

Name: _____

The Men Who Built America Episode 2: “Oil Strike” – John D. Rockefeller

1. What was the problem with Rockefeller’s deal with Cornelius Vanderbilt?
2. John D. Rockefeller had helped support his family because of his troubled father. What was the occupation of William A. Rockefeller, John’s father?
3. Rockefeller didn’t want to take the risk from finding oil wells. He avoided it by taking over another step in the process. What was that step?
4. According to Mr. Trump, “The people that really succeed in life are those who don’t _____.”
5. Why did Rockefeller choose the name “Standard Oil?”
6. What did Rockefeller do with the profits from his deal with both major railroads?
7. Rockefeller created America’s first monopoly. Vanderbilt realized that Rockefeller was too powerful and decided to “take him down.” How did Vanderbilt try to accomplish this?
8. How did Rockefeller attempt to solve the problem created by Vanderbilt?
9. Mark Cuban said, “Wherever there’s change, wherever there’s uncertainty, there’s opportunity.” How did Rockefeller demonstrate this principle?
10. How did Rockefeller’s actions affect the railroads?
11. Once the railroad stock crashed, they had to close the stock market. What did this “bubble burst” mean for the average American?
12. Most Americans were really struggling, but Rockefeller was still doing quite well – even buying up struggling companies. How did Rockefeller view himself here?
13. Scott realized he needed to diversify or lose. What did he begin doing?
14. Scott ran the only railroad between Pittsburgh and New York – and therefore the only way for Rockefeller to transport his oil. What did Rockefeller do about this problem, and what was the result?
15. Rockefeller’s great-grandson gives him credit for being such a good businessman. For what does his great-grandson NOT give him credit?

After Watching:

16. Rockefeller shows a win-at-all-costs attitude. How did this attitude help him? What problems might come from it?

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Episode 3: "A Rivalry is Born" – Andrew Carnegie

1. Carnegie met Tom Scott, his mentor, when young Andrew started working at age 12. Why did he start working so young?
2. There was one thing especially difficult about westward expansion – and Scott challenged Carnegie to solve the problem for his business. What was that problem?
3. Why did Carnegie begin working with steel?
4. What improvement did Bessemer make to the manufacture of steel?
5. What problems did Carnegie run into with his bridge?
6. According to advertising mogul Donny Deutsch, the Gilded Age entrepreneurs found a great motivator in their own _____.
7. Once the bridge was completed, the people of St. Louis were afraid to use it – they had never seen a steel bridge. How did Carnegie solve this problem?
8. When Carnegie built his steel mill, what was wrong with his timing?
9. With the railroad market destroyed, Carnegie was in bad straits. What industry did he turn to next?
10. As far as Carnegie is concerned, one man drove Tom Scott to his grave. Who did Carnegie blame?
11. The partnership between Carnegie and Henry Frick worked very well. According to Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban, what was good about it?
12. Frick built the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club around the private lake held back by the South Fork dam. Why did Frick decide to lower the dam, even though it made it weaker?
13. Why did the people of Johnstown ignore the warning to evacuate?

After watching:

14. How was Carnegie different than Vanderbilt or Rockefeller?
15. How do you think Carnegie will react to the South Fork dam disaster?