

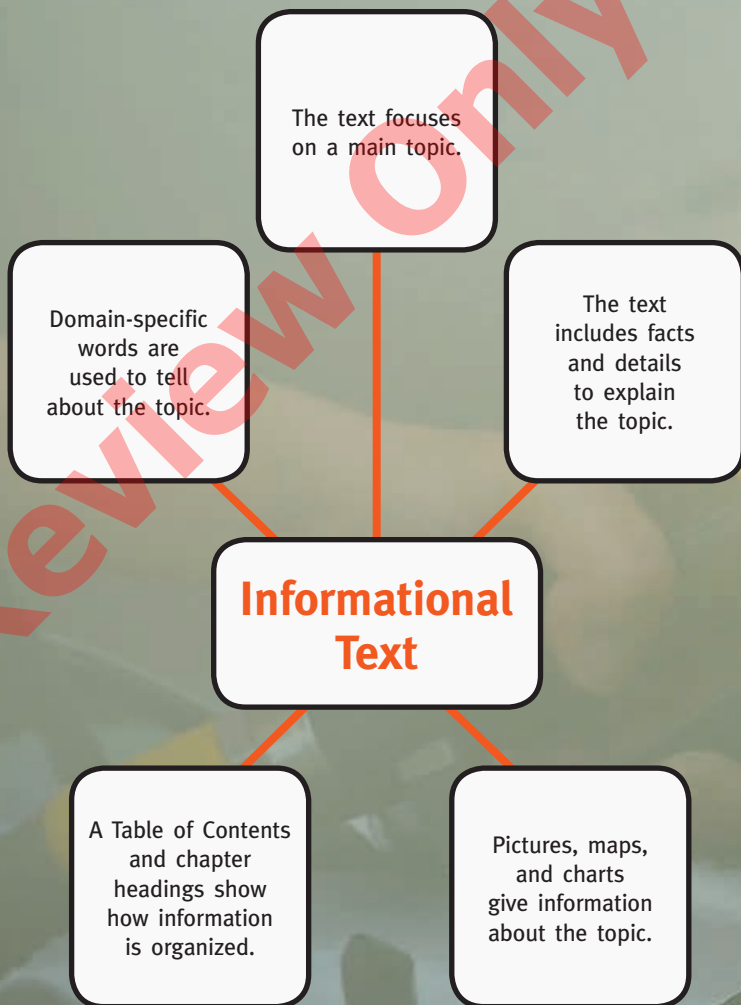
Petroleum



Level	J/17
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What Is Petroleum?

The word “petroleum” means “oil from rock.” Petroleum is a liquid that comes from inside Earth. It is usually black or dark. Petroleum can also be light yellow or brown.

▼ Petroleum is a liquid.



Petroleum helps make our cars, airplanes, and ships run. The petroleum we use is **refined**. That means the different things found in petroleum are separated from one another. Refined petroleum, or oil, is an important source of energy.

▼ Airplanes use petroleum.



Petroleum is also used in a wide variety of other things. The plastics we use every day come from petroleum. So does fertilizer, wax, ink, and some fabrics.



▲ Plastics are made from petroleum.

Where Does Petroleum Come From?

Petroleum is found in several parts of the world.



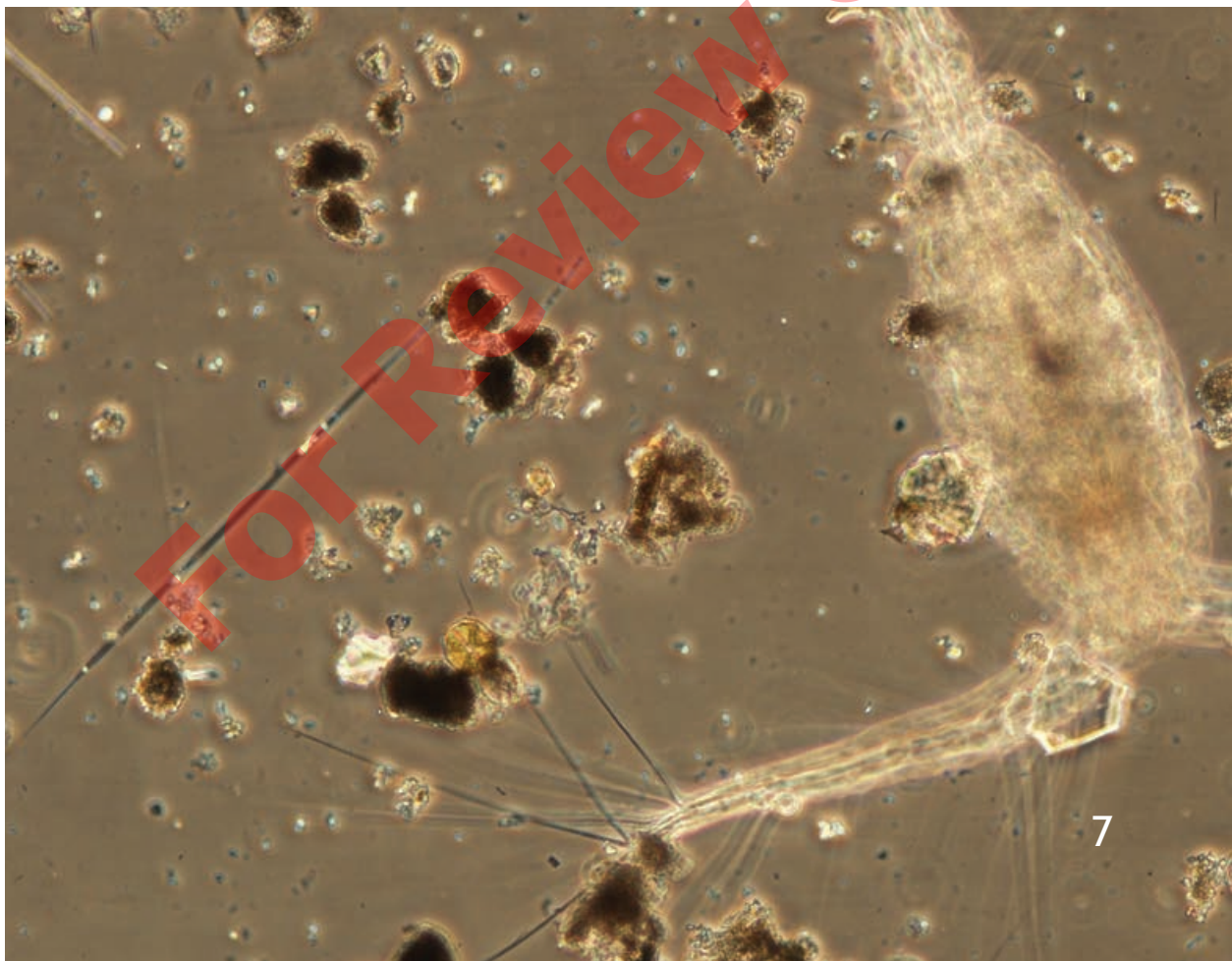
▲ Most petroleum is found in these countries.

Petroleum started forming in the earth a very long time ago. Earth was very different then.



Scientists believe that petroleum started forming in oceans and lakes. When small animals and plants called **plankton** died their remains fell to the bottom.

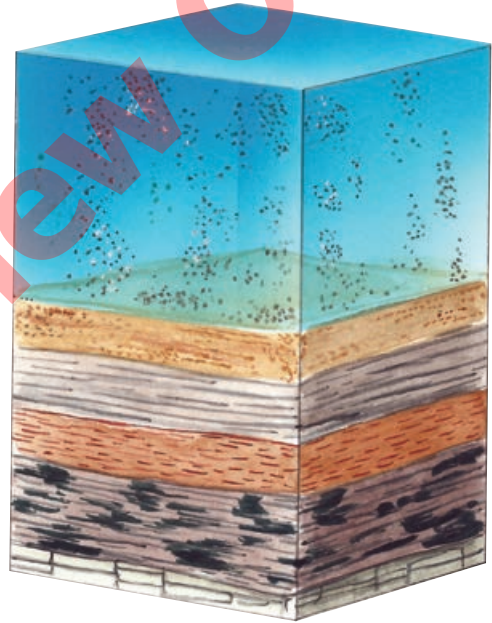
▼ Plankton is a group of plants and animals.



The remains of these animals and plants were covered by sand and mud. As this pattern repeated the layers continued to build.



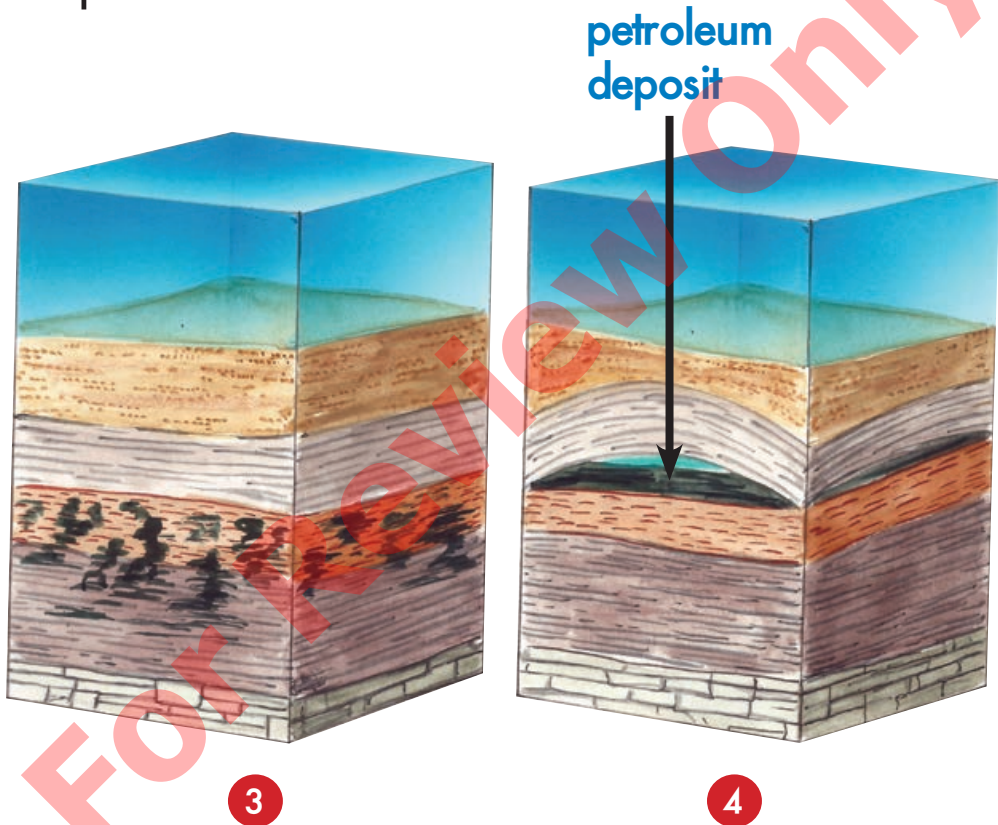
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2

▲ Layers of sand and mud build up.

The heat and weight of the soil helped the petroleum to form. The remains of the animals and plants turned to petroleum.



▲ After many years the hot and heavy soil turns to petroleum.