

## Writing a to-do list may help you sleep faster

16th January, 2018

2. Patch Holes & Cracks  
3. Clean the Shit Out of It  
4. Tape & Paint Walls  
5. Build Desk  
6. Tape & Paint Trim, Ceiling  
7. Paint Furniture  
Creative Commons  
via ray, paul studios on flickr.com

Scientists have an idea that could help us get to sleep faster. All you need is a pen and paper. The scientists are from Baylor University in Texas, USA. They did research into how we can fall asleep more quickly. They

found that writing a to-do list helps people get to sleep faster. Doctor Michael K. Scullin was the lead researcher of the study. He said to-do lists make us relax because we don't need to worry about the things we have to do. He said that if we write down the things we need to do, we can forget about them, so we become calmer. He added: "We live in a 24/7 culture in which our to-do lists seem to be constantly growing and causing us to worry about unfinished tasks at bedtime."

The researchers looked at the sleeping patterns of 57 male and female university students aged between 18 and 30. Half of them had to write down a to-do list five minutes before they slept. They had to turn the lights out by 10:30pm and could not have access to technology. The researchers found that the participants who wrote to-do lists fell asleep an average of 9 minutes faster than those who didn't. They also found that the students who wrote really detailed lists fell asleep faster than students who wrote simple, general lists. The USA's National Sleep Foundation said that around 40 per cent of American adults have difficulty falling asleep at least a few times each month.

Sources: [aol.com](http://aol.com) / [psychcentral.com](http://psychcentral.com) / [livescience.com](http://livescience.com)

## Writing

It is better to write to-do lists on paper, rather than on smartphones. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

scientists / sleep / pen / paper / writing / a to-do list / researcher / study / culture / sleeping patterns / university / five minutes / technology / average / 9 minutes / few

## True / False

- a) Scientists say a pen and paper could help you sleep more quickly. T / F
- b) The scientists say writing a to-do list can help you relax. T / F
- c) The researchers say we will soon be living in a 24/7 culture. T / F
- d) The researchers say we worry in bed about things we haven't done. T / F
- e) There were 570 participants in the sleeping research. T / F
- f) Half of the participants could use their mobile phone in bed. T / F
- g) People who wrote a to-do list fell asleep around 9 minutes quicker. T / F
- h) Over half of Americans have problems sleeping a few times a month. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. <b>idea</b>        | a. use of       |
| 2. <b>found</b>       | b. get stressed |
| 3. <b>relax</b>       | c. easy         |
| 4. <b>worry</b>       | d. theory       |
| 5. <b>constantly</b>  | e. complete     |
| 6. <b>half</b>        | f. problems     |
| 7. <b>access of</b>   | g. discovered   |
| 8. <b>detailed</b>    | h. always       |
| 9. <b>simple</b>      | i. 50 per cent  |
| 10. <b>difficulty</b> | j. unwind       |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What things are currently on your to-do list?
- c) What is your sleeping pattern like?
- d) What kinds of things keep you awake at night?
- e) Would your life be different if you fell asleep 9 minutes earlier?
- f) What things are on your bucket list?
- g) What things are usually on your shopping list?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

# Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

## Phrase Match

1. Scientists have an idea that could
  2. He said to-do lists make us
  3. We live in a 24/7
  4. our to-do lists seem to be constantly
  5. worry about unfinished
  6. sleeping
  7. They had to turn the lights out
  8. an average of
  9. students who wrote really
  10. at least a few times
- a. detailed lists
  - b. tasks
  - c. patterns
  - d. 9 minutes faster
  - e. help us get to sleep
  - f. each month
  - g. growing
  - h. relax
  - i. culture
  - j. by 10:30p

## Discussion – Student B

- a) Do you have difficulty getting to sleep?
- b) What kinds of lists do you write?
- c) Is it better to write lists on paper or on a smartphone?
- d) What do you do to help you sleep?
- e) How useful are to-do lists?
- f) Are you good at doing the things you need to do?
- g) What do you think of living in a 24/7 culture?
- h) Do you get stressed about having too many things to do?

## Spelling

1. The sientsitsc are from Baylor University
2. the lead hrrrcseae of the study
3. we become relacm
4. We live in a 24/7 tueurlc
5. canlotsnyt growing
6. unfinished stksa at bedtime
7. sleeping prntates
8. unsiitvrye students
9. have seacsc to technology
10. the tppacrtsniai who wrote to-do lists
11. an aareegv of 9 minutes
12. simple, elngare lists

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. g	3. j	4. b	5. h
6. i	7. a	8. f	9. c	10. f

## Role Play

### Role A – Writing a To-Do List

You think writing a to-do list is the best way to fall asleep. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): counting sheep, studying English or taking a hot bath.

### Role B – Counting Sheep

You think counting sheep is the best way to fall asleep. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): writing a to-do list, studying English or taking a hot bath.

### Role C – Studying English

You think studying English is the best way to fall asleep. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): counting sheep, writing a to-do list or taking a hot bath.

### Role D – Taking a Hot Bath

You think taking a hot bath is the best way to fall asleep. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): counting sheep, studying English or writing a to-do list.

## Speaking – Sleep

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things to help you sleep at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- listen to music
- read a book
- take a hot bath
- totally dark room
- write a to-do list
- count sheep
- drink hot milk
- study English

### Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.