

Your Dream Journal



Sigmund Freud said "Dreams are the royal road to the unconscious". He wrote several books on dreams, dream content, and dream interpretation. Everybody dreams, though there are those who say they do not. This is perhaps because they cannot recall their dreams. Most dreams occur during REM sleep, which takes up about 25% of total sleep time and occurs on an average of every 90 minutes. This exercise is designed to help you become more aware of your dreams, how often you dream, and what (if anything) can you learn from your dreams.

First, staple several sheets of loose leaf paper together, around 10 should suffice (not pages ripped out of a spiral notebook), or get a small steno pad. This is going to be your dream journal. Grades will be based on: following directions, insights gained, and thoroughness. Late assignments for reasons other than illness will not be accepted. If you have any questions, please see me IN ADVANCE of the due date. Start recording your dreams right away, and continue until you have about 4 to 5 dreams.

PART I. Dream Journal

Before falling asleep, DECIDE you are going to remember your dreams. Be patient; it may take a night or 2 for your unconscious to get the message. The most important thing to remember is that EVERYONE dreams and that once you believe you will remember them, you will!

Keep the journal and a pen close to your bed and write down dreams you recall immediately, without interpretation. You may have more than one entry per night (everyone dreams between 4 and 6 times) of varying lengths (REM sleep gets longer, therefore, your dreams get longer later on in night).

What should you record? Basically everything, uncensored, as you remember them... do not worry about proper english for this part. To be more specific write down:

- dialogue or any words
- the number and types of people (friends, strangers, relatives)
- objects
- the mood of the dream (happy, sad, scary, etc.)
- settings
- themes
- events
- timing in the dream
- relations to the dream and you (are you an observer, participant, seeing yourself as player?)

If it's too difficult to record a part of the dream in writing, sketch a picture.

The journal may be handwritten. If there are any dream entries that you do not want read by me, please mark these "Personal" across the top of the pages. *I hope that you can trust me by now.....I WON'T READ THEM!*

PART II. Analysis of your dreams

Once you have about 4-5 dreams in your journal, try to analyze them using the following questions as guides (but feel to create your own "questions" also).

- Were there any common threads, common ideas, running through the journal?
- Are your dreams bizarre? Mundane?
- Which dreams are most disturbing? Why? What do they mean to you?
- What common symbols or objects did you record? What do you think these symbols mean?
- Were you able to control your dreams as you remembered more and more of them?
- How are your dreams relevant to your waking life?
- Was the content of both journals identical on any days? What does this tell you?
- What seems to be the main function of your dreams?

In other words, what did you learn about yourself by writing in the journal?

Write a thesis statement, and support it with references directly from your dreams (you may even refer to a particular date of a dream and tell the reader to go to certain lines.) Summarize the dreams you discuss in your report. Consider comparing settings, plots, characters, emotions, and colors. Think of your dreams as a collection of poems and Part II as an analysis of these poems and what they say about you when looked at together.

The report should be in essay/paragraph form. Do not just write sentences answering each question, rather have a thesis in mind that connects all the individual ideas. The written report is to be typed, around 2 pages, double spaced.

