



John D. Rockefeller Lesson Plan

How do business leaders like John D. Rockefeller shape industries, build economic power, and influence society through innovation and philanthropy?

Students will understand how John D. Rockefeller's business strategies, innovations, and philanthropy shaped the oil industry and had a lasting impact on American society.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify key life events of John D. Rockefeller.
- Explain how Rockefeller revolutionized the oil industry and developed Standard Oil into a major monopoly.
- Analyze Rockefeller's business strategies and the impact of Standard Oil on American industry.
- Evaluate Rockefeller's legacy as a philanthropist and his contributions to education, medicine, and scientific research.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Monopoly:** Exclusive control of a commodity or service, limiting competition.
- **Philanthropy:** The desire to promote the welfare of others, often through charitable donations.
- **Trust:** A group of businesses that merge to control an industry, limiting competition.
- **Rebate:** A partial refund to someone who has paid too much money for something.
- **Venture:** A business project that involves risk but hopes for future gain.

Educational Standards: CCRA.R.7, CCRA.W.2, CCRA.W.4, CCRA.W.9, CCRA.L.1, CCRA.L.2, CCRA.L.4, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2

Academic Subject Areas: Biography, Investors, Historical Figures

What You'll Need

- Video: *Guess or Mess: John D. Rockefeller* (Watch [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Guess or Mess: John D. Rockefeller* (Click [Here](#))
- PragerU Kids *Builders of America* biographical book: *John D. Rockefeller* (Download [Here](#))
- Large paper or poster board for each group, along with markers

Lesson Plan: Read and Complete (60 minutes)

Introduction to John D. Rockefeller (5 minutes):

1. Begin with a brief discussion about business leaders who changed industries. Ask students if they know anyone who influenced an entire industry through innovation.



2. Display the *John D. Rockefeller* digital book using an electronic device. Briefly introduce Rockefeller's role in developing Standard Oil and how he shaped the oil industry. Show images from the digital book to provide a visual overview of his life and achievements.

Rockefeller's Journey: Group Activity (25 minutes):

1. As a class, read the "Meet John D. Rockefeller" section on page 1 of the digital book. The teacher should lead the reading to model fluent reading and set the tone for the lesson.
2. Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a different section of the digital book to explore:
 - Group 1: Early Life (page 2)
 - Group 2: Considerable Calculations, Westward and Beyond (page 3)
 - Group 3: A Practical Education, Independence (page 4)
 - Group 4: Black Gold, Religious Life and Family (page 5)
 - Group 5: Standard Oil Company, First U.S. Trust Company (page 6)
3. Allow time for each group to read their section aloud and discuss the key points.
4. Provide large paper or poster boards and markers for each group. Have them write down important facts, quotes, and key ideas from their assigned section.
5. Allow each group 1-2 minutes to present their findings to the class, followed by a brief discussion.

Worksheet Workshop (15 minutes):

1. Distribute individual worksheets to students and explain how to complete them.
 - **Timeline:** Plot key dates and events from the digital book. Suggestions:
 - 1839: Birth of John D. Rockefeller
 - 1870: Standard Oil Company founded
 - 1882: Standard Oil Trust established
 - 1911: Standard Oil broken up due to antitrust laws
 - 1937: Death of John D. Rockefeller
 - **Innovator's Gears:** In this section, students will identify a business or industry problem, brainstorm solutions, and then draw an invention or solution that could solve the problem. They can also label their invention and explain how it works.
 - **Vocabulary Builder:** Have students choose a word from the glossary on page 9 and use it in a sentence that shows their understanding of its meaning.
 - **Multiple Choice:** Students can complete the multiple-choice section, which corresponds to the *Guess or Mess* episode about John D. Rockefeller.

Reflection Round-Up (10 minutes):

1. Summarize key points about John D. Rockefeller's life, his role in developing the oil industry, and his contributions to philanthropy.
2. **Think-Pair-Share:** Ask students to recall one fact about Rockefeller and discuss its significance with a partner.

3. Have students answer one of the following reflection questions on a sticky note or index card:
 - What did you find most interesting about John D. Rockefeller?
 - How did Rockefeller's business strategies impact the oil industry and the American economy?
4. If time allows, have students complete the "Attention to Detail" activity on page 7, and the Crossword Puzzle and "Detect the Difference" activities on page 8.

Don't have time for a full lesson? Quick Activity (30 minutes)

Read the *John D. Rockefeller* book together as a class, with students taking turns reading aloud. Then, watch the *Guess or Mess* video and play along with the trivia questions.