



'Students are at their desks but their brains are at home in bed.'

Why are typical teenagers never tired at 11p.m. but they hate getting up in the morning? Are they lazy? No, the good news is that it's natural.

In the US, a lot of high schools start at about 7.30 in the morning. This means the students are at their desks after only five or six hours' sleep. However, they need 9–10 hours because their bodies and brains are still developing so they are very tired. Tiredness means 20 per cent of high school students fall asleep during their first two hours of school.

Sleep scientists are researching the problem. They say that it is crazy to fight nature so the only answer is for schools to start later. As one scientist said, 'At 7.30a.m. students are at their desks but their brains are at home in bed.' Luckily, some head teachers listened to the new scientific advice and changed their school hours. The results are very interesting: teachers and parents say students behave better, learn more, get better marks and fewer students drop out.

Everyone has a natural body clock which tells them when to wake up and fall asleep. In teenagers, the chemical that controls sleep, melatonin, is in their brains between 11.00p.m. and 8.00a.m. The result is that teenagers don't feel tired late in the evening but, when they get up before 8a.m., their brain is telling them to sleep. This lack of sleep means they are often unhappy, angry, can't learn and get bad marks.

READING

1 Who says these things? Write parent (P) or teenager (T). What time are they said? Write night (N) or morning (M).

- 1 Didn't you hear me? It's time to get up. PM
- 2 Go to bed – you've got school tomorrow.
- 3 I was having a lovely dream.
- 4 No, I'm not tired. I'm going to watch this film.
- 5 Just five more minutes ... Zzzzz Zzzzz
- 6 But I'm reading and it's a really exciting bit.

2 **4.1** Look at the pictures and read the article quickly. Choose the best title:

- a How much sleep everyone needs
- b Why teenagers are tired in the morning
- c School times in the USA
- d The effects of sleep on our brains

3 Complete the definitions with underlined words from the article.

- 1 _____ (*n*) the feeling that you want to sleep
- 2 _____ (*n*) when there is not enough of something
- 3 _____ (*v*) to do things in a particular way
- 4 _____ (*n*) everything in the world not made or controlled by people
- 5 _____ (*v*) studying carefully to find new information

4 Read the questions. Then read the article again and choose the best answers.

1 Teenagers are tired in the morning because
 a they are lazy.
 b they don't want to go to school.
 c they use computers late at night.
d they need more sleep.

2 It is difficult for teenagers to get up early because
 a they don't have clocks.
 b their beds are warm.
 c their body clocks are different.
 d they are unhappy.

3 Some teenagers are ___ because they are tired.
 a irritable c optimistic
 b cheerful d punctual

4 US school students ___ start school early.
 a usually b never c sometimes d always

5 Teenagers need a lot of sleep because they
 a work hard. c study a lot.
 b go to school early. d are growing.

6 ___ US high school students fall asleep at school.
 a All b Most c Some d A lot of

7 Some ___ head teachers changed the school hours.
 a sensible b tolerant c selfish d optimistic

8 The new school hours are
 a successful. c mysterious.
 b disappointing. d fascinating.