Power After Oil

Build an argument from evidence about national energy policies.

MWH.P.2.4.B "Construct arguments using a combination of evidence regarding solutions used by nations to address historical or contemporary economic issues."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one benefit of each country's policy, circle one cost or limit of each, and number two details you could combine to defend a policy choice.

Two Responses to Expensive Oil

1. In 1973, an oil embargo by several Arab oil exporters drove up prices and exposed a costly weakness: many European countries relied on imported oil. Factories paid more to run machines, and households faced higher heating bills. When oil prices surged again in 1979, governments had another reason to seek steadier energy supplies. France and Denmark faced the same broad economic problem but did not choose identical fixes. France invested heavily in nuclear power, while Denmark emphasized saving energy and developing several domestic sources. The important test was not just whether a plan reduced oil use, but what it cost and where it worked.

2. In 1974, France announced a major program to build nuclear power plants. Before the program, power stations burned substantial amounts of imported oil to make electricity. New reactors replaced much of that oil use in electricity generation, giving France a steadier source of power when oil prices changed. The change did not happen overnight: reactors took years to build and required large public investment. Nuclear plants also created long-term questions about radioactive waste and safety. Moreover, cars and trucks still needed liquid fuels. France's policy therefore reduced one important source of exposure to oil prices without ending its dependence on oil.

3. Denmark took a different path after the oil shocks. It promoted energy conservation, expanded district heating systems that send heat from shared plants to buildings, and supported wind power. Its 1979 Heat Supply Act helped towns plan shared heating networks, which can use fuel more efficiently than many separate boilers. During the 1980s, wind turbines began adding electricity without burning oil, although wind output varied with the weather. Building heating networks and turbines also cost money, and Denmark still used fossil fuels. These examples show why an argument about an energy policy needs evidence about both its benefits and its limits.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which country more directly reduced oil use in electricity generation? Defend your choice with evidence about both countries' approaches.

2. Make an argument that France's response was useful but incomplete. Combine two different details from the passage.

3. A critic says Denmark's plan had no economic costs. What evidence challenges that claim, and what evidence supports trying the plan anyway?

4. Which country used more than one approach to address expensive oil? Defend your answer with two distinct examples and one limitation.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

An oil-importing country in 1985 has crowded towns and a limited public budget. Write one paragraph recommending which of France's and Denmark's approaches it should adopt first, using evidence from both countries and explaining one drawback of your choice.

ANSWER KEY

Power After Oil

HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.P.2.4.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one benefit of each country's policy, circle one cost or limit of each, and number two details you could combine to defend a policy choice. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which country more directly reduced oil use in electricity generation? Defend your choice with evidence about both countries' approaches.	**France more directly reduced oil use in electricity generation because its reactors replaced much of the imported oil burned at power stations. Denmark added wind electricity, but the passage does not say it replaced as much oil in power generation.**
2	Make an argument that France's response was useful but incomplete. Combine two different details from the passage.	**Reactors replaced much of the oil used to generate electricity, but cars and trucks still needed liquid fuels.**
3	A critic says Denmark's plan had no economic costs. What evidence challenges that claim, and what evidence supports trying the plan anyway?	**Heating networks and turbines cost money to build. Shared heating networks can use fuel more efficiently than separate boilers.**
4	Which country used more than one approach to address expensive oil? Defend your answer with two distinct examples and one limitation.	**Denmark used several approaches, including energy conservation and shared heating networks. One limitation is that Denmark still used fossil fuels.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

For an oil-importing country with crowded towns and a limited budget, I would start with Denmark's conservation measures and shared heating systems. Denmark's heating networks can use fuel more efficiently than separate boilers, which could help crowded towns. France replaced much oil used to generate electricity with nuclear power, but its reactors required years and large public investment. Shared heating networks also cost money, so I would begin in the most crowded neighborhoods and expand only after checking costs.

Accept either national approach in the open task if the recommendation fits the country's circumstances and uses accurate evidence from both countries. The response should acknowledge a drawback of the recommended approach.