

Alfred C. Fuller

These questions can help to guide a student's viewing of the Alfred C. Fuller biography.

Before watching the video, define the following terms:

Entrepreneur | Peddler | Patent | Commission

1. What sources of information were used to produce this biography?
2. How did Alfred Fuller view himself as a young man working on his father's farm?
3. How were different gender spheres represented on the Fuller's farm? What responsibilities did Alfred's mother have? What responsibilities did Alfred and his brothers have?
4. What book featured prominently in the Fuller's family life?
5. What Alfred's greatest influence and source of guidance when he was developing his business philosophy as an entrepreneur?
6. List some of the family values that Alfred's parents instilled in him throughout his childhood?
7. Describe the methods of transportation available at the turn of the century? How did options differ for short and long distances?
8. Why did Alfred choose to leave home for Boston? What three things did Alfred's mother give him when he left?
9. Alfred worked several jobs before becoming self-employed. What were they? Do any of these jobs still exist today?
10. Why did Alfred leave Boston? Where did he go?
11. What skills did Alfred develop as a trolley-car operator?
12. Identify examples from Alfred's childhood that illustrate his fair sense of business and his work ethic.
13. What role did Evelyn play in the development of the Fuller Brush business?
14. Why did Evelyn choose to begin selling door-to-door?
15. Why did Alfred refer to the 1930s as a "bleak time"? Why was he able to recruit "quality men desperate for jobs"?

16. How did people generally perceive door-to-door salesmen during the period when Alfred began his business? How did he change that image?
17. What types of products did Howard add to the Fuller Brush Company?
18. What is a “Fullerette”?
19. Alfred expanded his business into new territories during the 1920s. What problems did this create for him?
20. What differences were there between Alfred’s childhood and his sons’ childhood?
21. What events led to Alfred’s and Evelyn’s divorce? How did it impact a) their sons; b) Evelyn; and c) Alfred?
22. How did Primrose Pelton change Alfred’s life?
23. Explain how Howard felt about his father and the business when he entered it. What effects did he have?
24. List some of the ways that Howard expanded the Fuller Brush Company while he was president.
25. What advertising and promotional mediums did the company expand into as its empire grew?
26. How did Alfred feel about his diminished role in Howard’s new Fuller Brush Company? Explain.
27. Why did Alfred want to sell the company? Why did he need his family’s approval to do so?
28. Why did Alfred decide to retire? Explain why you believe he made this choice. How did Alfred decide to focus his time and attention?
29. What factors led to the eventual sale of the Fuller Brush Company to Consolidated Foods in 1968?
30. Explain the concept of philanthropy. Do you believe that Alfred could be considered a philanthropist? What about Primrose?

