

CrossTalk

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter April, 2026



In today's fast-moving world, it is almost impossible to imagine modern life without crude oil, a resource that has shaped our societies ever since the Industrial Revolution first pushed machines, factories, and global trade into the spotlight. As countries grew more connected and industries expanded, the demand for oil rose steadily, turning it into one of the most valuable commodities on the planet. From powering engines to producing everyday materials, crude oil quietly supports countless activities that keep our world running. Its influence stretches across continents, reminding us how deeply our global economy still depends on this ancient, underground fuel.

Many Asian countries rely heavily on crude oil from the Middle East, partly because the oil found there is usually "lighter" than oil from other regions. This means it contains fewer impurities, such as sulphur, and is easier and cheaper to refine. For growing Asian economies (needing huge amounts of fuel for transport, electricity, and manufacturing), this type of oil is simply more convenient and cost-effective. The Middle East is a major supplier of crude oil as it's geographically closer to Asia than places like South America or West Africa, which makes shipping faster and reduces transport costs. As a result, a strong energy-based relationship has developed over the years, shaping trade routes and political ties across continents.

When we look more closely at crude oil itself, it is fascinating to see how this thick, dark liquid taken from deep underground becomes part of our everyday lives. After it is extracted, crude oil is sent to refineries, where it is separated into different products. Some of these, like gasoline and diesel, are used to power cars, buses, and ships that keep people and goods moving across cities and oceans. Another one is kerosene, which is used in jet fuel for airplanes, connecting distant parts of the world. It is almost surprising how something formed millions of years ago can play such a central role in modern transportation.

Crude oil derivatives also appear in places we might not expect. In the medical field, for example, substances like paraffin and certain alcohols are used in ointments, creams, and even capsules. Plastics made from petrochemicals are found in syringes, medical gloves, and life-saving equipment. These materials are lightweight, durable, and relatively cheap, which explains why hospitals depend on them so much. Without them, many medical procedures would be far more difficult, if not impossible.



In our homes, oil-based products quietly shape our lifestyle. The shampoo we use in the morning, the detergent that helps us clean our clothes, and the synthetic fibres in our clothes all come from crude oil. Even the asphalt on the roads we walk and drive on is a petroleum product. It is no exaggeration to say that crude oil has become woven into the fabric of daily life, sometimes in ways we barely notice.

However, this dependence comes at a price. Burning fossil fuels releases carbon dioxide and other gases that contribute to climate change. Plastic waste, much of it made from oil, often ends up in the soil, rivers and oceans, harming wildlife and polluting ecosystems. Extracting crude oil can also damage natural landscapes and threaten local communities. Although many countries are trying to develop cleaner energy sources, the world still relies heavily on oil to keep it running.

In the end, crude oil remains both a powerful resource and a serious challenge. It supports modern life, yet it also puts pressure on the planet. As we continue to use it in so many areas, from transport to medicine to household goods, we must ask ourselves: how long can we depend on fossil fuels, and what kind of future are we creating by doing so?

Article by Marek

Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

.... Try our *lessons on the net!*

To learn more about crude oil, navigate to:

<https://bkvenery.com/learning-center/crude-oil-petroleum-explained-complete-guide/>

Some Thoughts for the Month



Joshua: I ran across an interesting article put out by the British Council in 2015. You may think that most people throughout the world are monolingual, but according to a survey done back then, over 50% of the world's population is either bi- or multilingual. People are commonly flipping between two or more languages with ease whenever the situation calls for it. Does that surprise you?

Junko Says: ...con. from March... (Research) shows that while those born with hearing loss may hear speech while dreaming, individuals with "aphantasia" or congenital blindness, tend to have dreams involving touch, smell, and experience more intense emotions. And yet, other studies have shown that those born blind can experience visual content in dreams – even draw images – suggests that visual awareness is active even before birth. In the end, it is impossible to draw a conclusion ... there remains too much we don't know about ourselves.



Marek Says: The conflict in the Middle East is sending fuel price shockwaves across the globe, with several countries plunging into deep economic crisis, all the while the petrochemical giants making fortune off the oil market uncertainty. My question is: instead of getting repeatedly punished with higher cost of gasoline, why can't these mega-companies accept that maybe this year they won't earn as much money? Why is it so hard for them to lose a little bit, for our benefit?

Danielle dit: Ce printemps, je suis allée à Tokyo pour admirer les cerisiers. Les parcs et les sanctuaires des temples regorgent d'arbres fleuris, mais j'étais surprise de constater que les rues et les avenues aussi sont bordées de ces magnifiques arbres. J'espère que le président Macron, en visite au Japon, a apprécié les cerisiers roses sous un ciel bleu !



ACROSS

- 2 not of natural origin
- 4 taken out, removed
- 6 materials or products commercially traded
- 8 "kerosine" in the UK
- 11 separate from unnecessary matter
- 12 not completely
- 15 ordinary, common
- 17 materials of a particular type
- 19 kinds of creams or gels

DOWN

- 1 very interesting
- 2 emphasize or focus on
- 3 partly provide or add to
- 5 long lasting, tough, strong
- 7 by-products, offshoots
- 9 moving, going forward
- 10 flammable oil used as fuel
- 13 influencing
- 14 not refined or processed
- 16 used for paving roads
- 18 extremely old, extinct

Play A Game!
Find the answers on P1

Print
ver-
sion
(here)

Below are the meanings of some idioms related to oil. See if you can match these with the actual idioms on the right.

1. Work late into the night in order to finish an assigned task – examples are to study for an exam or work late to meet a deadline, etc.
2. People who complain, speak up or draw attention to themselves are more likely to get the help, or achieve their goals, compared to those who remain silent.
3. Two people or things are fundamentally incompatible. They can not work together, blend or in any way get along. Naturally unable to harmonize.
4. Outright fraudulence – swindle, fake, scam, fraud, humbug; or ineffective medicine or medical treatment – quackery, a dishonest “cure-all” (a sham elixir peddled widely in the 19th century).
5. To make a bad situation worse that it already is by using words or taking action that increases tension, anger or intensity (even if the intention is an attempt to help).
6. Experience sudden, unexpected good fortune, success or wealth by sheer good luck - you stumble upon a great opportunity or unexpected profit.
7. This idiom means to bribe someone by secretly giving them money or gifts in exchange of some kind of favor, gain, profit or advantage.
8. This expression is mostly used in Australia and New Zealand to mean reliable, true or valuable information, news or facts – it often implies getting “insider” knowledge or the real story behind a situation.

Strike Oil ()



The Good Oil ()



Burning the Midnight Oil (1.)

Oil and Water Don't Mix ()



Add Oil (Fuel) to the Fire ()



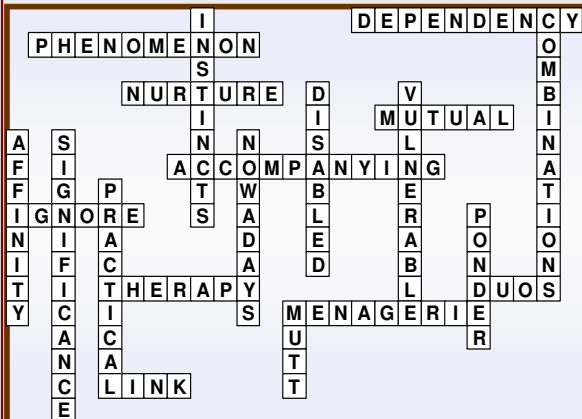
The Squeaky Wheel Gets the Oil ()



Snake Oil ()



Oil (Grease) someone's Palm ()



Last Month's puzzle Solution

ACROSS

- 2 relying on or needing support
- 4 a remarkable development
- 5 help, support development
- 8 shared or common understanding
- 12 being together with
- 14 give little or no attention to
- 16 healing treatment
- 17 pairs
- 18 collection of live animals
- 19 join, connect

DOWN

- 1 inborn, intuitive senses
- 3 put, add or exist together
- 6 unable to function normally
- 7 weak, defenceless
- 9 natural attraction, feeling
- 10 important
- 11 a current period of time
- 13 actual,, not theoretical
- 15 think about deeply
- 18 a mixed breed dog



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