B1 – SLEEPY IN SOUTH KOREA (BBC PODCAST)

Level: B1   **Time**: 45-55 minutes

Lesson focus: This class, based on a BBC 6-minute podcast 'Sleepy in South Korea', looks at the work culture and its effects on people's sleeping habits. The lesson starts by categorizing 10 cities and guessing which ones get the most and the least sleep. Students discuss the causes of sleeplessness and what can be caused by insomnia. Think how sleeplessness can be turned into a business, including sleeping medication. Finish by revising five new vocabulary items and answering the questions about sleep.

Materials:
- Sleepy in South Korea - Presentation
- BBC 6-minute podcast - *Sleepy in South Korea*
- Optionally - podcast transcript

Learning objectives:
- to discuss the work culture and its effects on sleeping habits
- to listen to and understand a podcast
- to learn and use five new vocabulary items

Structure:

1. Lead-in (8 mins)
Discuss the average time an adult person should sleep a night (about 7-9 hours) and students' sleeping patterns.

Look at the list of 10 cities and categorize them based on the countries that get the most and the least sleep.

Answers:
The most sleep - Buenos Aires (10 hours), Mexico City (9 hours), Beijing (9 hours), New Delhi (8.8 hours), Islamabad (8.8 hours)

The least sleep - Berlin (6 hours), Manila (6.3 hours), Soul (6.4 hours), Cairo (6.5 hours), Bangkok (7 hours)

Are they surprised by any of those results? Why?

2. Listening Part 1 (6 mins)
Students work in pairs and discuss three causes of sleeplessness and its consequences. Listen to the first part of the podcast *(1:33 - 2:03)* and check the answers.

Answers:
1. pressure, anxiety, stress
2. depression and suicide

3. Listening Part 2 (7 mins)
Look at the picture of a woman sleeping on the office floor and discuss what students think is happening. Discuss if they believe its real or fake and give reasons why anyone would decide to do this. (It's a real photo from the Twitter headquarters)

Discuss the average working time in South Korea (52 hours) and compare it with students' countries.

Look at two words, angry and intrude. Listen to the second part of the podcast *(2:03 - 3:18)* and write the synonyms of these words. (agitated, encroach). Discuss why the Korean worker speaking in the recording was angry about the situation.

Answer: They told me 'you need to be contactable 24/7' – there will always be

someone from work reaching out to me, like needing to get something done right now. Even just thinking about it, I get really agitated.

4. Listening Part 3 (6 mins)

Read a short quote from the next part of the podcast, Offering a cure for this sleeplessness has become big business, and in pairs think of three ways in which curing insomnia can generate money. Listen to the next part of the podcast *(3:18 - 3:55)* and check the answers.

Answers:
1. Sleep clinics where doctors assess people
overnight.
2. Sleep cafes that offer places to nap in the middle of the working day.
3. Taking medication to help sleep.

Discuss the ethics of generating money from someone's misfortune.

5. Listening Part 4 (6 mins)

Look at the list of side-effects caused by sleeping medication. Students can either rank the side-effects from the most to the least dangerous or can decide on one which is the most threatening to the patients.

Listen to the fourth part of the podcast *(3:55 - 4:55)* and tick the side-effects that were mentioned. Discuss two ways that the podcast suggests to do in case the sleeping medication doesn't work.

Answers: changes in weight (eating at night) and sleepwalking; meditation and less work.

6. Listening Part 5 (5 mins)

Discuss the importance of sleep and whether it is possible to live without sleeping. Think about the time they stayed up for the longest and the reason they decided/needed to stay awake. How did this situation make them feel?

Think about the longest time someone stayed awake. Mention an American man who set the record for staying awake for the longest period. Listen to the last part of the podcast *(4:55 - 5:25)* and check the answers. Were they surprised by this time?

Answer: c - 264 hours

7. Vocabulary revision (5 mins)

Match the vocabulary from the podcast with their definitions. Give the answers or listen until the end of the podcast to check the answers.

Answers: 1d, 2b, 3e, 4c, 5a

8. Vocabulary practice (4 mins)

Fill in the gaps with the missing vocabulary items from the previous exercise.

Answers: 1. sleepwalking, 2. switch off, 3. encroaching, 4. side-effects, 5. agitated

9. Discussion (8 mins)

Students work in pairs, asking and answering the questions from before.
Monitor the activity and provide speaking feedback as needed.