



JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER: THE GROWTH OF THE OIL INDUSTRY



Crude Oil
Oil found under the earth's surface
(there is a limited amount)

In modern times, oil is used in many products that we use every day. It is needed for gasoline, heating oil, perfumes, fertilizers, candle wax, vitamins, detergents, sneakers, asphalt, insecticides, pen ink, and much more. For this reason, oil is an extremely important part of our economy today.

In the late 1800s, **John D. Rockefeller** made a fortune by turning oil into **kerosene**, a fuel that was used in lamps to light people's homes. In a time before electric lighting, kerosene lamps were a huge improvement over candles and other forms of light that had been used earlier. Rockefeller gained much of his wealth by controlling oil **refineries** across the country. At Rockefeller's refineries, crude oil would be turned into kerosene and then sold to the American public at affordable prices. Kerosene lighting greatly transformed homes and businesses across the country.

1. What positive effects do you think kerosene lighting had on homes and businesses in the United States?

2. Why do you think the mass production of oil (or any product) leads to lower prices for the consumer?

3. What negative consequences do you think came about because of the oil industry?

THE LIFE AND CAREER OF JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER

John D. Rockefeller, a business giant, came from humble beginnings. Rockefeller was the son of a small merchant in New York. At age 23, he invested in an oil refinery. He used the profits to buy other oil companies. He wanted to control all parts of his oil business, so he built his own wagons and oil barrels. He began to build pipelines and made deals with railroads to get special rates for shipping his oil. His deals made it harder for other refineries to get railroad cars and send their products to market. That was just what he wanted. He told rivals that he would buy their oil and handle it for them. Rockefeller was a brilliant entrepreneur. He also did not hesitate to crush competitors, slashing prices to drive rivals out of business.

In 1882, Rockefeller ended competition in the oil industry by forming the **Standard Oil Trust**, where Rockefeller gained control of over 90% of the oil refining in the country! A **trust** is a group of corporations run by a single board of directors. This allowed Standard Oil to have a **monopoly** – almost total control – over the oil industry, eliminating competition. Other industries followed Rockefeller's lead. By 1900, trusts dominated many of the nation's key industries.

4. According to the reading, what steps did Rockefeller take in order to be a successful entrepreneur?

CHOOSE ONE DOCUMENT TO ANALYZE USING O.S.A.P....

DOCUMENT #1



DOCUMENT #2



O

What is the Occasion?

What is the **historical context**?
(background info. / general timeframe /
what's happening in history that sets the
scene for this)

S

Who is the Speaker?

- What can you tell or what do you know about the speaker that helps you understand the point of view expressed (gender, age, social class, occupation, education, etc.)?
What format does the speaker use to convey his or her message (is this a political cartoon, speech, etc.)?

A

Who is the Audience?

- It may be one person or a specific group. - Who does the speaker want to address their message to?
- Does the speaker mention a specific audience? If so, who is it?

P

What is the Purpose?

- What is the purpose behind the text/pic- why did the author write it/draw it?
- What was the author's message/main idea?