Texas History for Teachers

Oil Transforms Texas *Grade Level*

Unit 11: Age of Oil

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

Directions: Use the notes in the slideshow (also provided below) to answer the questions about the importance of oil in Texas.

Oil in Texas Before 1900

- For hundreds of years, **American Indian tribes** used petroleum that seeped through the soil for medicinal purposes.
- **Spanish explorers** used oil to waterproof their boats and ships.
- In the 1800s, most oil drilling in the U.S. took place in eastern states like **Pennsylvania**.
- **1896:** Texas Produced 1,000 barrels of oil total.

1. What was one way that oil was used in Texas before 1900?

2. On a scale of 1 (*unimportant*) to 10 (*incredibly important*) what role did oil play in Texas's economy before 1900? Circle your chosen number and explain.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Spindletop

3. How was Spindletop significant to Texas history in the early 1900s?
   a. It was the first time oil was ever discovered in Texas.
   b. It took more than a week to control the oil well.
   c. It made oil an important part of the Texas economy.
   d. It made Beaumont the largest and most important city in TX.

- January 10, 1901
- Near **Beamont**
- Produced 100,000 barrels of oil a day for 9 days before the well was brought under control.
- **1902**: TX produced 21 million barrels of oil.
- This discovery marked the beginning of the oil industry in Texas.

THE PORTAL TO TEXAS HISTORY

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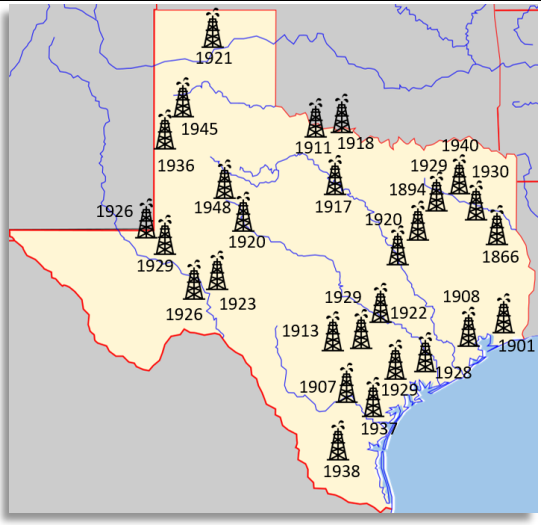
Oil strikes continued in Texas throughout the era…

4. List two things you notice about the information presented in the map.



Texas population growth & urbanization

Texas Population Growth:

- 1900 – 3,055,000
- 1910 – 3,922,000
- 1920 – 4,723,000
- 1930 – 5,844,000

City	1900	1930
Austin	22,258	53,120
Dallas	42,638	260,475
Galveston	37,788	52,938
Houston	44,633	292,352
Lubbock	293	20,520
San Antonio	53,321	231,542

5. Which statement best describes the trends shown in the population growth chart from 1900 to 1930?
   a) There was a steady increase in the Texas population.
   b) The was a steady decline in the Texas population.
   c) The Texas population experienced small growth but mostly stayed the same.
   d) All answers are correct.

6. What is one thing you notice about the information provided in the chart to the left?

THE PORTAL TO TEXAS HISTORY

Oil fuels Texas

7. Choose THREE responses that best demonstrate how the oil industry affected Texas from 1900 to 1930.
   - ☐ Oil production made cars more expensive for the average Texan.
   - ☐ Oil became a major source of energy in Texas.
   - ☐ Farm work became easier because farmers could use machines that ran on oil.
   - ☐ Oil brought in a lot of revenue to the government and schools.
   - ☐ Schools owed higher taxes due to oil discoveries on public lands.

- Cheap oil replaced steam and coal power.
- Cars became more common & Texas began paving roads.
- Farmwork became more mechanized.
- "**Oil-Production tax**" brought $6 million to Texas by 1930.
- Oil on public lands funded public schools and universities.

Oil develops Houston

- **Urbanization**: People & companies moved to Houston for oil.
- **Refineries**: Factories established in Houston to process petroleum to create gasoline and diesel.
- **Houston Shipping Channel:** Established 1914 to create a deep-water port for international commerce.

8. What effect did the oil industry have on Houston? Give two examples.

As a result of the oil industry, Houston _____

_____

_____

_____

Additionally, _____

_____

_____

_____

THE PORTAL TO TEXAS HISTORY

The Texas Railroad Commission

- Established 1891 to regulate railroads.
- **Pipeline Petroleum Law**
  - Passed in TX Congress, 1917
  - Declared oil pipelines "common carriers" like railroads.
- **Oil and Gas Conservation Law**
  - Railroad Commission regulates production of oil and gas, 1919

9. Which statement best explains how and why the Railroad Commission was given the power to regulate oil in Texas?

   a) Railroads were the sole method of transportation allowed to transport oil to Texas ports.
   b) Railroads were no longer an important method of transportation, so the Railroad Commission needed new responsibilities.
   c) The Texas Railroad Commission wanted to monopolize the oil industry in Texas and the U.S.
   d) Oil pipelines were determined to be similar to railroads, so the Railroad Commission became responsible for regulating the oil industry as well.

The Permanent University Fund

10. What effect did the oil industry have on education in Texas?

The oil industry in Texas (A) negatively (B) positively affected Texas education because _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

- **May 28, 1923**: Oil discovered at Santa Rita Well on west Texas lands set aside for the Permanent University Fund (PUF).
- In 2025, the PUF was valued at $38.9 billion to benefit the University of Texas and Texas A&M university systems.

THE PORTAL TO TEXAS HISTORY