

When gas burns, it makes energy. That energy is heat. Natural gas is mostly made of three gases: methane, ethane, and propane. People have learned to use natural gas in many ways. Natural gas is great.

We use natural gas every day. When you turn on hot water, natural gas probably heated it. Just think about all the things people need to heat! Natural gas can help do that. Farms use gas-made fertilizer. So the farmers may have grown your food with that fertilizer. People even use natural gas in cars. Natural gas really is the most important resource under the ground. It is very special.

We also use natural gas to make electricity. We use coal, wind, the sun, water, and uranium to make electricity, too. But natural gas is cleaner. It does not pollute as much. It is also cleaner for factories and cars.

Geologists are scientists who study what the earth is made of. The search for natural gas begins with geologists. They know a lot about rocks. They know which rocks usually have gas under them. They look for those rocks so that they can begin drilling. This is like a science project. The scientists start with a guess, a hypothesis. They think they will find gas under the ground. The next step is a search. The explorers use a drill to dig deep in the ground. If they find gas, then the explorers drill deep holes and use pipes to get the gas from under the ground.

Natural gas is found in many places. It is deep beneath the surface of the earth. It is also beneath the floors of the oceans. You won't get to it if you dig a little hole. It is far down under ground. You will not find it even with a very deep hole in Chicago. It is far under the ground in other parts of this country. It is also in other countries.

How does natural gas get to people who need it? A pipeline takes the gas to them. It travels hundreds of miles. A pipeline is a set of joined pipes. It has many parts. Each part is a pipe connected to other pipes. There are more than a million miles of natural gas pipelines in the United States today. Every 50 to 100 miles along those pipelines there are stations that push the gas along. They are called compressor stations. The gas travels about 35 miles an hour. It takes a lot of work to get natural gas to homes and businesses. But it is a great resource. So it's worth all that work.

*Directions: Choose the best answer for each question.*

1. Which of these sentences is an opinion?

- a. When gas burns, it makes energy.
- b. We use natural gas every day.
- c. It is far down under ground.
- d. Natural gas is great.

2. Which of these words shows that the writer is telling how she feels about natural gas.

- a. treasure
- b. resource
- c. under ground
- d. pipeline

3. What words in this sentence shows that it is an opinion? "Natural gas is the most important resource under the ground."

- a. natural gas
- b. most important
- c. under the ground
- d. really is

4. How do you know if a sentence tells a fact?

- a. It tells something that is real.
- b. It has numbers in it.
- c. It has a name in it.
- d. It is long.

5. Write your own answer to this question.

Write a sentence from this passage that is a fact.

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How do you know it is a fact?

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**TEACHER NOTES: Develop Students' Skills: Exercise Thinking**

These questions have not been validated, so decisions about student's achievement should not be made based on their responses. They are intended to exercise skills. Recommended activities include: students work in pairs to choose the best response; give students the questions without the responses so they generate their own answers; students make up additional questions; students make up questions like these for another passage.

**Answers:** You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.

Item	1	2	3	4
Answer	d	a	b	a

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

5. Students should identify a statement of fact.

## **SKILL: Contrast and Evaluate Fact and Opinion**

**Egypt** By Hannah Lantos

Center for Urban Education at DePaul University © 2008

**4<sup>th</sup> Grade Nonfiction**

Egypt is a country in Africa. It is at the north part of the continent. The north side of Egypt borders the Mediterranean. East of it is the Red Sea, Sudan to the south and Libya to the west. Other countries are on its other sides. It is in a very special location. It is a place that is close to Asia.

The capital of Egypt is Cairo. That is a really great city. It has been an important city for a long time. It is the largest city in Africa. If you visit that city, you will find a very modern place. You will see many cars. You will see many businesses, schools, and homes.

About 82 million people live in Egypt. They have a rich history. Long ago, Egyptians made this the greatest place in the world. They built pyramids. These very smart people invented ways to farm.

Long ago, Egyptians were wonderful leaders. They built great buildings. They set up schools. They invented a special way of writing. That was called hieroglyphics. They looked like pictures instead of alphabet letters.

You will still see hieroglyphics in Egypt today. But they are not used to read and write. They are a part of history. Egypt has a long history. It has been a leader for a long time. If you read Egypt's history, you will know how great this country has been.

Today most Egyptians live near the banks of the Nile River. This is where the only good land to farm is. It's a great place to live. There are other parts that are difficult to live—they are deserts. So not many people live there.

About half of Egypt's residents live in cities. Those big cities are in the area of the Nile River. If you go to Cairo, the biggest city, you will find millions of people.

Egypt has had some problems. There have been wars. There have been problems of poverty. Poor people in the cities need jobs. They need homes. Egypt is working to solve those problems.

Egypt is making its schools better. The school leaders are making plans to help students learn more. They are planning ways to help parents help their children learn more, too.

Egypt is a great country. It has a wonderful history. It will have a great future because people are working hard. They are working together to get more jobs and homes.

*Directions: Choose the best answer for each question.*

6. Which of these sentences is an opinion?

- a. Egypt is a country in Africa
- b. Other countries are on its other sides.
- c. It is in a very special location.
- d. You will see hieroglyphics there today.

7. Which of these sentences is a fact?

- a. It is the largest city in Africa.
- b. These very smart people invented ways to farm.
- c. Long ago, Egyptians were wonderful leaders.
- d. Long ago, they made this the greatest place in the world.

8. How do you know when a statement is a fact?

- a. It tells you information that is real.
- b. It uses adjectives.
- c. It tells you what someone thinks.
- d. It asks you a question.

9. Why do people write opinions?

- a. to help you know history
- b. to get you to believe something
- c. to answer a question
- d. to make sure the facts are correct

10. Write your own answer to this question.

Choose a sentence that tells a fact in this passage.

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How do you know it tells a fact?

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**Answers:** You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.

Item	6	7	8	9
Answer	c	a	a	b

Question 10 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

10. Students should identify a factual statement and explain that it tells something real.