Resource Detectives

Sort resources by how nature replaces them.

6.C.2.4 "Describe the distribution of natural resources found in each region, delineating between renewable and nonrenewable resources, and explaining how the relative location to such resources can influence the economic development of a region."

NAME _____ DATE _____

RENEWABLE	NONRENEWABLE
Nature can replace this resource within a human lifetime. People still need to use some renewable resources carefully. Corn grown each year	Nature replaces this resource so slowly that people can use it up much faster than it forms. Iron ore mined from a deposit

1 SORT

8 items

For each item, circle RENEWABLE or FINITE, then choose two items and write how you knew where each belongs.

1. Sunlight — RENEWABLE / FINITE
2. Coal underground — RENEWABLE / FINITE
3. Natural gas in rock layers — RENEWABLE / FINITE
4. Wind over open plains — RENEWABLE / FINITE
5. Water flowing in a river — RENEWABLE / FINITE
6. Trees in a replanted forest — RENEWABLE / FINITE
7. Crude oil below ground — RENEWABLE / FINITE
8. Heat from inside Earth — RENEWABLE / FINITE

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new example of a renewable resource and one new example of a nonrenewable resource.

RENEWABLE _____

FINITE _____

CHALLENGE

Choose one resource from Part 1 and write two sentences explaining how being near it could create jobs in a region.

ANSWER KEY

Resource Detectives

GRADE 6 · 6.C.2.4

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Sunlight	**RENEWABLE**	The sun supplies more sunlight each day.
2	Coal underground	**FINITE**	Coal takes millions of years to form.
3	Natural gas in rock layers	**FINITE**	Natural gas forms far more slowly than people use it.
4	Wind over open plains	**RENEWABLE**	Natural processes continually produce wind.
5	Water flowing in a river	**RENEWABLE**	The water cycle can replenish river water, although a river's supply can be limited.
6	Trees in a replanted forest	**RENEWABLE**	New trees can grow to replace harvested trees within a human lifetime.
7	Crude oil below ground	**FINITE**	Crude oil takes millions of years to form.
8	Heat from inside Earth	**RENEWABLE**	Earth continually supplies geothermal heat.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **RENEWABLE**: Wheat grown each year.
- **FINITE**: Nonrenewable: Copper ore in the ground.

Challenge: A region near coal underground could open mines and hire workers. Trains could carry the coal to factories, creating more jobs.

Accept explanations that distinguish resources replenished within a human lifetime from those that form far more slowly. For the challenge, look for a reasonable link between a nearby resource and economic activity.