

Chapter 3: Earth's Resources

Imagine that you are planning to take a long trip through outer space. What will you need to take with you? Remember, you must take everything that you will need to live. You will need food, water, air, clothing, tools, and **fuel**. Oil and coal are examples of fuels that are used to run engines. All of these things are **resources**. Resources are the things people use to meet their needs.

You use resources every day. Every time you eat food or drink water, you are using resources. Earth is like a giant spaceship that contains the resources humans need to survive.

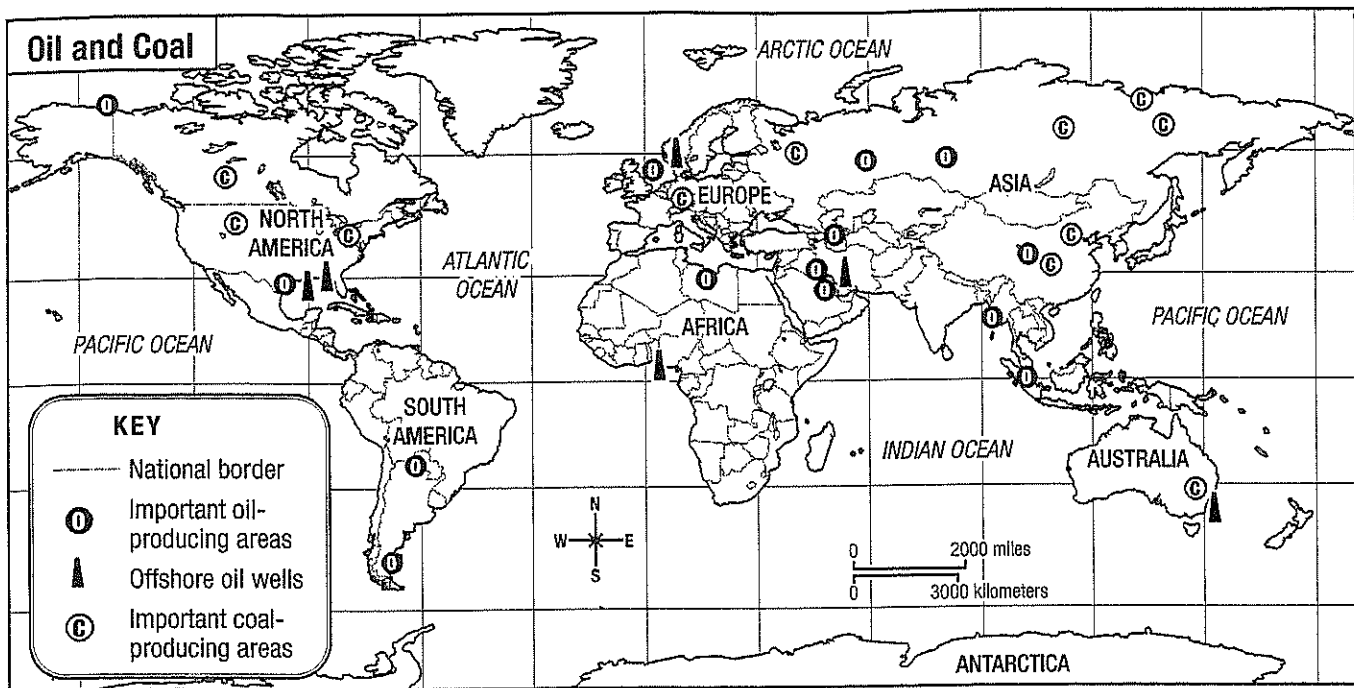
➤ **Oil is a natural resource found deep in the ground. How does it help us travel long distances?**

Renewable and Nonrenewable Resources

The resources that people use on Earth can be divided into two different groups: renewable and nonrenewable. Nature provides people with **renewable resources**. Air, water, and all living things, including animals and plants, are renewable resources. There will always be more of these resources, as long as people use them carefully.



Wind turbines use air to generate electricity.



Nonrenewable resources are those resources that Earth made long ago. They cannot be made again, except over a very long period of time. These resources were once the remains of plant and animal life. Over a period of millions of years, heat and pressure deep inside Earth turned these remains into such things as oil, coal, and natural gas. Many of these nonrenewable resources are important because they can be used as fuel.

- Look at the map on this page. Circle the offshore oil wells on the map. Name two continents that have offshore oil wells.

Coal, Oil, and Natural Gas

Today, the world's main sources of energy are coal, oil, and natural gas. Beginning in the 1800s, coal was burned to make steam. The steam was used to run engines in trains, ships, and other machines. Coal is still used today. It supplies about 30 percent of the world's energy.

Oil is used to make gasoline. It is also used for airplane fuel and to heat homes. Natural gas is used to heat homes and factories.