

Notes for the Parent or Teacher

This newspaper pack can be used in a number of ways. The pages can be printed on regular paper for drafting the articles and then printed on other various types of paper that give a more authentic feel. The images used in the pack are also repeated on extra pages at the end of the unit in case they are needed for other projects or formats.

"The Big Picture" provides students a very brief summary of events in order to help them understand how the events and people depicted were related, but it is meant only to serve as a springboard for further discovery as students investigate and complete their assignments.

Also, as explained in the student introduction, sometimes the artist's rendition of an event does not match what history records happened. This is a great opportunity to help the student learn about investigating the facts of history and weighing conflicting sources and evidence.

In a classroom setting, you may wish to assign one article to each student and then create a class newspaper or presentation of the events studied.

A template for a newspaper page. It features a large rectangular box with rounded corners for a main image or headline. Below this box are five horizontal lines for text. A large, diagonal 'SAMPLE' watermark is overlaid on the entire page.

Reporting From the Great Depression Instructions

It's time to go on assignment to the Great Depression. You'll need a few tools to get started. First, read the section called "The Big Picture." This introduces you to the time period and helps you see how your assignments are connected to each other.

Next are your assignments. Each assignment includes a small picture that matches the large picture on a newspaper page you'll find in this pack.

The next tool you have been given are ten sets of pages for newspaper articles. Each set is made up of three pages. The first has a large picture. There is room at the very top for the name of your newspaper and space for the issue number and date beneath it. The large picture is a picture related to your assignment (but be careful—some of these field artists don't always depict the information accurately, so be sure to do your own research and determine what happened at the event). Write your incredible, eye-catching headline beneath the picture. Then you can start your news story. Fill the first page. Then, depending on how long your story will be, fill the next two pages or jump to the third page that has the small box in the corner. Finish your article on this page. In the small box, write something such as a short bio of the author of the article, an advertisement, a help-wanted ad, etc. But be sure to keep in line with the time period. You can't have an ad for a television before one would have been invented!

Write an article for each of your assignments. When you are done, you will have a great record of the Great Depression!

Reporting From the Great Depression

The Big Picture

The Great Depression was a long period of very high unemployment and problems in the economies of countries around the world. It occurred during the 1930s. Many factors contributed to it. Because people did not trust the economy, they stopped buying as many things on credit. They were afraid they would not be able to pay the money back. Both people and banks invested in the stock market. In the second half of 1929, industries in the United States reduced how much they were producing.

In October 1929, the value of stocks fell drastically. Many people lost much of what they'd invested. Since banks were also invested in the stock market, they lost money when the stock market failed. People became worried their money wouldn't be safe in banks either, so they took their money out. People who had loans couldn't afford to pay them back. All this made a disaster for banks, and many of them had to close. This meant even more people lost their savings.

Farmers and businesses earned less money for their products during the depression, which made it hard to make payments on mortgages. Many farmers had to sell their farms, auctioning off the land and equipment to the highest bidder. With the farmers now unemployed, they had to move around in search of work that was very hard to find.

Droughts in the 1930s also caused problems in the Midwest and Southwest. It scorched the land, and dust storms came and blew away much of the good soil from the farmland. The worst of these storms carried much soil to the East Coast. Some people stayed and tried to make the best of the land that was left, but many left and went to the West Coast to try to find work on farms there.

As more and more people lost their jobs, it became harder to feed families. People couldn't find work or enough work to earn what was needed. Many times, people stood in line at places where they could get a free or inexpensive meal. Charity organizations and some businesses gave food to people to help. The people stood in what came to be called "bread lines." People also went to "soup kitchens" to get food.

Another agency that helped people get food was the Food Surplus Commodities Corporation, which had been known as the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation. This organization helped people by giving them stamps to get surplus food from farmers that they could get at places like the grocery store.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected president in 1932, he worked with Congress to try to find ways to help people through the depression. One of the organizations that began in 1933 was the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). This organization tried to help people by giving them jobs working on conservation projects. They were trained to plant trees, build dams, and fight forest fires among other things.

While good jobs were scarce all over the country, some were fortunate enough to have jobs working on the Hoover Dam, which had been approved for construction before the depression set in. More than 21,000 people worked on the dam, which included people from almost every state in the Union and a few from other countries. The average wage for workers on the Hoover Dam was sixty-two and one-half cents per hour. Wages seem low compared to today's wages, but they were actually very good. These workers made more per year than a civil service employee, a bus driver, or a steel worker.

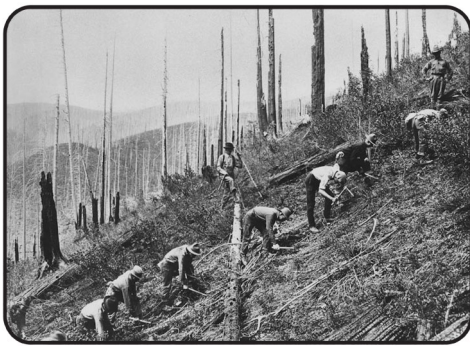
The National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 authorized the creation of a government agency called the Public Works Administration. One of the many achievements of the Public Works Administration during the depression was the aid it gave to help construct the Triborough Bridge. Construction had been scheduled to begin in 1929, but it was put on hold because of the stock market crash. Work resumed in 1933 when the federal government gave aid to proceed. It has been reported that when the work by people constructing the bridge, and the work needed to produce and provide the materials they needed, are totaled, more than 31,000,000 hours of work in at least 134 cities in twenty states was generated by the bridge's construction. This included steel workers to provide girders, cement factories to provide the cement for the roadway and the anchors for the bridge, and wood for the forms needed when the cement was formed, along with many other jobs. This was a huge boost to the those who were unemployed at the time. The bridge was completed and dedicated in 1936.

Slowly, the worst suffering from the Great Depression lessened through the 1930s. However, the United States economy did not boom again until the country entered World War II. The war materials needed created many jobs across the country, though it cost the nation and the world so much in many other ways.

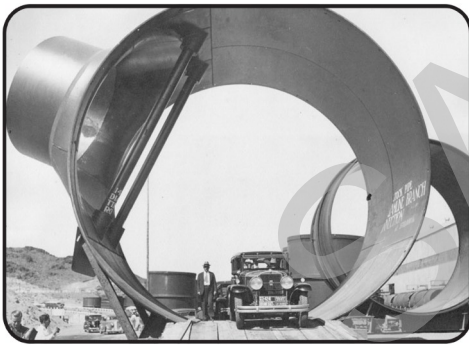




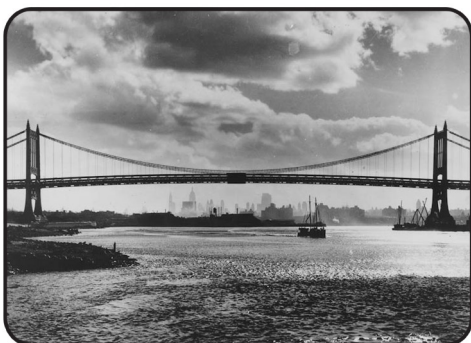
On Assignment: Help from the Food Surplus Commodities Corporation
Report on the way the Food Surplus Commodities Corporation works to help people afford more food. Talk to some of the people at the grocery store. How do they feel about the help being given? Has it made a difference in their ability to feed their families?



On Assignment: Working with the Civilian Conservation Corps
These men are working for the Civilian Conservation Corps. Do they like the work they are doing? Do they feel they are helping the country? Are they happy to have jobs? How is this impacting their families?



On Assignment: The Hoover Dam
President Roosevelt is touring the Hoover Dam construction site. You have been given the opportunity to interview him and some of the workers at the site. How does the president feel about the progress being made on the construction? How do the workers feel about their ability to have a fairly good job? Did they have to move to the site to work there? What impact is it having on their families?



On Assignment: The Triborough Bridge
This massive bridge project has just been dedicated. How will it impact the lives of the people living in the area? How do the workers feel about the project they have completed? Do they have other jobs to go to from here? Do they think there is any hope for the country to get out of the Great Depression?



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