

Catch the Breeze

Wind can help fly a kite, power a sailboat or spread seeds. Around the world, wind has also become an increasingly popular and inexpensive source of energy that is converted into electricity.



Gareth Stevens

A row of windmills.

At the National Wind Technology Center in Colorado, scientists are working to advance wind-power technology. Wind is often considered an environmentally friendly source of power. Wind doesn't pollute the environment and is a renewable source of energy that can't be used up like fossil fuels, such as coal, oil, and natural gas.

Harnessing power from wind is nothing new. Some of the first windmills were used in Europe more than 5,000 years ago. Today, modern windmills, called turbines, resemble airplane propellers and are grouped together in wind farms.

Despite the benefits, wind power is far from perfect. Opponents of wind farms say the biggest problem is unreliability-when the wind doesn't blow, there is no power. They also argue that wind turbines can be an eyesore and threaten birds and other wildlife that fly into the blades.

As of 2011, 38 states have wind farms. Those turbines provide enough power for more than a million homes.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. The main idea of this passage is

- A. people have been using wind power for many years.
- B. wind power is environmentally friendly.
- C. wind power is an excellent resource.
- D. wind power is being used as a source of energy.

2. Which of the following does *not* support the main idea?

- A. Wind helps to fly kites and spread seeds.
- B. Wind power is a renewable resource.
- C. Scientists are trying to advance wind power technology.
- D. Right now, in the United States, wind power gives electricity to a million homes.

3. The author seems to

- A. give both sides of the argument.
- B. support the use of wind power.
- C. be trying to confuse the reader about wind power.
- D. be against the use of wind power.

4. Which of the following would *not* be a good title for this passage?

- A. Using Wind Power
- B. Harnessing the Wind
- C. A Big Risk To Birds
- D. Power Up

5. The author writes that "wind power is far from perfect." Is this a fact or opinion? Explain.

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Answers will vary. That statement is an opinion. Though most people would agree with that statement, it is an opinion because the idea of the perfection of wind power changes from person to person.