

国際教養大学(A日程)英語 解答速報

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[解答例 1]

Time is money, and sleep demands one third of it from most of us every night. When I first learned that a person who lives until seventy-five needs to spend twenty-five years sleeping in total, I felt it was wasteful that so much of our precious time is spent with our eyes closed. Since then I have been thinking about whether we really do need eight hours of sleep every night, and through personal experience I have found that this is not the case.

Many times I have felt guilty for not being able to sleep for the recommended eight hours in a single night. I remember thinking to myself one Saturday evening: “Tomorrow is Sunday, so I’m going to give my body the eight hours of rest it deserves,” only to wake up after five hours of sleep. I ended up tossing and turning, trying to force myself back to sleep, even though I did not feel I needed any more rest. This was in fact more stressful than helpful, so eventually I decided to disregard the commonly held belief that “eight straight hours is essential”. And ever since then, I have been able to find the sleep pattern that best suits me and have never been happier.

On the days I could only manage about five hours of sleep, I realized that I naturally began to feel sleepy in the afternoon, and so when possible, I would take a thirty-minute nap. As the NASA-financed study concluded, taking such a nap greatly improved my concentration and it was enough to keep me fresh for the rest of the day. Thus for me, it seems like a total of about five and a half hours of sleep, which consists of one long sleep and one short nap, is ideal.

I also realized that the quality of sleep is much more important than its duration. Just as there are professional runners, dancers, and singers, I believe it is possible for there to be “professional sleepers”. These people have expert knowledge about how to most effectively sleep, taking into consideration the type of mattress they use, the amount and type of exercise they get, and the temperature of the room they sleep in, among other things that contribute to a good night’s sleep. If we all had this kind of knowledge, maybe we could do with four hours of sleep every night, yet be sufficiently healthy and productive.

In conclusion, I believe that our need to sleep for “eight straight hours” is a myth. And it’s time to wake up to the facts.

(431 語)

[解答例 2]

The article on the need for sleep mentioned that sleep deprivation is a common complaint, with one-third of American adults sleeping six hours or fewer per night. I identify with this segment, since I often stay up late and wake early. I have also attempted the typical response mentioned in the article, which is to get to bed earlier and sleep longer. In my case it was to no avail, so I was interested to read that our bodies are actually not designed to sleep in eight-hour blocks.

Human sleep patterns vary, with afternoon naps common across much of the world. Moreover, research has discovered that the practice of breaking up the night into “first sleep” and “second sleep” used to be common in the West. A study in which subjects deprived of artificial light began to conform to such a pattern confirmed that “split sleep” accords with our natural rhythm.

As it happens, I stayed in Italy for one year, a part of the world where people wake early, nap in the afternoon, and sleep again sometime after midnight. I too fell into this habit, and found that my daytime sleepiness disappeared. It does indeed seem more natural. Once you fall into the habit of napping, it is hard to return to a life where you must stay awake from morning to night without respite.

More research suggests that any deep sleep, even short naps, boosts our mental and physical power. The article mentions that Google now allows its employees to nap, and Major League baseball players may sleep before a game. I think we should follow their example in freeing up our sleep patterns. My personal experiments involve sleeping for 20 minutes on a train when I go back home from school in the afternoon. After taking a few minutes to come round again, I invariably feel sharper than I did before.

I know several people who believe that six hours' sleep is enough, yet seem to be low on energy. Personally, I need seven hours a night, but even this will not banish daytime sleepiness. It is clear to me that breaking up a long, hard day into two or more sleeps is both natural and kind to brain and body.

(374 語)

【傾向分析】

2011 年度の「デジタル世代の漢字離れ」(約 800 字)、2012 年度の「異文化の理解」(約 1300 字)に続いて 2013 年度は「睡眠の取り方」(約 1500 語)がテーマで、長文1題に対して設問1題(250 語以上の自由英作文)の形式は同じ。長文の難度も例年並みだったように思われる。

【解答のポイント】

引用元のタイトルを見ると“Rethinking Sleep”となっており、著者は「睡眠の常識」と言われているものに反論をしている。従って「睡眠の常識」について本文に沿って簡潔に述べて、著者の「その常識にこだわる必要はない」という意見を書いた上で、設問の指示に従って経験をまじえて、自分の意見を述べていくようにする。最も書きやすいのは、著者の「8 時間睡眠が理想的な睡眠というわけではない」という意見に対して、「賛成」か「反対」かを述べて、その論拠を並べていく書き方となるだろう。その場合に、いわゆる理想的とされている 8 時間睡眠に著者が論駁する際に言及している「仕事(作業)の効率化」という論点には触れる必要がある。つまり、賛成であるならば、「短い睡眠時間(あるいは昼寝)でも、効率が上がった」経験を、反対するならば「短い睡眠時間によって、効率が下がった、もしくは変わらなかった」経験を具体例に盛り込むことが必要となってくる。いずれの場合も、全体の段落構成は introduction, body, conclusion の 3 部構成とするのが無難と言える。

また、上記以外の書き方として、例えば、短時間睡眠の知的作業における効率化は認めながらも、肉体的作業では短時間睡眠が必ずしも有効ではないといった折衷案や、短い睡眠時間自体を管理出来るのかといった著者の意見の中で根本的に欠落している部分に触れるのもいいであろう。

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