NAME..... DATE.....

TEST READINESS—SLEEP

What would you think if your teacher told you to prepare for a big test by going to bed? It might sound silly, but research suggests that sleep is important for school success.

Your brain isn't a muscle, but just like your muscles, your brain needs rest so it can work its best. Studies have shown that kids who get enough sleep do better on math, reading and vocabulary tests. Students who get enough sleep also get better grades.

Scientists are learning why sleep is so important for learning. A tired brain gets stuck on the wrong answer. It lacks the creativity to move past one idea to come up with more and better answers. Sleep makes the connections in the brain work better, and these connections are very important for memory.

Getting enough sleep also helps concentration. And during sleep, your brain saves what it has learned—just like a computer saves a document. The more you learn during the day, the more sleep you need at night.

How much sleep is enough? According to the National Sleep Foundation, elementary school kids need 10 to 11 hours of sleep a night. Depending when you need to get up, your bedtime on a school night should be around 8 p.m.

Try these tips for getting enough sleep.

- No drinks that contain caffeine after lunch.
- Start getting ready for bed about an hour before bedtime. Turn off all screens – television, computers, cell phones and video games.
- Then do a quiet activity like reading before turning out the light and going to sleep.

Do you get 10 to 11 hours of sleep each night? What do you think would happen to test scores if every kid in your class had enough sleep?

»Discuss, Record and Share:

1. What does sleep do to the brain?
2. List examples from the text of how getting enough sleep helps learning.
3. How many hours of sleep is suggested for kids your age?
4. Using what you've just read about sleep and learning, how might getting lots of sleep the night before a test help you get a better score?

This health lesson is brought to you by

healthteacher

© 2012 All rights reserved.