



Dreams and Nightmares

Task: Why Do Nightmares Happen

Activity 1: Listening

Welcome to a practice listening task for the GESE 9.

You are going to hear a talk about **nightmares**. You will hear the talk twice. The first time, just listen. Then I'll ask you to tell me generally what the speaker is talking about. Are you ready?

Audio Script

Having a disorder, that has to do with nightmares, is known as parasomnia by doctors. This sleep disorder involves unpleasant experiences that happen when a person is asleep or in the process of waking up. Nightmares normally occur when somebody is going through REM sleep. REM stands for rapid eye movement. However, the reason why the nightmares happen, isn't really known.

So to continue, there are many reasons why nightmares may be activated. One way that nightmares can be developed is by the ordinary stresses of daily life. Namely, problems at home or school, major changes in life such as moving or the death of a loved one, have been a main reason for the increase of anxiety, and hence nightmares in its following. It is also quite common after someone has an experience that they can't stand having. Some examples of this would be an accident, injury, physical or sexual abuse, among other traumatic events. For this reason, psychologists must have realized that post-traumatic stress disorder, otherwise known as PTSD, is also a disorder that tends to have nightmares as a common occurrence. Moreover, schedule changes and having irregular sleeping and waking times can also invite nightmares. In other words, if an individual has their sleep interrupted or reduced in amount of sleep, this could also increase nightmares. This is most likely why insomnia is linked to the creation of nightmares. Unfortunately, there are cases that it is hard to avoid, and those cases would be for people that must take medication for antidepressants, blood pressure, beta blockers, treatment for Parkinson's disease and help with stopping to smoke. There have been many that have had to experience nightmares due to these medications. We can only hope that future medications for these cases will be improved so that these people don't have to suffer from nightmares in addition to what they are going through. Whereas, another possibility is those that are using or withdrawing from recreational drugs and alcohol can have this as a trigger for nightmares.

So, now let's consider that the risks must not be ignored. It is not uncommon to see somebody that suffers from nightmares having a family history of the same condition. Not only that, but also other sleep parasomnias, such as talking during sleep. What is more, if somebody finds themselves with excessive daytime sleepiness due to nightmares, this can lead to struggles at school or work, which can also lead to difficulties in everyday tasks. Therefore, somebody in this condition should neither drive nor work with dangerous machinery, due to the lack of concentration. On top of that, nightmares can cause problems



with a person's mood. For instance, depression and anxiety from dreams that bother sleepers even when awake. In addition, little did many sleepers know that nightmares would keep them from being able to sleep, since some sleepers show resistance to going to sleep for fear of having another bad dream. Furthermore, in extreme cases, nightmares have been responsible for provoking suicidal thoughts, and even suicide attempts, in individuals. That is to say, when nightmares become out of hand, we must give it the proper attention so that we don't enter in such extreme cases.

All in all, how you sleep and treat yourself will matter when it comes to the type of dreams and nightmares that you may have. Only by sleeping well and eliminating stress related triggers in your life will you be able to enjoy a restful and peaceful sleep. This is why it is important to sleep enough hours regularly and enjoy your waking hours. You wouldn't want to have nightmares, now would you?

Can you tell me in one or two sentences what the speaker was talking about?

Now listen to the talk again. This time make some notes as you listen, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to tell me about **the causes and risks of nightmares.**

Now tell me about **the causes and risks of nightmares.** You have one minute to talk.

This is the end of the listening task.

Answers:

Causes of Nightmares	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ordinary stresses of daily life, cause stress or anxiety; problems at home, school; a major change, like moving, death of a loved one; anxiety has greater risks of nightmares.• Common after an accident, injury, physical or sexual abuse or other traumatic events: common with people that have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)• Schedule changes and having irregular sleeping and waking times; interrupt or reduce the amount of sleep, increase nightmares; insomnia is linked with increased amount of nightmares.• Some medication for antidepressants, blood pressure, beta blockers, treatment for Parkinson's disease and help stopping smoking, can bring on nightmares.• Using or withdrawing from recreational drugs and alcohol can trigger nightmares.
Risks of Nightmares	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More common when there is family history of having nightmares or other sleep parasomnias, such as talking during sleep.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excessive daytime sleepiness can lead to struggles at school or work; problems with everyday tasks, like driving and working with machinery, due to the lack of concentration.• Problems with mood, such as depression or anxiety from dreams that bother the sleeper.• Resistance to going to sleep for fear of having another bad dream.• Suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts.
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