

## Why do people yawn?

3rd September, 2017



Do you ever wonder why we yawn? Do you always yawn when you see other people yawn? A new study from Nottingham

University in the UK has done research on this. Researchers found that yawning is a powerful and unstoppable reaction. People automatically want to yawn when they see other people yawning. The researchers said people actually yawn more when they try to stop yawning. The researchers also found that some people have a much stronger urge to yawn than other people. Lead researcher Professor Stephen Jackson said that even reading about yawning could be enough to make people yawn. You might even want to yawn right now.

The researchers studied the reactions and brain activity of 36 adult volunteers. The volunteers looked at video clips of other people yawning. They then had two choices - either to stop themselves yawning or to allow themselves to do it. The volunteers were videoed as they yawned or tried not to yawn. The researchers also monitored the brain activity of the volunteers and checked how strong their feeling to want to yawn was. Jackson said understanding more about yawning will help to treat conditions such as dementia, epilepsy and Tourettes. He said: "We are looking for potential non-drug, personalized treatments...that might be effective in [changing] imbalances in the brain."

Sources: [nottinghampost.com](http://nottinghampost.com) / [medicalnewstoday.com](http://medicalnewstoday.com) / [metro.co.uk](http://metro.co.uk)

## Writing

What are the good and bad things about yawning?

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

wonder / study / research / yawning / contagious / reaction / automatically / urge / brain activity / volunteers / video clips / monitored / checked / feeling / dementia

## True / False

- A university in the UK did some research on yawning. T / F
- Researchers discovered that yawning is contagious. T / F
- Researchers said people yawn more if they try to stop yawning. T / F
- A professor said reading about yawning stops us yawning. T / F
- Researchers studied the brain activity of 360 volunteers. T / F
- The volunteers looked at videos and were videoed. T / F
- The professor said yawning leads to dementia. T / F
- The professor hopes his research will lead to better drugs for the brain. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                         |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1. <b>wonder</b>        | a. encourage     |
| 2. <b>contagious</b>    | b. options       |
| 3. <b>automatically</b> | c. this instant  |
| 4. <b>urge</b>          | d. illnesses     |
| 5. <b>right now</b>     | e. catching      |
| 6. <b>reactions</b>     | f. watched       |
| 7. <b>choices</b>       | g. instinctively |
| 8. <b>monitored</b>     | h. successful    |
| 9. <b>conditions</b>    | i. think about   |
| 10. <b>effective</b>    | j. responses     |

## Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- Is yawning a good or bad thing?
- What do you think of your brain activity?
- How strong is your desire to yawn?
- What do you think of people making sounds when they yawn?
- What do you think of the word 'yawn'?
- Are there times when we should never yawn?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

# BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

## Phrase Match

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Researchers found that yawning is     | a. such as dementia        |
| 2. It is a powerful and                  | b. now                     |
| 3. some people have a much stronger      | c. want to yawn was        |
| 4. reading about yawning could be enough | d. contagious              |
| 5. You might even want to yawn right     | e. urge to yawn            |
| 6. They then had two                     | f. imbalances in the brain |
| 7. brain                                 | g. choices                 |
| 8. how strong their feeling to           | h. to make people yawn     |
| 9. treat conditions                      | i. activity                |
| 10. be effective in changing             | j. unstoppable reaction    |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of yawning?
- What do you think when you see other people yawning?
- Why do people yawn?
- How does yawning make you feel?
- Why is yawning contagious?
- When do you stop yourself yawning?
- What do you think of the research on yawning?
- Has reading this made you want to yawn?

## Spelling

- Do you ever dornew why?
- has done aechsrer on this
- yawning is otnsagcuoi
- a powerful and unstoppable arctieon
- a much stronger gure to yawn
- could be ongheu
- brain ivcitty
- The rnulteesv looked at video clips
- drtoonmei the brain
- help to treat ncdoiinots such as dementia
- that might be effective
- blcaasniem in the brain

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. i	2. e	3. g	4. a	5. c
6. j	7. b	8. f	9. d	10. h

## Role Play

### Role A – Boring People

You think boring people are the things that make us yawn most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least likely to make us yawn of these (and why): English classes, politics or other people yawning.

### Role B – English Classes

You think English classes are the things that make us yawn most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least likely to make us yawn of these (and why): boring people, politics or other people yawning.

### Role C – Politics

You think politics is the thing that makes us yawn most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least likely to make us yawn of these (and why): English classes, boring people or other people yawning.

### Role D – Other People Yawning

You think other people yawning is the thing that makes us yawn most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least likely to make us yawn of these (and why): English classes, politics or boring people.

## Speaking – Yawn Makers

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest yawn makers at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                |                         |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| • sports on TV | • boring people         |
| • reading      | • reading about yawning |
| • politics     | • other people yawning  |
| • tiredness    | • English classes       |

### Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.