

THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Grade Level: Seventh grade
Presented by: Damon Rodgers, Angie Wolf, Margaret Adams,
O.L. Slaton Junior High, Lubbock, Texas
Length of Unit: Three Weeks

I. ABSTRACT:

Beginning with the stock market crash of 1929, Americans faced hardships previously never experienced. The Great Depression was a time of unemployment, homelessness, and hopelessness. The focus of this unit is on the years 1929 to the end of 1932. The content covers the stock market crash, the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act, mass unemployment (factory mechanization, Bonus Army, "Hooversville"), the Dust Bowl, and the radicals (Huey Long, American Communist Party, Sinclair Lewis). Students will research the events, people, and places of the Great Depression. The students will have gained an appreciation for those Americans that lived during the Great Depression, and an understanding of the causes and contributions of the depression.

II. OVERVIEW:

- A. Concept Objectives:
1. Students will gain an understanding of cause and effect. Learn how major events relate to each other.
 2. Students will develop a sense of historical empathy. See through the eyes of people who were there.
 3. Students will learn how the national and world economies work and relate to each other, and how they affect everyone.
 4. Students will gain an appreciation for the people and events of the Great Depression.
 5. Students will gain an appreciation for the people and events of the New Deal.
- B. Content covered from *Core Knowledge Sequence*
1. Wall Street stock market Crash of '29, "Black Tuesday"
 2. Hoover insists on European payment of war debts
 - a. Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act
 3. Mass unemployment
 - a. Agricultural prices collapse following European peace
 - b. Factory mechanization eliminates jobs
 - c. Bonus Army
 - d. "Hooverilles"
 4. The Dust Bowl
 - a. "Okie" migrations
 5. Radicals: Huey Long, American Communist Party, Sinclair Lewis
 6. Franklin Delano Roosevelt
 7. The New Deal
- C. Skills:
1. The students will use the "Big Six" library skills for research assignments.
 2. The students will read and analyze a stock chart.
 3. The students will conduct an oral interview.
 4. The students will identify and analyze cause and effect.
 5. The students will analyze and create charts, tables, and graphs dealing with the stock market.
 6. The students will analyze pictures as primary sources.

7. The students will acquire and use various map skills.
8. The students will write a poem.
9. The students will write a one-paragraph reflection/opinion of Roosevelt's speech from the perspective of a person living through the Great Depression.
10. The students will research and locate information from a variety of sources, specifically the Internet.
11. The students will present their research to the class.
12. The students will analyze political cartoons.
13. The students will recognize bias.
14. The students will practice inference and generalization.
15. The students will recognize propaganda.

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE:

- A. For Teachers:
 1. <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Aegean/9006/firsttry.html>
 2. Sterling, Mary Ellen. *The Twentieth Century*. Huntington Beach, Ca: Teacher Created Materials, Inc., 1966. ISBN 1-55734-025-8.
 3. Burg, David. *The Great Depression: An Eyewitness History*. New York: Facts on File, 1996. ISBN 0-8160-3095-2.
 4. Core Knowledge Sequence: History and Geography: Grade 7: Part IV A. America in the Twenties.
- B. For Students:
 1. Hirsch, Jr. E.D. *What Your Sixth Grader Needs to Know*. New York: Dell Publishing, 1991. ISBN 0-385-31467-1.

IV. RESOURCES:

- A. Audio/Visual Materials:
 1. Overhead Projector
 2. Computer with PowerPoint software
 3. TV/VCR with accessibility to the Internet
 4. *Life in the Thirties*. McGraw Hill Training Systems (video)
- B. Books:
 1. Meltzer, Milton. *Brother Can You Spare A Dime? : The Great Depression. 1929-1933*. Facts on File, Inc. L991. ISBN 0-8160-2372-7.
 2. Schraff, Anne E. *The Great Depression and the New Deal*. _Franklin Watts, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney 1990.
 3. Stanley, Jerry. *Children of the Dust Bowl: The True Story of the School at Weedpatch Camp*. Crown Publishers, Inc. 1992. ISBN 0930324229.
 4. Sterling, Mary Ellen. *The Twentieth Century*. Huntington Beach, Ca: Teacher Created Materials, Inc., 1966. ISBN 1-55734-025-8.
 5. Watkins, T.H. *The Great Depression: American in the 1930's*. Little Brown, 1993. ISBN 0316924539.
- C. Internet websites:
 1. <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Aegean/9006/firsttry>.
 2. www.nobel.se/laureates/literature-1930-1-autobio.html
 3. www.ssa.gov/history/hlong/.html
 4. <http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/archives/sova.html>

V. LESSONS:

Lesson One: What was the Great Depression?

A. *Daily Objectives:*

1. Concept Objectives
 - a. Students will gain an understanding of cause and effect and learn how major events relate to each other.
 - b. Students will develop a sense of historical empathy.
 - c. Students will gain an appreciation for the people and events of the Great Depression.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Wall Street stock market Crash of '29, "Black Tuesday"
 - b. Mass unemployment
 1. Agricultural prices collapse following European peace
 2. Factory mechanization eliminates jobs
 3. Bonus Army
 4. "Hooverilles"
3. Skill Objectives:
 - a. The students will identify and analyze cause and effect.

B. *Material*

1. Power point presentation that presents the definition of the Great Depression, and the major causes and effects of the Great Depression.
2. Use appropriate resources from the bibliography to make the power point presentation.
3. Classroom that has the necessary technology to show the presentation. If technology is not available, color transparencies of the presentation are suggested as a substitute.

C. *Key Vocabulary:*

1. Great Depression-the severe economic slump that followed the collapse of the stock market in 1929
2. depression-a period of low general economic activity with widespread unemployment
3. economy-use of an economic system
4. surplus-a supply greater than what is needed
5. tariff-a tax on imported or exported goods

D. *Procedures/Activities:*

1. Make a power point presentation over the Great Depression that gives an overview of the Great Depression, its causes, and its effects.
2. As an introduction to the unit over the Great Depression, students will view each slide from the power point presentation, discuss, and take notes over what is viewed and said.

E. *Evaluation/Assessment:*

1. Evaluate students on participation in class discussion or evaluate with a quiz the next day. (Since this is an introduction, an evaluation process might not be needed).

Lesson Two: Understanding the Stock Market

A. *Daily Objectives:*

1. Concept Objective
 - a. Students will learn how the national and world economies work and relate to each other, and how they affect everyone.

2. Lesson Content
 - a. Wall Street stock market Crash of '29, "Black Tuesday"
 3. Skills
 - a. The students will read and analyze a stock page from a daily newspaper.
 - b. The students will analyze and create charts, tables, and graphs dealing with the stock market.
- B. *Materials:*
1. Sterling, Mary Ellen. *The Twenties*. Huntington Beach, Ca: Teacher Created Materials, Inc., 1996. pp. 29-31. ISBN 1-55734-024-8.
 2. Newspaper section(s) with the New York Stock Exchange daily entries.
 3. Typing paper
 4. Tape or glue
- C. *Key Vocabulary:*
1. bear market-
 2. bull market-
 3. dividend-a sum to be divided and given out, usually dealing with the owning of stock
 4. margin-an extra amount
 5. panic-a sudden widespread fright concerning financial affairs causing hurried selling and a sharp fall in prices
 6. price-earnings ratio-
 7. SEC-Stock Exchange Commission
 8. Commission-
 9. stock-the ownership element of a corporation divided to give the owners an interest and usually voting power
 10. stockbroker-one who handles orders to buy and sell stock
 11. stock exchange-a place where the buying and selling of stocks is conducted, an association of stockbrokers
 12. Stock market-
- D. *Procedures/Activities:*
1. Have students define the vocabulary words listed.
 2. Obtain *Stock Market Flow Chart* from material a. Cut out each box found on the worksheet and put them into packets to hand to students.
 3. Get students into groups of four. Pass out a packet, a blank sheet of typing paper, and glue or tape to each group. Have groups put the flow chart together in order on typing paper.
 4. Use activity from Sterling's *The Twenties* (pp. 31) on how to read the stock pages.
 5. From the NYSE section in the newspaper, select a section of the NYSE to put on a transparency. List the full name and the abbreviation for each stock found on your transparency.
 6. Assign each student (or let him or her choose) a stock from your list to keep track of throughout the unit. The student who makes the most money at the end wins. (There are many variations to this kind of activity. Depending on your time and resources, you may want your student to research stocks, purchase one with fake money, and so on).
- E. *Evaluation/Assessment:*
1. Evaluate students by grading flow chart and group participation.
 2. Grade student records at end of unit. Take so many points off for each day they did not record their stock's activity.

Lesson Three: Getting Personal: Oral Histories of the Great Depression.

- A. *Daily Objectives:*
1. Concept Objects
 - a. Student will develop a sense of historical empathy.
 - b. She student will gain an appreciation for the people and events of the Great Depression.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Wall Street stock market Crash of '29, "Black Tuesday"
 - b. Hoover insists on European payment of war debts
 1. Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act
 - c. Mass unemployment
 1. Agricultural prices collapse following European peace
 2. Factory mechanization eliminates jobs
 3. Bonus Army
 4. "Hooversvilles"
 - d. The Dust Bowl
 1. "Okie" migrations
 - e. Radicals: Huey Long, American Communist Party, Sinclair Lewis
 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. The students will conduct an oral interview
- B. *Materials:*
1. An interview sheet with 10-15 general questions to get them started in the interview. These questions are just a guide to get them started. They should not be the entire assignment. Students should generate their own questions also.
 2. Several people the students can use in case they have no other options.
 3. A tape you have made of an interview you conducted to give them an example of how assignment should be done.
- C. *Key Vocabulary:*
1. Vocabulary from first two lessons
- D. *Procedures/Activities:*
1. Pass out interview sheets and discuss assignment with students. Explain that the person they choose can be anyone that remembers the depression. A relative is probably the best source. Also, it does not have to be someone who lived through the depression. Although this is the goal of the assignment, it may not be feasible. Someone who remembers stories from their parents or grandparents will suffice.
 2. If possible, contact a nursing home about the assignment and schedule a field trip during class where students could conduct the interview, or have volunteers from the nursing home be willing to meet with students after school at a scheduled time.
 3. Have students write out or tape their interviews to present to the class on scheduled days.
- E. *Evaluation/Assessment:*
1. Evaluate students on participation in the activity. The interviewer cannot be graded on the interviewee's responses.

Lesson Four: A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words.

- A. *Daily Objectives:*
1. Concept Objectives
 - a. Students will sense of historical empathy.
 - b. Students will gain an appreciation for the people and events

- of the Great Depression.
 - 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Wall Street stock market Crash of '29, "Black Tuesday"
 - b. Hoover insists on European payment of war debts
 - 1. Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act
 - c. Mass unemployment
 - 1. Agricultural prices collapse following European peace
 - 2. Factory mechanization eliminates jobs
 - 3. Bonus Army
 - 4. "Hoovervilles"
 - 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. The students will analyze pictures as primary sources.
- B. *Materials:*
 - 1. Pictures of the Great Depression from resources listed or from independent research.
 - 2. A computer that has a scanner, or color transparencies of pictures.
 - 3. Overhead projector or computer accessible projector.
- C. *Key Vocabulary:*
 - 1. Vocabulary from previous lessons.
- D. *Procedures/Activities:*
 - 1. Choose 10-15 pictures of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl that are intriguing.
 - 2. Explain to the students that questioning is a good way to learn and that their job is to come up with five questions about each picture.
 - 3. Put one picture up at a time, without describing the picture or pointing anything out about the picture. When adequate time has passed, begin pointing out things about the picture and describing the picture to lead the students to some other questions.
 - 4. When time is up, ask different students to read their best question. Discuss what the students think is the right answer and why.
- E. *Evaluation/Assessment:*
 - 1. Evaluate students by requiring them to write so many questions per picture. Grade on how much time and thought went into each question they asked.

Lesson Five: Key People, Places, And Things of the Great Depression

- A. *Daily Objectives:*
 - 1. Concept Objectives
 - a. Students will develop a sense of historical empathy.
 - b. Students will gain an appreciation for the people and events of the Great Depression.
 - 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Wall Street stock market Crash of '29, "Black Tuesday"
 - b. Hoover insists on European payment of war debts
 - a. Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act
 - c. Mass unemployment
 - 1. Agricultural prices collapse following European peace
 - 2. Factory mechanization eliminates jobs
 - 3. Bonus Army
 - 4. "Hoovervilles"
 - d. The Dust Bowl

1. "Okie" migrations
- e. Radicals: Huey Long, American Communist Party, Sinclair Lewis
3. Skill Objectives:
 - a. The students will understand cause and effect.
- B. *Materials:*
 1. A research library
 2. Internet access
 3. A blank song sheet
 4. An outline of a stamp blown up to fit full page
 5. Map colors
- C. *Key Vocabulary:*
 1. stock market-
 2. Smoot-Hawley Act-
 3. mass unemployment-
 4. Dust Bowl-a region that suffers from land droughts and dust storms
 5. radicals-people who favor drastic change
 6. Sinclair Lewis-
 7. Huey Long-
 8. American Communist Party-
 9. Communist-a person who believes in Communism
- D. *Procedures/Activities:*
 1. Divide your students into five groups. Assign each group one topic (the stock market, the Smoot-Hawley Act, mass unemployment, the Dust Bowl, or the radicals: Sinclair Lewis, Huey Long, and the American Communist Party).
 2. Have each group research their topic in the library. They need to find out what or who each topic is, when and where it takes or took place, and how it relates to the Great Depression; Have them list five interesting facts they found about their topic relating to the Great Depression.
 3. Pass out the blank stamp sheet to each student. Have each student illustrate a commemorative stamp about his or her topic. They may stay in their groups, but each stamp must be different.
 4. Pass out a blank song sheet to each group. Instruct them to write a song about their topic to the tune of "Yankee Doodle Dandy." Have an example ready to sing to your students to give them an idea of what is expected.
 5. Have each group give an oral presentation of their research findings. Require the other students to take notes over each presentation. Have each student present their stamp and explain the reasons why they drew what they did. As a finale to their assignment, have the students sing their song to the class.
- E. *Evaluation/Assessment:*
 1. Evaluate students by participation in group activity. Require every student to write what they did in their group and how they contributed into the overall assignment.
 2. Grade students on how well they presented the information to the class. Require every member of the group to participate in the presentation in some way.
 3. Grade individual stamps based on creativeness.

Lesson Six: The Dust Bowl

- A. *Daily Objectives:*
 1. Daily Objectives
 - a. Students will develop a sense of historical empathy.

- b. Students will gain an appreciation for the people and events of the Great Depression.
 - 2. Lesson Content
 - a. The Dust Bowl
 - 1. “Okie” migrations
 - 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. The students will acquire and use various map skills.
 - b. The students will write a poem.
- B. *Materials:*
- 1. Poems from Dust Bowl period.
 - 2. Blank map of United States.
 - 3. Interstate maps of the United States.
- C. *Key Vocabulary:*
- 1. Dust Bowl-a region that suffers from land droughts and dust storms
 - 2. panhandle-a narrow strip of territory that extends from a larger territory
 - 3. erosion-the action or process of eroding, the wearing away of land by natural causes
 - 4. Black Blizzard-a very strong wind with dirt and dust
- D. *Procedures/Activities:*
- 1. Read and discuss selected poems from Dust Bowl period to the class.
 - 2. Have students write a poem about what it would be like to live during the Dust Bowl.
 - 3. Pass out blank maps and interstate maps to class. Have them locate a city in Oklahoma and plot a route to California. Label each state and city they will pass through on their way to California.
- E. *Evaluation/Assessment:*
- 1. Evaluate students by grading the poem and map.

Lesson Seven: The Radicals

- A. *Daily Objectives:*
- 1. Concept Objectives
 - a. Students will develop a sense of historical empathy.
 - b. Students will gain an appreciation for the people and events of the Great Depression.
 - 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Franklin Delano Roosevelt
 - b. The New Deal
 - 3. Skill Objectives:
 - a. The students will identify and analyze cause and effect.
- B. *Materials*
- 1. Reading over Huey Long, Sinclair Lewis, and the American Communist Party (look on Internet sites provided).
 - 2. Highlighters
 - 3. Questions over the readings chosen
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
- 1. radical-a person who favors drastic change
 - 2. Radical Movement-a movement of drastic change by a group
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
- 1. Make up questions to readings using state test connections.
 - 2. Have students annotate readings and answer the questions.

- E. *Evaluation/Assessment:*
1. Evaluate students on correctly annotating the work and successfully answering the questions.

Lesson Eight: Roosevelt Proposes a New Deal

- A. *Daily Objectives:*
1. Concept Objectives
 - a. Students will gain an appreciation of the people and events of the New Deal.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Franklin Delano Roosevelt
 - b. The New Deal
 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. The students will be able to write a one-paragraph reflection/ opinion of Roosevelt's speech from the perspective of a person living through the Great Depression.
- B. *Materials:*
1. Tape Recorder and Tape of Roosevelt's speech (see Bibliography)
 2. Blank outline of the speech components (on the board or in handout form)
 3. Directions for response paragraph
- C. *Key Vocabulary:*
1. New Deal-an economic reform program adopted by President Franklin Roosevelt to overcome the problems created by the Great Depression
 2. Great Depression-the severe economic slump that followed the collapse of the stock market in 1929
 3. fear-an unpleasant and often strong emotion caused by expectation or awareness of danger
 4. consecration-
 5. induction-
 6. candor-
 7. impels-
 8. pre-eminently-
 9. endure-
 10. curtailment-to make less by cutting off part of
 11. stricken-troubled with disease, misfortune, or sorrow
 12. reposed-to lay/lie at rest
 13. arduous-extremely difficult
 14. stern-
 15. mandate-
 16. perspective/point of view-a way of looking at or thinking about something, a standpoint
- D. *Procedure and Activities:*
1. Have the tape recorder and tape of Roosevelt's speech ready as students enter the classroom.
 2. Give a brief introduction of President Roosevelt.
 3. Hand out the outlines of the speech for students to fill in during the speech.
 4. After the speech, the students will write a one paragraph reflection/ opinion of Roosevelt's speech from the perspective/point of view of a person living through the Great Depression.
- E. *Evaluation/Assessment:*
1. Evaluate students by reviewing paragraphs and outlines.

Lesson Nine: Do you know your A,B, C's?

- A. *Daily Objectives:*
1. Concept Objectives
 - a. Students will gain an appreciation of the people and events of the New Deal
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. The New Deal
 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. The students will research and locate information from a variety of sources, specifically the Internet.
 - b. The students will present their research to the class.
- B. *Materials:*
1. Computer lab with Internet access, web-site address (see bibliography).
 2. Alphabet cards and a big bowl, directions for research/presentation, worksheet for students to fill in during the presentations
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Alphabet soup-
 2. New Deal-an economic reform program adopted by President Franklin Roosevelt to overcome the problems created by the Great Depression
 3. Great Depression-the severe economic slump that followed the collapse of the stock market in 1929
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Prior to class, divide alphabet soup programs into 30 alphabet cards (see appendix list)
 2. List alphabet programs on the board for students.
 3. As the students enter the room, let them draw an alphabet card from the big bowl.
 4. If class is smaller than thirty students, make sure that number of cards is equal to number of students. Cards not drawn, researched, and presented by students will need to be presented by the teacher.
 5. Have students locate their alphabet partners using the list on the board.
 6. Take students to a computer lab and provide Internet address for research (see appendix)
 7. Assign students as partners to research the Who, What, When, Where, Why of their alphabet soup program.
 8. Have students present findings to the class.
 9. During presentations, have students complete Alphabet Soup Worksheet
- E. *Evaluation/Assessment*
1. Give students a New Deal Quiz over the Alphabet programs (see appendix).

Lesson Ten: Hey, Who turned out the lights?

- A. *Daily Objectives:*
1. Content Objectives:
 - a. The students will gain an appreciation of the people and events of the New Deal.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. The New Deal
 3. Skill Objectives:
 - a. The students will compile notes and a daily log.
- B. *Materials*
1. Background notes on the TVA,
 2. Directions for writing

3. Pictures/placards
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 1. rural-of or relating to the country, country people or life, or agriculture
 2. TVA-
 3. electrification-process of providing electrical power
 4. empathy-being aware of and sharing another person's feelings, experiences, or actions
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
 1. Have students copy background notes over the Tennessee Valley Authority and the efforts to electrify rural parts of the country.
 2. Provide pictures or placards for students to see the homes of rural people during the Great Depression (see appendix).
 3. Assign students to write a daily log describing their normal day.
 4. Assign students to write a mirror log listing all the electrical appliances they use everyday.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation:*
 1. A participation grade will be given and students can be given the opportunity to share their lists.

Lesson Eleven: Inference and Generalization - Analyzing Political Cartoons

- A. *Daily Objectives:*
 1. Concept Objectives:
 - a. Students will gain an appreciation of the people and events of the New Deal
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. The New Deal
 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. The students will analyze political cartoons.
 - b. The students will recognize bias.
 - c. The students will practice inference and generalization skills.
 - d. The students will recognize propaganda.
- B. *Materials:*
 1. Overhead projector
 2. Cartoon analysis worksheet/guide
 3. Background notes.
- C. *Key Vocabulary:*
 1. propaganda-news and information designed to influence people's beliefs or actions.
 2. inference-the process of inferring, taking stated information and deriving an opinion or statement based upon the information
 3. generalization-
 4. bias-
 5. political cartoon-
 6. court packing
 7. imperialism-
 8. checks and balances-
- D. *Procedures/Activities:*
 1. Have the students write down background notes over Roosevelt – Imperial Presidency and Court Packing scandals. Discuss checks and balances.
 2. Show political cartoons on the overhead and have students analyze using analysis worksheet (see appendix).

3. Have students share their analysis with a classmate.
 4. Have students pick one insight with their partner to share with the class.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation:*
1. The students will turn in analysis worksheets.

VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITIES:

- A. Show video over the Great Depression (see resources).
- B. Have comprehensive exam over entire unit.
- C. Have students get into groups, write, and act out a play based on what they have learned about life during the Great Depression.

VII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS:

[Distributed at session only]

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- A. Audio/Visual Materials:
Life in the Thirties. McGraw Hill Training Systems (video)
- B. Books:
Meltzer, Milton. *Brother Can You Spare A Dime? : The Great Depression. 1929-1933*. Facts on File, Inc. L991. ISBN 0-8160-2372-7.
- Schraff, Anne E. *The Great Depression and the New Deal*. _Franklin Watts, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney 1990.
- Stanley, Jerry. *Children of the Dust Bowl: The True Story of the School at Weedpatch Camp*. _Crown Publishers, Inc. 1992. ISBN 0930324229.
- Sterling, Mary Ellen. *The Twentieth Century*. _Huntington Beach, Ca: Teacher Created Materials, Inc., 1966. ISBN 1-55734-025-8.
- Watkins, T.H. *The Great Depression: American in the 1930's*. Little Brown, 1993. ISBN 0316924539.
- C. Internet websites:
<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Aegean/9006/firsttry>.
- www.nobel.se/laureates/literature-1930-1-autobio.html
- www.ssa.gov/history/hlong/.html
- <http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/archives/sova.html>