

# SECTION THREE: PHILANTHROPY

## Why are we learning about this?

To understand why Andrew Carnegie decided to give all his money away, and to find out how he continues to impact our lives today.

### 3.1. Andrew's Promise

Some people think that Andrew Carnegie spent the first half of his life making money and the second half giving it away. The truth is that there was no separation between the two for him.

In 1868, at the age of 33 - long before he became a millionaire - he wrote a note to himself stating that he wants to help others. This note is known as his 'Memorandum to Self'. His way of thinking was influenced by the views of his family (see section 1.2).

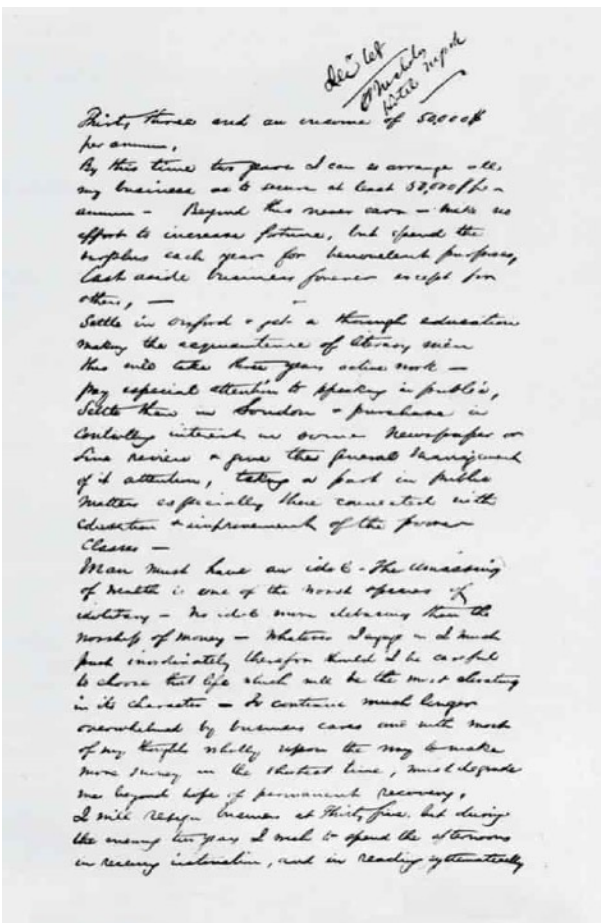


Image: Photograph of Andrew's 'Memo to Self', St Nicholas Hotel, New York, December, 1868. ACBM collection



Image: Andrew Carnegie, 1862. By an unknown photographer. ACBM collection

## **Task 1:**

Read sources A and B below to answer the following questions:

1. What does Andrew Carnegie promise to do by the time he is 35 years old?
2. Discuss what his **two main reasons** were for deciding to give up his current way of life.
3. Did Andrew Carnegie stop working in 1870, as he hopes in the memo? What did he do in the 1870s?

You may wish to record points from your discussion on the smartboard.

**As a class, you may wish to read the full note Andrew wrote:**

<https://www.carnegiebirthplace.com/history-resources> [Accessed June 2020]

“Thirty three and an income of \$50,000 per annum! By this time two years I can arrange all my business as to secure at least \$50,000 per annum. Beyond this never earn – make no effort to increase fortune, but use the surplus each year for benevolent purposes.”

“Cast aside business forever except for others”.

**Source A:** Extracts from Andrew Carnegie’s ‘Memo to Self’, St Nicholas Hotel, New York, December 1868

“A remarkable aspect about this note - and the life plan outlined in it - is the absence of any external motivating force. Carnegie had decided to ‘resign business’ [and give his money away] not because anyone had asked him to, not because he had pangs of guilt or shame. He was changing his life because he wanted to.”

**Source B:** David Nasaw, *Andrew Carnegie* (2006), p. 114

## **Task 2:**

Andrew Carnegie once said: “A man who dies rich, dies disgraced”. What do you think he meant when he wrote it? (**You may want to discuss this as a class or in pairs**)

## 3.2. The Gospel of Wealth

In 1901, Andrew Carnegie sold his steel company to the banker J.P Morgan for \$480 million (worth around £13.8 trillion today). He was to fully dedicate the last 18 years of his life to **philanthropy**, giving away \$350 million (90% of his fortune) to support the building of 2,811 public libraries across the world. He also supported schools and universities, the arts, scientific institutions and institutes that promoted international peace.

### Why Philanthropy?

In addition to the private letter he wrote to himself in 1868, Andrew Carnegie also published an article inviting other millionaires to give away their money. This article, called '**The Gospel of Wealth**', was published in 1889 - many years before he became the wealthiest man in the world. In it, he stated his belief that the very wealthy had a **responsibility** to give away their fortune (beyond what they needed to live on) within their own life time and give it back to society to support the 'greater good'.

Rather than giving away his wealth to charities, he explained that it was more beneficial to use his money to support institutions, (such as schools, colleges and libraries) that would "help people to help themselves". Andrew Carnegie was not the only millionaire philanthropist at the time - there were many others, both in the USA and UK. However, he was the most generous of them. He gave away almost all of his wealth within his lifetime.

"Yet the day is not far distant when the man who dies, leaving behind him millions of available wealth, which was free for him to administer [give away] during life, will pass away "unwept, unhonoured, and unsung," no matter to what use he leaves the dross [rubbish] which he cannot take with him.

Of such as these, the public verdict will then be: the man who dies thus rich, dies disgraced. Such in my opinion is the **true gospel concerning wealth**, obedience to which is destined someday to solve the problems of the rich and the poor".

Text: This excerpt originates from Andrew Carnegie's reading of The Gospel of Wealth. It was recorded in January 1914 in Thomas Edison's studio in New York.

It is the only known recording of Andrew Carnegie's voice.

[http://old.post-gazette.com/downloads/20071030biza\\_andrew\\_carnegie.mp3](http://old.post-gazette.com/downloads/20071030biza_andrew_carnegie.mp3)

(Fast forward to 4min)

### KEY WORDS:

\* Philanthropy

\* 'The Gospel of Wealth'

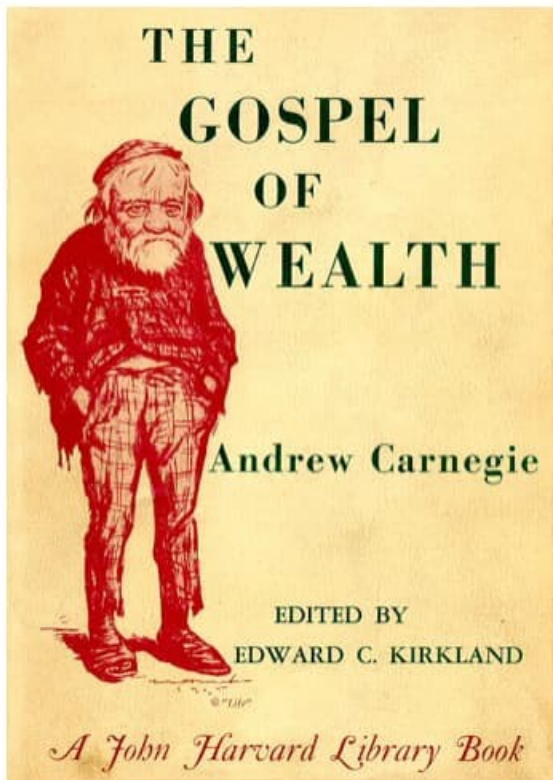


Image: The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays by Andrew Carnegie, edited by Edward Chase Kirkland, Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Copyright © 1962 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College

- Before completing the tasks below, as a class, discuss the definition of philanthropy.  
HINT: Think about how it is different from charity.

### Task 1:

1. Discuss: what does Andrew Carnegie mean by 'The man who dies rich, dies disgraced'? Do you agree with his statement?
2. Describe what 'responsibility' Andrew Carnegie believed the very wealthy had towards society.

### Task 2/Homework:

Today many modern philanthropists continue to be inspired by Andrew Carnegie's example. Choose a modern-day philanthropist (handout provided).

1. Find out how they made their money
2. Find out how they choose to give their money away

**What do you think: do you need to be a millionaire in order to become a philanthropist?**

Watch this video to find out more:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aC-9jwDQm7w> [Accessed July 2017]

### **3.3. Why Libraries Mattered Most**

Despite only attending the local school for four years, Andrew Carnegie understood the significance of education. When working as a young telegraph messenger boy in Pittsburgh, he had little chance to gain an education. However, a rich man called Colonel James Anderson kindly opened his private library of 400 books to working boys. Andrew Carnegie was able to use the library every Saturday. He used this opportunity to continue with the self-education he had begun as a boy in Dunfermline.

He would eventually provide the funding for numerous public libraries throughout the world so that all people had the means to help themselves through knowledge and information.

#### **Task 1:**

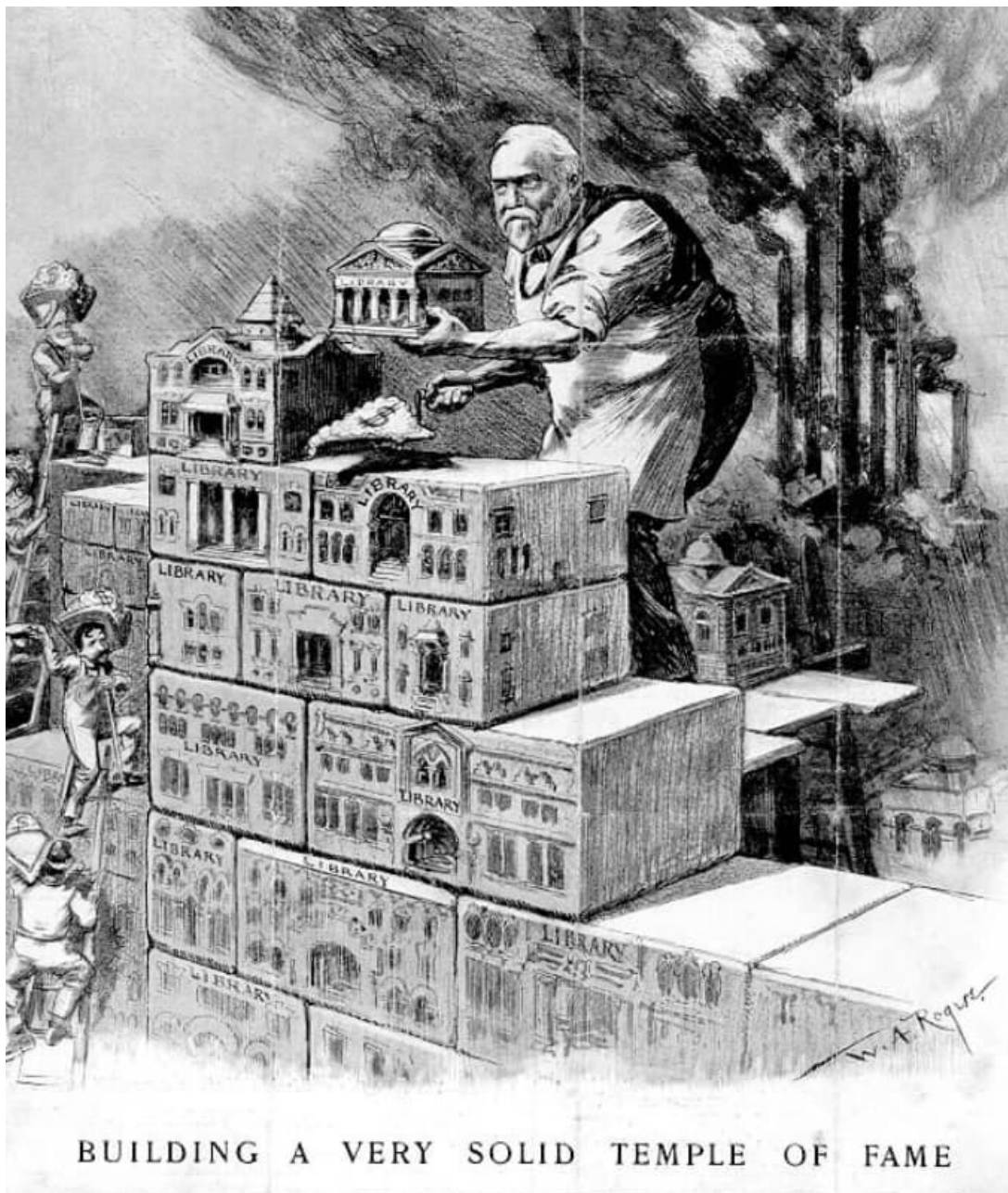
1. Thinking back to section 1.2. (Family Influence and Education), what were some of the other reasons why Andrew Carnegie was so fond of public libraries?
2. How many public libraries did Andrew Carnegie fund in his life time?



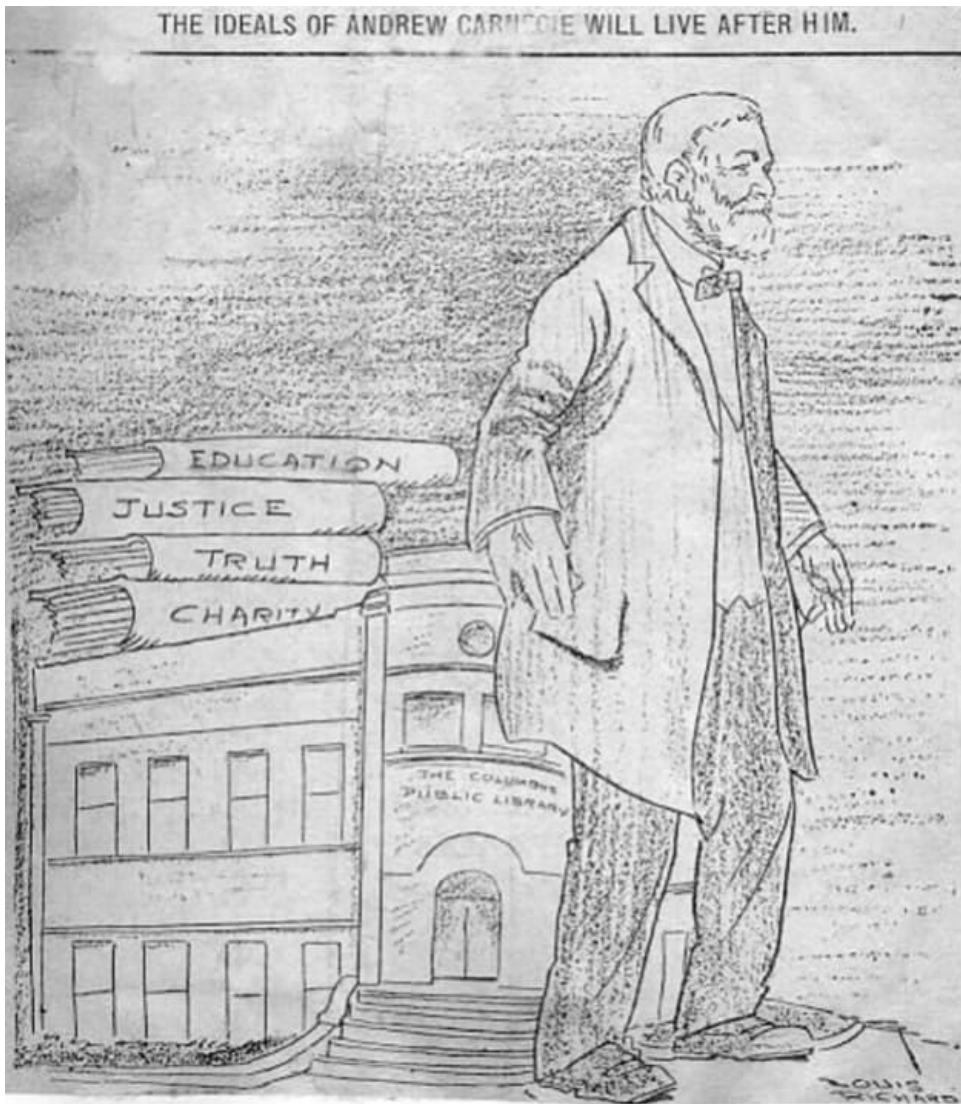
Image: Some of the books Andrew Carnegie borrowed from Colonel Anderson's library as a boy are now on display at the Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum.

## **Task 2:**

Sources A and B below show two opinions from the time about Andrew Carnegie's philanthropic achievements. Do both sources agree about his motivations for giving away his wealth for philanthropic causes? (You should give reasons for your answer referring to the content of both sources. You should also explain your understanding of each sources point of view).



**Source A:** Cartoon 'Building a Very Solid Temple of Fame' by William Allen Rogers. Published in the *Harper's Weekly*, 1901. ACBM collection



**Source B:** “The Ideals of Andrew Carnegie will live after him” by Louis Richard.  
Source unknown.

### **Extension Task:**

Discover which Carnegie Library is the closest to where you live.  
(Handout available)

### **3.4. Education for All**

Although slavery had been abolished in the USA, the UK and other European countries in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many people still thought that those of different race were less important and so did not need to be provided for.

Andrew Carnegie was one of a few famous people who tried to promote equality among races. He believed that everyone, no matter what the colour of their skin, country of birth or gender, should have equal opportunities to educate themselves and progress in life. This is why he helped to set up schools and libraries for African Americans. He also supported the suffragette movement and set up schools for women.



Image: Carnegie Library at Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama, USA. By unknown photographer. ACBM collection.

Andrew Carnegie has added a hand-written note to this photograph: "Built by student (coloured) labour at a cost of \$50,000 (£4000) for building and furniture. Professors are all negroes. Architect was also."



## **Task 1:**

Read sources A and B to answer questions below:

1. Name two reasons why people like Lewis Terman would have been shocked by Andrew Carnegie's speech.
2. Discuss: do all people in the modern day UK have equal opportunities to succeed?

To read more about the Black Civil Rights Movement in Britain, click here:

<http://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/blog/black-history-month-movement-black-civil-rights-britain/> [Accessed July 2017]

“[Black and other ethnic minority children] are ineducable beyond the nearest rudiments of training. No amount of school instruction will ever make them intelligent voters or capable citizens in the sense of the world...their dullness seems to be racial, or at least inherent in the family stock from which they come...Children of this group should be segregated in special classes and be given instruction which is concrete and practical. They cannot master abstractions, but they can be made efficient workers...”

**Source A:** Lewis Terman (Professor of Education, Leland Stanford Junior University), *The Measurement of Intelligence* (1916), pp. 91-92

In the year 1900, 1,095,774 colored youths at-  
tended public school, and 17,138 attended higher schools  
of learning. ~~Here we see that~~ the warfare against  
ignorance goes on apace among both the white and  
black races.

schools for 1899, \$3,762,617 out of a total cost of  
\$4,675,504, leaving but \$912,887 to be paid by the  
whites."

~~Such there is today in Scotland, and thruout the South~~

~~these negroes~~ exhibit an irrepressible tendency to

follow Scotland's example, but it will be many years

before that immense and sparsely populated region can

boast that Knox's scheme is completed. There is grat-

ifying evidence, however, that the negro race shares

with the Scotch the passion for education.

**Source B:** Draft for *Negro in America* by Andrew Carnegie, 1907. ACBM collection

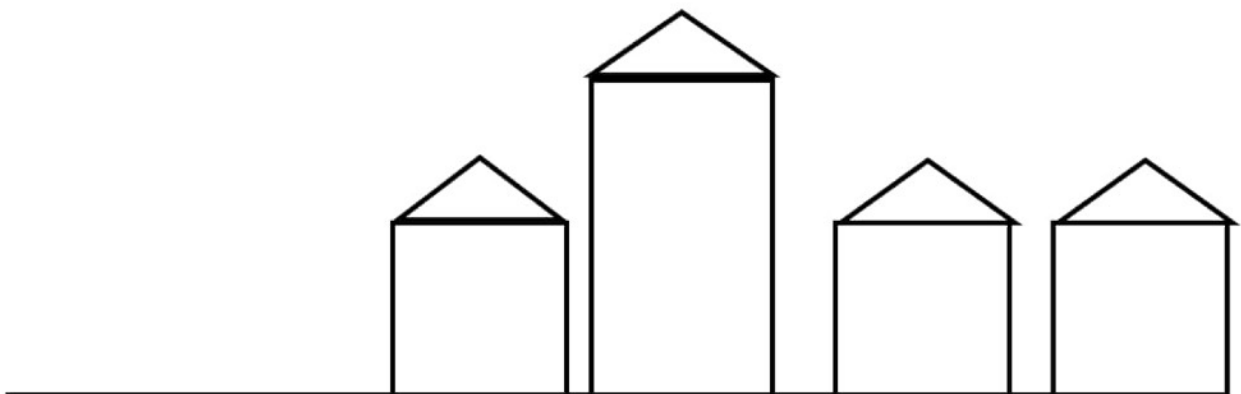
Although no longer an acceptable word, 'Negro' was a standard term in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and was also used by prominent black American campaigners such as Booker T. Washington.

## **Task 2:**

As we have learned, Andrew Carnegie's idea to set up libraries was inspired from his own childhood.

1. If you were a rich philanthropist, what would you give to your home town?
2. How does your chosen building/place benefit the people of the town?

Plan your buildings/places below:



## **Homework:**

Investigate how (one of) these Carnegie organisations continue(s) to influence and change our world today:

- \* Carnegie Foundation (The Peace Palace)
- \* The Carnegie Hero Funds
- \* The Carnegie Hall, New York
- \* Carnegie Mellon University

Info here: <https://www.carnegie.org/about/our-history/other-carnegie-organizations/>

**THANK YOU FOR  
TAKING PART IN  
THIS MODULE!**

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