

## **Oil in Texas - Grade 7**

Created by Adelheid (Heidi) Murphrey

### **Lesson Plan Summary:**

After completing this lesson plan, students will be able to summarize how the oil industry began in Texas, explain the importance of the oil industry in Texas, and evaluate the economical changes that occurred in Texas after Spindletop and the Lucas Gusher. Students will use their new knowledge to create news broadcasts these people and events, and then will take part in an activity that will allow them to “drill” for “oil.”

### **Objectives:**

The student understands how individuals, events, and issues shaped the history of Texas from Reconstruction through the beginning of the 20th century. The student is expected to identify significant individuals, events, and issues from Reconstruction through the beginning of the 20th century, including the factors leading to the expansion of the Texas frontier, the effects of westward expansion on Native Americans, the development of the cattle industry from its Spanish beginnings, the myth and realities of the cowboy way of life, the effects of the growth of railroads, the buffalo soldiers, James Hogg, Cynthia Parker, and Spindletop. **TEKS §113.23. History, Grade 7.6 (A)**

The student understands how individuals, events, and issues shaped the history of Texas during the 20th century. The student is expected to define the impact of "boom and bust" and trace the boom-and-bust cycle of leading Texas industries throughout the 20th century, including farming, oil and gas, cotton, cattle ranching, real estate, and banking. **TEKS §113.23. History, Grade 7.7 (A)**

The student understands the location and characteristics of places and regions of Texas. The student is expected to locate places and regions of importance in Texas during the 19th and 20th centuries. **TEKS §113.23. Geography, Grade 7.9 (A)**

The student understands the effects of the interaction between humans and the environment in Texas during the 19th and 20th centuries. The student is expected to:

- identify ways in which Texans have adapted to and modified the environment and analyze the consequences of the modifications;
- explain ways in which geographic factors have affected the political, economic, and social development of Texas.

**TEKS §113.23. Geography, Grade 7.10 (A, B)**

The student understands the factors that caused Texas to change from an agrarian to an urban society. The student is expected to

- explain economic factors that led to the urbanization of Texas;
- trace the development of major industries that contributed to the urbanization of Texas;
- explain the changes in the types of jobs and occupations that have resulted from the urbanization of Texas.

**TEKS §113.23. Economics, Grade 7.12 (A, B, C)**

The student understands the interdependence of the Texas economy with the United States and the world. The student is expected to analyze the impact of significant industries in Texas such as oil and

gas, aerospace, and medical technology on local, national, and international markets. **TEKS §113.23. Economics, Grade 7.13 (C)**

The student understands the impact of scientific discoveries and technological innovations on the political, economic, and social development of Texas. The student is expected to:

- identify Texas leaders in science and technology such as Roy Bedichek, Walter Cunningham, Michael DeBakey, and C.M. "Dad" Joiner;
- analyze the effects of scientific discoveries and technological innovations, such as barbed wire, the windmill, and oil, gas, and aerospace industries, on the developments of Texas;
- evaluate the effects of scientific discoveries and technological innovations on the use of resources such as fossil fuels, water, and land. **TEKS §113.23. Science, technology, and society, Grade 7.20 (B, C, D)**

The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology. The student is expected to analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions. **TEKS §113.23. Social studies skills, Grade 7.21 (B)**

Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:

- use social studies terminology correctly;
- use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation;
- transfer information from one medium to another, including written to visual and statistical to written or visual, using computer software as appropriate;
- create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information. **TEKS §113.23. Social studies skills, Grade 7.22 (A, B, C, D)**

### **Engage:**

Students will define the following terms: wildcatter, roughneck, fossil fuel, petroleum, boomtown, supply and demand.

Discuss the vocabulary and ask students to name various products derived from petroleum. Tell students that in 1901, oil was discovered at a hill called Spindletop outside the town of Beaumont.

Display [Map of Early Texas, 1874](#) . Ask students to locate Beaumont. Ask if they can describe the location of Beaumont in relation to the rest of the state and their town. Ask students if they have visited Beaumont and why it may be an important city.

### **Explore:**

Read and discuss the information about the oil industry from the textbook together. Invite students to point out causes and effects from the text and create a chart on the board.

Divide the class into small cooperative groups. Give each group a large sheet of paper and colored markers. Ask the students to formulate a number of questions from the text.

Each group will exchange their set of questions with another group who will answer the questions. Allow students enough time to complete the questions, and then have each group present their work to the class.

Each group will post their questions and answers on the classroom walls for students to copy in their notes.

### **Activity #1:**

Each cooperative group will create a short news broadcast and a background illustration for their broadcast. The teacher will assign a different topic for each group to present. The teacher may also provide a microphone and a special setting for the news broadcast.

Suggested topics: Oil discoveries in the 1800's  
How oil was used before the 1900's?  
Oil discoveries in the 1900's  
Economic impact after Spindletop  
The environmental effects of the oil boom

### **Activity # 2:**

For this activity, students will “drill for oil”. The teacher will supply wooden skewers and should prepare a large tray or an oversized box lid with a 3-4 in. rim.

1. fill a number of extra small Dixie cups with  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. of motor oil and some with 1 in. of oil
2. fill a number of cups with water
3. cover cups tightly with plastic wrap
4. cover the bottom of the tray with 1 inch of cat litter or sand
5. randomly arrange the cups in the tray
6. add more cat litter to cover all of the cups – any spills will be absorbed by the cat litter

Wildcatters (students) will now have a chance to invest their fake money (provided) to drill for oil. According to their drilling results, students who strike oil will have the opportunity to double or triple their investment.

### **Assessment:**

Teacher observation, student participation, and test over notes/reading.

### **Extension:**

Students may take a fieldtrip to the Kilgore Oil Museum in Kilgore Texas, the Texas Energy Museum, or the Spindletop/Gladys City Boomtown in Beaumont, Texas.

### **Materials:**

[Map of Early Texas, 1874](#)

[Photos of early Texas oil wells](#)

[Letters related to early Texas oil industry](#)

Writing utensils, paper, tape, markers, map pencils