

## Green Light, Blue Light Activity

**TRANSITION INTO ACTIVITY:** “Each of you has two pieces of paper, one green and one blue. The green paper indicates that a statement is true. The blue paper indicates that a statement is false. Once the statement is read and repeated, we will count down from three and then you will hold up one of the papers to indicate your opinion.”

[After every person holds up their response, ask one person who is holding “Green” why they think the statement is true. Then ask one student who is showing “Blue” why they think the statement is false. After both students have responded - or one student, if all have given the same response - provide the class with the correct answer and explanation.]

**TRANSITION OUT OF ACTIVITY:** “Remember, sleep is not just a time for your body to completely shut down. In fact, studies show that as you sleep, your brain is very busy creating pathways that help you learn, remember, and solve problems. A good night’s sleep is important for helping you to be your best.”

Blue Light, Green Light Facts: (Read the first statement - second statement is the answer. Black is fact, green is true, blue is false)

- **During sleep your brain becomes inactive.**
- False. While your body rests, your brain doesn’t. An active brain during sleep prepares us for alertness and peak functioning the next day.
- **Sleeping just one hour less a night can prevent you from learning or functioning normally.**
- True. Most adults need around eight hours of sleep to function at their best. To determine your sleep need, sleep until you wake on your own...without an alarm clock. Feel alert? That’s your sleep need. You can teach yourself to sleep less, but not to need less sleep
- **Resting in bed with your eyes closed cannot satisfy your body’s need for sleep.**
- True. Rest is not a substitute for sleep. Sleep is as necessary to health as food and water. When you don’t get the sleep you need, your body builds up a sleep debt. Missing out on 1 hour of sleep each night adds up to an entire night of sleep debt each week. Sooner or later, this debt must be paid... with sleep.
- **Everyone dreams every night.**
- True. Though many people fail to remember their dreams, dreaming does occur for every person, every night. Dreams are most vivid during REM or rapid eye movement sleep.
- **The older you get, the fewer hours of sleep you need.**
- False. Sleep need remains unchanged throughout adulthood. Older people who sleep less at night tend to sleep more during the day. If poor sleep habits, pain or health conditions make sleeping difficult, a physician can help.
- **No matter how sleepy you are, you can force yourself to stay awake.**
- False. If you’re sleepy enough, you can fall asleep anywhere. It’s also possible to fall asleep for a few seconds and not even realize it. These “microsleeps” can be dangerous if they happen when you’re driving.

- **Maximum REM sleep can only be achieved when you sleep at least 8 hours per night.**
- True. This is the phase of sleep that stores short term memory into long term memory as well as repairs muscle damage and fatigue from the day before. 8-10 hours of sleep per night is necessary to repair muscles and keep brain signals to your body moving fast.
- **Getting a good night's sleep leads to a fresher morning, better choices during the day, more efficiency, and being tired enough at night for another good night's sleep.**
- True. A bad night of sleep leads to a tired morning, poor daily choices, less efficiency, and difficulty falling back asleep at night.
- **The more sleep someone gets, the less likely they are to suffer bodily injury, especially in sports. More sleep leaves your body better prepared to face the day!**
- True. Sleep and energy deficits last for days which decrease effective decision making, academic productivity, and performance measures.
- **You can make up for lost sleep during the week by sleeping more on the weekends.**
- False. Although this sleeping pattern will help relieve part of a sleep debt, it will not completely make up for the lack of sleep. Furthermore, sleeping later on the weekends can affect your sleep-wake cycle so that it is much harder to go to sleep at the right time on Sunday nights and get up early on Monday mornings.
- **You can overcome a lack of sleep without a decrease in your mental and physical performance.**
- False, lack of sleep will impact your Central Nervous System, causing a decrease in performance. Getting ready for a big game or big performance? You must start getting enough sleep at least 3 nights in advance to have optimal performance.
- **Naps increase alertness by 30%.**
- True. Naps can help increase alertness by 30%. 10-20 minute afternoon naps are ideal for an extra boost of energy. Try to nap between the hours of 1 and 4pm, because if you nap later it will make it harder to fall asleep at night.
- **Sleeping with the light on does not affect your body's ability to fall asleep quickly.**
- False. In the absence of light, your brain's pineal gland starts to release melatonin (sleep hormone) which after about 30 minutes transitions you from wake state to sleep state. If you have light in the room the release is decreased. Complete darkness is best!
- **Sleep keeps you in a good mood.**
- True. Sleep is a huge modulator of mood, and mood is the best indicative factor in recovery, trainability and performance.
- **Pulling an all-nighter to complete homework or study is preferable to getting sleep and risking a lower grade.**
- Actually, while pulling an all-nighter might seem like a better option, an all-nighter can result in a 30% loss of cognitive function. While you get more study time, you sacrifice your ability to function. Studies actually show that sleep is correlated to GPA, and that students who stay up all night doing homework or studying actually have lower GPAs on average than those who get adequate rest. As the hours of sleep achieved each night increases, so does GPA.