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Rubrik: Hello children : where would you find carbon?

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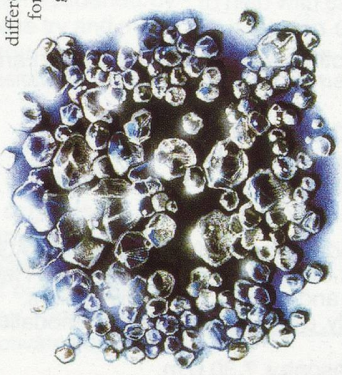
HELLO CHILDREN!

Where would you find carbon?

Carbon is found in all living things: it is one of the most familiar and important chemical elements yet it makes up only 0.032 per cent of the earth's crust. Carbon is the main component of such fuels as coal, petroleum and natural gas. Carbon is also found in most plastics, many of which are derived from carbon fuels. Carbon has the chemical symbol C. Pure carbon occurs in four forms: (1) diamond (2) graphite (as used in pencils) (3) amorphous carbons and (4) fullerenes. The four forms have different crystalline structures – that is, their atoms are arranged differently. The various forms of carbon differ greatly in hardness and other properties, depending on how their atoms are arranged.



FACT FILE

Diamond is the hardest naturally occurring substance and one of the most valuable. Natural diamonds form in the rock beneath the Earth's crust where high temperature and pressure cause carbon atoms to make strong bonds with four other carbon atoms each and to crystallize.