

Robber Barons: Who Were They?

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, America went through a period called the Gilded Age. This was a time of rapid economic growth, big businesses, and the rise of powerful individuals who controlled major industries like railroads, oil, steel, and banking. Some of these wealthy business leaders were called "Robber Barons." This nickname suggested that they used ruthless or unfair methods to get rich and gain power. While some people saw them as greedy and selfish, others thought they helped the country grow and provided jobs. Famous Robber Barons included John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and J.P. Morgan. The actions of these men changed American society and raised important questions about fairness, business ethics, and the role of government in the economy.

Fill in the Blank: Fill in the blank with the correct words.

1. The term "Robber Baron" was used to describe _____ who gained great wealth and power during the Gilded Age.
2. One famous Robber Baron who controlled the oil industry was _____.
3. Some people believed Robber Barons used _____ or unfair methods to become wealthy.
4. The Gilded Age was a period of rapid _____ growth in America.
5. Andrew Carnegie was known for his work in the _____ industry.

Word Bank: oil, ruthless, businessmen, steel, economic

Multiple Choice Questions: Choose the correct answer from the choices for each question.

1. Which industry did John D. Rockefeller dominate?
 - a) Railroads
 - b) Steel
 - c) Oil
 - d) Banking
2. What was a common criticism of Robber Barons?
 - a) They gave away all their money
 - b) They used unfair business practices
 - c) They helped small businesses succeed
 - d) They only worked for the government
3. Who was a famous Robber Baron in the steel industry?
 - a) J.P. Morgan
 - b) Cornelius Vanderbilt
 - c) Andrew Carnegie
 - d) John D. Rockefeller

4. What did Robber Barons often create to control their industries?

- a) Unions
- b) Monopolies
- c) Schools
- d) Farms

5. The term "Gilded Age" refers to a time in American history that was marked by:

- a) War and conflict
- b) Rapid economic growth and wealth
- c) The end of slavery
- d) The discovery of America

HW: Open-Ended Questions: Answer **TWO** of the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Why do you think some people admired Robber Barons while others criticized them?
2. Choose one Robber Baron mentioned in the passage and describe how he gained his wealth.
3. How did the actions of Robber Barons change American society during the Gilded Age?