



Article: [Further Review: Harding and the Teapot](#)

Classroom Discussion Questions College Level

What structural safeguards should exist to prevent corruption in government? The Teapot Dome Scandal involved secret agreements, conflicts of interest, and the abuse of public resources. What policies, oversight mechanisms, or ethical standards could have prevented these events from occurring?

To what extent should leaders be held accountable for the actions of their appointees? President Harding expressed confidence in several officials who were later implicated in corruption. Discuss the balance between personal responsibility and leadership accountability in public administration.

How did the Teapot Dome Scandal shape public trust in government, and what parallels can be drawn to modern political controversies? Consider the role of transparency, media scrutiny, and public perception in maintaining confidence in democratic institutions. How do historical scandals influence contemporary expectations of government ethics?

Classroom Discussion Questions Grades 9-12

Why is government transparency important in a democracy? The Teapot Dome oil leases were awarded in secret without competitive bidding. What problems can occur when government decisions are made without public oversight, and how can transparency help prevent corruption?

Should elected leaders be held responsible for the actions of the people they appoint? President Harding claimed he trusted many of the officials who were later implicated in scandals. To what extent should a president, governor, or other leader be accountable for the actions of members of their administration? Explain your reasoning.

How can investigative journalism influence government accountability? Reporters and newspapers played a major role in uncovering details of the Teapot Dome Scandal. What role does a free press play in exposing wrongdoing, and why is that role important today?

Classroom Discussion Questions Grades 6-8

Why do you think government officials should be honest and follow the rules? In the Teapot Dome Scandal, some officials secretly helped their friends and accepted money in return. How could actions like this affect people's trust in their government?

What should happen when powerful people break the law? Several government officials were investigated, resigned, or went to prison because of their actions. Do you think people in positions of power should be treated the same as everyone else when they break the law? Why or why not?

How can reporters help keep leaders accountable? Newspapers and reporters helped uncover information about the secret oil deals. Why is it important for journalists to investigate and report on what government leaders are doing?

Classroom Discussion Questions Grades 1-5

Why is it important for leaders to be honest? What can happen if a leader makes secret deals or breaks the rules?

How would you feel if someone got a special reward just because they were a friend? Do you think that's fair? Why or why not?

Why are newspapers and reporters important? How can they help people learn when something unfair is happening?