Earth's Resources – Teacher Notes

The major resources on Earth **are water, air, living things, rocks (including minerals and fossil fuels), soil and energy from the Sun**. Materials will move between different reservoirs in Earth at different rates for different periods of residence. Since the biosphere, atmosphere, lithosphere and hydrosphere are all inter-connected, each is of equal importance in maintaining sustainability.

List all the things that each resource can be used for, then number them in order of importance from 1 most important to 6 least important.

Resource	Uses	Importance
Water	Drinking. Washing. Bathing. Dissolving food for plants, cleaning, swimming, fish live in it, boats sail in it. Sink for carbon dioxide. Carries away broken rocks. Holds dissolved oxygen for marine creatures. Rain. Recreation	
Air	Breathing for animals. Carbon Dioxide for plants. Necessary for burning. Reduces Sun's harmful radiation. Wind power for energy creation and windmills.	
Living things	Food for ourselves and others. Breaks down rocks to form soil, work it and holds it in place to stop erosion. Medicines. Humans helping humans. Animals helping humans. Recreation.	
Rocks	Construction of houses, castles, walls & bridges. Habitats for plants and animals. Broken to form soil. Weathered to form clays. Minerals such as gold, silver & iron ore. Fossil fuels - Petroleum, oil & gas. Petro-chemicals and pharmaceuticals. Paints and plastics. Gems & jewels.	
Soil	Basis for food on land and in sea. Clays for bricks and china. Pigments. Rammed earth buildings.	
Energy from the Sun	Passive to heat and light. Active solar power Energy for photosynthesis leading to plant power and eventually fossil fuels	

Share your findings with others in your group and decide which resource (if any) is the most important. As a group, prepare a short statement on your findings and share that with the class.

We find that _____NONE_____ is the most important because all are

necessary for the survival of living things on Earth. Everything is affected by everything else