

ELECTRICITY: Go eco-logical. Read and understand.

Has there ever been a power cut in your house? Suddenly you can't watch your favourite cartoons, or play with your DS. There is no lighting to finish your homework, and your parents can't cook dinner in the electric cooker. Your brother can't listen to his mp3, or surf the net. The food in your freezer begins to thaw, and you can't wash your clothes in the washing machine. Your parent's mobile phone can't be charged, so it dies. Not a pretty prospect!

Yes, electricity is an extremely useful form of energy. It can give us light, heat, and motion. The lamp is an example of light electricity, the toaster is an example of heat electricity, and an electric fan is an example of motion electricity.

But is electricity clean energy or does it pollute the planet? When we use the car, we can see and smell the pollution, but when we turn on the lights, nothing bad seems to happen. This, however, does not mean that electricity is not polluting. Here is why.

The mains electricity that reaches your home, comes from a power plant. This is the place where electricity is produced. Most electricity is generated by burning coal, and by running nuclear plants. Coal is a fossil fuel, and it's non-renewable. Nuclear energy produces radioactive waste, which is very dangerous and cannot be recycled. Both energies pollute. So, every time you turn on the lights, you are creating a bit of pollution.

Now, are there any solutions to the problem?

Governments around the world are making an effort to promote other sources of energy, such as solar power and wind power. Hydro (water) energy is used to produce electricity whenever possible. Spain is a leading country in the use of wind power to generate electricity. Don Quijote would be only too happy to confront the new giants!

At home, there is also a number of things we can do to save on electricity. You can use fluorescent lights instead of regular light bulbs, which use less electricity to do the same job. You can make sure your heating is off before you leave the house, and use a ceiling fan instead of air conditioning in summer. Dry your clothes in the clothesline or laundry rack instead of using a drier, and if your fridge is older than 2001, it will be using up a lot more electricity than a new one.

All these things will not only help the environment, but also your pocket, since your electrical bill will be significantly reduced!

ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS

1. Name some household appliances that use electricity.

2. How is most electricity generated?

3. What are some alternative energies to produce electricity?

4. What is the problem with nuclear energy?

5. Name some ways in which you can save electricity at home.
