

The Science of Sleep

Teacher Notes

Are you a Lark, Owl, or Hummingbird?

It is often said that people who wake up early are more productive. The way our school, and working, day is structured feeds into this. The reality is that each person has an in-built in clock that will influence when they are the most energetic and the sleepest. This is called your chronotype and is influenced by your genes. There are three main chronotypes: larks, owls, and hummingbirds.

Larks prefer getting up earlier and going to sleep earlier and hit their peak performance level earlier in the day.

Owls prefer sleeping in and staying up later and hit their peak performance level later in the day.

Most people - around 70% - lie somewhere between a lark and an owl and are hummingbirds!

Understanding your chronotype could help you with working out when is the best time for you to get up, go to sleep, and schedule things like exercise and homework in your day. It can contribute to better sleep quality, and physical and mental health. Larks should wake up earlier and complete their tasks in the morning and early afternoon, whereas owls should sleep in and aim to work in the late afternoon and into the evening.

Activity:

The resources for this activity are a quiz worksheet, and three category posters (Lark, Owl, Hummingbird).

The quiz worksheet accompanying this resource can be used to give a rough idea of if an individual is a lark, owl or hummingbird.

Once members of the class have found which group they fall in to, they can add a marker to one of the posters to find out how they compare to others in the class.

Extension activities:

Once the data for a group has been collected, it can be used to work out percentages and look at frequencies. If the score data is collected it can be used to draw histograms and look at distributions.



Morning Lark

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Hummingbird

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Night Owl

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