Beating the Winter Blues



Does your moon change with the seasons?

Some people find that when the temperature goes down, so do their spirits. Those people sometimes feel sad for no reason. They eat more and gain weight. They have trouble sleeping. They can't think clearly.

Here are some ways you can beat the winter blues:

- Get out in the sun. Some experts say that winter blues happen because we get less sunlight in the winter than we do in other seasons. Some say that the decrease in sunlight can make us feel sad. Getting extra sunlight each day can help brighten your mood.

- Get some exercise. A brisk walk or other exercise will make chemicals called endorphins flow through your body. Endorphins are natural "feel good" chemicals.

- Eat more healthful foods. Avoid having too much sugar. If you crave sugary foods (like cookies or candy), it may be a sign that you need more protein (like meat, chicken, or fish).

- Avoid holiday stress. Cut back if you have too many things to do. Make sure you have some quiet time to yourself. Get some rest. Don't be so busy that you get run-down. Studies show that most teens need about nine hours of sleep each night. The average teen, though, gets only about six or seven hours of sleep per night.

- Get help. If you feel sad all the time and the feeling won't go away, you may have a bigger problem than the winter blues. Talk to an adult you trust. Get help from a doctor.

1. How many hours of sleep each night does the average teen need?
    a. 12
    b. 6
    c. 9
    d. 7

2. According to some experts, why do the winter blues happen?
    a. Because we eat too much protein and not enough sugar.
    b. Because we get less sunlight in the winter.
    c. Because we get to rest during the holidays.
    d. Because we have too much time to exercise.

3. Read these sentences from the text.

    Some say the decrease in sunlight can make us feel sad. Getting extra sunlight each day can help brighten your mood.

    Based on this evidence, what conclusion might you draw about someone who has the winter blues.

    a. Spending more time with their family members would improve their mood.
    b. Watching their favorite movies and having some popcorn would improve their mood.
    c. Going for a walk outside on a sunny day would improve their mood.
    d. Turning up the heat so they wouldn't be so cold would improve their mood.

4. Based on the text, how would people with winter blues feel in the spring compared to the winter?
    a. Happier
    b. About the same
    c. Sadder
    d. More stressed

5. What is this text mostly about?
    a. Blues musicians, and how some of their music is inspired by the seasons.
    b. Sunlight and what research shows are its effects on human happiness.
    c. How some people feel sad in the winter, and what to do about it.
    d. How each season has a mood depending on where the earth is in space.

6. Read this sentence from the text.

    Some people find that when the temperature goes down, so do their <u>spirits</u>, and they feel sad for no reason.

    In the sentence, what does the word "**<u>spirits</u>**" most nearly mean?

    a. Body temperatures
    b. Faith in their religion
    c. Wind speed outdoors
    d. Emotional happiness

7. Why might exercise make you feel better even when it's not winter?
    a. Exercise helps you lose weight.
    b. Exercise makes you feel warmer.
    c. Exercise causes endorphins that make you feel good.
    d. Exercise can make you feel sad.

8. If you crave sugary food, what might that mean?
    a. You need more protein.
    b. You are a good baker.
    c. You are stressed.
    d. You need to see your doctor.

9. Identify the genre of this passage.
    a. Science fiction
    b. Realistic fiction
    c. Informational nonfiction
    d. Biography

10. Why did the author most likely write this passage?
    a. To entertain you with a story about a boy who exercises in the snow.
    b. To convince you to exercise so you feel better.
    c. To tell you a story about a girl who is sad during the winter.
    d. To provide you with information about how to feel happier in the winter.