

Name _____



Industrial Titans

Directions: Read each mini-biography. Decide whether the figure acted more like a **Robber Baron** or a **Captain of Industry** during the Gilded Age. Explain your reasoning in 2-3 thoughtful sentences.

1. John D. Rockefeller: Oil Industry Powerhouse

Rockefeller created Standard Oil, a company that dominated the oil industry with aggressive business tactics. He donated hundreds of millions of dollars to education and science, funding universities and medical research.

Underline your choice: **Robber Baron** or **Captain of Industry**

Why did you choose this label?

2. Andrew Carnegie: Steel Industry Giant

Carnegie built one of the largest steel companies in the world and helped industrialize America. However, his factories had harsh working conditions, and violent strikes erupted during his leadership. Later, he donated most of his fortune to build libraries and cultural centers.

Underline your choice: **Robber Baron** or **Captain of Industry**

Why did you choose this label?

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3. Cornelius Vanderbilt: Master of Railroads

Vanderbilt expanded major railroad lines and improved transportation across the nation. Yet, he was known for ruthless competition, eliminating rivals with harsh tactics while becoming one of the wealthiest men of his time.



Underline your choice: **Robber Baron** or **Captain of Industry**

Why did you choose this label?

Final Thought Question: Do you believe someone can be **both** a Robber Baron **and** a Captain of Industry at the same time? Explain your opinion using examples from the biographies.
