

Read About Natural Resources

NATURAL RESOURCES DEFINITION

Anything that is found in nature that can be used by living things is a natural resource. This includes water, forests, fossil fuels, minerals, plants, animals and even air.

To better understand natural resources...

LET'S BREAK IT DOWN!

People need natural resources.

Living things depend on natural resources to survive. People need water to drink, air to breathe and wood or metal to build a shelter. We also need to power our cars and heat our homes.



Water is a natural resource.

Every living thing needs water to survive. Water can be found in oceans, rivers, lakes, underground and frozen in glaciers. Only a small amount of water on Earth is freshwater.

Wood is a natural resource.

Wood is a natural material made from trees. We use wood to make pencils and paper. It can also be used to build a house and when it burns it makes heat.



Fossil fuels are a natural resource.

Coal, oil and natural gas are all fossil fuels. They form deep in the Earth from dead plants and animals. It takes millions of years for them to form.

We need to conserve natural resources.

Many natural resources can be used up, so we must use them wisely. We can conserve natural resources by following the 3R's: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.



NATURAL RESOURCES VOCABULARY

Natural Resource

Anything from nature that living things can use.

Limited Resource

Resources that could run out. There might not be enough for everyone in the future.

Conservation

The careful use of resources so that they will last as long as possible.

Water

A clear liquid that has no taste or smell.

Wood

A hard material made from a tree. It is used to make pencils, paper and even to build houses.

Fossil Fuels

Coal, oil and natural gas are fossil fuels. They form from deep in the Earth from dead plants and animals. It takes millions of years for them to form.

NATURAL RESOURCES DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

How do people use natural resources?

People use natural resources to make things, produce energy and provide water, food and shelter needed to live. Natural resources are even used to make cars and computers.

Can there be shortages of natural resources?

Yes, if we use a lot of them very quickly, there may not be enough for everyone or they could run out. For example, if people eat too many fish from the ocean, that kind of fish may no longer exist.

Why are fossil fuels considered limited resources?

Fossil fuels, such as coal, oil and natural gas, formed in the Earth over millions of years. Humans are using up these resources much faster than they are being formed. The process to make fossil fuels happens naturally, but it is very slow.

What is one way you can conserve natural resources?

You could walk or ride a bike instead of driving, which uses gas made from fossil fuels. If you are going somewhere with other people, you can carpool.

What examples of natural resources can you find around you?

We can find wood used to make desks, pencils, paper and books. Water can be found in the bathroom and the drinking fountain. Things that are plastic are made from fossil fuels, which is also a natural resource.

Could we survive without natural resources?

People could not survive without natural resources. We need natural resources for food, housing, clothing, transportation, communication and more. We must conserve natural resources so they will continue to be available for everyone.
