

What is a pencil made of?

1. Most pencils are made of cedar wood. Cedar can be found by the Great Lakes.
2. Pencil lead is made from a form of carbon called graphite. Graphite cannot be found easily in the U.S. It is mainly imported from Sri Lanka or parts of Canada.
3. This graphite is then mixed with wax and clay. This wax is found mainly in Mexico, while the clay is found in the Southern parts of the U.S.
4. Ferrule, which holds the eraser to the wood, is made up of zinc and copper. Zinc is found mainly in Canada, while copper is found mainly in Chile.
5. The eraser is composed of rubber, which comes from a rubber tree, seed oil, and pumice. Rubber trees are most abundant in the Democratic Republic of Congo in Central Africa. Seed oil is found in Indonesia and pumice is found in Italy.
6. The yellow color comes from a glossy lacquer made up of castor oil. Castor oil comes from seeds of the castor plant. This can be found in India.
7. Finally, the black lettering found on most pencils is made of carbon black. This can be found in Texas.

Given that some of the resources needed to make a pencil is not easily accessed in the U.S., the students should be advised that they have to think about transporting these goods to their pencil factory. They can use land, air, or water transportation methods.

