Podcast name: imagine this

Episode title: do animals sleep like people?

Duration: 7’41”

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Bri: Hello, i'm Bri. And I have a question for you today on imagine this. When you get tired and your body wants to go to sleep, do you ever make this sound?

[kids and bri yawn]

Bri: It's called a yawn. And we might sneak in a few yawns today because this episode is about sleep. And our question comes from five-year-old, Lucinda.

Lucinda: How do animals sleep? Do they sleep like us?

Bri: Good question. Have you ever wondered how other animals sleep?

[ballet music]

Bri: How do you sleep?

Kids: A bed.

A bed.

Bed.

My colour bed is blue and it has mermaids on them.

It's a super hero bed.

Bri: What do you wear when you go to sleep?

Kids: With pyjamas!

I have Minnie and Mickey and Donald Duck.

They helps you sleep comfier.

Bri: It's good to be comfortable when you sleep. And where do you rest your head?

Kids: A pillow. A pillow. A pillow.

Pillow. Because it's soft.

Bri: Then how do you go to sleep?

Kids: You close your eyes.

Bri: Ah so we sleep with our eyes closed?

Kids: I sleep with my eyes open because I have a sister.

[kids giggle]

Bri: Do you think other animals sleep in cosy beds with pyjamas like us?

Kids: No.

Bats sleeps upside down.

Because the bats are different than people.

Yeah, they're different from people.

Because they're animals.

Bri: Bats don't have little bat beds that they sleep in in the night-time?

Kids: No, they don't in the night.

Bri: Well, when do they sleep?

Kids: They only sleep in the day.

Bri: Hanging upside down, in the middle of the day to go to sleep?

Kids: Yeah.

Bri: I want to find out more about how these animals sleep. Let's talk to a sleep scientist. And I know just the person; Dr John Lesku, from La Trobe University. He is the sleepiest sleep scientist I have ever known. Actually, I think I hear him right now.

[John snoring]

Bri: he's sleeping. Should we wake him up?

Kids: Yes.

Bri: Hey, John. John.

John: Hmmm, no I don't want to go to work today.

Bri: John, wake up. We're on the radio.

John: Hello?

Bri: What are you doing? It's time to wake up.

John: I was just having a nap.

Bri: Hey, nice pyjamas by the way.

John: Oh, thanks. They're so cosy.

Bri: What colour are they?

John: Navy blue with bright, turquoise blue polka dots on them.

Bri: Do you have dinosaurs on your jamies too?

John: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Bri: Very nice. John, do we have to go to sleep?

John: Yes. Sleep's really important. Sleep helps our brains recharge, ready for the next day.

Bri: What happens if we don't sleep?

Kids: If you don't go to sleep then-

You can be really cranky in the morning.

And in the morning you'll be very tired and you can't go anywhere.

And you will be really cranky.

John: Yes, I get cranky, I get tired during the day, I forget things. I don't want to get out of bed.

Kids: And you'll be late for school.

Bri: Other animals don't have to go to school, like insects.

[kids mimicking insects]

Bri: Do they need sleep?

John: Absolutely, insects sleep.

Bri: What about worms?

John: Worms sleep too.

Bri: Worms sleep?

John: Yes, every single animal that has been studied has been found to sleep.

Bri: Jellyfish?

John: Jellyfish definitely sleep.

[underwater bubble sounds]

Bri: Wow.

John: Even an octopus sleeps.

Bri: Snails too?

[crickets buzzing]

[warm classical music]

John: Yep. Everyone needs to sleep, even snails. And they sleep in their shell.

Bri: Naw, well where do other animals sleep?

[busy wildlife]

John: Some can sleep in burrows. They can sleep in tree hollows, like some parrots do. Birds will have a nest that they use as a bed. Monkeys will have leaves that they pulled together, but they make into a nest. And some animals will huddle together when they're sleeping, like sea otters that like to hold hands. So, they don't drift away from each other on the surface of the water.

Bri: Awww they hold hands while they're sleeping?

John: Yeah. And although sea otters don't have beds, sea otters use seaweed for a blanket.

Bri: Seaweed for a blanket? That is so cute.

John: Yep. And they wrap themselves up so they don't float away.

Bri: What about bigger animals?

[Sound of farm animals]

John: Some farm animals sleep standing up like cows and horses and even giraffes and elephants sleep while standing.

Bri: How come they don't just fall over when they sleep?

[Pleasant ballet music]

John: While they're sleeping, their muscles are still working.

Bri: How do birds sleep?

John: Well, bird's claws are really clever and they can keep holding onto a branch even when the bird is sleeping.

Bri: So they don't fall off their branches when they sleep?

[comical falling sound]

John: No.

Kids: No.

John: And some birds can even sleep while they're flying.

Bri: Sleeping and flying at the same time? That sounds dangerous.

Kids: They could have an accident and lose control or balance.

Yeah.

John: These are birds that soar over the ocean. So, they stretch their wings out and hold them super still. And they just soar over the surface of the water and they never touch it. They sleep for very short periods of time. Just a few seconds.

Bri: They only sleep for a few seconds?

[fluttering classical music]

John: Yes. Not all animals sleep in one go. Some birds have tiny little naps, hundreds of naps across the day. And they fall asleep for just a couple of seconds. And then they wake up again.

Kids: I'm asleep. I'm awake. I'm asleep. I'm awake.

John: But they still sleep.

Bri: How do fish sleep?

John: Underwater, with their eyes open. Because they don't have eyelids.

Kids: Yeah.

Yes.

And they float.

Bri: How do whales sleep and swim at the same time?

John: Whales sleep one half of their brain at a time, so they can keep swimming and keep breathing.

Kids: And they always keep an eye open to look out for things.

[Bri yawns]

Bri: So, Lucinda, every animal needs to sleep, but they all sleep a little differently depending on who they are and where they live. I don't know about you, but I'm feeling a little bit tired.

Kids: Yeah. I'm getting tired now.

Me too.

Me too.

Bri: Shall we have a nap?

Kids: Yes.

Yes.

Bri: Okay. Let's get ready. Find a comfy space, rest your head and close your eyes.

[kids sigh with sleepiness]

Bri: John, I said close your eyes. Eyes closed for sleeping.

John: Okay. I will. I will. I'm closing my eyes, I'm closing my eyes.

Kids: See you in the morning.

Good night, sweet dreams.

[snoring]

Credits

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