

Which energy for the future?

🕒 30min 🧑 10-16 SUSTAINABILITY • INTERDEPENDENCE

What do I want to find out?

What pupils know and think about the impacts of energy production and consumption. Explore how pupils make choices about their own futures, the future of others and that of the planet.

What do I need?

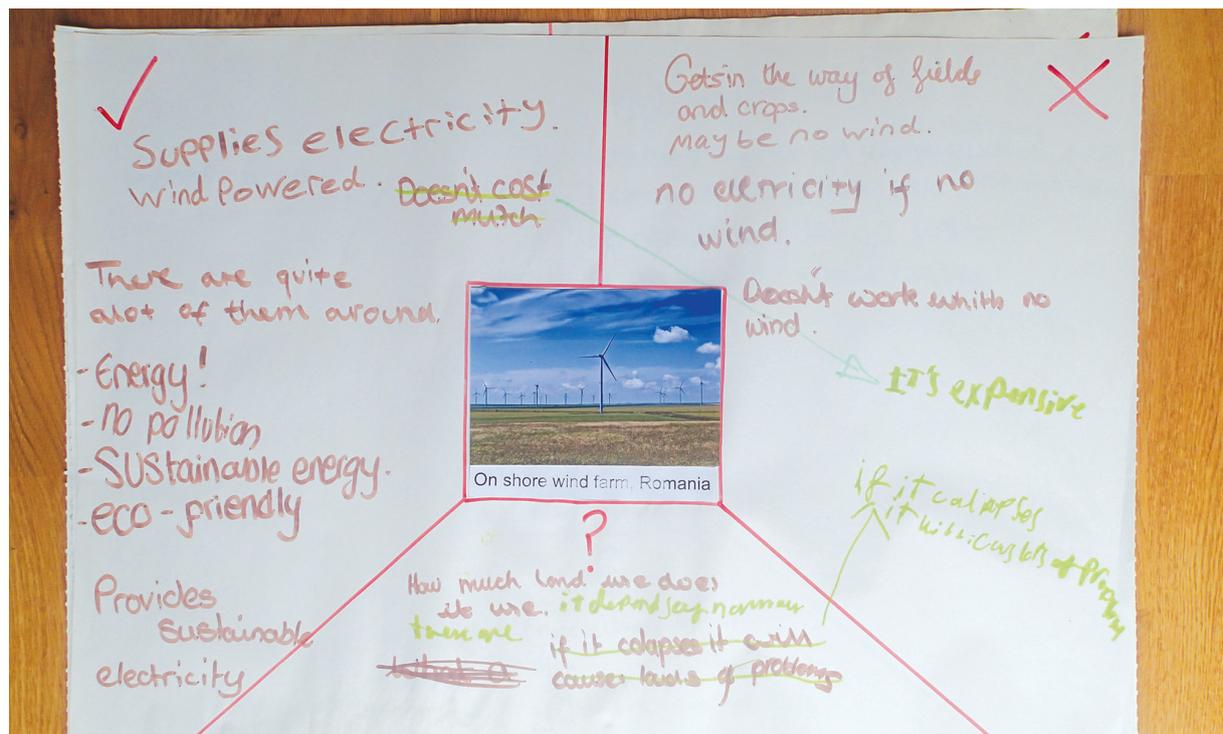
A selection of photographs representing different forms of energy production. Choose ones that are appropriate to the age of your pupils.



📄 Download recording templates and images for these activities from the website:
www.risc.org.uk/toolkit

What do I do?

- Attach each photo to the middle of a large sheet of flipchart paper.
- Divide the papers into pros (tick), cons (cross) and research questions (question mark).



- With pupils in small groups, ask them to move from one sheet to the next adding the pros and cons and questions they can think of for each type of energy, using pens of the same colour.
- Collect the flipcharts and retain them for the follow up audit.
- Note key points of discussion.
- Finally, ask the pupils *What if the school were to change its energy supply, which would you vote for?*

How do I analyse the results?

- Summarise the pupils' responses using the headings in the table below.

	pros	cons	questions
impact on the environment (esp climate change)			
impact on the people who live (or lived) there			
cost of the energy to the consumer			
reliability of the supply			
disposal of waste			
how safe it is			
efficiency			
use of finite resources			
security/vulnerability to sabotage or attack			
other			

- Look for a balance of pros and cons for all energy types, and critical thinking skills through the questions they pose.
- Note any recognition of the greater environmental and social impact of some energy productions over others. Are pupils thinking about what would benefit them, their wider society or the planet and its people?
- Note to what extent pupils are able to think of multiple perspectives on each energy type and whether they clearly make the connection between energy consumption and climate change.

How do I measure the change?

- Repeat the activity using the same flipcharts and allowing pupils to add to the pros, cons and questions in a different coloured pen, so changes can be tracked.
- Ask them to add answers to their and their classmates' research questions if they now know them.
- Through discussion, ask pupils to reflect on how far their understanding and attitudes have changed or been consolidated in the light of learning. What surprises have they found or have they changed their minds and can they identify why?
- Look for increasing awareness of the complexity of balancing needs in deciding future energy choices and critically evaluating different perspectives (eg industry, environmentalists, anti-poverty campaigners, local campaigns). You are also looking for a greater understanding of the finality of fossil fuels and the importance of renewable energy sources.
- Note whether pupils discuss any opportunities for action or further research. Are they interested in finding out what the school energy supplier is and how much they invest in renewable energy sources? Do they refer to any media reports or discussions on energy policy nationally or issues of climate change internationally?