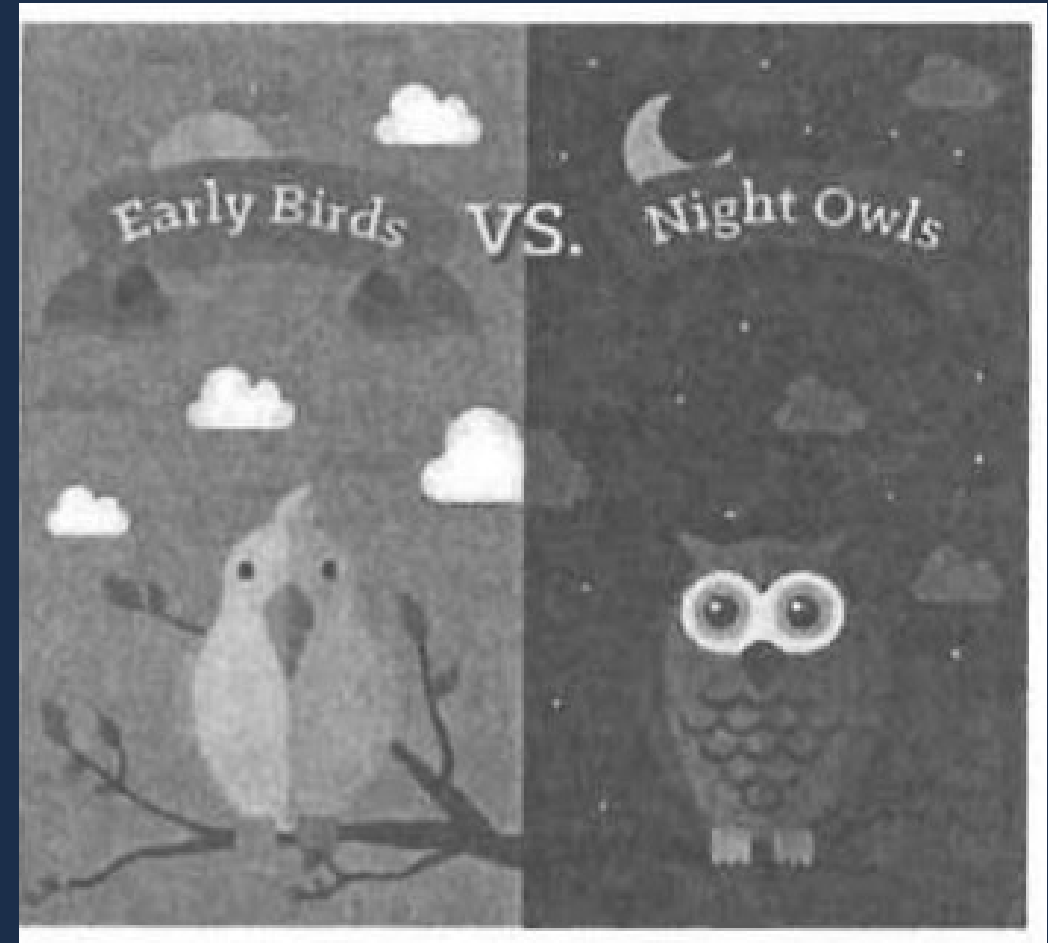


Night Owls

Sleep patterns, body clocks
and flexible working hours

DSE 2023 Paper 4 Set 2.1 · Lesson 3

EARLY BIRDS VS NIGHT OWLS



Which one are you?

Two questions to get you talking



QUESTION 1 (Student A)

**Do you wake up early
on weekends?**

QUESTION 2 (Student B)

**Do you often have
problems
waking up in the
morning?**

Your discussion task

Your group is doing a project on sleeping patterns and you are meeting to discuss this. You may want to talk about:

- the advantages of being a night owl
- the advantages of getting up early
- whether companies should have flexible working hours for people with different sleeping patterns
- anything else you think is important



Q1 Advantages of being a night owl

SUGGESTED IDEAS — noun phrases

- **a genuine late-night mental peak**
- **uninterrupted late hours (after 10 p.m.)**
- **a natural fit with modern work**

e.g. Their body clock is inherited, so they really are sharpest after dark — when my concentration peaks, the house is quiet and I finally get chapters read.

Q2 Advantages of getting up early



SUGGESTED IDEAS — noun phrases

- **head start on the day**
- **peak alertness when exams happen**
- **a calmer, better-prepared start**

e.g. Morning people get the revision slot, the empty gym and the quiet library before anyone else is up.

Q3 Should companies have flexible working hours?



SUGGESTED IDEAS — noun phrases

- **measurable gains in output**
- **a better match between the person and the timetable**
- **fair limits that must be admitted**

e.g. When night owls were allowed to start later or work from home, the study estimated a US\$277m gain in productivity.

Q4 Anything else you think is important



SUGGESTED IDEAS — noun phrases

- **habits that can be changed**
- **a school start time that fits teenage biology**
- **a health issue, not a character flaw**

e.g. Most of the extra heart risk came from smoking, poor sleep and diet — not from the body clock itself, so it is not a life sentence.

Part B - Question 7



Would you consider a job that requires working at night?

SUGGESTED IDEAS — noun phrases

- **a good match with my body clock**
- **practical rewards and fewer interruptions**
- **a serious long-term health cost**

On balance, I would try it short-term, but the trade-off is a sleep deficit I could not sustain.

Part B - Question 8



Do you envy people who only need a few hours of sleep?

SUGGESTED IDEAS — noun phrases

- **the appeal of extra hours**
- **the hidden cost of short sleep**
- **a misconception that short sleepers are fine**

The trade-off is clear: five broken hours may look efficient, but they cost me the next day's lessons.



Say it like this — from the lesson

I burn the midnight oil most nights.

I am sleep-deprived, so I suffer from daytime drowsiness.

I try to catch up on sleep at the weekend.

My concentration peaks late at night, but not in the morning.

Long-term night work takes a toll on your health.

My productivity peaks late at night — I am an evening type.

When I am sleep-deprived, my cognitive performance is impaired.

The trade-off is clear: five broken hours cost me the next day's lessons.