**Sleep is for Everyone** by Paul Showers

When a horse goes to sleep, its eyelids go down. When a chicken goes to sleep, its eyelids go up. When a snake sleeps, its eyes stay open. Snakes have no eyelids.

When you go to sleep, which way do your eyelids go?

An elephant can sleep standing up. A pigeon sits down when it sleeps. Pigs lie down to sleep. So do dogs. So do you. Sometimes dogs curl up. So do cats. Cows don’t. Do you?

Like birds and animals, people have to sleep. Some people sleep more than others. Jonathan is only six weeks old. He sleeps most of the time. He only wakes up when he wants to eat—or have his diaper changed.

Caroline is two years old. She goes to bed right after her dinner. She sleeps all night, twelve **hours** or more. She takes a nap in the **afternoon**, too. When Caroline doesn’t get her nap, she is cranky. She cries. She throws things. But the next morning she feels fine—after she’s had a good night’s sleep.

When people are little, they are growing, and they need a lot of sleep. As they grow bigger and older, they need less sleep. Schoolchildren need to sleep about ten to twelve **hours** an night.

Most grown-ups need only seven or eight **hours**. But babies, children and grown-ups all of them need to have their sleep.

Every part of your body has to rest after it does its work. Your arms need to rest after they **carry** heavy bundles. When you run fast your legs work hard. They get tired, and you have to rest them.

Your brain works hard, too. It never stops working. When you are a wake, it helps you pay attention to the world around you—to the sights you see and the sounds you hear, and to the things you taste and smell and feel. You can sit perfectly still

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and rest your arms and legs, but your brain isn’t resting. It goes right on thinking as long as you are awake.

At night your brain needs a rest from thinking. It needs to turn off the world—the way you turn off the light when you go to bed. Sleep is the time when part of your brain takes a rest.

Sometimes it is hard to go to bed. Perhaps I want to watch something on TV. But my mother makes me go to bed. Sometimes she is cross with me. That’s because she is tired. Sometimes I’m cross. That’s because I’m tired.

Most of the time I go to bed when my parents tell me. It is warm under the covers. Sometimes I curl up. Or I stretch out and twist around. I yawn. I shut my eyes. I feel as if I am floating.

My thoughts begin to wander. I am floating on a rubber mattress in a pool...or in a balloon high up in the clouds. I think of different things—riding my bicycle...roller-skating...an airplane high in the sky...a basket of apples...waves at the seashore...racing cars...my goldfish. Soon I stop thinking. I am asleep.

**Phonics Skill**

**Comprehension Skill**

**High-Frequency Words**

| Short Vowel /ĕ/ ea | Main Idea | afternoon, bicycle, carry, hours, parents |

**Genre: Nonfiction**

In nonfiction pieces, an author gives information about a topic. Look for information about why sleep is important and details and facts about sleep.

**Think About It**

1. Is “Sleep Is for Everyone” a good title for this selection? Why?
2. Why is sleep important?
3. When does your brain get a rest from thinking?
4. Do you like to go to bed on time or stay up late? Tell why.
5. What can happen to children when they don’t get enough sleep?