

## **“Earth Materials: Needs Over Wants”**

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Throughout time, humankind has utilized Earth materials in various ways- such as architecture, agriculture, and transportation. Eventually, our use of resources has led to discussion over the processing of raw materials. From this, society has given rise to an important question: how do we use the materials and resources available to us?

Because of the myriad ways in which Earth materials can impact the future, it is crucial to promote practices and policies which draw out the efficient usage of materials while also maintaining ethical standards. Since Earth materials are naturally occurring resources- such as rocks, water, or oil- they can be processed to create goods such as clothes, cars, food, and buildings that affect our communities. However, these Earth materials will dwindle over time.

As Pete Seeger once said, “If it can’t be reduced, reused, repaired, rebuilt, refurbished, refinished, resold, recycled, or composted, then it should be restricted, designed or removed from production.” This significant quote captures a direct solution concerning the processing of Earth materials. Many of the goods made through Earth materials should be prioritized through policies based on their significance to us for preserving community values. For example, although technology is more practical and reusable than jewelry, most gold is used for jewelry. Also, fossil fuels are versatile and used in several ways, such as transportation and heating. However, they release harmful greenhouse gases, which leads to global warming and a plethora of other issues. By emphasizing practical value, we can encourage practices that allow us to bring out the most from Earth materials.

The first step to developing practices and policies is to look at the practical uses of Earth materials over irrelevant wants we may have. If we carelessly use Earth materials, unprecedented consequences can adversely affect our everyday lives.