


Module 5: Minerals

Topic 3 Content: Ore Minerals Notes

Ore Minerals



Ores are mined so that certain minerals within the ore can be extracted and sold for a profit. Sulfur is a mineral that is mined in its native state, or it can be mined in several different ores. It is used in the manufacturing of gun powder, matches, and explosives. The valuable element is also used to create rubber and dyes. Sulfur is needed in the manufacturing of paper, insecticides, and

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Pyrite is a minor ore of both sulfur and iron. This mineral has also been used as a substitute for gold in inexpensive jewelry. As you can see from the image, pyrite mimics the appearance of gold. This characteristic earns pyrite the nickname "fools gold."

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Magnetite is known for its magnetic properties. This mineral also serves as an important ore for iron. This mineral is also very popular for collectors of minerals.

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Hematite is the main ore for iron. In the United States, an estimated 90% of all iron is mined from hematite. This mineral is very popular for collectors as it exhibits magnetic properties. Hematite is also sometimes used in the production of jewelry.

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Did you think that lead was actually still used in your pencil? Since exposure to lead is known to cause cancer, much of the mined graphite is used as the “lead” in pencil filings. This is not graphite’s main use. Graphite is an excellent lubricant for many objects such as wheel bearings. Graphite also conducts electricity and is used in electronics.

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Galena is mined as an ore of both silver and lead. Galena is known to sometimes contain as much as 20-25% silver. Galena is mined as the main source of lead.

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