

Glossary: Oil and Gas

Glossaries have been created to provide the definition of any words that are specific to each theme area. It is suggested that teachers review or point out the glossaries to students before they examine a specific theme area. Students may access them under Student Resources.

Alchemy: A medieval chemical idea whose goal was to change base metals into gold.

Bar Association: A professional association made up of all lawyers of a specific province.

Black gold: A slang term for oil.

Boom: A time of great growth, development, or rapid progress.

Chemist: A scientist specializing in the structure and properties of matter, especially of atomic and molecular systems.

Crude Oil: Unrefined liquid petroleum as it comes out of the ground. Crude oils range from very light (high in gasoline) to very heavy (high in residual oils).

Derrick: A tall, metal framework over a drilled oil well that is used to support drilling equipment or hoist and lower lengths of pipe.

Devonian: Belonging to the geologic time period from 405 million to 345 million years ago. The period was characterized by the appearance of amphibians and insects and the first forests.

Ecology: The science of the relationships between organisms and their environments.

Economy: The system of economic activity within a country, region, or community.

Embargo: A government order imposing a trade barrier on a certain product or with a certain country.

Engineer: A person who uses scientific and mathematical principles to design and manufacture structures, machines, processes, or systems.

Gas: Natural gas is a fossil fuel mixture of hydrocarbon gases that occurs with petroleum deposits. It is mostly methane with small amounts of ethane, propane, butane, and other gases. It is found in a gaseous state and is used for cooking and heating homes.

Geologist: A person who studies the origin, history, and structure of the earth.

Geophysicist: A scientist who studies the movements of the earth and its environment, including within fields such as meteorology, oceanography, and seismology.

Incentive: Anything, such as the fear of punishment or a reward that motivates effort.

Jughound: An entry-level physical labour job on a seismic recording crew. It is their responsibility to carry and lay out cable.

Kyoto Accord: An international treaty on global warming. Countries that sign this agreement commit to reduce their emissions of carbon dioxide and five other greenhouse gases. A total of 141 countries have ratified the agreement. A notable exception is the United States.

Legislature: An officially elected group of people with the responsibility and power to make laws for a province. Also refers to the actual building where they discuss new legislation.

Maverick: There are two main definitions.

1. Originally, it referred to cattle that have not been branded yet, usually meaning a calf that has become separated from its mother. They were usually considered the property of the first person to brand them.
2. Today, it refers to a person who is independent in thought and deed, or who refuses to "go along with the group."

Multinational: A company that operates or invests in more than two countries.

National Energy Program (NEP): The government of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau enacted the NEP in 1980. The program came from the wake of the energy crises of the 1970s and was designed to promote oil self-sufficiency, maintain the oil supply for industry in eastern Canada, promote lower prices and oil-exploration, and increase government revenues from oil sales through increased taxes. The program was enormously unpopular in Western Canada, and heightened distrust of the federal government.

Natural Gas: Natural gas is a fossil fuel mixture of hydrocarbon gases that occurs with petroleum deposits. It is mostly methane with small amounts of ethane, propane, butane, and other gases. It is found in a gaseous state and is used for cooking and heating homes.

Oil: A thick, flammable, yellow-to-black mixture of gaseous, liquid, and solid hydrocarbons that occurs naturally beneath the surface. It can be separated into component parts that include natural gas, gasoline, naphtha, kerosene, and jet engine fuel. Oil is a non-renewable resource, as it cannot be replenished within a short time.

Oil Deposits: A concentration of either the liquid (petroleum) and gas phases (natural gas) of oil that collect in pools under the earth's surface. A drilling and pumping process is used to extract it, after which it is sent to a refinery to be made usable.

Oil Well: An artificial hole drilled into the earth, usually cased with metal pipe, for the release of natural gas or oil.

Oilpatch: The oil and natural gas industry as a whole.

Paleontologist: The study of life that existed in prehistoric or geologic times through fossils of plants and animals.

Petroleum: Refers to a range of substances composed primarily of carbon and hydrogen that are found in rock. The word derives from the Latin words *petra* for rock and *oleum* for oil and literally means "rock oil." Although petroleum can be found in solid or gaseous form, the term usually refers to liquid forms of crude oil and natural gas.

Politics: The art or science of government of a political entity, such as a nation, and the administration and control of its internal and external affairs.

Porous: Rock or soil that admits the passage of gas or liquid through small spaces. A sponge is very porous.

Precambrian Shield: Also called the Canadian Shield, it is a large area in eastern and central Canada composed of bare rock dating to the Precambrian Era (between 4.5 billion and 540 million years ago).

Recession: An extended decline in general business and economic activity.

Refinery: An industrial plant for purifying crude oil and separating it into its component parts.

Roughneck: Any member of an oilrig crew other than the driller.

Socred: A name for a member of the Social Credit Party, a Canadian political party originally based on the Social Credit theory of Major C.H. Douglas. It reached its height of popularity in the 1930s as a result of the Great Depression. This theory argued that all citizens have a claim to part of the wealth that we have jointly produced and financial institutions should be put under social control.

Speculation: Investing in risky business transactions on the chance of a quick and considerable profit.

Stratigrapher: A scientist that studies rock strata (or levels), especially the distribution, deposition, and age of sedimentary rocks.

Tar Sands: Also called oil sands or bituminous sands. It is a combination of clay, sand, water, and bitumen (hydrocarbons), which is then refined into oil. Tar sand deposits are mined using strip-mining techniques.

Well shooter: A person who drops explosives down a drilled well in order to get it producing oil or natural gas.