

# THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The Great Depression was a time in the very late 1920's and the 1930's when the world economy was facing very difficult times. In the United States, the Stock Market in New York City crashed. That left many people without jobs. Also, at the same time, the farmlands of the Great Plains experienced a severe drought. This drought led to horrible dust storms.

The cause of the Great Depression is complicated. There were many causes, and it is not always easy to tell what happened first. Some of the reasons include a weak banking system. There were a lot of small banks that couldn't survive when people took out too much money suddenly. There was not enough money in the United States, so prices went down. Money went down, wages went down. When wages went down people didn't have money to spend and companies didn't make money. When companies didn't make money, they had to lay off many workers.

Fifteen million people lost their jobs during the Great Depression. Another reason for the Great Depression was the Dust Bowl. The Dust Bowl was a drought in the farmlands of the Great Plains that caused many dust storms to ruin crops.

The president at the beginning of the Great Depression was Herbert Hoover. Herbert Hoover had no political experience before becoming president. He didn't know what to do during this big crisis and there was little he could do. The whole world was facing a depression. Then in 1933 a new President came to office. His name was Franklin D. Roosevelt. Franklin D. Roosevelt created a program called the New Deal. The New Deal had three parts. These included Relief, Recovery and Reform. Relief offered help to those without jobs. Recovery gave people short-term jobs. Reform meant new laws and regulations about the economy to avoid a Great Depression again.

The Great Depression ended in the late 1930's when war started in Europe. The United States supported France and England, so the US started making supplies for them. This created many more jobs.

## SYMBOLS

Underline the "Words to Know" found in the passage. (see bottom)

? Something you have a question about

! Something that surprised you

✓ Your favorite fact

## COLOR

[YELLOW] 

What were the 3 parts of the New Deal?

[GREEN] 

When was the Dust Bowl?

[ ] 

When did the Great Depression occur?

## WORDS TO KNOW

Crisis – time of intense difficulty

Economy – system in which an area makes money

Severe – intense

# CAUSES OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

## CHECK THE CORRECT ANSWER

What year did the Stock Market crash?

☐ 1928

☐ 1929

☐ 1930

What is the main cause of the Great Depression?

☐ Shares

☐ Stocks

☐ Animals

Where was the Great Depression twice as bad?

☐ East

☐ Great Lakes

☐ Old West

## TRUE OR FALSE

The value of crops plummeted, and farmers didn't have money to pay off their loans.

TRUE

FALSE

Banks had limited amounts of money, so if people quickly withdrew money then they would have to shut down.

TRUE

FALSE

## Fill in the blank

During this time, the Stock Market crashed on October 24, 1929.

Reasons for the Great Depression are many. A result of a weak banking system, the Stock Market crash, and \_\_\_\_\_.

## WORD SEARCH

J A N D N L A J U L T E L C V A Z Q  
O F B C Q A E R L I O E V S J I S Y  
L N L P N X I G W S A S F J K V U P T  
K S M V D Y Q P Q I P P N A N R S M B C  
P T F K H W M L W T T I D E R C S Y W  
M O L E S R E M R A F I L F X W E S  
G C G H V T H G U O R D B X P N C K S  
F K L O B Z C J R L T R Z W O F T N M  
B S S M L I V E S T O C K M P L O A N  
B Y O K K C W A E C O N O M Y U A B Y Q

BANKS  
BOUGHT  
LIVESTOCK  
ECONOMY  
MONEY  
CREDIT  
FARMERS  
STOCKS

# THE DUST BOWL

## CHECK THE CORRECT ANSWER

How far away could the effects of the dust storm be felt?

☐ 10 miles☐ 1,000 miles☐ 10,000 miles

The land in the Great Plains and \_\_\_\_\_ tended to be dry.

☐ Northeast☐ Southeast☐ Southwest

What color was the dust?

☐ Grey☐ Red☐ Black

## TRUE OR FALSE

The Dust Bowl was \_\_\_\_\_ of dust storms in the 1930s.

TRUE

FALSE

The wind would blow monstrous clouds of black dust through towns.

TRUE

FALSE

## Fill in the blank

The people who escaped the Dust Bowl were often called \_\_\_\_\_.

The crop prices were so low that people could not pay for the plows and tractors that they had bought on \_\_\_\_\_.

## WORD SEARCH

H U M H Z T K I K B Y J D M G J Z  
S T S P O R C A A U X Q W G Z O I N E  
D T R W A E C I N C B J Z R N B G N E  
U R W X U U E G A P A X S W O L E K N S  
O A T U H K D U S N S X A V E G D R E  
L C W W O L F Z D I M G D J B K F C  
C T C R E D I T Q A A F C L B K I L I  
R O K Z I L Q B J R C X I Z R R N E C F  
P R O B L E M S R E M R A F P Z Y D W V  
S S Y G A C L C D W K Q Z E Y T R S X Y

CROPS  
FARMERS  
LOWS  
PRICES  
CREDIT  
CLOUDS  
PROBLEMS  
RAIN  
TRACTORS

# THE NEW DEAL

The New Deal was a program started by Franklin D. Roosevelt and passed by Congress. It was created to help end the Great Depression. The program was made up of three parts – Relief, Recovery and Reform. Some programs covered more than one of the parts.

Relief meant support for the poor. This included welfare programs for the unemployed. People needed help and they needed it right away. Twenty-five percent or 1 out of 4 people didn't have a job.

Recovery meant addressing problems so that the country could get better. There were several recovery programs. The most well-known is the Public Works Administration. The Public Works Administration was a government agency that hired people to build bridges, schools and airports. They also focused on building dams to control flooding in Tennessee.

Reform meant changing laws in order to avoid a future economic depression. There were two major reforms. These were the Wagner Act which gave workers more of a right to unionize so that they could be paid a fair wage and have support at their work. The second was the Social Security Act which gave help to those in need, such as the elderly and disabled.

Not everyone liked the New Deal. Some people felt that the government was overstepping their boundaries; they shouldn't be so involved in business. Some felt that the programs the government created were taking away opportunities from businesses to make money.

However, there were several great things about the New Deal. The most significant being that the economy was able to recover. Also, workers gained more rights. This gave people felt they had support from the government if they faced hard times. Overall, people were happy and many different kinds of people came together. People liked Franklin Roosevelt so much that they re-elected him three times. His presidency ended when he died.

## WORDS TO KNOW

Congress – lawmakers

Welfare – financial support to those in need

Wage – income earned

©Think Tank

## SYMBOLS

Underline the "Words to Know" found in the passage. (see bottom)

? Something you have a question about

! Something that surprised you

☆ Your favorite fact

## COLOR

YELLOW

What hard things came from the Great Depression?

GREEN

What were some problems with the New Deal?

What were the two major reforms?