

Ecotricity founder to grow diamonds 'made entirely from the sky'

Level 1 • Pre-intermediate / Intermediate

1 Warmer

Which of these 'green' ideas do you think is the most effective? Rank them in order from 1 (most effective) to 6 (least effective).

- | | |
|----------|--------------------------|
| 1. _____ | a. electric cars |
| 2. _____ | b. wind farms |
| 3. _____ | c. a vegan diet |
| 4. _____ | d. solar energy |
| 5. _____ | e. free public transport |
| 6. _____ | f. planting more trees |

2 Key words

Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text. The paragraph numbers will help you.

mine environmentalist facility atmosphere identical

1. An _____ is someone who wants to protect the environment. (para 1)
2. If you _____ for diamonds, you dig a large hole or tunnel in the ground to find them and take them out. (para 1)
3. A _____ is an area or building used for a particular purpose. (para 1)
4. The _____ is the air around the Earth. (para 2)
5. If two or more things are _____, they are exactly the same. (para 2)

electrolysis impact molecule split carat

6. An _____ is the effect that something has. (para 2)
7. A _____ is a unit for measuring the weight of diamonds and other jewels. (para 5)
8. If you _____ something, you divide it into smaller parts. (para 8)
9. A _____ is the smallest part of an element or compound that can exist independently. (para 8)
10. _____ is the process of sending electricity through liquid in order to make chemical changes. (para 8)

3 Find the information

Find the following information in the text as quickly as possible.

1. What is the main business of Ecotricity?
2. What is the name of Vince's new business?
3. How much rock and earth is moved to produce a one-carat diamond?
4. How much water does this process use?
5. How many carats of diamonds will the sky mining facility produce each month?
6. What is the temperature inside the sealed box?

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Jillian Ambrose

30 October, 2020

- 1 A British multi-millionaire and environmentalist has a plan to grow thousands of carbon-negative diamonds in a laboratory every year. Dale Vince, who started the green-energy supplier Ecotricity, says the company has developed the world's only diamonds made from carbon, water and energy at a "sky mining facility".
- 2 His company makes the diamonds using carbon dioxide taken directly from the atmosphere. The diamonds are chemically identical to diamonds mined from the earth. The result is the "world's first zero-impact diamond", according to Vince. They could even help to clean the air by removing carbon dioxide directly from the atmosphere.
- 3 Vince says the traditional diamond-mining industry causes enormous damage to the environment. "Making diamonds from nothing more than the sky, from the air we breathe, is a magical idea," said Vince. "We don't need to mine the earth to have diamonds; we can mine the sky."
- 4 Vince said he has not yet decided on the price of the environmentally friendly diamonds.
- 5 Diamonds grown in laboratories are becoming more popular because people are becoming more aware of the environmental, social and economic impact of the mining industry. There have been violent wars in regions that mine diamonds. Research has also shown that, to produce a one-carat diamond, you have to move 1,000 tonnes of rock and earth, use 3,890 litres of water and create more than 108kg of carbon dioxide.
- 6 Vince expects his new business, Sky Diamonds, will produce 200 carats of carbon-negative diamonds every month. He also said the laboratory could increase production to create 1,000 a month within the next year. He said that Sky Diamonds would use a special process to create the diamonds.
- 7 This process normally means putting a "diamond seed" inside a box. This is then heated to 800 degrees Celsius and filled with methane gas. The carbon elements in the gas will gradually connect with the "seed" and create a diamond that is identical to a stone that has taken billions of years to grow underground.
- 8 Vince has promised to take the carbon dioxide directly from the air and will produce hydrogen by splitting rainwater molecules using a green electrolysis machine.

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4 Comprehension check

Match the beginnings and endings to make statements about the text.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Dale Vince's company will use natural materials ... | a. ... the environmental impact of mining. |
| 2. These diamonds will be chemically ... | b. ... are becoming more popular. |
| 3. Diamonds that are grown in laboratories ... | c. ... for natural diamonds to grow underground. |
| 4. People are beginning to understand ... | d. ... increase production to 1,000 carats a month. |
| 5. Dale Vince's facility could ... | e. ... such as air and water to make diamonds. |
| 6. It takes billions of years ... | f. ... identical to diamonds mined from the earth. |

5 Two-word phrases

Match the words in the left-hand column with the words in the right-hand column to make phrases from the text.

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. environmentally | a. dioxide |
| 2. multi- | b. industry |
| 3. carbon | c. friendly |
| 4. methane | d. energy |
| 5. mining | e. gas |
| 6. green | f. millionaire |

6 Word-building

Complete the table using words from the text.

	noun	adjective
1.	tradition	
2.	environment	
3.	economy	
4.	magic	
5.	violence	
6.	friend	

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7 Word stress

Divide these words from the text into two groups according to their word stress.

carbon
increase (v)

produce (v)
damage

machine
result

region
impact (n)

research
British

A o o	B o o

8 Discussion

Is Dale Vince's plan to create diamonds using carbon and water a good idea? Why? Why not?