

THE FORMATION OF FOSSIL FUELS

Adapted from the NY Energy Education Project

Overview: This lesson helps students see their role in our national consumption of energy. It includes a look at the energy contained in all the things we use—from crayons to packaging.

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Extract relevant information from the reading material
- Measure accurately and show information on a scale
- Perform basic division problems

Students will understand:

- Fossil fuels were formed millions of years ago.
- Other sources of energy are replaced continuously. They are said to be renewable.
- Fossil fuel resources are finite.
- Fossil fuels may be used up at some future time. Because they are not replaced during the time span of human history, they are said to be nonrenewable.

Time:

- One period for advance discussion
- One period for Worksheets A, B, and C
- One period for preparing time lines (Worksheet D) and completing questions.
- One period for calculations (Worksheet E) and follow-up discussion of entire activity.

Subjects: Science, Social Studies, Math, Technology

Suggested Grade Level: 6-10

Materials: Adding machine tape, student worksheets, meter stick, pencil

PREPARATION & BACKGROUND

Advance Planning

Discuss with the students:

- the various sources of energy
- the concept of the quad as a unit for measuring an amount of energy
- the major concepts involved in the formation of coal, oil and natural gas.

The time for the activity can be reduced if the strips of adding machine tape are cut ahead of time.