

The City After Midnight

B1 | Adults / Teens | Reading + Vocabulary + Discussion | 50-60 minutes

BEFORE YOU READ

Talk with a partner. What jobs need to be done while most people are asleep? Which of these jobs would you be willing to do?

1. Match the words (1-6) with the definitions (A-F).

- | | | |
|----------------|-------|---|
| 1. essential | _____ | A. praise or attention for something good |
| 2. shift | _____ | B. a usual way of doing things |
| 3. reliable | _____ | C. completely necessary |
| 4. isolate | _____ | D. separate someone from other people |
| 5. routine | _____ | E. a period of time when someone works |
| 6. recognition | _____ | F. able to be trusted to work well |

2. Read the article. The bold words are the vocabulary from Activity 1.

1. At two o'clock in the morning, many city streets look empty. However, the city has not stopped. Buses are being cleaned, bread is being baked, hospitals are receiving patients and workers are collecting rubbish. These jobs are often invisible during the day, but they are **essential** to the way a city works.

2. For people who work at night, the **shift** can be both peaceful and difficult. A train driver may enjoy quieter stations, while a hospital nurse may value the strong teamwork of a smaller group. At the same time, night workers must stay alert when their bodies expect to rest. They also need a **reliable** way to travel home when public transport is less frequent.

3. Sleep is one of the biggest challenges. A worker may finish at seven in the morning, just as neighbours are leaving for work and children are going to school. Thick curtains and a regular sleep **routine** can help, but daytime is rarely as quiet as night. Friends and family may not understand why the worker cannot meet at the weekend or answer messages during the afternoon.

4. Some night workers say the schedule can **isolate** them. Others find ways to build a social life around it. A bakery team might share breakfast after work, for example, while security staff may use quiet moments to study online. The experience depends on the job, the workplace and how much control people have over their hours.

5. Cities depend on night work, yet it often receives little public **recognition**. Supporters of better working conditions argue that this should change. Safer transport, fair pay and predictable schedules would not remove every difficulty, but they could make an important kind of work more sustainable.

Vocabulary note: rubbish (UK) = trash (US).

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UNDERSTAND, DISCUSS AND WRITE

3. Comprehension. Answer in complete sentences. Use the article to help you.

1. Why are night jobs described as essential?

2. What are two possible advantages of a night shift?

3. Why can travelling home be difficult for night workers?

4. How can a daytime environment affect a night worker's sleep?

5. What improvements do supporters suggest?

4. Discuss. Talk in small groups. Give reasons and examples.

- Would you prefer a day shift or a night shift? Why?
- Which night jobs are most important in your town?
- Should night workers receive extra pay?
- How could a city make night work safer and easier?

5. Homework: Write an opinion paragraph.

Write 120-150 words about one job that is important but often unnoticed. Explain what the worker does, what challenges they face, and how society could show more recognition.

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ANSWER KEY AND TEACHING NOTE

Vocabulary matching

1. **essential** - C
2. **shift** - E
3. **reliable** - F
4. **isolate** - D
5. **routine** - B
6. **recognition** - A

Comprehension answers

1. Why are night jobs described as essential?

They are essential because they keep services such as hospitals, transport, food production and cleaning running.

2. What are two possible advantages of a night shift?

It can be quieter, and workers may enjoy strong teamwork in a smaller group.

3. Why can travelling home be difficult for night workers?

Public transport is less frequent when their shift ends.

4. How can a daytime environment affect a night worker's sleep?

It can be noisy because neighbours and children are active during the day.

5. What improvements do supporters suggest?

They suggest safer transport, fair pay and predictable schedules.

Teaching note

Compare vocabulary answers before reading. Help learners plan an unnoticed job: duties, challenges and ways to recognise the work. Accept accurate comprehension paraphrases and supported personal responses.