

The Great Depression and the New Deal -DBQ

Document A

Those families who had lived on a little piece of land, who had lived and died on forty acres, had eaten or starved on the produce of forty acres, had now the whole West to rove in. And they scampered about, looking for work; and the highways were streams of people, and the ditch banks were lines of people. . . . The great highways streamed with moving people. . . .

And this was good, for wages went down and prices stayed up. The great owners were glad. . . . And wages went down and prices stayed up. And pretty soon now we'll have serfs again. . . .

And the little farmers . . . lost their farms, and they were taken by the great owners, the banks, and the companies.

. . . As time went on, there were fewer farms. The little farmers moved into town for a while and exhausted their credit, exhausted their friends, their relatives. And then they too were on the highways. And the roads were crowded with men ravenous for work, murderous for work.

And the companies, the banks worked at their own doom and they did not know it. The fields were fruitful, and starving men moved on the roads. . . .

The great companies did not know that the line between hunger and anger is a thin line. . . . On the highways the people moved like ants and searched for work, for food. And the anger began to ferment.

The Grapes of Wrath
by John Steinbeck

- 1.) Based on the text what can we determine might be the setting of this passage?
- 2.) In your own word attempt to identify what kind of people the main characters are?
- 3.) What can we infer based on the text is the main reason the farmers are so angry?

Document B

"My father walked the streets everyday. . . . My mother went to work. I even worked, playing the piano for dancing class on Saturday mornings for fifty cents an hour. My mother would find a few pennies and we would go to the greengrocer and wait until he threw out the stuff that was beginning to rot. We would pick out the best rotted potato and greens and carrots that were already soft. Then we would go to the butcher and beg a marrow bone. And then with the few pennies we would buy a box of barley, and we'd have soup to last us for three or four days. I remember she would say to me sometimes, 'You go out and do it. I'm ashamed.'"

—*Clara Hancox, quoted in The Century, by Peter Jennings and Todd Brewster*

- 1.) Based on the information contained in the primary source what can we infer was the effect of the Great Depression on Clara and her family?

Document C

Programs sponsored by the National Youth Administration (NYA) helped boost family incomes so that children could stay in school. Helen Farmer recalled working in an NYA program as a teenager.

"I lugged . . . drafts and reams of paper home, night after night. . . . Sometimes I typed all night. . . . This was a good program. It got necessary work done. It gave teenagers a chance to work for pay. . . . It gave my mother relief from my necessary demands for money."

—*Helen Farmer, quoted in The Great Depression, by T. H. Watkins*

- 1.) Identify the way in which programs like the NYA were designed to help people like Helen Farmer.

Document D



Source: An image of Harry Byrd of Virginia questioning Harry L. Hopkins about the effectiveness of government spending. Courtesy of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

- 1.) Based on the imagery in the primary source what is Harry Hopkins attempting to fix by “dumping” money into it?

Document E

Social Security

Referring to the Social Security Act, Frances Perkins recalled, "Nothing of the sort had ever come before the Congress of the United States." The act altered many Americans' ideas about the government's responsibility to ensure the welfare of citizens. Since its beginning in the 1930s, the program has expanded to cover children, people with disabilities, and many others. Social Security also manages numerous other welfare programs, including subsidized school lunches. Providing monthly pensions to retired people or their survivors is the best-known Social Security program. Ida May Fuller of Ludlow, Vermont, was the first person to receive a monthly Social Security pension. Her first check, for \$22.54, arrived January 31, 1940.

Over time, the monthly payments have risen along with the cost of living. At the same time, more people are covered by Social Security. Although many people feared that this situation would eventually force the Social Security program into bankruptcy, legislators have long been reluctant to alter the system. Finally, in the late 1990s Congress enacted several measures to reform Social Security and guard it for future generations.

- 1.) Based on the information contained in the text what can we infer have been the major changes to Social Security since its introduction in the 1930's?
- 2.) Describe in your own words what you believe the long term impact of Social Security has been on America.

Document F



In this image FDR is treating the United States like a sick patient in an attempt to heal the nation's social and economic illnesses.

- 1.) Identify the main characters in the political cartoon.
- 2.) In your opinion do you feel that the artist is optimistic or pessimistic in regards to FDR's abilities as President during the Great Depression? ***Please give evidence for your response**

Document G

"Talking Dust Bowl."

"Back in nineteen twenty-seven
I had a little farm and I called that heaven,
Well, the price was up and the rain came down
And I hauled my crops all in to town. . . .
Rain quit and the wind got high,
And a black old dust storm filled the sky,
And I swapped my farm for a Ford machine
And I poured it full of this gasoline. . . .
We got out to the West Coast broke,
So dad gum hungry I thought I'd croak,
And I bummed up a spud or two,
And my wife fixed up a 'tater stew."
Woody Guthrie

- 1.) In your own words describe what major event Woody Guthrie is describing.
- 2.) What can we infer was the main reason Woody Guthrie might have said "And I swapped my farm for a Ford machine"?
- 3.) Based on the elements of the primary source on which major roadway might Woody Guthrie and his wife have traveled on their journey to the West Coast?

Document H

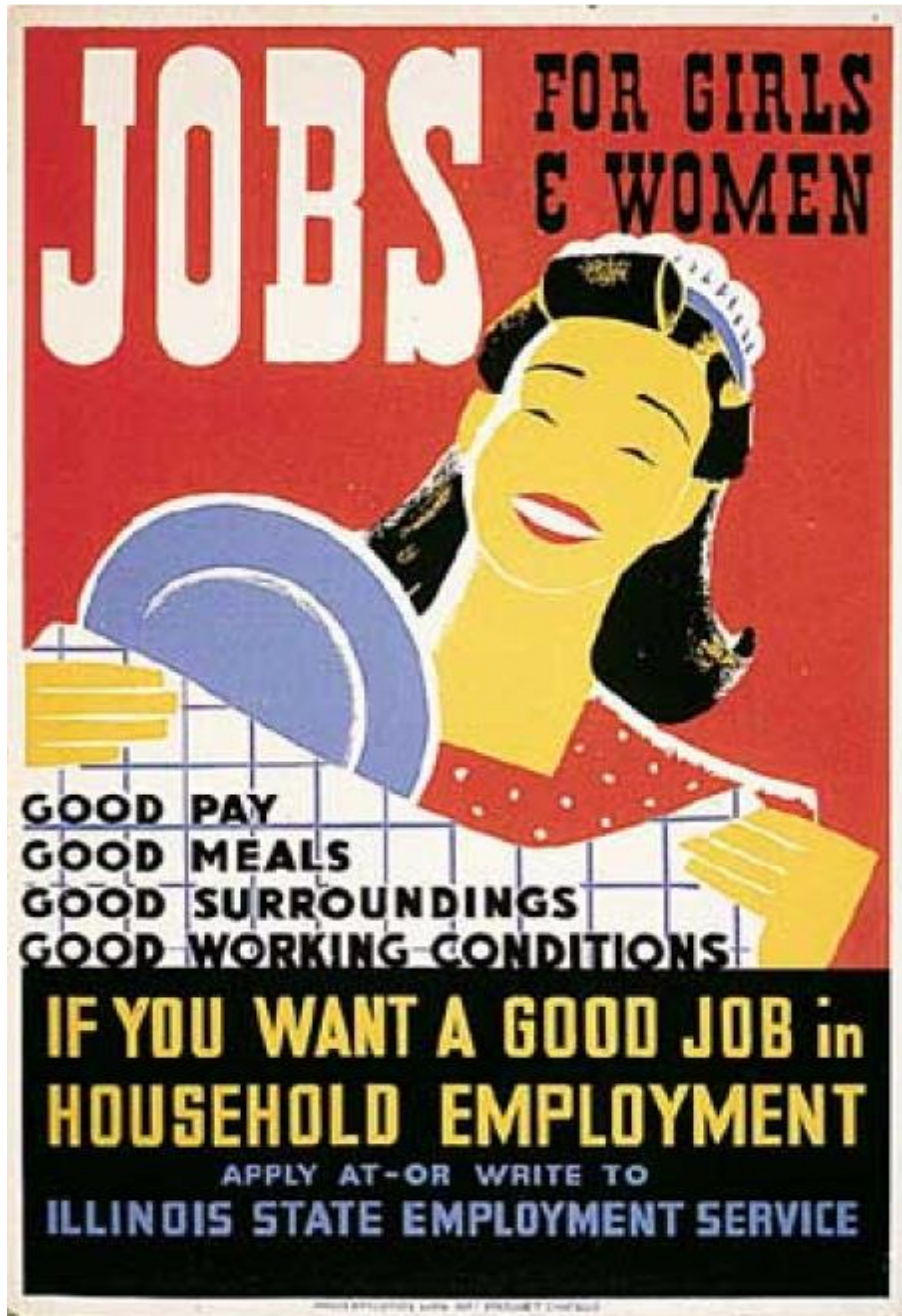


This photograph shows young American men working for the CCC.

While they were part of this New Deal program they were able to earn a living, help support their family and improve conservation efforts across the country.

- 1.) What can we infer these workers are doing in the primary source photograph?
- 2.) Based on the description below the photograph what can we infer was the main benefit for a young man who choose to join the CCC?

Document I



Source: The Granger Collection, New York

- 1.) What can we infer was the reason the Illinois State Employment Service elected to produce an advertisement like this?
- 2.) How might a poster like this be considered bias in terms of its intended audience?

Document J



In this photograph the woman and her child have been photographed in front of their makeshift home on the Mescalero Apache Reservation in 1936.

Source: American Library of Congress.

- 1.) What can you tell about this woman's standard of living based on the photograph?
- 2.) In what ways can we infer the Great Depression affected minorities in the United States?

Document K

Year	First New Deal	Provisions
1933	Emergency Banking Act	Gave the administration the right to regulate banks
1933	Farm Credit Administration (FCA)	Refinanced farm mortgages at lower interest and for longer terms
1933	Economy Act	Proposed to balance the budget through savings measures
1933	Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)	Employed young men on public-works projects
1933	Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA)	Provided grants to states for relief efforts
1933	Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA)	Paid farmers to reduce crops; funded by a tax on food processors; later declared unconstitutional
1933	Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)	Constructed dams and power plants to improve social and economic welfare in the region
1933	Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC)	Loaned money to home owners to refinance mortgages
1933	Banking Act of 1933	Created FDIC and authorized branch banking
1933	Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)	Insured individual bank deposits up to \$5,000
1933	National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA)	Established NRA and PWA; later declared unconstitutional
1933	National Recovery Administration (NRA)	Regulated industry through fair-trade codes for businesses
1933	Public Works Administration (PWA)	Constructed roads, public buildings, and other projects designed to increase employment and business activity
1933	Civil Works Administration (CWA)	Employed jobless people to work on federal, state, and local projects
1934	Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)	Regulated the securities market
1934	Federal Housing Administration (FHA)	Insured bank loans for building and repairing houses
Year	Second New Deal	Provisions
1935	Works Progress Administration (WPA)	Employed people to do artistic, public-works, and research projects
1935	Soil Conservation Service (SCS)	Promoted control and prevention of soil erosion
1935	Rural Electrification Administration (REA)	Provided electricity to rural areas lacking public utilities
1935	National Youth Administration (NYA)	Provided job training and work for people ages 16–25; provided part-time jobs for needy students
1935	National Labor Relations Act (Wagner-Connery Act)	Recognized rights of labor to organize and bargain collectively; regulated labor practices
1935	Social Security Act	Provided unemployment benefits, pensions for the elderly, and survivor's insurance
1935	Revenue Act of 1935 (Wealth Tax Act)	Increased taxes on the wealthy
1937	Farm Security Administration (FSA)	Provided loans to help tenant farmers buy land
1938	Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 (AAA)	Increased government regulation of crop production and increased payments to farmers
1938	Revenue Act of 1938	Reduced taxes on large corporations and increased taxes on smaller businesses
1938	Fair Labor Standards Act (Wages and Hours Law)	Established minimum wage of 40 cents per hour and maximum workweek of 40 hours for businesses in interstate commerce

Source: Encyclopedia of American History

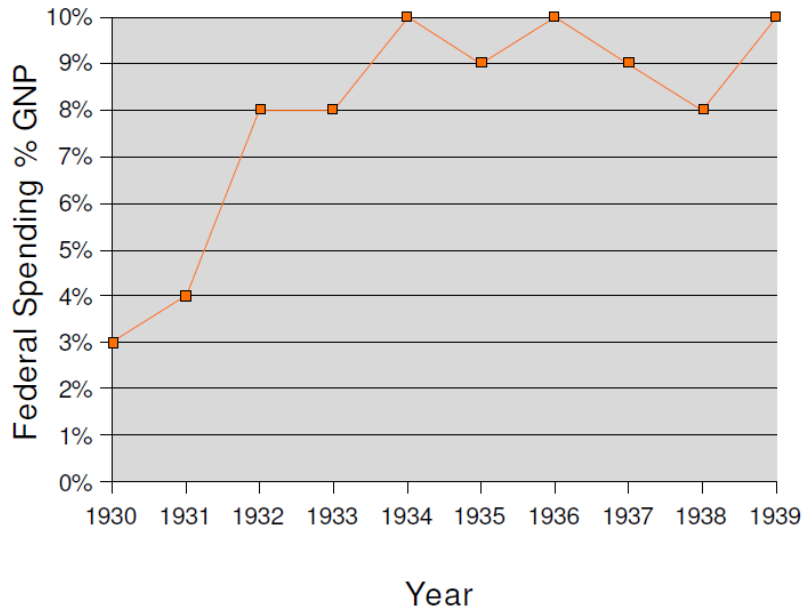
This chart shows the sweeping social and economic changes introduced by FDR from 1933 to 1938.

- 1.) After examining the chart identify and describe which three programs you feel were most impactful. *Please describe why you feel this way.
- 2.) Identify to the best of your ability identify which of the New Deal Programs listed above still impact nation today?

Document L



Federal Spending



- 1.) Based on the graphs shown above what can we identify were the major changes in employment between 1925 and 1939?
- 2.) Based on the graphs shown above what can we infer was the effect of federal spending on unemployment between 1930 and 1939?