

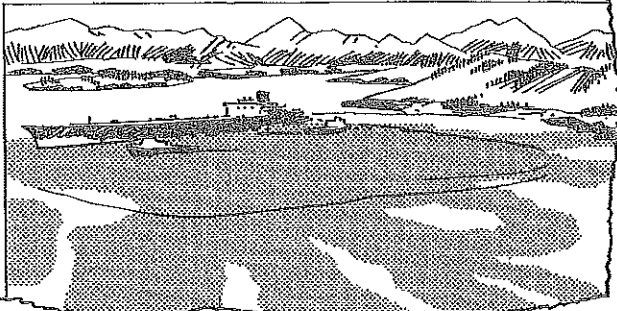
Oil and the environment

The newspaper accounts below describe two serious accidents. Both accidents involved oil and caused considerable damage.

THE GUARDSMAN
March 24 1989

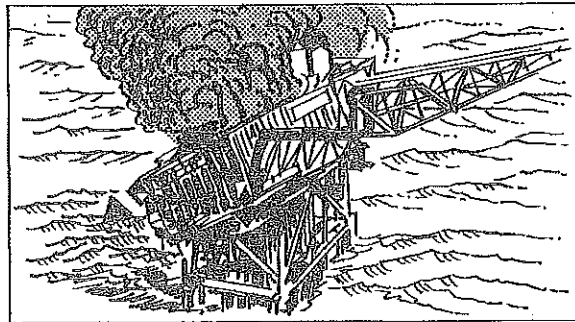
Giant tanker runs aground

THE HUGE EXXON VALDEZ was full of oil and had just left the Alaskan port of Valdez, when it ran aground. Millions of litres of oil were spilled. Within days many birds, sea otters and fish had died, while whales and dolphins had been forced to move. Hundreds of kilometres of coastline had been covered in black slime. The whole environment was ruined in the worst oil-tanker accident in history.



THE PLANET 6 July 1988

HUGE EXPLOSION BLASTS OIL RIG



THE SEA WAS CALM, the wind was light and it was nearly midnight. It was still not quite dark over the Piper Alpha oil rig in the North Sea. Without warning, a mighty explosion ripped the rig open and covered it in smoke and flames. 168 of the 232 workers, and two of the rescuers were killed. It took several days to put out the fire and months to recover the bodies.

- 1 a) What was the Exxon Valdez? _____
 b) What caused the accident? _____
 c) Where did the accident take place? _____
- 2 How did the Exxon Valdez accident affect
 - a) Wildlife? _____
 - b) The physical landscape? _____
- 3 a) What was Piper Alpha? _____
 b) What caused the accident? _____
 c) Where was Piper Alpha? _____
- 4 How did the Piper Alpha accident affect
 - a) People? _____
 - b) The environment? _____