

WORLD BOOK EXPLAINS

What Are Renewable Sources of Energy?

MOST ENERGY WE USE COMES FROM PETROLEUM, COAL, AND NATURAL GAS.



THESE SOURCES ARE CALLED FOSSIL FUELS BECAUSE THEY DEVELOPED FROM THE REMAINS OF PREHISTORIC PLANTS AND ANIMALS.

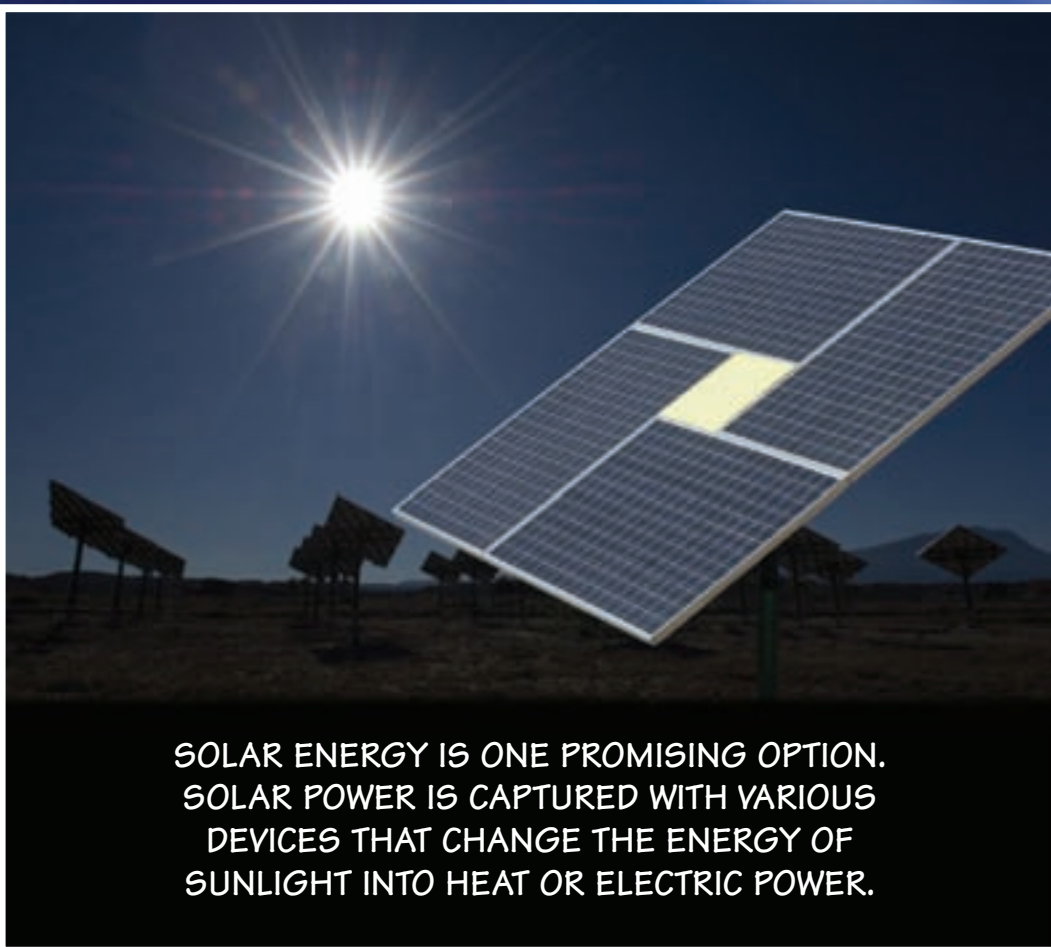
EARTH CONTAINS ONLY A LIMITED SUPPLY OF FOSSIL FUELS. IF WE KEEP USING FOSSIL FUELS, SOMEDAY THE SUPPLY WILL RUN OUT.



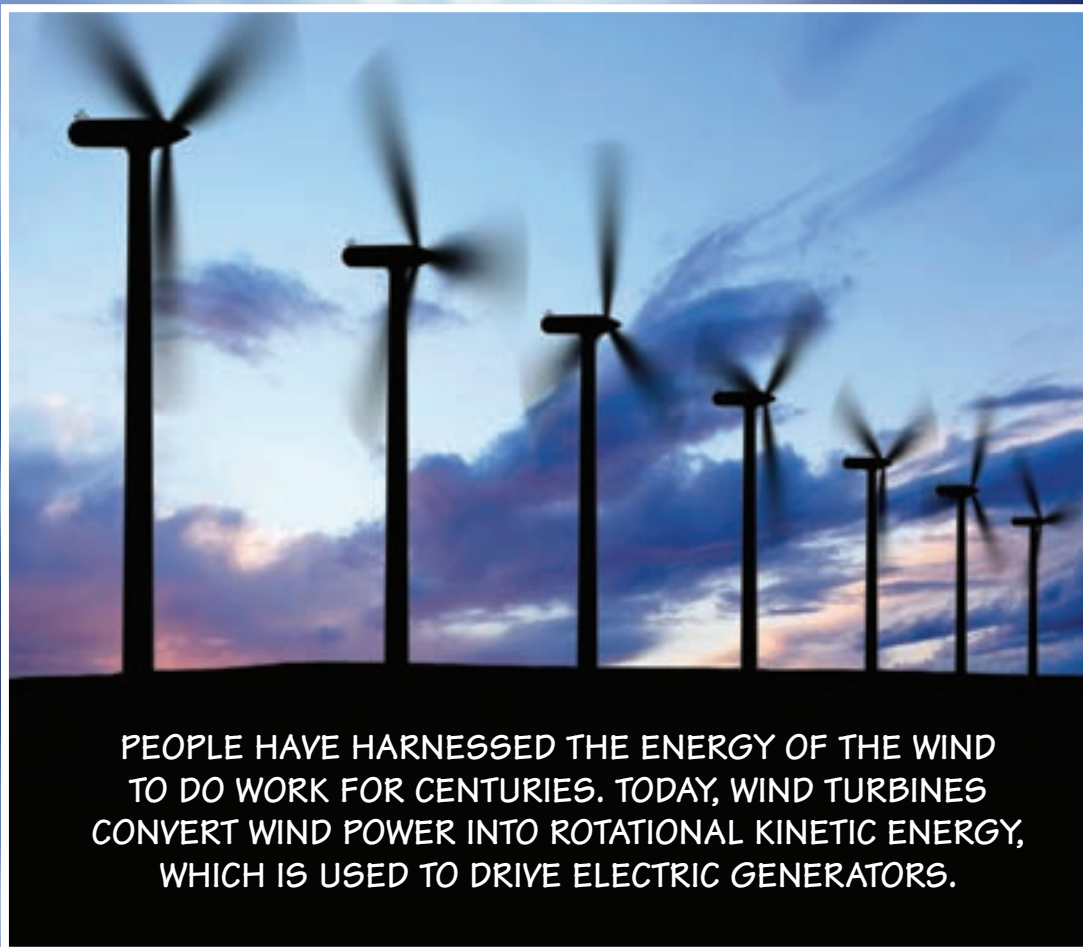
SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS ARE DEVELOPING RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY TO REPLACE THE SHRINKING RESERVES OF FOSSIL FUELS.



SOLAR ENERGY IS ONE PROMISING OPTION. SOLAR POWER IS CAPTURED WITH VARIOUS DEVICES THAT CHANGE THE ENERGY OF SUNLIGHT INTO HEAT OR ELECTRIC POWER.



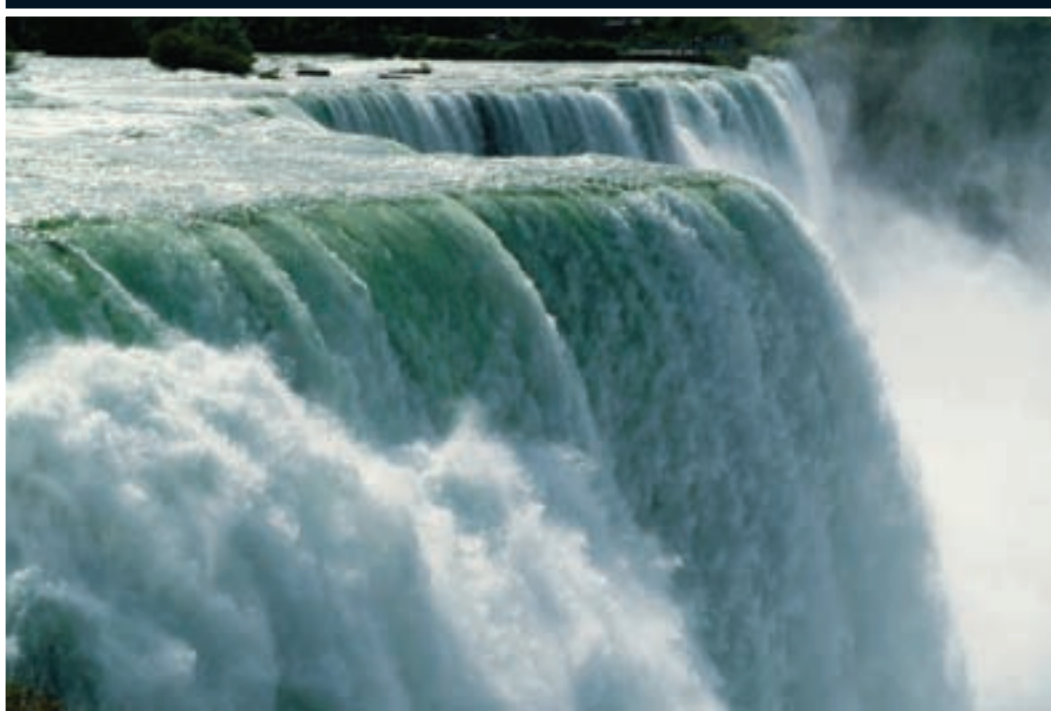
PEOPLE HAVE HARNESSSED THE ENERGY OF THE WIND TO DO WORK FOR CENTURIES. TODAY, WIND TURBINES CONVERT WIND POWER INTO ROTATIONAL KINETIC ENERGY, WHICH IS USED TO DRIVE ELECTRIC GENERATORS.



GEOTHERMAL ENERGY IS ENERGY THAT COMES FROM THE HEAT OF EARTH. POWER COMPANIES CAN PUMP HOT WATER OR STEAM FROM UNDERGROUND AND USE IT TO HEAT HOMES OR GENERATE ELECTRIC POWER.



WATER POWER, OR HYDROPOWER, IS ONE OF THE MOST WIDELY USED SOURCES OF RENEWABLE ENERGY. THE GRAVITATIONAL ENERGY OF THE FALLING WATER CAN BE CAPTURED TO PRODUCE OTHER FORMS OF ENERGY.

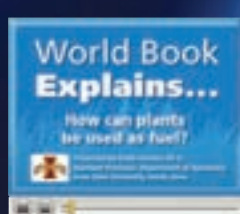
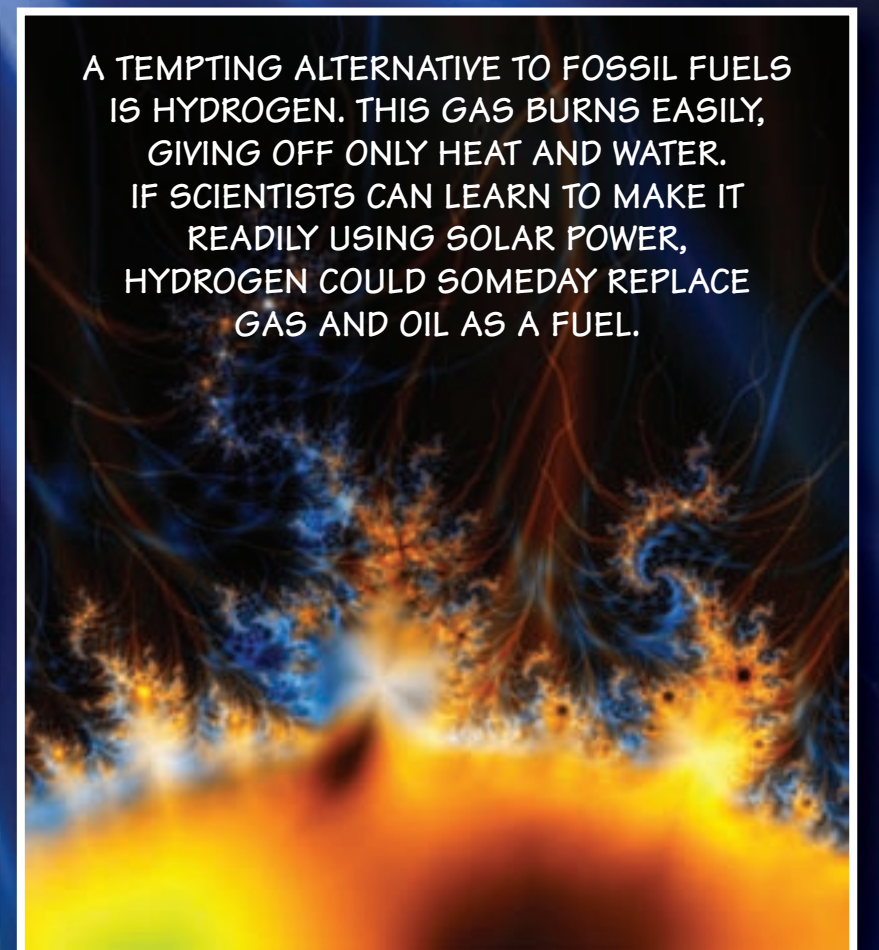


ANIMAL WASTES AND PLANTS CAN BE USED TO CREATE AN ENERGY SOURCE KNOWN AS BIOFUEL.

ETHANOL, A BIOFUEL AVAILABLE AT MANY GAS STATIONS, IS PROCESSED FROM CROPS SUCH AS SUGAR CANE, CORN, AND GRASSES.



A TEMPTING ALTERNATIVE TO FOSSIL FUELS IS HYDROGEN. THIS GAS BURNS EASILY, GIVING OFF ONLY HEAT AND WATER. IF SCIENTISTS CAN LEARN TO MAKE IT READILY USING SOLAR POWER, HYDROGEN COULD SOMEDAY REPLACE GAS AND OIL AS A FUEL.



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