

Reading and word formation

Read the text about examination stress. Change the words in brackets and then answer the questions below the text.

EXAMINATION STRESS

Examinations are the most stressful events facing any student. Stress can lead to panic and insomnia. Cases of insomnia are quite common and students should know that sleeping pills will not solve the problem. Stress can be spotted by signs of _____ (IRRITATE), a lack of concentration and _____ (PATIENT).

Exam stress is not greatest during the actual exams but in the few weeks just before them. The climax is usually the night before, when last minute _____ (PREPARE) confirm your worst fears. There are, however, some simple ways of dealing with the problem.

First, the dedicated student can suffer from anxiety, blanking out, and memory gaps just as much as the student who has left everything to the last minute. But the remedy is the same in each case. The night before is too late to do anything. Far better to go to a dance, for a walk, or play a game than increase stress by frantic efforts to plug in gaps in your knowledge.

Your brain is a complex bioelectrical machine, which like computers can be _____ (LOAD). It does not work continuously, but in fits and starts. When you study, your brain reaches its maximum _____ (EFFICIENT) about five minutes after you start work, stays at this level for about ten minutes, and thereafter it is all downhill. Indeed, after thirty minutes, your attention wanders, your memory actually shuts off, and _____ (BORE) sets in.

For this reason, the best way to study is in half hour sessions, with gaps in between of about the same length. It even helps to change subjects and not keep to the same one, since this reduces the boredom factor.

The two popular drugs: tea and coffee in very large doses can have a depressing effect on memory and _____ (ALERT); they can also keep you awake. And you need sleep before exams. During sleep the things you have been trying to learn are either stored in your permanent memory, in which case you will remember them, or passed into your transient memory, in which case you will have a vague idea but no clear recollection.

The lesson here is clear. To beat exam stress you have to feel that what you are doing is fun, and perhaps the best way to do this is to treat revision as a game. This gives your brain the best chance to excel itself. If you tire it with long, boring study sessions, you will find you cannot remember much, but if you stimulate it with short snappy sessions, you will be surprised how quick and sharp you are. Give yourself a real chance by getting out and about before exams, aware that a laugh with friends or a walk through the country is really giving your mind the recreation it needs. Exams stress then turns into exam exhilaration, real _____ (COMPETE) fun.

1. According to the text what are the symptoms of stress?

2. When are the exam stress levels increased the most?

3. Students who prepare in advance don't suffer from symptoms of stress. T / F

4. Coffee and tea will help you increase efficiency and decrease levels of stress. T / F

5. According to the text what's the best ways to deal with exam stress and excel your memory?

Extra activity

Match the words with their definitions:

insomnia

climax

to blank out

frantic

in fits and starts

vague

snappy

to wander

1. impatient or irritable _____

2. to forget something _____
3. habitual sleeplessness _____
4. it often stops and then starts again _____
5. to not remain focused on the task _____
6. fast, nervous or distracted _____
7. lacking clarity _____
8. the most intense, exciting, or important point of something _____