9.6 Duck's Phase Model of Relationship Breakdown: 30-minute Pack

AQA 7182 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 Outline what is meant by the social phase in Duck's model, in the context of a couple where Priya has started telling friends about problems and seeking their opinions.

(Total for Question 1 is 3 marks)

2 Describe the grave-dressing phase in Duck's model as it would apply to Callum after he has left a long-term relationship and begins to tell a post-breakup story about why the relationship ended.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

3 Give one limitation of Duck's original phase model related to its retrospective and descriptive nature, and explain why this limitation matters for using the model to predict breakups.

(Total for Question 3 is 3 marks)

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4 Outline one practical application of Duck's phase model for relationship counselling or interventions, and explain how the model informs that application.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

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5 Outline and evaluate one strength and one limitation of Duck's model for understanding relationship breakdown, each developed with a reasoned explanation.

(Total for Question 5 is 6 marks)

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Mark scheme · 9.6 Duck's Phase Model of Relationship Breakdown: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

states that partners involve third parties such as friends or family and make the relationship troubles public oe	**M1**
states that external opinions, support or pressure influence decisions about the relationship oe	**A1**
refers to reputational or social consequences arising from discussing the breakup publicly oe	**A1**

Answer: Social phase: Priya tells friends about problems, the issues become public, and external opinions, support or pressure help shape what happens next with social consequences for reputations.

Question 2

states that partners construct a narrative to explain the breakup and present themselves in a favourable light oe	**M1**
mentions that the narrative is often self-protective, blaming the other or minimising one's own role oe	**A1**
mentions that the story serves social functions, managing reputation and allowing emotional closure oe	**A1**
may note that reinterpretation of events helps the individual move on emotionally oe	**A1**

Answer: Grave-dressing: Callum constructs a post-breakup story that makes the breakup socially acceptable, often protecting his self-image by blaming the other or reinterpreting events, which helps manage reputation and aids emotional closure.

Question 3

states a limitation: the model is largely descriptive and based on retrospective accounts oe	**M1**
explains that retrospective reports can be biased by memory or self-justification, reducing the model's predictive power oe	**A1**
explains that because it describes stages after the event it may not reliably predict which relationships will end or when oe	**A1**

Answer: Limitation: the model is descriptive and often based on retrospective accounts, which can be biased by memory or self-justification and therefore limit the model's ability to predict which relationships will break up and when.

Question 4

identifies a practical application, e.g. timing of interventions at the dyadic phase to improve communication or designing repair strategies oe	**M1**
explains why that phase is an appropriate point for intervention, e.g. partners are discussing issues and can be helped to negotiate more constructively oe	**A1**
explains how the model guides the intervention, e.g. counsellors focus on conflict resolution skills, improving communication and preventing escalation into the social phase oe	**A1**
may mention that awareness of stages helps practitioners tailor support and timing, improving chances of repair oe	**A1**

Answer: Application: counsellors can target the dyadic phase to teach communication and conflict-resolution skills because partners are openly discussing problems; the model guides when and how to intervene to prevent escalation into public breakdown.

Question 5

outlines one strength of the model, for example its usefulness in identifying stages and guiding interventions oe	**M1**
explains why this is a strength, linking to practical counselling or timing of support oe	**A1**
outlines one limitation, for example its descriptive and retrospective nature or failure to account for cultural/individual differences oe	**M1**
explains why this is a limitation, e.g. retrospective bias, lack of predictive power, or limited generalisability oe	**A1**
provides an evaluative comment linking the strength and limitation, for example that usefulness for intervention is constrained by limited predictive validity oe	**A1**
may support evaluation with brief reference to Rollie and Duck's resurrection phase as an improvement or to empirical evidence that shows variability in how breakups proceed oe	**A1**

Answer: Strength: the model identifies recognisable stages which helps practitioners target interventions at appropriate points, for example helping couples with communication during the dyadic phase. Limitation: it is largely descriptive and based on retrospective accounts so it may not predict breakups well and may not generalise across cultures or individual differences. Overall, while useful for structuring interventions, its limited predictive validity and variability in real-world progress reduce its explanatory power.

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