



This passage is about ways to conserve electricity. Read the passage. Then answer the questions that follow.

Zap the Volts

Our homes have many different electrical products in them. We use them, but often we don't use them efficiently. How can we be more energy efficient? We can *change* the ways we use electricity. We can also *choose* to buy products that use electricity efficiently.

First, the *changes*. Think about the appliances you might use in your house. There might be a dishwasher, washing machine, refrigerator, and water heater. You can change the way you use them to save electricity. Make sure the dishwasher is full when you run it. Select the "air dry" option on the machine. That way you won't use electricity to create hot air to dry the dishes. They will dry naturally. When you wash clothes, select the "warm" or "cold" water temperature setting.

Did you know that your refrigerator accounts for about 20% of the electricity use in your house? You can save electricity if you set the refrigerator temperature to 37° Fahrenheit and the freezer to 3°F. Check to see if your refrigerator has an "energy saver" switch. If it does, turn on the switch. Many homes have a large tank of water that is kept hot all the time. This gives you hot water when you need it to wash dishes, clothes, or people. You can save electricity if you keep the water heater temperature set at 120°F. You can also wrap insulation around the water heater to keep the heat in. These are a few changes you can make in how you use electricity.



What about the *choices* you can make to save electricity? A special symbol can help you make decisions about what to buy. It's the ENERGY STAR logo. If the ENERGY STAR is on a product, it means the product saves energy. You'll find the ENERGY STAR on many products that use electricity. One place you'll see the ENERGY STAR is on compact fluorescent light bulbs. These light bulbs use 75% less electricity than regular light bulbs do. They also last 8 to 12 times longer than a regular light bulb. Big appliances like stoves and refrigerators may have the ENERGY STAR label, too. You'll also find the ENERGY STAR on some computers, TVs, and DVD players. So choose carefully when you buy products that use electricity.

Why is it so important to save electricity? Generating electricity uses natural resources like coal. More people in the world need electricity. The demand for electricity will double in the next 20 years. If you use less electricity, you will help save natural resources. You will also save money. So, change what you can, and choose wisely!



Understanding the Story

Here are some questions about the passage that you just read. Read each one and then fill in the circle beside the best answer. If you're not sure, go back and look at the passage again.

1. What setting on your dishwasher will save electricity?

- (A) air dry
- (B) high heat
- (C) hot rinse
- (D) heat dry

Factual

2. At what temperature should you set your refrigerator to save energy?

- (A) 3°F
- (B) 20°F
- (C) 37°F
- (D) 120°F

Factual

3. What can you do to your hot water heater to save electricity?

- (A) Keep it above 130°F all the time.
- (B) Keep it in an open area in the garage.
- (C) Put it in the basement of your house.
- (D) Wrap it in insulation.

Factual

4. Why is it a good idea to buy products with the ENERGY STAR label on them?

- (A) It means they look good.
- (B) It means a movie star has said they were good.
- (C) It means they save energy.
- (D) It means they are made by the Star Electric Company.

Critical Reasoning

5. Why do people use hot water heaters?

- (A) They save energy.
- (B) They will have hot water when they need it.
- (C) They don't have to buy water from the water company.
- (D) They have a way to store water for a long time.

Inference

6. How much longer do compact fluorescent bulbs last than regular light bulbs?

- (A) 2 to 4 times as long
- (B) 8 to 12 times as long
- (C) 20 times as long
- (D) 30 to 40 times as long

Inference

7. How much electricity will people in the world need in 20 years?

- (A) 2 times as much as we use now
- (B) 5 times as much as we use now
- (C) 10 times as much as we use now
- (D) 20 times as much as we use now

Inference

8. Which of these products would probably not have an ENERGY STAR label?

- (A) television set
- (B) stove
- (C) refrigerator
- (D) car

Critical Reasoning

9. Why is it good for your family to use less electricity?

- (A) You will save money and natural resources.
- (B) You will have fun using candles instead of lights.
- (C) You will have more family time.
- (D) You will spend more time outdoors.

Factual

10. If you want to save electricity, what is the best temperature to set your water heater?

- (A) 37°F
- (B) 75°F
- (C) 120°F
- (D) 200°F

Factual



Summing Up



In this passage, you learned how you can save energy by changing the way you do things and by making good choices about what you buy. Use the information you learned from the passage to complete the chart below. Part of the information is already written for you.



Saving Electricity

Changes	Choices
Use the “air dry” setting on the dishwasher	



Write About It

Sometimes it is easy to organize information into small chunks. It helps, too, to have pictures to go with your information. Use the information from the chart on page 17 to create several pictures that show how to save electricity. Put information about the changes and choices you can make to save electricity in captions under the pictures.



Change: _____



Change: _____



Change: _____



Change: _____



Change: _____
