

Name _____

Precious Pieces of Earth: The Significance of Minerals in Our Planet's Composition

Short Answer Key

1. Three common silicate minerals are quartz (used in glass and electronics), feldspar (used in ceramics and glass), and mica (used in cosmetics and insulation). They are significant because they make up a significant portion of Earth's crust and have various industrial applications.
2. Minerals contribute to mountain formation through tectonic processes like plate collision and uplift. Mountains are important because they affect climate, provide habitats for diverse ecosystems, and are essential for the water cycle.
3. Nutrient minerals like calcium and potassium are essential for plant growth because they play critical roles in processes like photosynthesis, cell division, and nutrient transport within plants.
4. An example of a valuable resource obtained from mining minerals is iron ore. It is used to produce steel, which is used in construction, transportation, and manufacturing.
5. Beyond their aesthetic value, gemstones have cultural and symbolic significance. They are often used in jewelry to mark special occasions and are believed to possess various healing and spiritual properties.

