

## THE HISTORY CHANNEL CLASSROOM STUDY GUIDES

### Empires of Industry

*Empires of Industry* is a mini-series which explores the cornerstones of America's economic might that established the United States as a world leader. Each of the one hour programs in this remarkable series focuses on an industry which played a unique role in America's rise to world economic dominance. The stories of changing fortunes in the Steel, Coal, Brewing, Ship Building and Textile industries reveal much about our country's past and present.

*Empires of Industry* would be useful for classes on American History, History of Science and Technology, Economics and American Culture. It is appropriate for middle school and high school.

#### The Legacy of King Coal

*The Legacy of King Coal* recounts the story of the rise of the coal industry. Coal, the black gold of the earth, fueled the industrial revolution and the accompanying changes in American culture and the American landscape. *The Legacy of King Coal* presents the story of the coal barons and the coal miners, their tumultuous relationship, and the painful process of unionization. It also explores the symbiotic relationship of the coal and railroad industries, which transformed America and the world.

- [anthracite](#)
- [arbitration](#)
- [benevolent](#)
- [bituminous](#)
- [brethren](#)
- [coffers](#)
- [discrepancy](#)
- [eons](#)
- [epitaph](#)
- [foliage](#)
- [gargantuan](#)
- [havoc](#)
- [infiltrate](#)
- [opulence](#)
- [pariah](#)
- [patrician](#)
- [perpetrated](#)
- [philanthropic](#)
- [predator](#)
- [sediment](#)
- [staunch](#)
- [stranglehold](#)
- [subservient](#)
- [tycoon](#)

#### Discussion Questions

1. Without the discovery of American coal veins, the Industrial Revolution in America might not have taken place. What was the contribution of American coal to the Industrial Revolution? How did coal literally fuel the Industrial Revolution?

2. The coal industry's contribution to America was, and still is, tremendous. But there is a darker side to the history of the coal industry. What is the "fame" and the "shame" of the coal industry?
3. What is the difference between bituminous coal and anthracite coal? How do these differences determine coal's utility?
4. The United States is the acknowledged economic and military leader of the 20th century. How did the coal industry contribute to United States economic dominance?
5. Of all the tools used by coal miners, a delicate canary was the most important. How did this fragile, melodious bird save miners' lives?
6. Coal mining was, and still is, one of the most dangerous occupations. What are some of the hazards of coal mining? Why would miners continue to work in a profession that is fraught with such dangers?
7. Because of the remote locations of many mines, company stores and towns provided the basic necessities of life to the miners, but at a price. How did this arrangement of company towns and stores enable mine owners to control their workers?
8. Mother Jones, a seemingly fragile, elderly woman, was influential in the organization of mine workers. What was Mother Jones' role in miner unionization?
9. Why were industrialists and mine owners against unionization and organized workers?
10. Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced the New Deal to alleviate some of the pressures of the Great Depression. What is the legacy of the New Deal in labor relations in the United States?
11. How did technology revolutionize coal mining in the mid-20th century?

#### **Extended Activities**

1. Create the front page of a newspaper that reports the Ludlow Massacre.
2. Imagine that you are a coal miner in the early part of the twentieth century. Create a diary or journal that recounts your experiences for a designated period of time.
3. Create a poster promoting F.D. Roosevelt's New Deal labor legislation.