

Natural Resources...Handle With Care

OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate the concept and management of natural resources and energy.

MATERIALS: HANDOUTS: Natural Resources (A49)

VOCABULARY: natural resources, renewable, non-renewable, energy

BACKGROUND:

Canada uses more energy per capita than any other country. Energy is used to heat our homes, light our lights, cook our meals, move people or goods from place to place and even extract more energy. Most of the energy we use is derived from natural resources. Our energy consumption combined with our waste production is straining the natural resources we have while jeopardizing resources we will need in the future. Everything essential for life depends upon natural resources. They provide food, clothing, shelter, medicine and many other items.

Natural resources are divided into two categories: renewable and non-renewable. Water, forests, fish and soils are examples of renewable resources. Fossil fuels, minerals and metallic ores are non-renewable resources. Everyone understands how the quantity of non-renewable resources is a fixed amount; once they are used there will be no more to be had. However, if we use or pollute all of our renewable resources they will not be able to regenerate thus becoming non-renewable resources.

PROCEDURE:

1. Instruct the students to take five items from their desk. Write a definition of natural resources on the chalkboard. You may use the one provided in this book or a definition from a dictionary, encyclopedia etc.
2. Ask the students to name all the natural resources they can think of. Write the suggestions under the definition.
3. Instruct the class to look at the five items they have on their desk. Each student is to consider what natural resources were used to create the item. Tell the students to consider the energy used to make the items. Mention the energy used in harvesting the raw materials, turning these materials into finished products, transporting the items to a retailer and so on.
4. Explain the idea of renewable and non-renewable resources to the class. Write both words on the chalkboard. Take the list of natural resources the class provided in Step 2 and place each suggestion under the appropriate heading: renewable, or non-renewable.