

Critical Buddies

Theory (make up 6 marks)

Freud's Theory of Dreaming argues that we could understand what is happening in someone's unconscious mind (the part of the mind that people are not aware of but holds thoughts and memories) (1) by analysing their dreams. (1) This is because he believed that dreams were repressed urges from the unconscious mind being released. (1) He saw this as wish-fulfilment of people's deepest desires that couldn't be fulfilled in real life. (1) Freud argued that dreams are rarely attempts to directly act out a wish, rather they are made up of manifest content (the actual content of the dream) and latent content (the underlying meaning of the dream). (1) For example, a person dreaming of falling through the air (manifest content) may be feeling that they are losing control of an aspect of their life (latent content). (1)

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Criticism/limitations (make up 6 marks)

Freud's theory is limited as it is too subjective (1); dream interpretation is open to opinion and we cannot just assume that Freud's own interpretation is more valid than interpretations from anyone else (1).

Freud's theory is based on his concept of the unconscious mind, which is an abstract concept and cannot be observed and tested (1). Thus, there is no hard evidence to suggest that dreams actually do represent the unconscious mind. (1)

Freud's theory is based on unreliable research (1), as the evidence is mainly from case studies and so making generalisations about the meaning of dreams for all may not be fair. (1)

Freud's theory is based upon a narrow interpretation of dreams by only relating them to wish fulfilment. (1) Critics suggest that dreams can represent many aspects of our lives and it is hard to accept that nightmares are linked to wish fulfilment. (1)