

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Lighting Up the World

## by Karen Fanning

### In the Dark



Imagine life without electricity. You have no lights. You have no television. You have no computer, refrigerator, or stereo! It may sound like a bad dream to you. But it's a fact of life for nearly two billion people around the world.

Those left in the dark generally live in developing countries. Often, they live in poor, rural areas, far from big cities. Running power lines to these remote villages is too expensive. They could use oil generators to make electricity, but most of these villagers can't afford them.

Without electricity, things you take for granted are just a distant dream. And it's not just a question of watching TV or listening to some good CDs. Without power, people can't keep food from spoiling. Growing food is a problem, too. Farming requires power in all kinds of different ways. Often, people without electricity have no access to clean water. That's because electric pumps are needed to raise water from the wells.

### The Renewable Solution



One company that makes environmentally friendly products thinks they have a solution. They are developing innovative ways to bring renewable energy to places that are "in the dark." Renewable energy comes from the sun, wind, and water. It's very different from energy sources such as gas and oil, which are burned to create electricity. Unlike gas and oil, renewable energy never runs out, and there's no costly fuel to keep buying!

This energy solution doesn't require expensive power lines or power plants. Instead, power is generated locally, through windmills, solar panels, and batteries. The U.S. Department of Energy thinks that renewable energy use will grow rapidly in developing countries. They predict an increase of nearly 60 percent by the year 2015.

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**Resource Links**

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**SAM Keywords:** Problem



## Lighting Up the World *(Continued)*

### A Village in India



So how is renewable energy changing people's lives? One good example is the tiny village of Mandonigudam, India. In this village, farmers couldn't afford pesticides. Each year, they lost half their crops to hungry insects. Then, the environmental product company loaned the villagers money for a renewable energy project. The farmers bought inexpensive solar-powered lanterns that killed the bugs. Today, the farmers' crops are thriving without the use of dangerous and expensive chemicals. And, of course, the energy is renewable. As long as the sun keeps coming up, the lanterns will continue to work.

### The Wonders of Windmills

Children in Timor, Indonesia, once spent several hours a day hauling buckets of water from the village well so that their families could farm, wash, and cook. Now, pumps do the work, and children go to schools—all powered by windmills. The windmills also provide electricity to nearby farms and homes. While the community might have to renovate them every few years, they require no gas or oil.

With the help of low-cost renewable energy sources, some of the world's poorest villages now have a renewed sense of hope. These neophytes to the electric world are looking forward to a bright future.

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#### Resource Links

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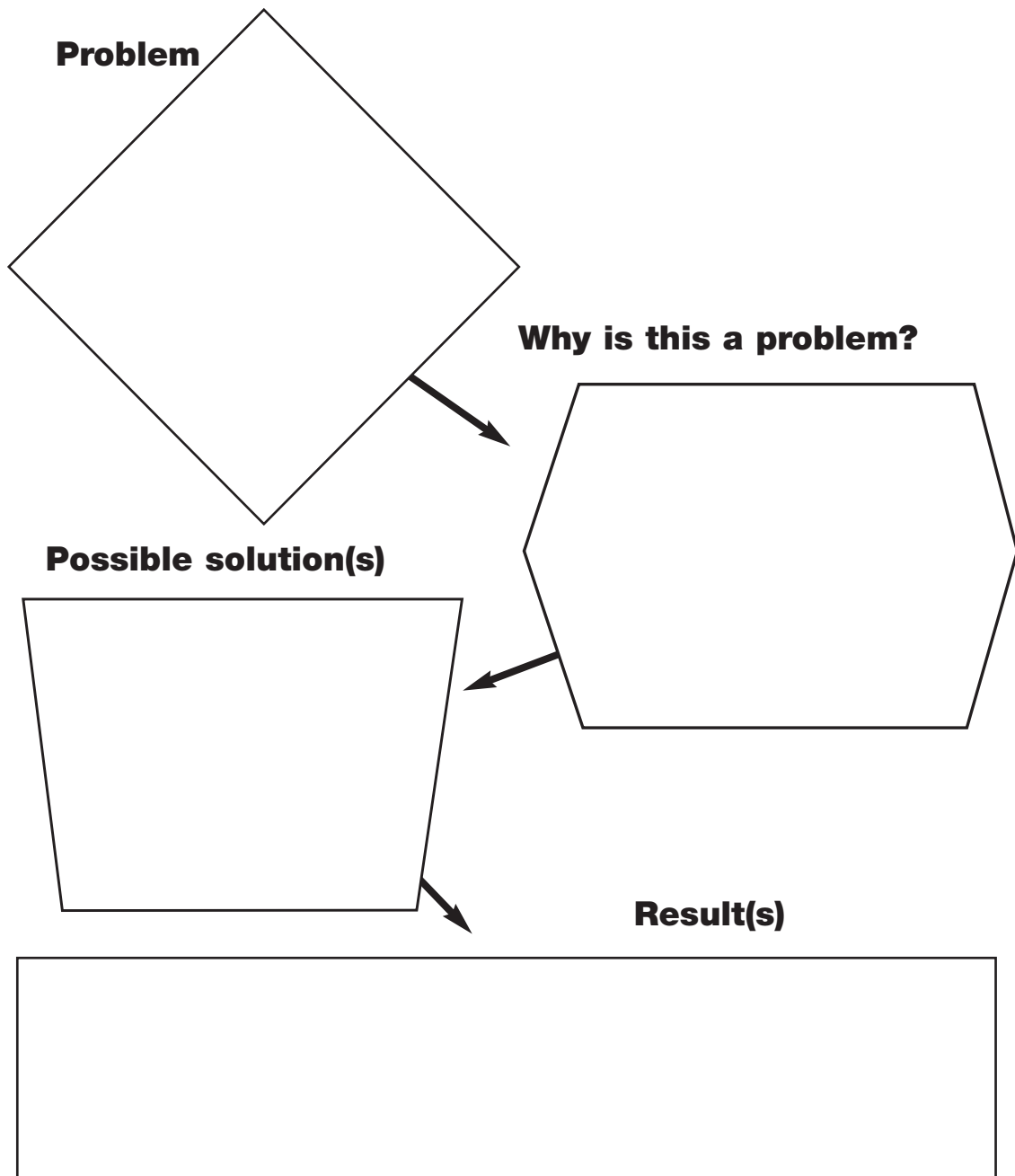


# Problem and Solution

Sometimes an article is organized into sets of **problems** and **solutions**. Identifying these sets can help you to understand what you read.

Use this chart to help you find problems and solutions.

**Passage:** \_\_\_\_\_



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**Resource Links**

**1** RDI Book 1: p. 427  
**SAM** Keywords: Problem

