

Eighth Grade Physical Science Energy Unit Vocabulary

1. Energy – the ability to cause change; the ability to do work
2. Potential Energy – stored energy; (can be many forms – gravitational, elastic, chemical, electrical, etc.)
3. Kinetic energy – energy of motion, energy doing something, energy in action
4. Electrical energy – energy of flowing electrons, stored by charge differences
5. Chemical energy – energy stored in chemical bonds and released when the bonds are broken
6. Radiant energy – energy carried by an electromagnetic wave (light, x-ray, microwave, ultraviolet, etc.); does not need matter to transfer, can travel through space
7. Thermal energy – heat energy; energy of the particles in an object; energy of moving, vibrating particles
8. Mechanical energy – energy of a moving object
9. Law of Conservation of Energy – energy cannot be created or destroyed, it can only be changed from one form to another
10. Nuclear energy – energy stored in atomic nuclei; can be released by fission or fusion (splitting or combining nuclei).