

113 學年度青埔國中英語朗讀比賽題目 1

Are You getting enough sleep?

What happens if you don't get enough sleep? Randy Gardner, a high school student in the United States, wanted to find out. He designed an experiment on the effects of sleeplessness for a school science project. With doctors watching him carefully, Gardner stayed awake for 264 hours and 12 minutes. That's eleven days and nights without sleeping!

What effect did sleeplessness have on Gardner? After 24 hours without sleep, Gardner started having trouble reading and watching television. The words and pictures were too blurry. By the third day, he was having trouble doing things with his hands. By the fourth day, Gardner was hallucinating. For example, when he saw a street sign, he thought it was a person. He also imagined he was a famous football player. Over the next few days, Gardner's speech became so slurred that people couldn't understand him. He also had trouble remembering things. By the eleventh day, Gardner couldn't pass a counting test. In the middle of the test he simply stopped counting. He couldn't remember what he was doing.

When Gardner finally went to bed, he slept for 14 hours and 45 minutes. The second night he slept for twelve hours, the third night he slept for ten and one-half hours, and by the fourth night, he had returned to his normal sleep schedule.

Even though Gardner recovered quickly, scientists believe that going without sleep can be dangerous. They say that people should not repeat Randy's experiment. Tests on white rats have shown how serious

sleeplessness can be. After a few weeks without sleep, the rats started losing their fur. And even though the rats ate more food than usual, they lost weight. Eventually the rats died.

During your lifetime, you will probably spend 25 years or more sleeping. But why? What is the purpose of sleep? Surprisingly, scientists don't know for sure. Some scientists think we sleep in order to replenish brain cells. Other scientists think that sleep helps the body to grow and to relieve stress. Whatever the reason, we know that it is important to get enough sleep.

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Hang Up or keep Talking?

Millions of people are using cell phones today. In many places it is actually considered unusual not to use one. In many countries, cell phones are very popular with young people. They find that the phones are more than a means of communication--- having a mobile phone shows that they are cool and connected.

The explosion around the world in mobile phone use has some health professionals worried. Some doctors are concerned that in the future many people may suffer health problems from the use of mobile phones. In England, there has been a serious debate about this issue. Mobile phone companies are worried about the negative publicity of such ideas. They say that there is no proof that mobile phones are bad for your health.

On the other hand, why do some medical studies show changes in the brain cells of some people who use mobile phones? Signs of change in the tissues of the brain and head can be detected with modern scanning equipment. In one case, a traveling salesman had to retire at a young age because of serious memory loss. He couldn't remember even simple tasks. He would often forget the name of his own son. This man used to talk on his mobile phone for about six hours a day, every day of his working week, for a couple of years. His family doctor blamed his mobile phone use, but his employer's doctor didn't agree.

What is it that makes mobile phones potentially harmful? The answer is radiation. High-tech machines can detect very small amounts of

radiation from mobile phones. Mobile phone companies agree that there is some radiation, but they say the amount is too small to worry about.

As the discussion about their safety continues, it appears that it's best to use mobile phones less often. Use your regular phone if you want to talk for a long time. Use your mobile phone only when you really need it. Mobile phones can be very useful and convenient, especially in emergencies. In the future, mobile phones may have a warning label that says they are bad for your health. So for now, it's wise not to use your mobile phone too often.

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Would You Go to Antarctica?

If you were looking for adventure and could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go? Would you run with the bulls in Pamplona, or go bungee jumping in New Zealand? Perhaps you would prefer to go diving in the Indian Ocean, or go hiking in the Himalayas.

But if you'd done all that, and you had the time and money, would you go to Antarctica? Considered the last great wilderness on Earth, it's becoming the destination of choice for adventurous tourists. Just a few scientists in research stations share the icy landscape with penguins and other animals which can cope with the low temperatures.

Tourism began in Antarctica in the 1950s and it's still small scale. About 37,000 tourists are expected there this season, and many won't even leave the boat.

But when Juliet Rix visited the frozen continent, she asked herself if she should be there at all. Tourists can cause problems to such a sensitive environment. Her tour guide admitted that all visitors leave a footprint and they all go to the same places, the accessible coastline, which is also where the penguins and seals go to breed.

However, some people believe that if carefully controlled, tourism could be good for Antarctica. It has no native population and it needs advocates. Visitors to the icy continent might be ready to support and even to fund its preservation. And they're likely to join the discussion about global warming, which has led to the melting of glaciers.

According to Rix, guidelines are followed when you're about to set

foot in Antarctica and tourists have to disinfect their boots to make sure no alien species are introduced.

And once on land, there's no eating or smoking. Rocks, bones – nothing should be taken as a souvenir and nothing should be left behind.

So if you did go, you would be able to enjoy breathtaking views. You would also have to be very careful not to pollute the environment, and keep your fingers crossed that you were not destroying it for future generations.