

Eight

39,889 people were asked whether they woke before 8am. 94 percent said yes. Half of one percent said no. The question was not about sleep.

THIS IS	PART OF	STATUS
PAPER 009 · A FINDING	THE GAME · ACT I, TRANSMIS- SION 001-E	FILED · V1 · 31 AUG 2026

SOURCE

40,149 23 Oct 2025

COMMENTS

DATES

IN PLAIN WORDS

On the second day of the Game, 23 October 2025, a post captioned SLEEP CYCLE TEST told the feed that the system had detected increased early-riser activity. Comment 8 if you woke before 8am, it said; we will verify with psychic powers. Late risers, report 404 and prepare for recalibration.

40,149 people answered. 37,768 wrote 8. 221 wrote 404. That is 171 early risers for every late one, from an audience that is, by every other measure we have, mostly young and mostly on their phones late at night.

This paper treats that number as what it is: not a measurement of when people wake, but a measurement of what people say when one answer is a badge and the other is a confession, and nobody can check.

THE QUESTION WE ASKED

The caption asked about sleep. The question this paper can answer is different: **when a crowd is offered two unverifiable self-reports, one flattering and one penalised, what does the split look like?** The post was not designed as an experiment, and the paper says so. It was the second transmission of a Game that did not yet know what it was. The count is still the count.

WHAT WE DID

- **Instruction:** Comment 8 if you woke before 8am. Late risers, report 404.
- **Where:** one Instagram reel, 23 October 2025, the second post of the Game. It reached far beyond the account's following; 39,889 distinct people commented.

- **How we counted:** top-level comments from the comment archive. A comment counted as 8 if its text began with the digit 8 in any form (8, 8 with an emoji, 8 followed by anything). It counted as 404 if it began with 404. Everything else, including the 22 comments with no text, counted as other.
- **A second signal:** 284 comments mention being on their second, third, or nth video from the account. We counted those separately because they are a measurement of something else: how many times the feed had already shown these people the Game.

WHAT HAPPENED

TABLE 1. What 40,149 comments said.

COMMENT	COUNT	SHARE
8, early riser	37,768	94.1%
404, late riser	221	0.6%
Something else	2,160	5.4%
Top-level comments	40,149	39,889 people

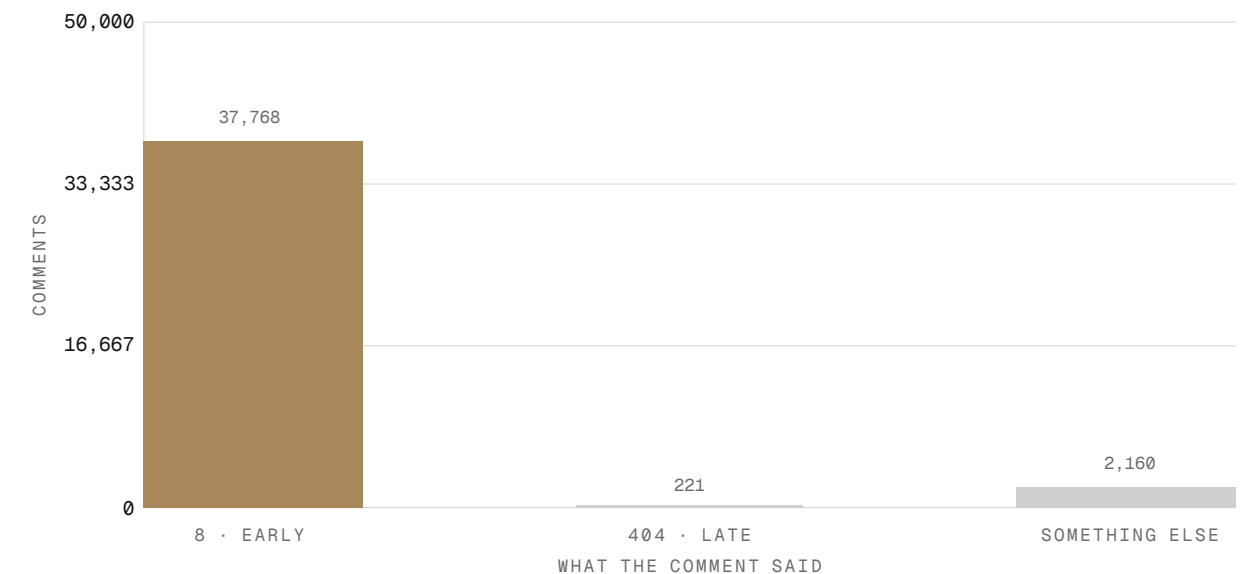


FIGURE 1. The two offered answers and everything else. The 404 bar is there; it is just very small.

TABLE 2. Shares with 95 percent intervals.

MEASURE	COUNT	OF	SHARE	95% INTERVAL
Wrote 8	37,768	40,149	94.1%	93.8% to 94.3%
Wrote 404	221	40,149	0.6%	0.5% to 0.6%
Mentioned being on their nth video	284	40,149	0.7%	0.6% to 0.8%

At this size the intervals are formalities. The interesting number is the ratio between the first two rows, 171 to 1, and the interval on that is not the point; the asymmetry is.

The most liked comment in the thread is the whole paper in one line: **8, this is my second video after the invitation omg**, at 2,542 likes. It takes the badge and, in the same breath, reports that the feed has now shown this person the Game twice. The most liked 404 has one like, and it is the operation’s own.

TABLE 3. The post at platform scale, as of 31 August 2026.

REEL	VIEWS · REACH	COMMENTS TODAY
The Sleep Cycle Test · 23 October 2025	778,315 · 438,732 reach	79,184
Likes on the reel	61,565	

Platform numbers are from the Instagram API on 31 August 2026. Comment counts there include replies and everything written since the round, which is why they run above the counts this paper analyses; views and reach are the tallies the platform reports.

WHAT IT MEANS

An unverifiable self-report with unequal options does not measure the thing it asks about. It measures the gap between the options. Offer a badge and a confession, and a crowd takes the badge 171 times out of 172.

Survey researchers have a name for the tendency to give the answer that looks best: social desirability bias. The usual estimates of it come from comparing what people say with a record of what they did, and the gap is typically a matter of percentage points. This post has no record to compare against, which is exactly why the gap is not points but orders of magnitude. Nothing anchored the answer to the truth, so the answer floated to the better story.

The design of the options did most of the work. The early-riser answer came with a joke (psychic verification) and an identity (the system has detected you). The late-riser answer came with a word for failure and a threat of recalibration. Given that pair, 404 was not a report of a sleep schedule. It was volunteering for a penalty, and 221 people volunteered.

The second signal is the one we did not expect to find. 284 people wrote that this was their second or third video from the account. On day two, the feed was already serving the Game repeatedly to the same people, and the people noticed and said so. That is the earliest evidence in the record of what the Game would later build on: that the feed delivers a series, and a series makes a crowd.

WHAT THIS DOES NOT SHOW

- **Nothing about sleep.** No claim in this paper is about when anyone woke up. The instrument cannot see it.
- **Not a designed experiment.** The options were written to be funny, not to be balanced. This paper reads the result, it did not set it up.
- **The 8 count is generous.** Any comment beginning with 8 counts as the badge, including comments that go on to say the person did not wake early. A sample of the thread suggests those are rare; we

have not counted them.

- The nth-video count is a keyword match. 284 is the floor. People said it in ways we did not search for.

WHAT WE WOULD RUN NEXT

The same question with the options swapped in tone: a badge for late risers and a penalty for early ones. If the split flips, the finding holds and the number is the pull of the badge. If the split stays near 94 percent, something about early rising itself is doing the work, and this paper is wrong about why.

THE WHOLE ROUND

The transmission this paper reads is one post. Its numbers on the platform, and what the comment archive holds of it, are below.

POST	DATE	VIEWS	REACH	COMMENTS	ARCHIVED
The Sleep Cycle Test	2025-10-23	778,315	438,732	79,184	65,720

Views, reach and comments are the platform’s figures from the Instagram API, snapshot 2026-08-31, and keep growing. The reach total adds each post’s reach and overlaps between posts, so it is not a count of distinct people. Archived is the number of comments the archive holds for the post; ingestion is selective, so a gap between the two columns is expected and is stated wherever it changes a count in the paper.

IN THE RECORD

The Game opened the day before this post, filed as THE FLASH WARNING, ◇011. The Sleep Cycle Test has no Chronicle entry of its own; it sits between that opening and THE INTRUSION, ◇012, two days later.

THE POSTS, AS ISSUED

The instruction as it went out: the reel frame beside the caption, captured from the operation’s own signed-in account. What the paper counts is the answer to exactly this.



kinggwuu_
Original audio

kinggwuu_ Edited • 43w
FLASH WARNING

[TRANSMISSION 001-E // SLEEP CYCLE TEST]
The System has detected increased early-riser activity.

Comment 8 if you woke before 8 a.m. we'll verify with psychic powers.

Late risers, report "404" and prepare for recalibration.

amnayabbassene 4w
8

[View insights](#) [Boost reel](#)

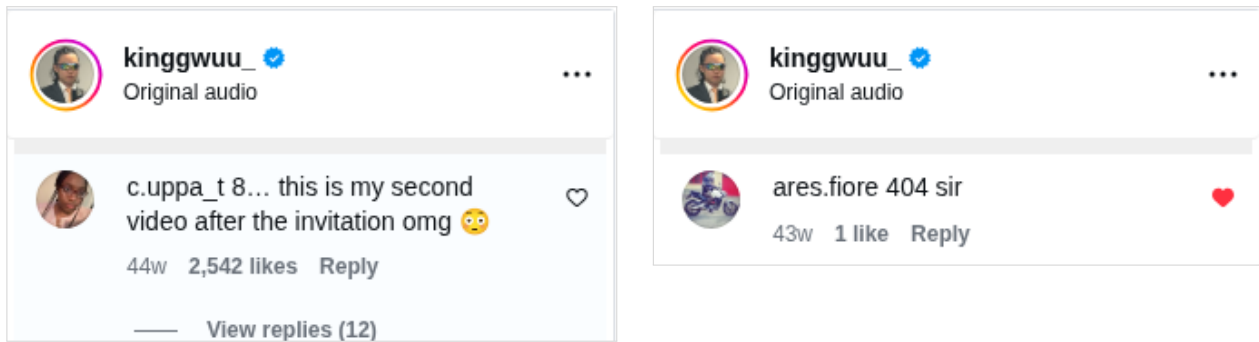
61.6K **79.2K** **618**

Liked by **focahq** and **61.5K others**
October 25, 2025

[Add a comment...](#)

THE RECEIPTS

Native captures of the comments this paper leans on, taken from the operation’s own signed-in account on 31 Aug 2026. Handles and like counts are as they stood that day; the numbers in the paper are the round-time count.



METHOD NOTE

- **Source of truth:** the comment archive, top-level comments on the post, re-counted on 31 August 2026. No round ledger exists for Act I transmissions.
- **Social desirability bias:** Krumpal, I. (2013). Determinants of social desirability bias in sensitive surveys: a literature review. *Quality and Quantity*, 47(4), 2025 to 2047.

SOURCES, BY LINK

01 The Sleep Cycle Test · 2025-10-23 · <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DQJtGZqCacF/>

WHERE THE NUMBERS COME FROM

POST-LEVEL COUNTS

Views, reach, comments, likes, shares and saves per post come from the Instagram Graph API (Meta), read with the operation's own access token for its own business account. Each paper states the date of the snapshot it uses. These are the platform's counts of events, not of people: one person can view a reel twice and comment ten times, and the counts keep growing after a round closes.

COMMENT TEXT

The comment archive is the operation's own database of public comments on its own posts, pulled through the Instagram Graph API comments endpoint and stored with the comment id, username, text, like count, timestamp and whether it is a reply. Ingestion is selective: the most engaged posts were backfilled and recent posts are pulled daily, so some posts are held whole and others only in part. Every paper states how much of each post the archive holds. Every count that reads text (exact matches, categories, keyword themes) is run as a read-only script against this archive, and the scripts are in the repository beside the paper data.

THE ROUND LEDGER

For Act II rounds, the counts filed on The Game's round record at the time each round closed. Where a paper uses a ledger figure it says so, and where the archive re-count differs from the ledger both numbers

are shown.

RECEIPTS

Every comment and post shown as evidence is a native capture from the operation's own signed-in Instagram session, taken by opening the exact permalink, with the source URL, a description, the rights basis and a file hash recorded in a manifest that is checked on every build of the site. Nothing shown is recreated, retyped or edited beyond cropping to the post header and the comment.

STATISTICS

Shares carry Wilson 95 percent intervals: the range the share would land in 19 times out of 20 if the same count were taken on a fresh crowd of the same size. Differences between two shares carry a Wald interval. Where a study is cited as a baseline, its own reported figure and sample size are used.

WHAT NONE OF THIS CAN SEE

No demographics beyond what people typed. No view durations. No private messages. No comments that were deleted before the archive pulled them. No way to verify that a self-report is true. Every paper's limits section names the specific things its count cannot show.