MAN-MADE MATERIALS

Today, many of our major industries are involved in the production of man-made materials. Look around and you will see numerous structures made from these. Steel, plastic and glass are all man-made materials that are manufactured from natural resources. Steel is made from iron, plastic is made from chemicals found in oil and glass is mostly made from sand.

Man-made materials have been developed over the years because they have special properties suited for a particular job. Advances in technology have meant that today, in some cases, man-made materials are also easier and cheaper to manufacture.

PLASTICS

Plastics are usually made from chemicals which come from oil. Plastics are cheap, easy to make, light and they do not rust or rot. For these reasons plastics are often used instead of metal, wood or glass. The properties of plastics vary according to their chemical structure. Some plastic structures, like these bags (left), are flexible. Others are rigid, transparent or strong.