7-8am to rise. Yet this natural cycle can easily be impacted by social and academic commitments which in turn disrupt the natural sleep pattern and can make a young person more tired.

You could ask students...

- How does the recommendation of 9-9 ¼ hours' sleep compare with the original estimates at the start of the lesson?
- What do you think are the biggest barriers to young people getting enough sleep?
- What are the challenges for young people in getting the right sleep environment in their bedrooms?

### CONSEQUENCES OF POOR SLEEP HABITS

Allocate one scenario from Resource 2: Consequences of poor sleep habits to each group of students (approximately 4-6 students per group). Ask them to discuss what the potential consequences of their character's poor sleep habit(s) might be, what they should do next, and how they could change their sleep-related behaviours in future.

Feedback as a class to cover all the scenarios. Key learning points are provided on Resource 2a: *Consequences answer sheet*.

### IDEAS TO PROMOTE SLEEP

Fill a class mind-map with ideas of how to promote sleep and how to avoid issues with sleep. Ideas could include: avoiding stimulating activities for 60-90 minutes before bed, curbing caffeine and making healthy lifestyle choices (e.g. avoiding alcohol and nicotine).

You may wish to share the concept of social jet lag — it's suggested that for every hour lost/gained when travelling across time zones, it takes the body 1 day to catch up. Oversleeping at the weekend can have a similar effect; having a lie in for 3 hours can take the body 3 days to catch up to this sleep pattern change.

SUPPORT	You may wish to provide a list or set of pictures to help students select which things they think will help a person to sleep.
CHALLENGE	Invite students to complete more detailed online research on sleep hygiene and report back any interesting findings. Ensure any websites used are suitable and encourage students to assess their reliability.

Ask students to sort the cards from Resource 3: *Managing sleep difficulties* into statements which are true (i.e. they typify behaviours which address sleep difficulties), or false (behaviours that make it more difficult for someone to sleep).

When discussing shifting sleep habits, explain that it takes approximately 4 weeks to establish a new sleep routine. If a person is struggling to adapt their sleep pattern, they can try shifting their alarm by 10 minutes each week.

*\* In order to save time and preparation, it would be possible for students to simply annotate Resource 3 with 'T' or 'F' to indicate true or false. However, this might limit the capacity to extend this activity.*

SUPPORT	You could reduce the number of cards provided to focus on the challenges most likely to face the individuals concerned.
CHALLENGE	Invite students to rank the behaviours into those most to least likely to encourage sleep. This is likely to be based on personal reflection about what has the biggest impact on their and their family's sleep quality and quantity rather than based on objective research findings.

## ENDPOINT ASSESSMENT

Revisit the baseline scenario involving Abe. Ask students to annotate their original work to show any changes in opinion or to add interesting comments based on what they have learnt in the lesson. All students should write at least 3 pieces of useful advice for Abe to help him sleep better.

This activity demonstrates progress and should be reviewed through class questioning and feedback to ensure students have met the learning outcomes.

Key points you may wish to highlight are that:

- 'Getting an early night' can be counterproductive if it is a change of sleep pattern as the level of sleep hormone is unlikely to be high enough to encourage sleep — this means a person is more likely to struggle to sleep and may therefore be unable to sleep, even at their normal bed time.
- Pressing the 'snooze' button can again mean disrupting the normal sleep pattern. It is best to avoid this if possible. Experts suggest we will find it easier to wake naturally in 90-minute cycles — so plan to wake after 9 hours as standard or 7.5 hours' sleep if having a one-off late night.
- Not eating breakfast increases the likelihood of sugar cravings and energy dips which are already potential problems due to lack of sleep — this is why Abe grabbed junk food and energy drinks. Such food/drinks can then disrupt the sleep cycle further so are best avoided.
- Eating a large meal late in the evening can make it more difficult to sleep — as can watching TV and using screens which produce blue light waves that disrupt the release of sleep hormones.
- Preparing for the next day in advance is helpful, as is his technique of separating school work and home, and his regular exercise.

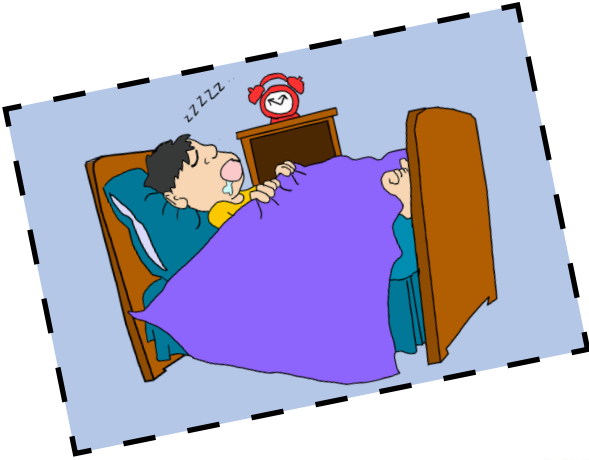
### SLEEP RESEARCH

Plan and conduct a survey of close friends and family about their sleep patterns. This could include questions about how much sleep, when they sleep, how they prepare for sleep, techniques they use if struggling to sleep etc.

Ensure any follow up discussions from this activity are suitably distanced to ensure young people do not share sensitive details.

Students can then use this information to help them decide on a priority for the creation of an advert which raises awareness of a particular aspect of sleep hygiene. This could be a video played in assembly or tutor times, a poster which is displayed around the school or a leaflet which is passed to younger students or parents.

# FACTS ABOUT SLEEP



Children aged 6-12 years old usually need between 10 and 11 hours sleep every night (some may need more or less). To wake up at 7am in time for school, a good time to go to bed is before 9pm.

Doing something relaxing in the hour before going to sleep can really help. This could be things like reading a book or listening to a story being read, having a bath, cuddling a pet, talking to someone in your family about your day, or playing a board game or puzzle.



Spending time outside during the day and exercising can help someone fall asleep and help them to sleep well.

Keeping to the same routine is a good idea, such as going to bed and waking up at the same time every day, even at weekends.



**TIDY YOUR ROOM!**

A messy bedroom can actually affect good sleep! It is much easier to relax and fall into a deep sleep in a tidy, organised room. Making a bedroom dark and cool before going to sleep can also help.

**CALM DOWN!**

Avoid running around or doing lots of exercise just before bedtime. This can make the body wake up when it needs to be winding down.

**TURN IT OFF!**

All electronic screens like the TV, computer, tablet, mobile phone should be turned off at least an hour before bedtime. It's best to put them away in a room where people don't sleep.

**DON'T DRINK THAT!**

Drinking or eating anything with caffeine (like coffee, tea or energy drinks) or lots of sugar (like sweets and fizzy drinks) can keep someone awake for a long time. This might mean that when they fall asleep, they don't sleep very well.

# SLEEP

**FEEL  
happy**

People who get good quality sleep are more likely to...

**MAKE  
GOOD  
decisions**

PERFORM  
better at sports



GET BETTER  
scores in exams

**AVOID  
illness**

**LEARN  
better**

BE MORE  
creative

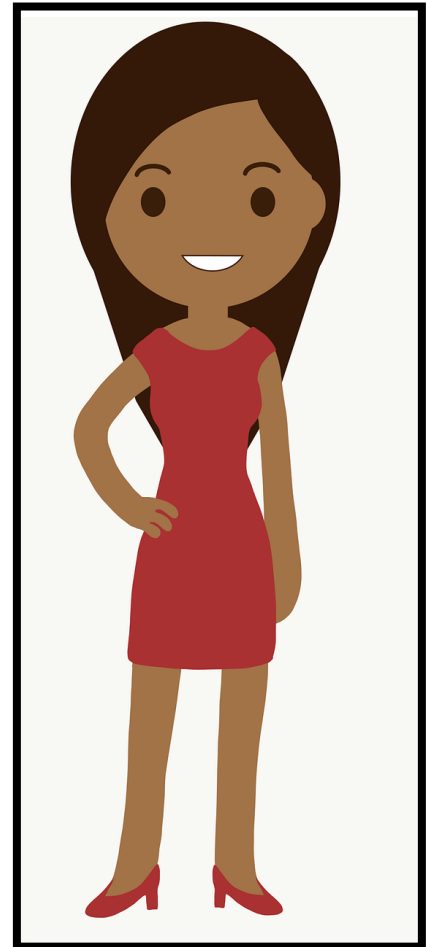


**REMEMBER  
more**

FEEL  
healthier

**HEAL FASTER  
from an injury**

# PUBERTY & SLEEP



As we get older, our sleep needs and patterns change. As children become teenagers, they need a bit less sleep each night (usually about 9 or 10 hours sleep per night).

Teenagers usually want to go to sleep and wake up about 2 hours later than younger children or adults. This is called a shift in their “internal body clock”.

During puberty, a person’s body produces new hormones and this mostly happens when they are in a deep sleep.

By getting good sleep the body can grow and develop during puberty. This will help to improve memory and learning. Good sleep might also reduce some other issues during puberty such as moodiness, getting spots or putting on weight.

QUESTION	ANSWER
<b>How much sleep do children need each night?</b>	
<b>Find 3 things to start doing that help someone get good sleep:</b>	
<b>Find 3 things to stop doing that would help someone sleep:</b>	
<b>What happens during sleep when someone starts puberty?</b>	
<b>Why is it important to get good sleep?</b>	
<b>*CHALLENGE question: Why is it more important to get sleep during puberty?</b>	

It is difficult to go to sleep when...	A solution to this might be....
Individual steps I would need to take to carry out the sleep solution .....	



# Resource 1a

## Sleep Quiz — True (T) or False (F)

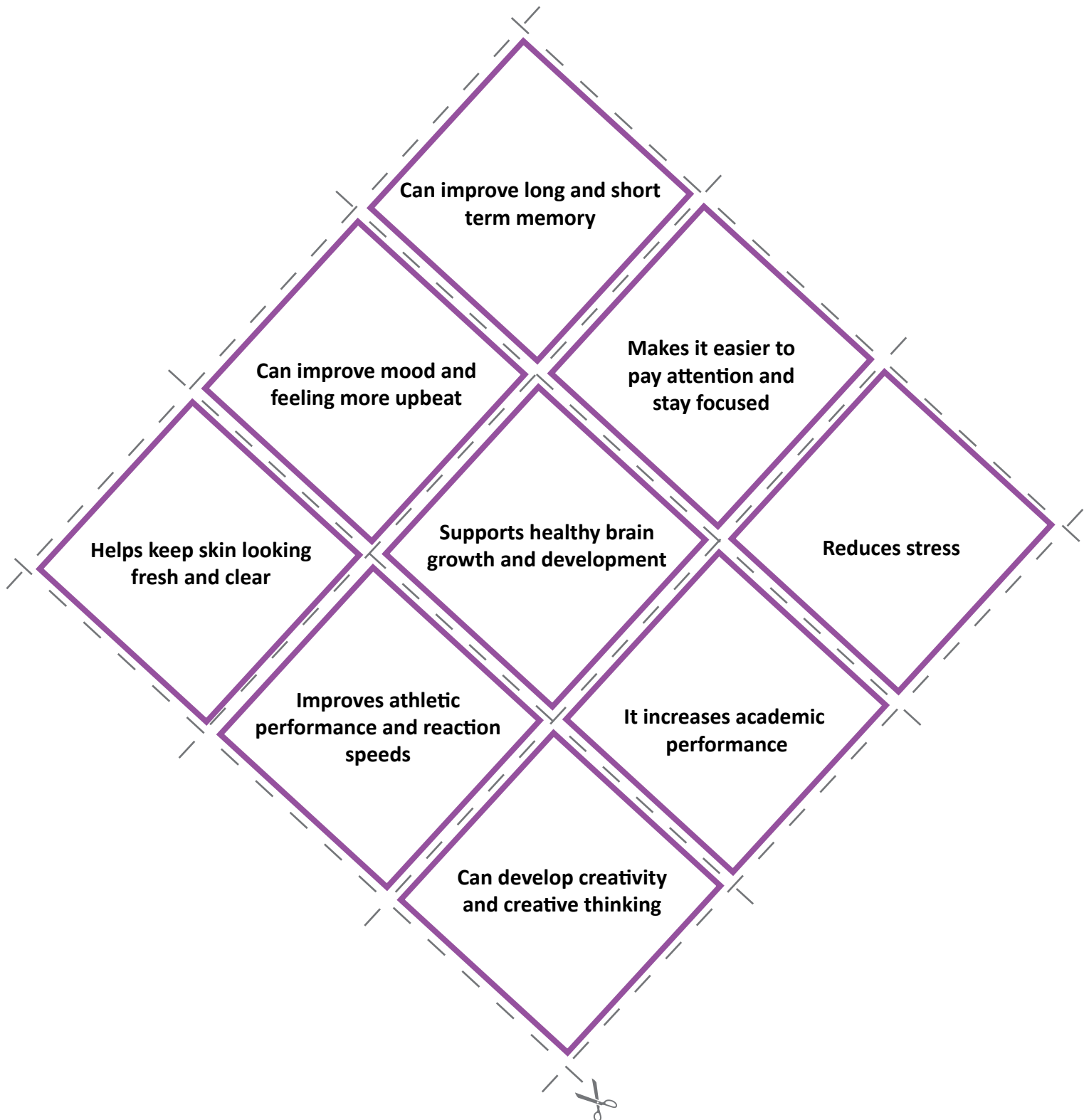
STATEMENT	T/F	COMMENTS
Teenagers need more sleep than adults		
Sleeping in at weekends to catch up on sleep will help you feel refreshed on Monday		
Most teenagers on average get the right amount of sleep		
It is recommended to eat a small snack before bedtime		
It is helpful to use a phone app to help track and promote sleep		
Naps should be no longer than 30 minutes		
It is possible to counteract the effects of lack of sleep by drinking caffeinated drinks		
Getting healthy sleep can improve school results		
Using the night setting on a phone means it doesn't have any effect on sleep		

## Teacher Answers

STATEMENT	T/F	COMMENTS
Teenagers need more sleep than adults	T	Research shows the average teenager needs just over 9 hour sleep a night, whereas the average for adults is 7 hours. This can be particularly challenging to manage as teenagers often don't feel tired until considerably later (e.g. 11pm) and have changing routines that require them to wake up in time for school.
Sleeping in at weekends to catch up on sleep will help you feel refreshed on Monday	F	This can actually make sleep worse. An erratic sleep schedule (for example staying up later at weekends and sleeping in later) make it even harder to fall asleep on Sunday night and wake up on Monday morning. It is much better to maintain regular wake hours over the weekends to keep the body in routine.
Most teenagers on average get the right amount of sleep	F	Due to problems highlighted above, the majority of teenagers are sleep deprived, (often by more than 2 hours of required sleep per night) which accumulates over time.
It is recommended to eat a small snack before bedtime	T	It is a good idea not to go to sleep hungry. While a big meal right before sleep is not advisable, a small snack before bed can help with falling asleep and improve sleep quality.
It is helpful to use a phone app to help track and promote sleep	F	Lots of apps suggest they can help to promote or track sleep, however little research has been done into how effective these really are. Any benefits the app may provide are also likely to be outweighed by having the phone on the bedside table, as the lights on phones and constant notifications throughout the night can have a significant negative impact on sleep
Naps should be no longer than 45 minutes	T	Napping can help sleepiness, but should be no longer than 15-30 mins and in the early afternoon. Napping for longer than this or late in the afternoon can make it difficult to fall asleep at night. Naps should only be used as a technique if absolutely necessary; it is much better to try to improve the quality and length of night-time sleep
It is possible to counteract the effects of lack of sleep by drinking caffeinated drinks	F	Caffeine can give the body a temporary energy boost but it can have significant detrimental effects over time. Caffeine products are potentially addictive and can impact health; they also disrupt sleep even further.
Getting healthy sleep can improve school results	T	Research suggests that students who get the best results in tests sleep more than their peers. Sleep can improve brain functions such as memory, organisation, decision making and attention.
Using the night setting on a phone means it doesn't have any effect on sleep	F	As blue light filter apps are relatively new, research studies have not yet been published. However, using your phone before sleep still has other impacts as people are engaging in conversations, games, processing information etc. at a time when the brain needs them to wind down

# Resource 2

## Diamond 9



## Resource 3

### Sleep Scenarios

## KS3 RESOURCE 3: SLEEP SCENARIOS

### KLAUDIA (12 YEARS OLD)



Klaudia has a really busy after school schedule. She finishes school at 3.30pm, and stays behind for homework club most days, until 4.30pm. She then helps out in the family shop until 7pm before she goes to basketball training three times a week (between 7.30 and 9pm). So when she gets back home she needs to shower, wash her hair and usually eats dinner at about

9.30 or 10pm. Then she relaxes by watching TV or chatting on social media before falling asleep around midnight. She is always tired when her alarm goes off at 7am to get ready for school, and usually snoozes it for at least half an hour.

### BENJI (13 YEARS OLD)

Benji feels tired all the time. He finds it really difficult to wake up in the morning so gets into an argument with his parents most mornings and gets blamed for making everyone late. He often gets into trouble for being late to school, too. He drinks a caffeine drink on the way into school to help him wake up and usually has three or four more



during the day. He sometimes finds himself falling asleep during lessons, and most days he has a nap when he gets home from school, between about 4.30pm and 6pm. The only time he feels energetic or awake is in the evening, and doesn't feel tired when he tries to go to bed! At the weekend he usually has a lie in until 1pm to catch up on sleep, but stays out late with friends on Friday and Saturday nights.

### RYAN (11 YEARS OLD)



Ryan has just started secondary school. It starts earlier in the morning than his primary school used to, and he has to travel further to get to school now too. To make it on time, he gets up at 6.30am. He is finding this really hard, and feels very tired. This is made even worse because Ryan is quite worried about secondary school and is quite disorganised. He's been told off and had detention twice because he forgot his equipment. He often lies in bed

running through in his mind all the things he needs to pack in his schoolbag for the next day. He sometimes wakes up in the night worried that he is going to get in trouble again.

### SHAZNAY (12 YEARS OLD)



Shaznay has just got her first smartphone for her 12th birthday. She has started using her mobile phone as an alarm clock, so sleeps with it on her bedside table. She doesn't think it disturbs her sleep much, but she does use it for an hour or so before she goes to bed, and sometimes that means she stays up later than she meant to. Her phone often goes off during the night and it is hard to resist checking the notifications, but she

only looks at it for a second or to in case it's important. She doesn't understand why some of her friends are still posting at 2 or 3am. Checking her phone is the first thing she does when she wakes up. Sometimes, she listens to a podcast or a relaxation app to help her fall asleep.

# Resource 1:

## Helpful and less helpful sleep behaviours

Abe had been feeling fairly tired recently so went to bed early on Sunday to ensure he felt ready for the week at school. He had packed his things ready beforehand to ensure a quick getaway in the morning.

But he couldn't get to sleep so, despite his best intentions, Abe starts Monday by pressing the snooze button, being too late for breakfast, and missing the bus meaning he had to run to school. He got through the morning by eating crisps and energy drinks for a quick energy boost.

Abe tries to finish school work at school so he feels like there is a balance between school and home life. So he stays at homework club till 5pm and works ultra-hard before going to cricket practice at the local club.

When he gets home, Abe showers and has dinner before winding down by messaging friends and watching TV. He tries again to get an early night but just lies awake.

## Consequences of poor sleep habits



Layla has slept through her morning alarm so her dad starts telling Layla off for being late. She shouts back as she runs out of the door.

Abdi's family business is in making furniture so he often helps out in their woodwork shop after school. Recently, he's not been getting enough sleep but doesn't want to let his parents down so he carries on working in the shop.

Su went out with her girlfriend the night before a basketball final as she wanted to take her mind off her nerves. They stayed out longer than expected and she's feeling pretty exhausted ahead of today's fixture.

Tal was up really late studying for an exam later in the week so a friend offers him an energy drink from their 'stash'. Tal wouldn't normally drink this kind of thing as he knows they aren't that great for your health but he's too tired to argue.

Alima is late for her Saturday job at a café so she decides to take her moped. However, she's slept badly and is not really feeling that alert.

Connor didn't sleep well last night so when a teacher asks him a question, Connor realises he's been daydreaming and can't answer. He feels like a fool in front of the class so spends the rest of the lesson chatting and being generally disruptive.



## Consequences Answer Sheet

*Layla has slept through her morning alarm so her dad starts telling Layla off for being late. She shouts back as she runs out of the door.*

The pre-frontal cortex normally allows us a chance to think about our reactions before we do something. But if we are tired, this 'brake' on our emotional reactions no-longer functions so we can end up lashing out or acting without thinking. It would help for Layla and her dad to talk about a better morning routine to avoid similar occurrences.

*Abdi's family business is in making furniture so he often helps out in their woodwork shop after school. Recently, he's not been getting enough sleep but doesn't want to let his parents down so he carries on working in the shop.*

Working with machines and power-tools whilst tired is very risky – in fact a recent study found that being awake for 17 to 19 hours can impair ability more than being over the drink-driving limit. Researchers found that reaction times in a series of tests were up to 50 per cent slower in people deprived of sleep compared with the same people being given increasing doses of alcohol. This doesn't mean it's okay to drink then operate machinery, simply that lack of sleep can be dangerous when using tools and machinery. It is important that Abdi discusses this with his parents so that he and his family are not subject to unnecessary risk when using the tools and machinery in the woodwork shop.

*Su went out with her girlfriend the night before a basketball final as she wanted to take her mind off her nerves. They stayed out longer than expected and she's feeling pretty exhausted ahead of today's fixture.*

Attainment in sports is very much affected by lack of sleep. Reaction time and the capacity for strategic thinking are affected so players don't look as 'on the ball' — they are more likely to miss shots or passes and positioning may be poor. Due to the impact of the emotion-filter discussed above being reduced, there is an increased risk of frustration resulting in unsporting conduct. Research also shows that, not only is stamina reduced but there is an increased risk of sports-related injuries.

Su can make minimal impact on her performance for this game but can plan better next time. Su may be tempted to use a standard energy drink or caffeine pills to give her a boost. But these have a range of side-effects which may affect her performance, and they are likely to lose effectiveness just as she needs the energy most. Sports drinks which are well adapted to cardio workouts may be useful at keeping her hydrated, in the same way that they would do when she is not tired, but studies have been inconclusive — some have shown they make no difference, others a slight increase in performance, others suggest the side effects affect performance. In any respect, they are unlikely to mask the lack of sleep

## Consequences Answer Sheet continued...

*Tal was up really late studying for an exam later in the week so a friend offers him an energy drink from their 'stash'. Tal wouldn't normally drink this kind of thing as he knows they aren't that great for your health but he's too tired to argue.*

Energy drinks are notoriously unhelpful around exam season as they can give a temporary feeling of alertness but this is lost quite quickly and the person drinking them is likely to find themselves less able to concentrate than if they hadn't had one at all. Caffeine boosts like this can also affect a person's ability to sleep well by disrupting the circadian rhythm (sleep cycle). Sleep during exam season is incredibly important. Research has shown that better outcomes are often linked to more sleep not less. So cramming for exams can be counterproductive. It is best to stick to a normal sleep pattern and allocate revision accordingly.

*Alima is late for her Saturday job at a café so she decides to take her moped. However, she's slept badly and is not really feeling that alert.*

Research shows that driving on less than five hours sleep results in a one in ten chance of staying awake on a lengthy journey. Both lack of sleep and alcohol slow reaction time, affect the ability to process information and impair memory. In one study, driving while sleepy and driving while drunk were both found to have the potential to double your risk for a car accident. It's therefore really important that Alima does not drive if she does not feel alert enough to do so. Incidentally, studies suggest that we are generally quite poor at estimating how tired we really are, particularly young drivers.

*Connor didn't sleep well last night so when a teacher asks him a question, Connor realises he's been day-dreaming and can't answer. He feels like a fool in front of the class so spends the rest of the lesson chatting and being generally disruptive.*

Lack of sleep has been shown to affect concentration, memory, information processing and reasoning. Connor's emotional reaction to the situation can be accounted for by the poor emotional filter explained above. Connor should take steps to stop this happening again and should catch up on the work missed. He should also take responsibility for his behaviour rather than distracting others to mask his embarrassment.

# Resource 3:

## Managing sleep difficulties



If out late, a person should skip their usual wind down routine (e.g. having a bath, reading a book) to make sure they get to bed as close to their normal time as possible

If someone has been struggling to get to sleep for a long time, they should get out of bed and read or drink a cup of herbal tea

If someone struggles with racing thoughts when trying to sleep, they could try allocating a time to think about the day ahead or about worries — perhaps after dinner

Ensure any clocks or alarms aren't visible from a person's sleeping position so they don't focus on how long they have been trying to sleep for

To help someone figure out what could be causing their sleep difficulties, it might be worth keeping a sleep diary — what they did before a good night's sleep and what happened when they slept less well

People should leave curtains open so they go to sleep and wake up with the sun cycle

It's helpful to have a TV or radio in the bedroom to help distract a person who is struggling to sleep

Meditation, visualisation and mindfulness techniques can help a person to calm their mind if they are finding it difficult to get to or fall back to sleep

Walking in the sunshine, especially in the mornings, can help to reset the circadian rhythm

Caffeine is fine as long as it's drunk at least 2 hours before sleep

Install a blue light filter on phones to help reduce the impact of screen time on the sleep cycle

Exercising before bed can help tire a person out and help them sleep

Taking a short afternoon nap after teatime is a great way to regularly top up sleep

Keeping to a sleep routine at weekends is important to encourage a regular sleep pattern

## Managing sleep difficulties answer sheet

TRUE	FALSE
<p>If someone has been struggling to get to sleep for a long time, they should get out of bed and read or drink a cup of herbal tea</p> <p><b>*However, it is important to try other techniques first (e.g. mindfulness) and to recognise that relaxation in bed is still beneficial</b></p>	<p>If someone is out late, they should skip their usual wind down routine (e.g. having a bath, reading a book) to make sure they get to bed as close to their normal time as possible</p> <p><b>*Sleep experts recommend sticking to a 90-minute wind-down schedule daily</b></p>
<p>If someone struggles with racing thoughts when trying to sleep, they could try allocating a time to think about the day ahead or about worries — perhaps after dinner</p>	<p>It's helpful to have a TV or phone in the bedroom to help distract a person who is struggling to sleep</p> <p><b>*Screen time and activities are more likely to distract from sleep and blue light from screens can disrupt the production of sleep hormones</b></p>
<p>To help someone figure out what could be causing their sleep difficulties, it might be worth keeping a sleep diary – what they did before a good night's sleep and what happened when they slept less well</p>	<p>People should leave curtains open so they go to sleep and wake up with the sun cycle</p> <p><b>*Most of us will find it difficult to sleep with street light, moonlight and car lights coming into the room – blackout curtains can help anyone sensitive to light disruption</b></p>
<p>Ensure any clocks or alarms aren't visible from a person's sleeping position so they don't focus on how long they have been trying to sleep for</p>	<p>Install a blue light filter on phones to help reduce the impact of screen time on the sleep cycle</p> <p><b>*This may be helpful but there are no clear studies yet to demonstrate their impacts. Plus, the engagement with friends and gaming etc. still keeps the mind engaged and disrupts sleep</b></p>
<p>Walking in the sunshine — especially in the mornings — can help to reset the circadian rhythm</p>	<p>Caffeine is fine as long as it's drunk at least 2 hours before sleep</p> <p><b>*Doctors suggest that those finding sleep difficult should avoid caffeine for at least 6 hours before sleep</b></p>
<p>Meditation, visualisation and mindfulness techniques can help a person to calm their mind if they are finding it difficult to get to or fall back to sleep</p>	<p>Exercising before bed can help tire a person out and help them sleep</p> <p><b>*Regular exercise supports sleep but it is important that exercise is completed 2-3 hours before sleep to ensure adequate wind-down time</b></p>
<p>Keeping to a sleep routine at weekends is important to encourage a regular sleep pattern</p>	<p>Taking a short afternoon nap after teatime is a great way to regularly top up sleep</p> <p><b>*Naps may help some people if they are maximum 30-45 mins and taken before 3pm. It is important to ensure this does not disrupt regular sleep patterns</b></p>