TEENS LESSON

Would You Like School to Start Later?



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. Would you choose a later start to school?
2. Which is more useful to you: an extra hour in the morning or afternoon?
3. What would make getting to school easier?

2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

1	**timetable**	☐	A	the usual amount
2	**introduced**	☐	B	practice for a sport
3	**researchers**	☐	C	a list of the times when things happen
4	**completed**	☐	D	finished
5	**average**	☐	E	at once, without waiting
6	**offered**	☐	F	started using something new
7	**training**	☐	G	gave someone the chance to have something
8	**straight away**	☐	H	people who study something carefully to learn new facts

3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

A Swiss school let students choose when to start. Almost all of them chose later, and they slept longer.

1 Imagine your school gives you a choice. You can arrive at 7:30, or you can wait and arrive at 8:30. Would you stay in bed for the extra hour?

2 Many people would say yes straight away. But there is a catch. A later start might mean a later finish, and that could change your bus, your training and your evening. The easy choice isn't always the best one.

3 A school in Gossau, in Switzerland, tried something like this. Before the change, classes there began at 7:20. Then the school introduced flexible hours. Students could arrive at 7:30, or they could wait until 8:30, when classes officially began.

4 Researchers from the University of Zurich asked students about their sleep and health before the change, and again a year later. In total, they collected 754 completed surveys. The students were about 14 years old.

5 Almost all of them chose the later start: 95 out of 100. They woke up later, but they went to bed at about the same time. On average, they slept 45 minutes more on school days. They also said they had fewer problems falling asleep.

6 The survey asked about sleep and health. It did not test a later finish, and it doesn't prove that a later start is perfect for every school. It was a survey, so it shows what happened, not exactly why. Some students travel a long way. Some have training or family jobs after school. A later finish could be hard for them.

7 So here is the real question. Would you choose more sleep or a free evening? If your school offered the choice tomorrow, which timetable would you pick?

Sources: University of Zurich; Journal of Adolescent Health, study abstract. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. Lessons at the Gossau school used to start at 7:20 before the flexible hours. T F NG
2. Every student had to start school at 8:30. T F NG
3. Most students picked the later start time. T F NG
4. The students said they were happier at school. T F NG
5. The study proves that a later start is perfect for every school. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

collected	flexible	officially	perfect	prove	survey	travel

1. My mum's job has _____ hours, so she can start at eight or at ten.
2. Our class did a _____ to find out how many students walk to school.
3. You can't _____ that the new trainers made him run faster.
4. The museum _____ opens at ten, but the doors open a little earlier.
5. Our teacher _____ all the forms and put them in her bag.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. Last year our school _____ the timetable. (CHANGE)
2. Yesterday I _____ up at six because of the noise outside. (WAKE)
3. We _____ PE on Monday because the sports hall was closed. (NOT HAVE)
4. My friend usually _____ the bus at half past seven. (CATCH)
5. I _____ my homework at home, so I did it again at lunch. (FORGET)

7 Language focus: prepositions

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. Some words are always followed by the same preposition, like afraid of and good at. Learn them as pairs.

about	at	for	in	of	on	with

1. Many students worry _____ their exams.
2. I'm not very good _____ getting up early.
3. Our coach is proud _____ the team.
4. Whether I can come depends _____ the bus times.
5. She's interested _____ science and wants to be a researcher.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. What school start time would you try for a month?
2. Should everyone follow the same timetable?
3. What should a school ask students before changing the day?

9 Plan a fair school day

In pairs, plan a school day for two invented students: one who lives far away and one who has training after school. Include fixed lessons, a lunch break and travel. Decide who could start later and what each student gives up. Then explain one compromise to another pair. You can use invented students, so nobody has to share anything personal.

Useful phrases

I'd rather start later, even if I finish later.

That wouldn't work for someone who catches the early bus.

What if lessons started at half past eight on two days?

She'd miss her training, so that isn't fair.

Let's meet in the middle.

We've decided that the best compromise is ...

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

1 C · 2 F · 3 H · 4 D · 5 A · 6 G · 7 B · 8 E

4 True, false or not given

1 T · 2 F · 3 T · 4 NG · 5 F

5 Vocabulary

1 flexible · 2 survey · 3 prove · 4 officially · 5 collected

6 Verb forms

1 changed · 2 woke · 3 didn't have or did not have · 4 catches · 5 forgot

7 Language focus

1 about · 2 at · 3 of · 4 on · 5 in