



Unit 5: Energy

Lesson 1: Exploring Alternative Energy

Purpose:

Anytime you watch the evening news or open a newspaper you are sure to see information about oil, gas prices, or our nations need to become more energy independent. Is it actually possible for us to become self-reliant? The encouraging fact is that it is entirely possible! However, this possibility cannot be reached without overcoming a number of obstacles. First we need to determine what types of renewable energy there are, and where those sources of energy fit best.

Directions: Access the commodities and products tab on the AgMRC website (<http://www.agmrc.org>) and find the link to Biomass. Utilize information located here to answer the questions below:

1. According to the AgMRC website, what are four sources of alternative energy?
2. Take some time to look over the different sources of renewable energy. Choose 2 that you think would be the most beneficial for producing electricity in your state. Justify your answers.
3. Utilizing the link <http://www.thesolutionsproject.org> find what experts think Iowa can do to become completely energy independent. Does your answer for question 2 match or differ from this website? Why or why not?
4. Look around at some of the different states on the solution projects website. Notice how the renewable energy percentage breakdowns vary from state to state. Why do you think this is? Use a few specific states as examples.



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5. In a state like Iowa ethanol is of great interest in the renewable energy conversation. Why do you think a fuel like ethanol is considered “renewable”?

Reinforcement Activity: Quick Write

For this activity, you will write a short story about how you would imagine the world in the year was 2100 and we did not have renewable energy. What would be different? How would your life change? Be creative and put yourself in the shoes of the people that will be living in the future we are creating.