

## Out of the blue? How the colour of light could be used to treat mental illness

### Level 1: Elementary

**Article summary:** This article explains the effect of blue light on the body's internal clock and how helping people see less blue light can improve mental health.

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Skills:** Reading, Speaking

**Language focus:** Zero conditionals

**Materials needed:** One copy of the worksheet per student

- b. Before reading the article carefully, students use the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they know how the words are used in other contexts.

**Key:**

1. conditions
2. lighting
3. automatically
4. circadian rhythm
5. mental illness
6. mood
7. sensitive
8. stable
9. reduce
10. ward

### 1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to let students discuss the effect that the blue light from our phone screens can have on our sleep and how we feel. Ask them to share personal examples of when they have felt bad after a bad night's sleep. If possible, explore what caused them to have a bad night's sleep. End by having students consider the effect of design on mental health and how elements such as light, colour and the way a room is organised can affect mood. Encourage them to think of as many examples as possible and not to rule them out.

### 2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do this task individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. As an extension activity, ask students to highlight the key words in the article.

**Key:**

- |                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| 1. lighting         | 6. sensitive |
| 2. mental illness   | 7. stable    |
| 3. automatically    | 8. mood      |
| 4. circadian rhythm | 9. reduce    |
| 5. conditions       | 10. ward     |

### 3. Comprehension check

- a. Students decide if the statements are True or False based on the information in the article. Encourage the students to use full sentences when they correct the sentences that are false, e.g. sentence 2 is false, so students may say, *Blue light can delay sleep.*

**Key:**

1. True
2. False – *It can delay sleep.*
3. True
4. False – *People with mental illness often have sleep problems.*
5. False – *They stay for the same amount of time but have a better mood.*
6. True,
7. False – *Patients do not need special equipment.*
8. True

### 4. Key language

- a. This activity helps students use the zero conditional to explain situations that are always true, such as rules or scientific facts. As an extension activity, ask students to examine the content in which these examples are used in the article.

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**Key:**

1. *d*
2. *a*
3. *b*
4. *c*

- b. Students complete the rules for the zero conditional, referring back to the examples in task a and using the words provided.

**Key:**

1. *present*
2. *if*
3. *when*
4. *start*
5. *middle*
6. *comma*

- c. Students complete the zero conditional sentences using the verbs provided.

**Key:**

1. *feel / don't sleep*
2. *are / affects*
3. *has / is*
4. *use / reduces*
5. *feel / sit*
6. *doesn't need / follow*

### 5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the statements related to the article and give their reasons and justifications for each answer, referring to their own experiences wherever possible.

### 6. In your own words

- a. Ask students to discuss how the forms of interior decoration could help people with mental illness. The images are provided to help them, but you may want to discuss ideas with the class first so that students can confidently talk in groups.
- b. Students think of other examples of controversial media and add them to the table. If possible, have students research more information about these examples. Ask them to consider the impact they had.
- c. Students then work with their group and explain what the perfect space for their mental well-being would be. Encourage students to include zero conditionals and have them refer to the examples provided to help them.