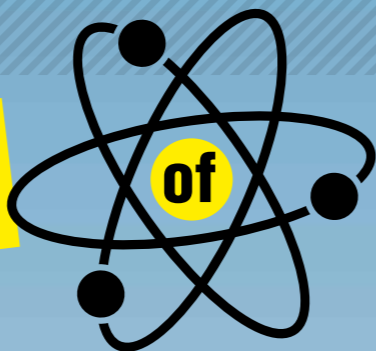


THE SCIENCE of HOMESICKNESS



Imagine you were going to summer camp, starting boarding school* or moving* to a different country ... it should be an exciting time, right? But what if, when you got there, you felt sick to the stomach? What IS that feeling? And why do we feel it?

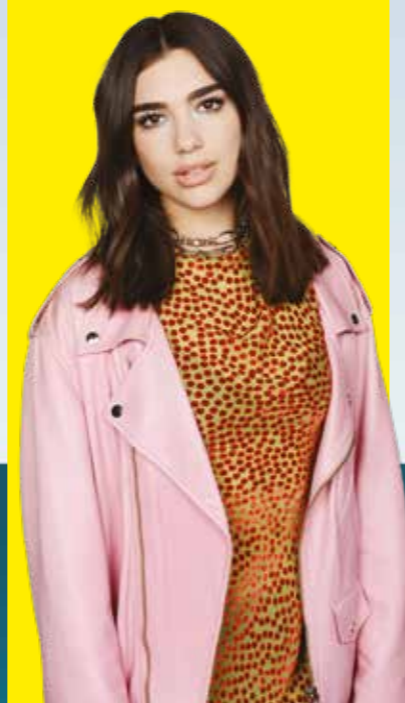
TEAM finds out about the Science of Homesickness.

BEFORE YOU READ:

- Have you ever been away from home / parents?
- Where did you go? How did you feel?

"If I ever felt homesick, I would Facetime my mum."

Dua Lipa



"It's a bittersweet feeling Longing and I'm leaving I go, I go, I go Tell my heart to lie But deep inside it's true That I wish I was there with you I wish I was there with you"*

These are the words to pop star Dua Lipa's song Homesick.

Dua left home and her parents in Albania at the age of 15 to live in London to start a new school and to become a singer. It worked, but it wasn't easy. And there were times when Dua felt homesick. "If I ever felt homesick, I would Facetime my mum," says Dua. "And she would call me every day too. When I had breakfast, when I ate dinner, and when I left school. It made living apart easier." But the experience of living abroad* made Dua more independent and determined*. "Moving away helped me become the person I am today," she says.

TEAM: What is homesickness?

When you're away from home and you miss and long for* things you know and are comfortable with. You might miss your parents, your dog, your favourite home-cooked dinner, even your annoying sister!

TEAM: Who gets homesick?

Everyone! It's a totally normal feeling. Stars like Emma Watson who went to uni in USA, Zayn Malik who felt homesick on tour and pop star Dua Lipa who moved from Albania to London have all suffered from it. Studies show that more men (70%) feel homesick than women (50%).

TEAM: How does being homesick feel?

If you feel homesick, you will feel depressed, anxious, tired and lonely*. Psychologist Tamar Chansky says, "Some people will feel sick, some people will feel shaky*, some people will feel tearful*."



TEAM: Why do we feel like this? What's the science behind it?

According to Chansky, your body is telling you that "Something is wrong," and that produces fear and stress. You have a choice: protect yourself or escape*. This is your 'fight or flight' instinct*. So, if you were in the woods and you saw a bear, 'fight-or-flight' would help you decide to fight the bear, or to run away. Some scientists say homesickness is an important instinct. In the past, it was safer for humans to live in tribes*. If you left your tribe, you would be in danger. Homesickness helps us to stay safe, and stay together.

TEAM: How long does it last?

The answer to this is different for everybody. Some people get used to their new environment quickly but others need months before they can relax.

TEAM: What's the cure*?

If you moved away from home and felt homesick, what could you do to feel better?

Read our TEAM TIPS...

TEAM TIPS

- ✓ **DO phone home (but DON'T do it every day!):** It's great to call, Facetime or Skype your family and see their faces on screen. They miss you too! But don't call them every day – enjoy your new independence!
- ✓ **DO meet new people:** Talk to your new people, and tell them how you feel. They could have advice and they could invite you out!
- ✓ **DO try new foods!** You miss you mum's home cooking ... so you're eating crisps and chocolate? Try to find local dishes and eat fresh foods.
- ✗ **DON'T get bored:** Boredom makes homesickness worse! If you like reading, read! If you like football, find a club or go and watch your new local team!