

ANDREW CARNEGIE: 1835–1919

by Clare Pinchin

Introduction

Before reading the articles, bring in household materials made out of steel and some photographs of steel bridges (Brooklyn Bridge) to show students. The sidebar on page 18 provides some helpful examples. Ask the students if they know how, when, where, and by whom these items were made. Make a list of all the other items they can think of made from steel. Differentiate between iron and steel, if necessary. Introduce Andrew Carnegie as the “King of Steel.”

Mark It on the Map

Scotland (Dunfermline); Pennsylvania (Braddock, Pittsburgh, Homestead, Titusville, Carnegie), Massachusetts (Lenox), New York

Questions for Discussion

- What specific character traits and wisdom did Carnegie learn from his mother, father and uncle while growing up in Scotland? What life experiences in Scotland affected and encouraged him when his family immigrated to the United States?
- How did Carnegie become successful in the telegraph business? What did he do to help move himself up within the company?
- What role did Carnegie play during the Civil War?
- Aside from the railroad, in what other products did Carnegie invest?
- Why did Carnegie decide to invest in steel? What did he want to build?
- How did Carnegie’s approach to making steel differ from other companies? What innovative process did he use to make the steel? Was it profitable?
- What caused the Homestead Strike of 1892? What was the outcome of the strike? How did it affect Carnegie’s professional reputation?
- Why did Carnegie believe that creating a simplified spelling program would help to achieve world peace? Was he successful? Why or why not?
- Describe his relationship with his wife. Why did they wait so long to get married?
- How did Carnegie become the richest man in the world?
- What was Carnegie’s philosophy about wealth and how to use it?
- How did Carnegie spend his time when he retired at age 65?
- What was the “Carnegie Formula” for creating public libraries?
- Why did Carnegie inscribe “Free Library” or “Free to the People” on all of his library buildings?

Think About It

- Andrew Carnegie is credited with believing that to die rich was to die disgraced. What do you think he meant by that? Research on-line versions of Carnegie’s “Gospel of Wealth” essay on the responsibilities of rich men to support your answer. Do you agree with Carnegie’s beliefs? Do you think he lived up to them?
- Research the Homestead Strike of 1892. Create four teams. Three will represent the points of view of the union workers, the managers, and the Pinkerton agents. The fourth group will represent negotiators to help solve the dispute once arguments are presented. Discuss as a class how the strike could have been prevented or resolved without violence.

Vocabulary

amalgamated	legacy
apprentice	molten
benevolent	ore
bobbin	pedant
courier	philanthropy
endowment	pig iron
financier	quarry
foundation	subsidize
immigrant	telegraph
Industrial Revolution	

Writing Workout

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Reread the section on Andrew Carnegie's ideas for simplified spelling (pages 29–31). Work with a partner to create a one-page dialogue using the simplified spelling rules. What do you think of Carnegie's spelling program?
- As a boy, Carnegie wrote a letter to a newspaper protesting an annual fee to use the library. What are you passionate about? Write a letter to your principal or a community leader with the intent of improving an issue that you want changed for the better.
- You have just inherited \$100 million! In order to receive the money, you must submit a proposal on how you would use it and a portion of it must go toward establishing your own foundation. What would be your foundation's mission? Would you give any money to other charitable organizations or foundations? How would you spend your personal portion?

Then and Now

- How was the Morse code created? Is it still used today? Why was it an important way to communicate in the 1800s? How do we communicate today?
- What impact did Carnegie have on philanthropic activities?
- How has the production of steel and its usage changed today?

Get Into Art

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Create a hero's bulletin board for your classroom. Create a series of qualifications to meet your Classroom Hero Fund and design a medal and certificate to give out. Research heroes in your local newspaper or nominate someone in your school. Post their names and a brief description of their actions on the bulletin board.
- Organize a fundraiser to benefit a charitable group. Classmates should be in charge of researching and designating a nonprofit organization to receive the funds, designing the promotional flyer, publicizing and organizing the event, and working at and attending the event. Create a class photograph album to document the process.
- Carnegie was the target of many editorial cartoons because of his various projects and wealth. (See the cartoons throughout the issue.) Choose a person or an issue that you have a strong opinion about and draw your own editorial cartoon stating your views clearly and fairly.

Further Research

- Research the history of your library. Find out if Andrew Carnegie gave a gift to it. If not, trace your library's roots and discover when and by whom your library was started. How are new books and programs funded today?
- Research famous philanthropists of the past and present including athletes, musicians, actors, and wealthy individuals. Compare and contrast a philanthropist of your choice to Andrew Carnegie to answer the question of whether Carnegie was America's greatest philanthropist.

Colonel James Anderson
Henry Bessemer
William Carnegie
Margaret Carnegie
Melvil Dewey
Henry Clay Frick

William Kelly
J.P. Morgan
Samuel F.B. Morse
Pinkerton National
Detective Agency
Thomas Scott

William Siemens
Edgar Thomson
William Wallace
Louise Whitfield
Theodore Woodruff

"Andrew Carnegie" replaces "The History of Computers," which has gone out of print.