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Sommario/riassunto

Although it is a rock rather than a mineral (the building blocks of rocks), coal is often considered to be a mineral resource. Coal has been mined since ancient Roman times, but it has become a major energy source only since the Industrial Revolution. It currently provides 22 percent of the world's energy, and is used to generate approximately 40 percent of electricity world-wide. Coal generates more than half of all electricity in the United States. Coal is also an important ingredient

in the creation of methanol which turns up in such items as plywood (binding resin) and plastic bottles (acetic acid). Reserves are widely distributed throughout the globe, although the United States, Russia, China, and India account for more than half of the world's recoverable coal reserves. This book presents new research in the field.