

Script 1

The Secrets of Sleep

Babies do it for up to eighteen hours a day. Mrs Thatcher and Napoleon both said they only needed to do it three or four hours a night. Sleep. No one can live without it. But how much do we really need?

Research by the National Sleep Foundation in Washington says that we all need eight hours' sleep every night. Scientists have found that people who sleep for less than six and a half hours a night are more often ill than people who sleep for eight hours. Going without sleep also increases the chance of serious illness. 'Workaholics' who sleep for less than five hours often die young, and do less well at work.

The scientists found that, on average, adults sleep for seven hours a night, with thirty-two percent sleeping less than six hours. It also says that the idea that we need less sleep as we get older is completely untrue. 'People have no idea how important sleep is to their lives', Dr Thomas Roth, director of the Foundation says. 'Good health needs good sleep.'

'But not too much of it,' says Professor Jim Horne of Loughborough University. 'Sleep is like food and drink,' he believes: 'you would always like to have a little bit more, but that doesn't mean you need it.' Professor Horne studied a group of people who could spend as many hours as they wanted in bed; after ten hours they didn't find it any easier to get up in the morning. And people who sleep for more than nine hours a night die younger than people who usually sleep for seven or eight!

Script 2

Diamonds Are Forever

'Diamonds,' sang Marilyn Monroe in the film "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes", 'are a girl's best friend.' You might not agree, but we can be sure of this: diamonds are not only the hardest substance in the world, they are also the most expensive. A single diamond cost \$16.5 million when it was sold in Geneva in 1995!

Diamonds. are found in a number of countries including Australia, South Africa and Brazil. In fact, there are two types of diamond; colourless diamonds (about 25% of those found) are the hardest and are often made into jewels. Black

diamonds — the remaining 75% — are usually used by industry. Industrial diamonds are also produced artificially.

The largest diamond in history is the Cullinan diamond. It weighed 620g and was mined in South Africa in 1905. It was bought by the Transvaal government for £150,000, and then it was presented to the King of England, Edward VII. The diamond was cut into smaller jewels, which are now part of the British Crown Jewels, which belong to the Queen of England and are kept in the Tower of London.

Diamonds are also used for decoration. Between 1885 and 1917, the Russian jeweller Peter Carl Fabergé made a number of decorated Easter eggs for the tsars and their families. The most valuable of them is decorated with more than 3,000 diamonds. It was sold at Christie's, Geneva for \$5.5 million.