

Name: _____

Renewable vs. Non-Renewable Resources

By Lydia Lukidis



Energy resources are all around us. They are things that people use. They come from nature. We need them to survive. For example, they keep us warm and help us cook food. We also use them to do things that make life easier, like driving cars. These resources fall into two categories: non-



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Renewable resources are different: they are replenished by nature (rain, energy). They rely on Earth's natural processes. Examples include plants, solar power, wind, and water. You can imagine that it's impossible to "use up" all the sunlight from the sun. And those rays are useful when heating up a building or a swimming pool. The same goes for water. It never fully disappears. The water cycle keeps the flow going. It may evaporate. But it still exists in gas form. Soon, condensation forms in the clouds. We're all familiar with the part that happens after that: it rains! Then the water cycle begins again.

For hundreds of years, humans have used renewable resources. They used wood for cooking and heating. They used wind and water for milling grain. Then about 150 years ago, scientists discovered the power of fossil fuel. Energy could be taken out of the fossils of ancient plants and animals. Soon, coal, oil, and natural gas replaced things like wood and wind. They were great resources, but were not unlimited.

Today, we rely on many non-renewable resources. We use them to heat our homes, play our electronic devices, and power our cars. Think about that the next time you ride a school bus. The bus uses diesel or gasoline. Both are made from petroleum. Petroleum is a fossil fuel. Or imagine the next time you play a video game, or turn on a light. So many things require energy.

Unfortunately, there are problems with using so much non-renewable energy. First, these resources are limited. They will eventually disappear. How will we ride in our cars and turn on our ovens then? Also, they're not good for the environment. Burning fossil fuels pollutes the air.

That's why it's important for us to develop new technologies. We have to find new ways of using renewable resources. For example, wouldn't it be great to have a car that runs on water or plant



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In the meantime, it's important to use our non-renewable resources wisely. If we use them too much or too quickly, they will run out faster. One thing we can all do is follow the rule of the three R's: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. Doing this will make a difference. We're all living on this beautiful planet together, so why not take care of it?



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1. How long does it take for non-renewable resources to be replenished once they are used?
- a. a few years
 - b. hundreds of years
 - c. thousands of years
 - d. millions of years



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4. Complete the T-chart below with three non-renewable resources and three renewable resources.

non-renewable resources	renewable resources

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In the article, "Renewable vs. Non-Renewable Resources," you learned that we rely heavily on non-renewable resources to fuel many of the activities in our everyday lives.

On the lines below, answer the following question: Do you think our society should

~~replace non-renewable resources with renewable resources as our primary fuel~~



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ANSWER KEY

Renewable vs. Non-Renewable Resources



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natural gas
fossil fuels
gasoline
diesel
petroleum

water power
plants

ANSWER KEY

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9. g. milling

i. a form of petroleum used as fuel

10. d. ancient

j. conversion of gas to liquid