

Natural Resources: Renewable or Nonrenewable?

Grade 4 • SCIENCE • Classifying natural resources as renewable or nonrenewable and choosing conservation actions that reduce resource use or environmental impact. • Standards: 4-ESS3-1

Read each question about natural resources carefully. Decide if the resource is renewable or nonrenewable, or choose the best conservation action.

1. Sunlight is a natural resource we use for energy and warmth. Is sunlight renewable or nonrenewable?
2. Coal is formed from ancient plants that were buried underground millions of years ago. Is coal renewable or nonrenewable?
3. Trees can be planted and grown to replace trees that are cut down for lumber. Are trees renewable or nonrenewable?
4. Natural gas is a fuel found deep underground that formed over millions of years. Is natural gas renewable or nonrenewable?
5. Which action would best conserve water at home: taking long showers every day or turning off the faucet while brushing your teeth?
6. Wind is moving air that we can use to generate electricity with wind turbines. Is wind renewable or nonrenewable?
7. Which action would reduce the use of nonrenewable resources: riding your bike to school or asking for a car ride every day?
8. Iron ore is a metal found in rocks underground that is used to make steel. Once mined, it cannot be replaced. Is iron ore renewable or nonrenewable?
9. A family wants to reduce their environmental impact when heating their home. Which choice would be better: installing solar panels to capture sunlight or burning more coal for heat?

10. A town is choosing how to generate electricity. They can build a power plant that burns oil or build wind turbines. Which option uses a renewable resource and reduces environmental impact?

Answer Key — Natural Resources: Renewable or Nonrenewable?

For the teacher / parent. Do not distribute with the worksheet.

1. Renewable (*Sunlight is constantly produced by the sun and will not run out in our lifetimes.*)
2. Nonrenewable (*Coal takes millions of years to form and cannot be replaced quickly.*)
3. Renewable (*Trees can be replanted and regrown within a human lifetime.*)
4. Nonrenewable (*Natural gas takes millions of years to form and cannot be replaced quickly.*)
5. Turning off the faucet while brushing your teeth (*This action saves water by preventing waste when water is not needed.*)
6. Renewable (*Wind is constantly created by temperature differences in the atmosphere.*)
7. Riding your bike to school (*Riding a bike uses no fuel, while cars use gasoline made from nonrenewable oil.*)
8. Nonrenewable (*Iron ore is a mineral that formed over millions of years and cannot be replaced once used.*)
9. Installing solar panels to capture sunlight (*Solar panels use renewable sunlight and produce no pollution, while burning coal uses a nonrenewable resource and creates pollution.*)
10. Build wind turbines (*Wind turbines use renewable wind energy and produce no air pollution, while burning oil uses a nonrenewable resource and creates pollution.*)