

The *Grassroots Writing Research Journal* Presents: Picturing Literate Activity

The Early Bird Battles the Night Owl

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PLA Narrative: “The early bird gets the worm.” Sure, but what if the early bird keeps falling asleep at her desk? In my first semester as a graduate student, I had class at 8 a.m. and regularly arrived on campus at 6:30 a.m.—with the hope that I would suddenly be super productive while trapped in my office. Lo and behold, ninety percent of the time, I found myself asleep at my desk. I had to admit to myself that I was a night owl through and through. My most productive times were from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., and that was OK.

Yet now I am, reluctantly, a newly hatched early bird. Lately, I have been falling asleep at 10 p.m. on the couch; my brain tells me that my most productive hours are still ahead of me, but my body disagrees. As my night owl and early bird tendencies go to war with each other, I have found myself in transition—a transition that is common when our schedule changes every semester, but that is even more decisive now that I’m getting older. With this transition, I have found that my space to be productive can stay the same—my trusty couch and cozy blankets—but the time of day has had to change. Good morning, productivity!



Figure 1: The cozy space where Nichol both naps and works . . . depending on the time of day.



Nichol Brown is a PhD student in Children's Literature at Illinois State University who researches fairy tale retellings and posthumanism. In her free time, she channels "grandma energy" by knitting, baking, reading, and falling asleep on the couch at 10 p.m.