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AP English 2B

Classification Essay

**Strategies to Wake a Stubborn Sleeper**

If one is burdened with the responsibility of convincing someone both horribly stubborn and terribly tired that it is in her best interest to wake up, his burden can be seen as something to be of great detriment to all mornings in his experience. This person would be forced, with such a task, to come up with many strategies to try to force the best outcome to appear out of the situation. These strategies may be extremely varied, but they do have general trends to define them.

Many techniques are those that are nothing spectacular. In fact, they often border upon (are, rather) cliché. Any joke, any idiom about waking someone up has been tried—short of a marching band, which is quite a surprise. The banal begins with the setting off of alarm clocks, for example. Maybe next will come yelling in the sleeper’s ears, but perhaps today it will be stolen blankets instead. When the times get desperate, along will come the icy water (though reduced to just ice cubes to reduce the mess) or a true test of strength: pulling her off of the bed, entirely against her will. Such normal attempts are usally tried at the beginning of the ordeal: why waste all the effort if there’s a chance, no matter how slim, that the simple will work this time? But they almost invariably *don’t* work, so there are the next categories to make things more interesting.

Annoyance strategies can be extremely effective; at the very least they will let you know whether the sleeper in question is really sleeping through it all or if she is just very skilled at ignoring what is going on around her. These techniques require extensive knowledge of the sleeper’s pet peeves or other annoyances. For example, if you know that this person hates certain music—say, that with voices that seem to be trying to sound good and sincere when the singer really has no idea what she’s talking about—blast it, and if in the course of the morning you hear it stop, you can be sure that she has been ignoring it. At least, she was until she was driven to action by annoyance. Such things are good for gauging the situation if nothing else. Of course, there are annoyances that *could* work in getting her up. If someone is talking or reading out loud with no refrain for ages, *something* will probably happen. This could be risky, though, so to continue is to risk harm.

The other secondary strategies are the creative ones: anything anyone could possibly think of. If they’re good enough, like jumping on the bed while singing Christmas carols or putting on a Shakespeare production, attempts could be rewarded with a surrender just out of appretiation for the ridiculousness of the whole situation. If that’s not the right direction, however, anything that is a new and ideally strange idea, if kept going, will probably be rewarded, whether because it wakes the sleeper up to the point of “there’s no way I’m getting to sleep again now” or just because there’s a suddenly intense hunger or coughing fit that requires action.

On the rare occasion that nothing has worked, one could begin to play dirty. This is a tough call to make, though, because even the worst of guilt tripping, bribing (if this particular person would be susceptible to such things), or threatening of property (“I will find your journal and read it!” or “I’m going to rip up all your magazines!”) can lead to a hardened heart.

These trends in strategies are things which, when known, can lead to more and more understanding of more and more techniques. Knowing them will most likely improve the lot of this poor person by at least a bit, for he will no longer be left hopeless: he will have a plan!