

Vocabulary: sleep 词汇：睡眠

Yawning is something we all do – maybe because we’re **bored** carrying out tedious tasks or because we’re **tired**. Sometimes, just seeing other people yawn can **set you off**. But is this **biological function** really **contagious**, and why do we do it in the first place?

Many of us think we open our mouths when we yawn to take in more **oxygen**, but in fact it appears there is no clear biological reason. According to BBC Bitesize, new research suggests it might be because yawning cools the brain down and prevents it from **overheating**, much like the fan in your laptop. This might be why we’re more likely to feel **drowsy** and yawn in warm temperatures.

What is clear is that we yawn more when we’re **exhausted** and ready for a **nap**, and we can’t control when we do it – once we start, there’s no stopping us! But it’s also true that yawning is a very contagious **behaviour**. John Drury, a researcher from Sussex University, told the BBC that “it’s meant to be **automatic**; it’s something that you can’t stop. Dogs yawn when their owners yawn, animals yawn to each other. It happens whether you want to or not.”

His research into this **cognitive** behaviour found that there is a connection with our social group and how close we are to the people in it. If we **identify with** the person who **exhibits** the behaviour, we are likely to copy it too.

Other research by the University of Nottingham in 2017 found similar results. They asked volunteers to watch other people yawn. They found their ability to **resist** yawning when others around them yawned was limited. And the **urge** to yawn was increased when people were told they couldn’t. They also found, when using **electrical stimulation**, that they were able to increase people’s desire to yawn. These findings, they say, could be useful because it could help treat other conditions like Tourette’s, which involve the same area of the brain.

What is certain is that a yawn can **creep up on us** at any time even when we think we’re not tired – but, I hope, not when you’re reading this article!

词汇表

yawning	打哈欠
bored	感到无聊的
tired	疲倦的, 累的
set sb. off	使某人开始做某事
biological function	生物功能
contagious	有感染力的, 会蔓延的
oxygen	氧气
overheat	使……变得过热
drowsy	昏昏欲睡的
exhausted	精疲力尽的
a nap	小睡, 打盹
behaviour	行为
automatic	不自觉的, 无意识的
cognitive	认知的
identify with sb.	与某人产生共鸣
exhibit	表现出
resist	抗拒
urge	强烈的欲望
electrical stimulation	电刺激
creep up on sb.	不知不觉中体验到, 悄悄接近某人

测验与练习

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. According to one researcher, what does yawning stop from overheating?
2. True or false? *We yawn more to take in more oxygen.*
3. What happens when people are told not to yawn?
4. True or false? *We are more likely to yawn when someone we know yawns.*
5. How can we stop ourselves yawning?

2. 请在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. I find walking to work every day a bit _____, so I might start cycling instead.

contagious	tedious	automatic	drowsy
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2. When my sister started crying at the wedding, it _____ and we were all in floods of tears!

set one off	set it off	set us off	set you off
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3. I'm not going out tonight: I've worked two nightshifts and I'm _____.

drowsy	a nap	overheating	exhausted
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4. I'm supposed to be on a diet, but it's hard to _____ all the chocolate people bring into the office.

resist	urge	exhibit	contagious
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5. He found it hard to _____ his team as he had come from a different background.

identity with	identify on	identify with	identify at
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答案

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. According to one researcher, what does yawning stop from overheating?

The research suggests yawning cools the brain down and prevents it from overheating.

2. True or false? We yawn more to take in more oxygen.

False. It appears there is no clear biological reason for yawning.

3. What happens when people are told not to yawn?

The urge to yawn was increased when people were told not to yawn.

4. True or false? *We are more likely to yawn when someone we know yawns.*

True. Research from Sussex University found that if we identify with the person who yawns we are likely to copy them.

5. How can we stop ourselves yawning?

You can't. It happens whether you want to or not.

2. 请在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. I find walking to work every day a bit **tedious**, so I might start cycling instead.

2. When my sister started crying at the wedding, it **set us off** and we were all in floods of tears!

3. I'm not going out tonight: I've worked two nightshifts and I'm **exhausted**.

4. I'm supposed to be on a diet, but it's hard to **resist** all the chocolate people bring into the office.

5. He found it hard to **identify with** his team as he had come from a different background.