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Londoners offered BLT for SAD

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15 January, 2006

THE ARTICLE

Londoners offered BLT for SAD

Short and gloomy days are responsible for a medical condition known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). The aptly named acronym is being increasingly diagnosed by doctors in countries that have generally dismal and depressing weather. One of the most infamous places for its gray skies that rain cats and dogs is London, where a new cafe has opened that offers visitors a respite against the wintertime blues. Anyone wanting to lift their spirits can visit the newly opened Dana Cafe at the Science Museum for some Bright Light Therapy (BLT). The cafe's Light Lounge contains specially designed boxes, which produce light five times brighter than regular house lights. Customers can reserve a 20-minute dose of the bright stuff with their latte.

Over five million people suffer from SAD during winter in the UK alone. It is common knowledge that people in northerly latitudes feel miserable at this time of year. This recognized medical disorder is caused by a biochemical imbalance in the part of the brain that controls mood, appetite, libido and sleep. A lack of the chemical serotonin, which the body receives from sunlight, can induce a range of symptoms in levels varying from mild to severe. A serotonin deficiency triggers the release of another hormone responsible for making animals hibernate. SAD sufferers can experience depression, anxiety, lethargy, sleep problems, overeating and a loss of sex drive. Eighty percent of SAD cases can be treated with a BLT session. Dana Cafe's Light Lounge is fully booked until March.

WARM-UPS

1. SUNSHINE: Talk to your partners about sunshine. Write down five reasons why sunshine is important. Change partners and share and compare the reasons you wrote down. What is the most common reason for sunshine being important?

2. THERAPY: What kind of therapy would you recommend for people suffering from the following problems? Discuss this with your partner(s).

- Sunshine deficiency
- Insomnia (sleep disorder)
- Hydrophobia (fear of water)
- Lack of confidence making speeches
- Xenophobia (fear of foreigners)
- Anorexia (eating disorder)
- Alcoholism
- Dislike of studying English

3. SAD: SAD is an acronym for Seasonal Affective Disorder – a medical condition caused by a lack of sunshine. In pairs / groups, rate the following suggestions to treat SAD.

- a. Sit in front of extremely bright lights.
- b. Move to Hawaii.
- c. Move your desk and sofa nearer the window.
- d. Spend more time walking outside.
- e. Look at photographs of the sun, deserts and beaches.
- f. Take vitamin C.

4. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

Gloom / medical conditions / seasons / disorders / depressing weather / cats and dogs / cafes / the blues / bright lights / therapy / hibernation / lethargy / anxiety

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

5. GLOOMY PLACES: With your partner(s), brainstorm a list of gloomy places. What do you know about them? Here are a few you can talk about to get you started:

- London in winter
- The dark side of the moon
- A dentist's waiting room
- A three-dollar hotel room
- The losing team's bus
- The land of broken hearts
- Siberia
- A beach hotel during a typhoon

6. WINTER: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with winter. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. Depressed people should eat bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwiches. T / F
- b. London is infamous for gloomy skies and raining cats and dogs. T / F
- c. A new London cafe offers patrons Bright Light Therapy. T / F
- d. The cafe's special lights are five times brighter than the sun. T / F
- e. More than fifteen million Britons suffer from SAD. T / F
- f. People in southerly latitudes feel miserable in December and January. T / F
- g. A lack of sunshine can increase appetite and cause lethargy. T / F
- h. Eighty percent of SAD cases can be treated with Bright Light Therapy. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| a. gloomy | bring about |
| b. diagnosed | fix |
| c. aptly | lull |
| d. respite | sex drive |
| e. dose | identified |
| f. suffer | deprivation |
| g. libido | (be) affected by |
| h. induce | dreary |
| i. deficiency | sluggishness |
| j. lethargy | fittingly |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. Short and gloomy | against the wintertime blues |
| b. aptly | by a biochemical imbalance |
| c. offers visitors a respite | dose of the bright stuff |
| d. Anyone wanting to lift | the release of another hormone |
| e. reserve a 20-minute | named acronym |
| f. people in northerly | a range of symptoms |
| g. medical disorder is caused | can be treated with a BLT session |
| h. induce | days |
| i. triggers | latitudes feel miserable |
| j. Eighty percent of SAD cases | their spirits |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

Londoners offered BLT for SAD

Short and _____ days are responsible for a medical condition known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). The _____ named acronym is being increasingly diagnosed by doctors in countries that have generally dismal and depressing weather. One of the most _____ places for its gray skies that rain cats and dogs is London, where a new cafe has opened that offers visitors a _____ against the wintertime blues. Anyone wanting to lift their _____ can visit the newly opened Dana Cafe at the Science Museum for some Bright Light Therapy (BLT). The cafe's Light Lounge contains _____ designed boxes, which produce light five times brighter than regular house lights. Customers can reserve a 20-minute _____ of the bright _____ with their latte.

infamous

stuff

aptly

spirits

dose

specially

gloomy

respite

Over five million people suffer from SAD during winter in the UK _____. It is _____ knowledge that people in northerly _____ feel miserable at this time of year. This recognized medical disorder is caused by a biochemical imbalance in the part of the brain that controls mood, appetite, _____ and sleep. A lack of the chemical serotonin, which the body receives from sunlight, can _____ a range of symptoms in levels varying from mild to severe. A serotonin deficiency triggers the release of another hormone responsible for making animals _____. SAD sufferers can experience depression, anxiety, lethargy, sleep problems, overeating and a _____ of sex drive. Eighty percent of SAD cases can be _____ with a BLT session. Dana Cafe's Light Lounge is fully booked until March.

loss

libido

common

hibernate

treated

alone

induce

latitudes

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

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Short and _____ days are responsible for a medical condition known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). The aptly named _____ is being increasingly diagnosed by doctors in countries that have generally dismal and depressing weather. One of the most _____ places for its gray skies that rain cats and dogs is London, where a new cafe has opened that offers visitors a _____ against the wintertime blues. Anyone wanting to lift their _____ can visit the newly opened Dana Cafe at the Science Museum for some Bright Light Therapy (BLT). The cafe's Light Lounge contains _____ designed boxes, which produce light five times brighter than regular house lights. Customers can reserve a 20-minute _____ of the bright stuff with their latte.

Over five million people suffer from SAD during winter in the ____ _____. It is common knowledge that people in northerly _____ feel miserable at this time of year. This recognized medical disorder is caused by a biochemical imbalance in the part of the brain that controls mood, appetite, _____ and sleep. A lack of the chemical serotonin, which the body receives from sunlight, can _____ a range of symptoms in levels varying from mild to severe. A serotonin deficiency _____ the release of another hormone responsible for making animals hibernate. SAD sufferers can experience depression, anxiety, _____, sleep problems, overeating and a loss of sex drive. Eighty percent of SAD cases can be treated with a BLT session. Dana Cafe's Light Lounge is _____ booked until March.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'cat' and 'dog'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "SUNSHINE" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about sunshine.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- responsible
- named
- infamous
- spirits
- designed
- dose
- alone
- latitudes
- lack
- triggers
- lethargy
- treated

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What were your initial thoughts upon reading the headline?
- c. What do you know about SAD?
- d. Do you think or know that you suffer from SAD?
- e. What kinds of things give you the blues?
- f. What is your image of London and its weather?
- g. What do you do to lift your spirits?
- h. How do you feel when the weather is depressing?
- i. Would you like to have a latte in Dana Cafe's Light Lounge?
- j. Do you think people who live in northerly latitudes are generally a little less happy than those who live in warmer climates?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. How do the weather and seasons affect your moods?
- d. What would you suggest to someone who feels depressed because of the weather?
- e. Do you like bacon lettuce and tomato (BLT) sandwiches?
- f. Do you ever feel like hibernating?
- g. Do you think SAD is similar to end-of-the-weekend blues?
- h. Do you ever suffer from depression, anxiety, lethargy or sleep problems?
- i. How does sunshine make you feel?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

THE FOUR SADS: You are a researcher who has just discovered four different Seasonal Affective Disorders –related to spring, summer, fall (autumn) and winter. Complete the following table with your researcher partners.

SAD	SYMPTOMS	TREATMENTS
Spring SAD		
Summer SAD		
Fall (Autumn) SAD		
Winter SAD		
Other seasonal SAD		

Change partners and talk about your “research”. Share your findings regarding symptoms and treatments. Make mental notes to take back to and share with your original partners.

Return to your original partners and discuss what you found out from the other “researchers”.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on SAD. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

3. SUNSHINE: Write an essay about the importance of sunshine. Read your essay to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write similar things?

4. DIARY: Write the diary / journal entry of someone with a severe form of SAD. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did everyone have similar thoughts?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F b. T c. T d. F e. F f. F g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| a. gloomy | dreary |
| b. diagnosed | identified |
| c. aptly | fittingly |
| d. respite | lull |
| e. dose | fix |
| f. suffer | (be) affected by |
| g. libido | sex drive |
| h. induce | bring about |
| i. deficiency | deprivation |
| j. lethargy | sluggishness |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. Short and gloomy | days |
| b. aptly | named acronym |
| c. offers visitors a respite | against the wintertime blues |
| d. Anyone wanting to lift | their spirits |
| e. reserve a 20-minute | dose of the bright stuff |
| f. people in northerly | latitudes feel miserable |
| g. medical disorder is caused | by a biochemical imbalance |
| h. induce | a range of symptoms |
| i. triggers | the release of another hormone |
| j. Eighty percent of SAD cases | can be treated with a BLT session |

GAP FILL:

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Short and **gloomy** days are responsible for a medical condition known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). The **aptly** named acronym is being increasingly diagnosed by doctors in countries that have generally dismal and depressing weather. One of the most **infamous** places for its gray skies that rain cats and dogs is London, where a new cafe has opened that offers visitors a **respite** against the wintertime blues. Anyone wanting to lift their **spirits** can visit the newly opened Dana Cafe at the Science Museum for some Bright Light Therapy (BLT). The cafe's Light Lounge contains **specialty** designed boxes, which produce light five times brighter than regular house lights. Customers can reserve a 20-minute **dose** of the bright **stuff** with their latte.

Over five million people suffer from SAD during winter in the UK **alone**. It is **common** knowledge that people in northerly **latitudes** feel miserable at this time of year. This recognized medical disorder is caused by a biochemical imbalance in the part of the brain that controls mood, appetite, **libido** and sleep. A lack of the chemical serotonin, which the body receives from sunlight, can **induce** a range of symptoms in levels varying from mild to severe. A serotonin deficiency triggers the release of another hormone responsible for making animals **hibernate**. SAD sufferers can experience depression, anxiety, lethargy, sleep problems, overeating and a **loss** of sex drive. Eighty percent of SAD cases can be **treated** with a BLT session. Dana Cafe's Light Lounge is fully booked until March.