

NB: This is not a word for word transcript

- Chris:** Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Chris.
- Rosie:** And I'm Rosie.
- Chris:** And today we are going to talk about a new invention that promises to influence our dreams.
- Rosie:** Oh, that sounds exciting! I love new inventions!
- Chris:** That's good, Rosie! But calm down - **hold your horses** - because we have to start with the usual challenge for our listeners. Now, I want to put a question to you and the answer is linked to sleep and dreams. What do the former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, the former French leader Napoleon Bonaparte and the famous English nurse Florence Nightingale have in common?
- Rosie:** Oh, that's difficult because I didn't think they had very much in common.
- Chris:** Let me make it easier for you by giving you three options. What do Margaret Thatcher, Napoleon Bonaparte and Florence Nightingale have in common? Is it that:
- a) They all dreamt of becoming farmers when they were children.
 - b) They all suffered from a recurring nightmare of being bitten by spiders.
 - c) They all usually slept for just four hours a night.
- Rosie:** Mmm... dreaming of being farmers... I dream about being a movie star!
- Chris:** Well, farmer or movie star, they ended up becoming famous due to their **remarkable** achievements. I will give you the answer by the end of the programme. Now, let's talk about this interesting invention that got you so **fired up**. It works in smartphones, Rosie.
- Rosie:** That's so cool! I just adore my iPhone and have loads of **applications** on it!
- Chris:** An '**app**' or **application** is what Professor Richard Wiseman from the University of Hertfordshire has developed to influence dreams. It plays specific sounds to you while you are sleeping. You select the sound and the phone automatically plays it when you're dreaming by monitoring your movements. Let's hear a report by the BBC's John McManus.

BBC John McManus:

*Professor Wiseman says most people have about five dreams every night, but if they are **pleasant**, they can lead to people feeling more positive and being more **productive** during the day. A recent survey found that most people would choose sounds that **prompted** relaxing visions, perhaps set in woods filled with birdsong. Others though, wanted some night time adventure.*

Rosie: So some people wake up feeling better after an agreeable, or a **pleasant**, dream. They are able to work more and are more **productive**. You know, I feel really sleepy when I get up and I need about three hours before I actually feel awake.

Chris: And what sort of sounds would make your mind produce – or **prompt** – relaxing visions, Rosie?

Rosie: Oh, I'm not too sure. But I am thinking about those nature CDs, the ones with the waterfall sounds and birds in the forest and things like that.

Chris: Well, for me a dream is all about adventure - all about going up a mountain and discovering somewhere new or exploring a new country. But it's good to keep in mind that this technology is in the experimental stage. They even plan to find a way so that when you wake up, the **app** will **prompt** you to feedback exactly what your dream was and how you felt.

Rosie: So they are still working to develop this project.

Chris: Yes, they are. But let's listen to the final part of John McManus's report to find out how the technology might be used if it is successful.

BBC John McManus:

*A successful experiment could lead to new ways of treating depression and stress. It may also **enhance** creativity – Paul McCartney was said to have woken from a dream with the Beatles hit 'Yesterday' going through his mind, and Mary Shelley was inspired by a dream to write the horror story 'Frankenstein'. Most of us of course, will be hoping for sweeter dreams than that.*

Rosie: I liked the idea that it could make us even more creative. John McManus said that it may **enhance** creativity and the mention of the ex-Beatle Paul McCartney is really enticing. He came up with so many great songs!

Chris: And the English novelist Mary Shelley was also very creative when she wrote the horror story, Frankenstein.

Rosie: I would have thought that Frankenstein is more of a nightmare.

Chris: Talking about nightmares, let's go back to our challenge, Rosie. I will repeat the question, the three options and you can guess the right one. What do the former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, the former French leader Napoleon Bonaparte and the famous English nurse Florence Nightingale have in common? Is it:

- a) They all dreamt of becoming farmers when they were children but ended up becoming something else.
- b) They all suffered from a recurring nightmare of being bitten by spiders.
- c) They all usually slept for just four hours a night.

Rosie: Oh, that's a very difficult question. I think I'm going to go for (b) – the nightmare of being bitten by spiders.

Chris: Okay. Well, the answer is actually (c) - Margaret Thatcher, Napoleon Bonaparte and Florence Nightingale usually slept for just four hours a night. Most people only feel rested after seven or eight hours of sleep but for these guys four hours would do.

Rosie: That's incredible! So they didn't even have much time to dream?

Chris: Some people might say that they didn't have time enough for nightmares either! Unfortunately we've run out of time ourselves and have to finish the programme now. But we leave you with today's words.

Rosie: And here they are:
hold your horses
remarkable
fired up
application (or app)
pleasant
productive
prompted
enhance

Chris: Thank you, Rosie. And that's all for today. Bye for now and sweet dreams.

Rosie: Bye.

Vocabulary and definitions

hold your horses	don't rush, be patient
remarkable	surprising and noticeable
to be fired up	to be excited about something
an application (app)	a piece of software designed to help the user to perform specific tasks
pleasant	agreeable
productive	effective in achieving results
prompted	gave an incentive for action
enhance	increase in quality

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