

PSYCHOLOGY Level 3

Common Assessment Task

Work Requirements:

This task is based on Psychobiological Processes - Consciousness

Assessment Type:

Essay

Criteria being assessed:

- Criterion 2 - elements 2, 4 and 5
- Criterion 8 - elements 1, 2, 4 and 5

Suggested conditions:

- This task should take learners 75 minutes.
- 15 minutes for planning the response and 60 minutes for the creation of the response.
- The response should be between 300 and 400 words
- The response may be word-processed or hand-written.
- This task requires an individual response by each learner.

Task Description:

Read the stimulus and respond to the questions.

- You have 15 minutes to organise your thoughts and plan your response.
- Use the remaining 60 minutes to write your response.
- Include 5 minutes to check your essay for obvious errors and to make sure you have included the information you wanted to.

Stimulus – A biological view

Some dream researchers argue that dreams are biological phenomena with no meaning at all. According to one such theory, dreams represent interpretations of neural signals initiated in the midbrain during REM sleep (Hobson, 1988; Hobson & McCarley, 1977). Because the initial signals are essentially random, the interpretations rarely make logical sense. Many dream researchers criticise this view, arguing that the presence of dreams during NREM sleep challenges this explanation of dreaming.

More recently, biologically oriented researchers have offered another view that emphasises the role of sleep and dreaming in learning and memory. If they are right, the next time you are tempted to stay up all night to prepare for a big exam, think again. Sleep appears to be involved in the consolidation of memory. Memories for newly learned material are stronger after eight hours of sleep than after eight hours of wakefulness. The

data suggests that during NREM sleep, the hippocampus 'replays' what it has 'learned' during the day and activates relevant parts of the cortex to consolidate the memory (Chrobak & Buzsaki, 1994; Wilson & McNaughton, 1994).

(Source: Adapted from Westen, D., Burton, L. & Kowalski, R. (2006). Psychology: Australian and New Zealand Edition.

Milton: John Wiley & Sons – TASC examination paper 2013)

What you need to do:

Write an essay (between 300 and 400 words) that responds to the following:

- (a) Referring to the above stimuli and other relevant information, demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the following concepts:
- characteristics of normal waking consciousness
 - measurements of consciousness
 - characteristics of sleep as an altered state of consciousness
- (b) Analyse and evaluate explanations of why humans dream.

Teacher use only - What needs to be submitted for assessment?

Learners submit a handwritten or word-processed response.