

Dogs dream about their owners, says scientist

24th October, 2016



An expert believes she has uncovered the secret of what dogs dream about. Dr Deirdre Barrett, a psychologist at Harvard Medical School, conducted research into dog dreams and concluded that,

among other things, dogs dream about their owners. Dr Barrett said canine dreams were comparable to those we have: "Humans dream about the same things they're interested in by day....There's no reason to think animals are any different. Since dogs are generally extremely attached to their human owners, it's likely your dog is dreaming of your face, your smell and of pleasing or annoying you." The psychologist even advised pet owners to give their pets "happy daytime experiences" to make sure they have nice dreams.

Dr Barrett stated that there is no way of knowing for certain what dogs see when they dream. Research isn't even close to disclosing that mystery with human dreams. Her conclusions are based on the fact that canines and other mammals have a sleep cycle that is similar to the human cycle. This includes a period of activity called REM (Rapid Eye Movement), which is the part of the sleep cycle when humans dream. She said: "That certainly makes it the best guess that other mammals are dreaming too." Dr Barrett also explained the reason that dogs move their legs while they are asleep. She said they are probably acting out their dreams so their legs move in a running motion in their sleep.

Sources: independent.co.uk / techtimes.com / fox25boston

Writing

Scientists should never give us the ability to see our dreams. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

expert / secret / psychologist / canine / dreams / animals / pleasing / annoying / certain / mystery / conclusions / mammals / REM / guess / acting / running / motion

True / False

- a) A vet at Harvard thinks she knows what dogs dream about. T / F
- b) A scientist said dog dreams and human dreams are probably similar. T / F
- c) The scientist said dogs are the only animals that have dreams. T / F
- d) The scientist said it is likely dogs dream about their owners' smell. T / F
- e) Research is a long way from understanding human dreams. T / F
- f) Dogs have a dream cycle similar to the human dream cycle. T / F
- g) REM is the phase of sleep in which we do not dream. T / F
- h) Dogs move their legs while asleep mostly because they get cramp. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. expert | a. encouraged |
| 2. uncovered | b. fond of |
| 3. comparable | c. puzzle |
| 4. attached | d. revealed |
| 5. advised | e. movement |
| 6. mystery | f. specialist |
| 7. based | g. sequence |
| 8. cycle | h. estimate |
| 9. guess | i. built |
| 10. motion | j. similar |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you dream about?
- b) Why do we dream?
- c) Is there any reason why animals would not dream?
- d) What do your dreams mean?
- e) What different things might dogs dream about?
- f) Would you like to record and watch your dreams?
- g) What do you think of research into dog dreams?
- h) What can you do to make sure you have nice dreams?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. An expert believes she has uncovered | a. knowing for certain |
| 2. canine dreams were comparable | b. to their human owners |
| 3. There's no reason to think animals | c. other mammals |
| 4. dogs are generally extremely attached | d. pet owners |
| 5. The psychologist even advised | e. in a running motion |
| 6. there is no way of | f. are any different |
| 7. close to disclosing that | g. cycle |
| 8. canines and | h. the secret |
| 9. part of the sleep | i. to those we have |
| 10. acting out their dreams so their legs move | j. mystery |

Discussion – Student B

- How much of a mystery are dreams?
- Do you have a regular sleep cycle?
- Why do some people never remember their dreams?
- Why do we have nightmares?
- How much do you move about in bed?
- What's your favourite dream?
- What do you think a dog's favourite dream would be?
- What questions would you like to ask the researcher?

Spelling

- An treepx believes she has uncovered the secret
- a pocoystiglhs at Harvard Medical School
- canine dreams were campealbro to those we have
- dogs are generally extremely aaetcdht
- pleasing or nganiyno
- happy daytime einpsecexe
- no way of knowing for eirtca
- close to iclidnosgs that mystery
- Her isoscnlcnou are based on the fact
- similar to the human lccye
- other ismamma are dreaming too
- their legs move in a running ointom

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. d	3. j	4. b	5. a
6. c	7. i	8. g	9. h	10. e

Role Play

Role A – Steak

You think dogs most like to dream about steak. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why dogs wouldn't like to dream about their things. Also, tell the others which of these dogs would least like to dream about (and why): cats, hunting or nature.

Role B – Cats

You think dogs most like to dream about cats. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why dogs wouldn't like to dream about their things. Also, tell the others which of these dogs would least like to dream about (and why): steak, hunting or nature.

Role C – Hunting

You think dogs most like to dream about hunting. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why dogs wouldn't like to dream about their things. Also, tell the others which of these dogs would least like to dream about (and why): cats, steak or nature.

Role D – Nature

You think dogs most like to dream about nature. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why dogs wouldn't like to dream about their things. Also, tell the others which of these dogs would least like to dream about (and why): cats, hunting or steak.

Speaking – Dog dreams

Rank these with your partner. Put the things dogs might dream about at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| • steak | • running |
| • owners | • hunting |
| • cats | • beds |
| • bones | • nature |

Answers – True False

a F	b T	c F	d T	e T	f T	g F	h F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.