

Energy and Your Environment

Teacher's Guide

Energy and Your Environment presents energy concepts in an interdisciplinary context. This presentation guide provides answers to questions and problems, as well as extension and discussion tips for each page.

Page 2: Your Environment is Energetic (Physical Science)

Answers: Illustration questions

- Energy is released when ice melts; therefore ice exhibits potential energy.
- The ocean waves depict kinetic energy. The water at the top of the waves has potential energy.
- The sprinters represent kinetic energy. There is stored energy within their muscles (& whole bodies).
- The jelly beans depict potential energy that can be released when the beans are eaten.

Page 3: We Get Energy From the Environment (Physical Science)

Answers: *What Do You Think?*

1. The electric dryer method depends on the kinetic energy of either water-driven turbines (hydropower) or steam-driven turbines (fossil fuel or nuclear energy) to generate the electricity needed to power the dryer. The clothesline approach depends on the kinetic energy of the wind and the sun (heat) to dry the clothes.
2. The electric dryer method uses non-renewable resources unless the electricity was generated by water, wind or solar power. The clothesline method uses renewable resources.
3. The energy that is in fossil fuels came from plants and animals that have stored the sun's energy in their tissues.

Extension: Ask students to explain why wood is a renewable form of energy, while coal is not.

Page 4: Energy Use in the Environment Has Changed Over Time (Language, Social Studies)

Answers: *Imagine*

Students' answers should reveal logical thinking skills as well as whether they have studied the timeline. (Students can assume that fire has been discovered for the prehistoric time period.)

Extension: Discuss as a class how to prepare a meal in the three different time periods. What technologies would be used? What kinds of fuel would be used? (Prehistoric—open wood fire; 200 years ago—wood or coal burned in fireplace or brick oven; 1990's—gas fire or electric heat in kitchen range or oven.)

Page 5: Energy Production Affects the Environment in Many Ways (Environmental Science)

Answers: *Environmental Impacts Chart**

- Fossil Fuels: smog, release of greenhouse gases, acid precipitation, water and soil contamination, hazardous waste generation
- Nuclear: highly hazardous waste, accidental radiation exposure
- Hydropower: destruction or alteration of plant and animal habitats
- Wood: deforestation, air pollution (release of greenhouse gases, soot)
- Solar: no significant environmental impacts from power generation
- Wind: some wind turbines can be noisy or can harm flying birds; turbines can block scenic views

* All energy resources have environmental impacts associated with manufacture of equipment used in energy production and delivery of electricity. Some have impacts associated with transportation of fuel.

Discussion: You may help students get started on the Community Connection by discussing the environmental effects that are experienced locally.

Page 6: Everybody Needs Energy (Social Studies)

Discussion Tips: *Is It Fair?*

If you have students who have lived in other countries, ask them to compare the ways that people use energy in the two countries.

Page 7: Paying the Price for Our Energy Use (Math, Social Studies)

Answers: *How Many Hours . . . ?*

- It would take 400 hours at \$5/hour to pay a \$2000 energy bill. This would take 10 work weeks, or about 22% of a work year.
- Ideas for reducing the country's energy bill may include: encouraging alternatives to automobile use, improving vehicle fuel efficiency, increasing demand for recycled products, improving insulation in buildings, encouraging people to buy things that require little transportation, processing and packaging, etc.

Page 8: Living in a Global Greenhouse (Physical Science)

Answer: *Make a Mini Greenhouse*

- The ice in the covered bottle should have melted faster. Students should explain that the plastic wrap holds in heat just as the clear greenhouse gases trap the Earth's heat.
- Extension: The problem is not that greenhouse gases exist but that their concentrations have increased due to human activities. Discuss what life would be like if there were no greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. (Without greenhouse gases the Earth would have an average temperature of -18°C , instead of the current 15°C .)

Page 9: Energy Efficiency (Math)

Sample calculations for problems

- Refrigerators:
At $9\text{¢}/\text{kWh}$, the savings would be: $(1807 \text{ kWh} - 734 \text{ kWh}) \times 9\text{¢}/\text{kWh} = \96.57
- Automobiles:
Yearly gallons of gas for average hybrid vehicle = $15,000 \text{ miles/year} \times 1 \text{ gallon}/44 \text{ miles} = \text{approx. } 341 \text{ gallons/year}$.
Yearly gallons of gas for average midsize car = $15,000 \text{ miles/year} \times 1 \text{ gallon}/18 \text{ miles} = \text{approx. } 833 \text{ gallons/year}$
Savings in gallons = $833 - 341 = 492 \text{ gallons}$. Dollar savings with gasoline at $\$3/\text{gallon} = \$1,476$

Page 10: Conserving Energy at Home (Community Involvement)

Discussion Tip:

Ask students to discuss in groups how they tried to change their families' energy consumption patterns, and how their families responded to these efforts.

Bonus question Answers:

Transportation changes would conserve fossil fuel use. Lighting and appliance and some water use changes would reduce electricity use, and natural gas use in the case of gas dryers. Heating, shower and water heater changes would reduce natural gas, fuel oil, or electricity use depending on the type of fuel used.

Page 11: Energy: How Much Does it Take? (Math)

Additional Information about energy measurement conversions:

Just as there are multiple units for measuring distance (meters, yards, fathoms), there are multiple units for measuring energy. These different units arose out of practical needs to quantify amounts, such as the heat generated by a furnace, or the work that a horse could do in a given period of time. Because energy is the same thing, whether it's in a furnace or a horse, these quantities can all be converted to equivalent units. By multiplying a quantity in one measurement unit (e.g., calories) by a conversion factor, you get the quantity in another measurement unit (e.g., joules). Joules is the standard scientific unit of measurement for energy.

Answers to *Brain vs. Car*

- 2500 food calories/day x 20% x 100 days = 50,000 food calories
Conversion to joules: 50,000 food calories x 4184 joules/food calorie = 209,200,000 joules
- If the car gets 25 miles/gallon, then it takes 4 gallons of gasoline to go 100 miles. 4 gallons of gasoline x 1.5 gallons crude oil/gallon gasoline = 6 gallons crude oil.
Conversion to joules: 6 gallons x 146,000,000 joules/gallon of crude oil = 876,000,000 joules.

The 100-mile car trip takes a little more than 4 times the energy needed for a brain to work for 100 days.

Page 12: Youth Can Make a Difference (Community Involvement)

Research Tip:

Contact your local business organizations and community nonprofit associations to find out about sponsorship possibilities for youth activities in energy efficiency or environmental improvement.

Page 13: Investigate Your School's Energy Habits (Math, Community Involvement)

Sample Calculation for a School Relighting Project

(Costs, hours, and number of lights will vary with location.)

- Standard fluorescent tubes and ballasts are to be replaced with "T-8" fluorescent tubes and electronic ballasts.
Old lighting used 75 watts for each 8-ft fluorescent.
New lighting uses 50 watts for each 8-ft fluorescent.
Electronic ballasts increase efficiency of the lighting system by 35%.
Replacement costs = \$12 per tube and \$40 per fixture.
Tubes last for approximately 20,000 hours of use.
- School had 300 8-ft tubes and 150 ballasts.
- Lights are on 1400 hours/yr
- 1400 hours/yr x 300 tubes x 75 watts = 31,500,000 Watt-hours/yr. (Old system) This is the same as 31,500 kWh/yr.
1400 hours/yr x 300 tubes x 50 watts = 21,000,000 Watt-hours/yr. (New system) This is the same as 21,000 kWh/yr.
- If electricity cost per kWh is 10¢, then cost for each system is:
 - Current system: 31,500 kWh/yr x \$0.10/kWh = \$3,150/yr
 - New system: 21,000 kWh/yr x \$0.10/kWh = \$2,100/yr
 - Savings from electronic ballast of 35%: \$2,100 x 0.35 = \$735
 - Total Savings = kWh svgs + electronic ballast svgs = (\$3,150/yr - \$2,100/yr) + \$735/yr = \$1785/yr
- New system cost = (300 x \$12) + (150 x \$40) = \$3,600 + \$6,000 = \$9,600
 - (Consider that old tubes and ballasts would need replacement anyway, so the additional cost of the new system will not be as high as this figure.) If 1/3 of the tubes and ballasts needed replacing, then real cost would be \$6,400. It would take about three and a half years for the energy savings to pay off the cost of the new equipment.

7. Other energy uses include gasoline used by people traveling to and from school, energy for heating and air conditioning, electricity for classroom, office and cafeteria equipment, etc.

Page 14: Reuse News (Community Involvement)

Discussion Tip:

Display a number of everyday items: bag of chips, a shoe, can of soda, magazine, computer disk. Challenge students to think of: (1) ways to reuse the object, or (2) how the item could be changed to require less packaging or allow for reuse.

Page 15: Test Your Energy Savvy (Review)

Answers: Word Search:

1. Bicycle
2. Reusing
3. Person
4. Renewable
5. Infrared
6. Brain
7. Osage
8. By-products
9. Fluorescent

Page 16: Creating Our Energy Future (Environmental Science, Art, Community Involvement)

Research Tip:

Invite a government planning or transportation department member, or local industry representative to discuss plans for reducing energy use. Students may also get ideas for reducing energy use in the community by studying city or county general plans, which have sections that deal with energy-related issues, such as transportation, housing, and waste management.