

## *The 1930s*

### *Teacher's Guide*

One of America's most tumultuous decades, the 1930s challenged Americans with a financial crisis, environmental catastrophe, and high unemployment rates. The repercussions of the Great Depression brought about change for both the people and the government, and many new habits and policies are still being debated today.

In this Teacher's Guide, examine the role of government and the New Deal. Explore the relationship between conservation and economic recovery, and look at the personal side of what life was like in the 1930s.

- Lesson Plan 1: The Role of Government and the New Deal
- Lesson Plan 2: 1930s Conservation
- Lesson Plan 3: The Human Cost, in Pictures
- Lesson Plan 4: A 1930s Museum
- Lesson Plan 5: The Life of a Worker, in Words and Pictures
- Lesson Plan 6: A Popular Culture Time Capsule

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



## *The 1930s*

### *Lesson Plan 1: The Role of Government and the New Deal*

#### **Introduction:** During the **Great Depression**

([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/2/](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/2/)), Franklin Delano Roosevelt initiated the far-reaching legislation of the **New Deal**

([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/5/](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/5/)) that extended the federal government’s arm deep into the economy, the policies of individual states, and the lives of many Americans. The programs faced fierce opposition at the time, and many of those same arguments—including limiting the role of government as a whole—have resonated throughout United States history in the political battles over the economy, health care, unemployment, and other volatile issues.

**Length of Lesson:** 4-6 days

#### **Objectives:**

- Understand the different positions on the role of the federal government.
- Analyze the reasoning behind President Roosevelt’s 1930s New Deal.

#### **Tasks:**

- Discuss the role of the federal government in the United States.
- Hold a senate debate on the merit of the government’s increased level of economic and social intervention during the New Deal.

#### **Process:**

##### **Part 1: The Role of Government**

1. Individually answer and then discuss as a class the following questions:
  - What role should the federal government play in our day-to-day lives?
  - What are our expectations of the federal government?

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



- How should the federal and state governments balance their authority?
  - How much control should the federal government exert over the economy?
2. As a class, discuss the [Role of the Government](http://www.america.gov/st/business-english/2008/April/20080415223308eaifas0.4951441.html) ([www.america.gov/st/business-english/2008/April/20080415223308eaifas0.4951441.html](http://www.america.gov/st/business-english/2008/April/20080415223308eaifas0.4951441.html)) article from America.gov and continue talking about any points that were already mentioned in the first discussion and any new relevant ideas.

## Part 2: The New Deal

1. Review the main ideas of the Great Depression and the New Deal. Then discuss whether a government should actively work to end a severe economic crisis.
2. Show the selected segment on the events leading up to the stock market crash. Should the government have intervened in the months before the crash? Do you think it could have averted the looming crisis?
  - Video Segment #1: [The Crash of 1929](#), Chapter 4: Mass Illusion ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/crash](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/crash))
3. Show the selected video segments from the Great Depression that depict the government involving itself in the economic recovery of the United States. After each clip, discuss the value of that specific program and whether or not it was necessary.
  - Video Segment #2: [Surviving the Dust Bowl](#), Chapter 5: Saving the Land ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl))
  - Video Segment #3: [The Civilian Conservation Corps](#), Chapter 3: FDR's New Deal— Includes an overview of the New Deal and opposition to the CCC ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/ccc](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/ccc))
4. Research the arguments for and against the New Deal.
5. Individually or in small groups, prepare a speech defending or opposing the New Deal. Include philosophical arguments and historical facts to defend the selected position. Additionally, use the beliefs and the role of President Roosevelt in the argument.
6. Hold a Senate legislative session, allowing each individual or group to present their position.

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



7. As a class, discuss the merits for and against the New Deal. Link those arguments, as appropriate, to current events.

**Part 3: The New Deal and 2009 Stimulus (Optional)**

1. Review the provided 2009 Stimulus links.
2. Using the position determined in Part 2 as a foundation, develop an argument for or against the 2009 governmental efforts using the following criteria:
  - Economic comparison between the Great Depression and the 2009 recession
  - Types of stimulus instituted
  - Perceived role of government
3. Write a second senate speech defending or attacking the 2009 stimulus package, drawing facts from 2009 and the New Deal.
4. Have each group or individual present their opinion in a second senate session.
5. As a class, compare and contrast the federal government’s reactions to the economic conditions during the 1930s and in 2009. Do they merit the same type of response? Did the government overstep its role in one or both situations?

**Resources:**

New Deal Links

- Video Segments:
  - [The Crash of 1929](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/crash) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/crash)
    - Chapter 1: Permanent Prosperity
    - Chapter 6: The End of an Era
  - [The Civilian Conservation Corps](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/ccs) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/ccs)
    - Chapter 3: FDR’s New Deal—Includes an overview of the New Deal and opposition to the CCC
    - Chapter 7: A Legacy of Change
  - [Surviving the Dust Bowl](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl)
    - Chapter 5: Saving the Land

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
 MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
 AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



- [The New Deal](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/5/) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/5/)
- [Franklin Delano Roosevelt](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/presidents/32_f_roosevelt/) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/presidents/32\_f\_roosevelt/)
- An electronic version of the [United States Constitution](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution.html) (www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution.html)
- From The Foundation for Teaching Economics, [“The Constitution and the Economy”](http://www.fte.org/teachers/programs/history/lessons/lesson02.htm)—the U.S. Constitution as an economic document (www.fte.org/teachers/programs/history/lessons/lesson02.htm)
- [FDR’s Inaugural Address](http://newdeal.feri.org/speeches/1933a.htm), March 4, 1933 (http://newdeal.feri.org/speeches/1933a.htm)
- FDR’s Fireside Chat, [Outlining the New Deal](http://newdeal.feri.org/chat/chat02.htm) (http://newdeal.feri.org/chat/chat02.htm—May 7, 1933)
- [Opposition to the New Deal](http://www.schoolhistory.co.uk/lessons/usa192941/opposition.html)—a British site lets you create your own diagram to outline different opposition views of the New Deal (www.schoolhistory.co.uk/lessons/usa192941/opposition.html)
- From the Library of Congress, [“Disagreeing with the New Deal”](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/features/timeline/depwwii/newdeal/disagree.html)—an interview with an average American who opposed the New Deal (http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/features/timeline/depwwii/newdeal/disagree.html)
- Digital History article, [Roosevelt’s Critics](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=474) (www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\_display.cfm?HHID=474)

### 2009 Stimulus Links

- Bloomberg.com article from August 8, 2009, [“US Recession Worst Since Depression”](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601087&sid=aNivTjr852TI) (http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601087&sid=aNivTjr852TI)
- [Economic Stimulus Articles](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/u/united_states_economy/economic_stimulus/index.html) from *The New York Times*. (http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/u/united\_states\_economy/economic\_stimulus/index.html)
- Bloomberg.com article from February 18, 2009, [“1930s Myth”](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601039&sid=aPQDtpOebjKI) (www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601039&sid=aPQDtpOebjKI)

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



- *The New York Times* feature: “The 2009 Stimulus Plan”  
([http://projects.nytimes.com/44th\\_president/stimulus](http://projects.nytimes.com/44th_president/stimulus))
- From the Bureau of Labor Statistics, *The Economy at a Glance*  
([www.bls.gov/eag/eag.us.htm](http://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.us.htm))
- Globalissues.org article from July 25, 2009, “The Global Financial Crisis”  
([www.globalissues.org/article/768/global-financial-crisis](http://www.globalissues.org/article/768/global-financial-crisis))

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR *AMERICAN EXPERIENCE* PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
*AMERICAN EXPERIENCE* IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



## *The 1930s*

### *Lesson Plan 2: 1930s Conservation*

**Introduction:** The federal government had long sought to protect the environment through the creation of National Parks and Forests. However, during the 1930s, the idea of environmental conservation took on a new meaning, which spread into mainstream America. The [Dust Bowl](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl) ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl)) forced farmers and legislators around the nation to confront the need for soil conservation. In addition to opening up America's wilderness for tourists, the [Civilian Conservation Corps](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/ccc) (CCC) ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/ccc](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/ccc)) instilled a new understanding that the environment needs to be maintained and purposefully conserved. Finally, the federally funded [Hoover Dam](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/h Hoover) ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/h Hoover](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/h Hoover)) sought to control nature itself.

**Length of Lesson:** 1-2 Days

#### **Objectives:**

- Understand the successes and failures of environmental policy during the 1930s.
- Examine the conservation movement during the 1930s.

**Task:** Write a news article as if living in the late 1930s and reporting on the CCC, the Dust Bowl, or the building of Hoover Dam. Discuss environmental issues of the time and any impact of these projects on their surroundings.

#### **Process:**

1. As a class, discuss the nature of conservation and environmentalism in modern times, including global warming, pollution, recycling, and the green movement.
2. Review Radford University's Environmental History Timeline on [conservation history from 1890 - 1920](http://www.runet.edu/~wkovarik/envhist/5progressive.html) ([www.runet.edu/~wkovarik/envhist/5progressive.html](http://www.runet.edu/~wkovarik/envhist/5progressive.html)), noting the

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



Progressive Era movement and contributions of President [Theodore Roosevelt](#)

([www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/tr/envir.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/tr/envir.html)).

3. Select one of the following topics: The Civilian Conservation Corps, the Dust Bowl, or Hoover Dam. Research the selected topic using the provided resources, answering the following questions:

- Name a specific issue or problem that was addressed during the 1930s.
- Why did it need addressing?
- Was the solution successful? Why or why not?
- How was it implemented? Did it go as planned?
- Write the news article, following the Media Awareness Network’s basic news article format ([www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/handouts/broadcast\\_news/news\\_article\\_formula.cfm](http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/handouts/broadcast_news/news_article_formula.cfm))

**Resources:**

- Video Segments:
  - Surviving the Dust Bowl ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl))
    - Chapter 2: Settling of the Southern Plains
    - Chapter 5: Saving the Land
  - Hoover Dam ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/hoover](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/hoover))
    - Chapter 2: Harnessing the Colorado River
  - The Civilian Conservation Corps ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/cc](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/cc))
    - Chapter 5: CCC Projects and People—includes environmentalism
    - Chapter 7, A Legacy of Change—includes the impact of the CCC
- [Selected interview excerpts](#) from Author Neil Maher  
([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/cc/storyHighlights/2](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/cc/storyHighlights/2))

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.





## *The 1930s*

### *Lesson Plan 2: The Human Cost, in Pictures*

**Introduction:** The photographers and writers of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) documented the poverty, suffering, and dire conditions faced by thousands of Americans in the 1930s. The images and stories recorded at this time have become symbols of one of the most trying eras in United States history.

**Length of Lesson:** 2-3 Days

#### **Objectives:**

- Examine primary source images and firsthand accounts of the Great Depression.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the struggles faced by Americans during the era by analyzing and interpreting photographic images.

**Task:** Select images taken by WPA photographers and use them to tell the story of the tragedy of the Great Depression and the triumphs of the American spirit.

#### **Process:**

1. Individually or in small groups, review the provided resources, noting the types of hardships faced by Americans across the nation. Topics to be addressed include:
  - Poverty
  - Environmental hardship
  - Family and personal struggles
  - Movement, including migration from the Dust Bowl to California
2. Select three images that best epitomize the student's understanding of the time.
3. Analyze each picture, closely examining all parts of the photograph and any provided captions.

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



4. Write a summary explaining how the images depict the suffering of the Great Depression. In the explanation, include related facts, quotes, the topics listed in step number 1, and interpretations of what the photographer may have intended.
5. If possible, publish images in [VoiceThread](http://voicethread.com) (<http://voicethread.com>) or [Glogster](http://www.glogster.com). ([www.glogster.com](http://www.glogster.com))

#### Resources:

- Video Segments
  - [Surviving the Dust Bowl](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl) ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl))
    - Chapter 3: Death and Destruction
  - [The Civilian Conservation Corps](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/ccs) ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/ccs](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/ccs))
    - Chapters 1-2: Introduction and The Great Depression
    - Chapter 5: CCC Projects and People and Chapter 6: Effects on the Enrollees—includes information on the people of the CCC and their work and education
- [The Drought](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/3) ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/3](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/3))
- [Black Sunday](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/7) ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/7](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/7))
- Article from Digital History on [The Human Toll](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=463) of the Great Depression ([www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\\_display.cfm?HHID=463](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=463))
- Article from Digital History on [The Dispossessed](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=465) of the Great Depression ([www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\\_display.cfm?HHID=465](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=465))
- From the Library of Congress, Dorothea Lange's [Migrant Mother series](http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/128_migm.html)—a collection of photographs ([www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/128\\_migm.html](http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/128_migm.html))
- From the Federal Writer's Project, [Voices from the Thirties](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/exhome.html)—a collection of interviews conducted by Life Histories (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/exhome.html>)
- From the Federal Writer's Project, [American Life History—1936-1940](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro)—a collection of manuscripts (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro>)
- From Webster University Professor Bill Barrett, [Farm Security Administration Photographers](http://www.webster.edu/~barrettb/fsa.htm) ([www.webster.edu/~barrettb/fsa.htm](http://www.webster.edu/~barrettb/fsa.htm))

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



- From the Library of Congress, [Documenting America—Photographs from the Depression through WWII](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/fsowhome.html) (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/fsowhome.html>)
- From the U.S. Department of Agriculture, [Dust Bowl Photographs](http://www.weru.ksu.edu/new_weru/multimedia/dustbowl/dustbowlpics.html) ([www.weru.ksu.edu/new\\_weru/multimedia/dustbowl/dustbowlpics.html](http://www.weru.ksu.edu/new_weru/multimedia/dustbowl/dustbowlpics.html))

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR *AMERICAN EXPERIENCE* PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
*AMERICAN EXPERIENCE* IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



## *The 1930s*

### *Lesson Plan 4: A 1930s Museum*

**Introduction:** The events of the 1930s dramatically reshaped all facets of life in the United States. The turmoil of the stock market crash and the proceeding economic depression forced millions of people into dire economic times. In reaction, the people of America elected President Franklin Delano Roosevelt who promised recovery with his New Deal programs. The implementation and success of the New Deal during the 1930s helped redefine the role of government in the United States.

**Length of Lesson:** 4-6 Days

#### **Objectives:**

- At the end of a 1930s unit, review the major events of the 1930s.
- Select the most important social, political, environmental, and economic events of the decade.

**Task:** Create a museum to the 1930s addressing the social, political, environmental, and economic highs and lows of the era. Select two items in each category, one representing the suffering or failure of times and the other a triumph of America during the 1930s.

#### **Process:**

1. At the end of the unit on the 1930s, review the significant events of the era.
2. Individually or in small groups, create a chart with the following categories: social, political, environmental, and economic. Each category should have a negative and positive column.
3. Review the provided resources and other materials from the unit. Place potential topics in the chart. Select one positive and one negative topic from each category.

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



4. For each topic, include the following:
  - An object, image, or document that will represent it in the museum
  - An explanation for its inclusion in the exhibit
5. Present all items in a virtual museum, using a wiki, blog, or other multimedia online application. (If a virtual medium is unavailable, create a museum display using posterboard.)

**Video Resources:**

The five AMERICAN EXPERIENCE films in *The 1930s Collection* provide valuable information on the social, political and cultural aspects of the decade. Refer to chapter descriptions for a sense of what content is included in each chapter.

- [The Crash of 1929](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/crash) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/crash)
- [The Civilian Conservation Corps](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/ccs) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/ccs)
- [Hoover Dam](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/hoover) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/hoover)
- [Surviving the Dust Bowl](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl)
- [Seabiscuit](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/seabiscuit) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/seabiscuit)

**Other Resources:**

- [The Great Depression](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/2)  
(www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/2)
- [The New Deal](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/5) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/5)
- [Seabiscuit-itis](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/seabiscuit/storyHighlights/8) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/seabiscuit/storyHighlights/8)
- [Racing in the Depression](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/seabiscuit/storyHighlights/2)  
(www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/seabiscuit/storyHighlights/2)
- Digital History article on [“Popular Culture During the Great Depression”](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=481)  
(www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\_display.cfm?HHID=481)
- From the University of San Diego History Department, a [New Deal Overview](http://history.sandiego.edu/gen/20th/1930s/newdeal.html)  
(http://history.sandiego.edu/gen/20th/1930s/newdeal.html)
- Statistics from The Gilder Lehrman Institute, [“The Impact of the Depression”](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/module18/tool_is_pop3.html)  
(www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/module18/tool\_is\_pop3.html)

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



## *The 1930s*

### *Lesson Plan 5: The Life of a Worker, in Words and Pictures*

**Introduction:** During the Great Depression, many members of the working class suffered significantly. As the rate of unemployment grew to unprecedented highs, men and women faced more strenuous working conditions and increased competition for the limited number of available jobs. Often, workers traveled long distances across the nation in hopes of finding a job.

**Length of Lesson:** 3-5 Days

#### **Objectives:**

- Examine the life of a worker from the Great Depression era.
- Compare the employment experiences of different types of people during the 1930s.

#### **Tasks:**

- Select an individual worker from the Great Depression and write a narrative of his/her life during the era.
- Publish the narrative in a blog or other multimedia application, utilizing images and other assets, if available.
- Share finished products and compare the experiences in each of the stories.

#### **Process:**

1. Individually or in small groups, select one of the following job types:
  - Dust Bowl Farmer
  - Migrant Farmer
  - Hoover Dam Worker
  - Civilian Conservation Corps or Works Progress Administration Worker
  - Industrial Worker

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



2. Using the provided resources, research the working conditions and possible daily life routine of the selected worker.
3. Outline a story based upon the historical events and conditions that a worker or farmer in the Great Depression might have faced.
4. Develop a persona for your main character, including family members and background.
5. Write a story or narrative about what the person and his/her family might have endured during this time. The story should draw strongly from the research in Step 2. Do not exaggerate the suffering or create an unrealistic storyline.
6. Find and include images that complement the storyline.
7. If possible, publish the story online using a blog ([Wordpress](http://wordpress.com) [http://wordpress.com], [Edublogs](http://edublogs.org) [http://edublogs.org], [Blogger](https://www.blogger.com/start) [https://www.blogger.com/start]) [VoiceThread](http://voicethread.com) (http://voicethread.com), [EverLater](http://www.everlater.com) (www.everlater.com), or other online application.
8. Share stories and compare the different experiences of laborers across the nation. How were the experiences the same? How were they different? Are there similarities to the lives of today’s laborers? What lessons can we learn from those experiences?

**Resources:**

General Information

- From the Federal Writer’s Project, [Voices from the Thirties](#)—a collection of interviews conducted by Life Histories (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/exhome.html>)
- Manuscripts from the Federal Writer’s Project, [“American Life History—1936-1940”](#)—search by region or job (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro>)
- Digital History article, [“Labor Issues and Unionization in the 1935 Wagner Act”](#) ([www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\\_display.cfm?HHID=475](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=475))
- Digital History article, [“The Human Toll”](#) of the Great Depression ([http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\\_display.cfm?HHID=463](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=463))

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



Farming

- Video Segment
  - [Surviving the Dust Bowl](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl)
    - Chapter 3: Death and Destruction
- [Mass Exodus from the Plains](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/9)  
(www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/9)
- [Black Sunday](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/7) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/7)
- Digital History article, [“The Farmer’s Plight”](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=471) During the Great Depression  
(www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\_display.cfm?HHID=471)
- Article from the American Folklife Center, [“Migrant Farmers in the Great Depression”](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afctshtml/tsme.html)  
(http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afctshtml/tsme.html)
- From the Library of Congress, [Voices from the Dust Bowl](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afctshtml/tshome.html)—a multi-media collection  
(http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afctshtml/tshome.html)
- From Wessels Living Farm, York, Nebraska, [Okies](http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/water_06.html), a history  
(www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/water\_06.html)
- From the State Library and Archives of Florida, [Migrant Workers from Florida](http://www.floridamemory.com/PhotographicCollection/photo_exhibits/migrant)  
(www.floridamemory.com/PhotographicCollection/photo\_exhibits/migrant)
- [Dorthea Lange Images and Captions](http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/lange/index.html)  
(www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/lange/index.html)
- From Wessels Living History Farm, York, Nebraska, [Farm Life in the 1930s](http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/life_01.html)  
(www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/life\_01.html)
- From the Library of Congress, [Farm Security Images](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/pp/fsacabt.html)—photographs depicting rural and farm life from the Farm Security Administration  
(http://lcweb2.loc.gov/pp/fsacabt.html)

CCC and WPA

- Video Segments
  - [The Civilian Conservation Corps](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/cc) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/cc)
    - Chapter 4, Life at the CCC Camps

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.





- Chapter 6, Effects on the Enrollees—includes information on life in the camps after work
- Chapter 5, CCC Projects and People and Chapter 6—includes the people of the CCC and their work and education
- [Works Progress Administration](#)  
([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/6](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/dustbowl/storyHighlights/6))
- Digital History article, “[Jobs Programs](#)” and FDR’s New Deal  
([www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\\_display.cfm?HHID=473](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=473))
- [Daily Life in the CCC](#)—former CCC enrollee Paul Mathews recalls daily life in a Pennsylvania camp ([www2.gsu.edu/~phltso/paulwriting/ccc.html](http://www2.gsu.edu/~phltso/paulwriting/ccc.html))
- National Park Service book chapter, [A Day in the CCC](#)—this chapter outlines a typical day in camp ([www.nps.gov/history/history/online\\_books/ccc/salmond/chap8.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/ccc/salmond/chap8.htm))
- [WPA Workers Handbook](#) (<http://newdeal.feri.org/misc/faq/index.htm>)

#### Hoover Dam

- Video Segments
  - [Hoover Dam](#) ([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/hoover](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/hoover))
    - Chapter 1 - Introduction
    - Chapter 4 - Workers Plight in the Desert
- [Workers’ Strike at Hoover Dam](#)  
([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/hoover/storyHighlights/9](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/hoover/storyHighlights/9))
- [Building Boulder City](#)  
([www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/hoover/storyHighlights/5](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/hoover/storyHighlights/5))
- From Boulder City Museum and Historical Association, [Hoover Dam Working Conditions](#)  
([www.bcmha.org/photos/workers.html](http://www.bcmha.org/photos/workers.html))
- *Time Magazine* article on the [Hoover Dam Strike](#)  
([www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,752972,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,752972,00.html), August 24, 1931)
- From the University of Virginia, [Planned Living in Boulder City](#)—a brief essay  
(<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA98/haven/hoover/boulder.html>)

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



## *The 1930s*

### *Lesson Plan 5: A Popular Culture Time Capsule*

**Introduction:** While the economic foundations of the nation were shaken during the Great Depression, popular culture continued to evolve and grow. Movies, radio, fashion, music, literature and sports became even greater parts of American life.

**Length of Lesson:** 1-2 Days

**Objective:** Examine 1930s popular culture and identify ideas, people, or objects that might interest a teenager.

**Task:** Create a time capsule of what you think would best represent the interests of a young American during the 1930s.

**Process:**

1. Discuss as a class that, while the Great Depression greatly affected millions of Americans, for many others, life did not change significantly. As a group, answer the following question: Why did many entertainment and other industries related to popular culture continue to do well and even thrive?
2. Review the provided resources and identify four objects that a young American living in the 1930s might have put into a time capsule.
3. For each item, write a description of what it represents, its importance in the 1930s, and a justification for its inclusion in the time capsule. If available, include images with each description.
4. Publish your selections on [VoiceThread](http://voicethread.com) (<http://voicethread.com>) or [Glogster](http://www.glogster.com) ([www.glogster.com](http://www.glogster.com)) including appropriate images.

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



## Resources:

- Video Segments
  - [Seabiscuit](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/seabiscuit) (http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/seabiscuit)
    - Chapter 1: Hard Luck Heroes
    - Chapter 6: Seabiscuit-itis
- A photo gallery of [The Roaring 20s](#)  
(www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/crash/photoGallery)
- [Seabiscuit-itis](#) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/seabiscuit/storyHighlights/8)
- [Racing in the Depression](#)  
(www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/seabiscuit/storyHighlights/2)
- [Racing and Radio Broadcasts](#)  
(www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/seabiscuit/storyHighlights/14)
- AMERICAN EXPERIENCE website on [Joe Dimaggio](#) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/dimaggio)
- Digital History article on [Popular Culture in the 1930s](#)  
(www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\_display.cfm?HHID=481)
- An online list of well-known [American architecture](#), 1930-1939  
(www.greatbuildings.com/types/usa/usa\_1930-1939.html)
- From the University of Virginia, [American Popular Music in the 1930s](#)  
(http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ug03/Jukebox/front.html)
- From artcyclopedia.com, the [Art Deco Movement](#)—a definition of Art Deco and a list of the movement’s artists (www.artcyclopedia.com/history/art-deco.html)
- [Sports in the 1930s](#)—an essay on 1930s sporting milestones  
(www.sportplanet.com/sbb/apfas/30R.HTM)
- The official website of boxing legend [Joe “Brown Bomber” Louis](#)  
(www.cmgww.com/sports/louis/)
- The official website of track legend [Jesse Owens](#) (www.jesseowens.com)
- From the University of Virginia, [Artists of the 1930s](#)—biographies and galleries of major American artists of the 1930s  
(http://xroads.virginia.edu/~am482\_04/am\_scene/opening.html)

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.



- [Fashion—Stylish 30s](http://www.fashion-era.com/stylish_thirties.htm), an overview of fashion in the 1930s (www.fashion-era.com/stylish\_thirties.htm)
- [Movies in the 1930s](http://www.filmsite.org/30sintro.html) (www.filmsite.org/30sintro.html)
- [Radio Programs](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~1930s/RADIO/audio_archive/radio/radio.html) of the 1930s, from the University of Virginia (http://xroads.virginia.edu/~1930s/RADIO/audio\_archive/radio/radio.html)
- A biography of author [John Steinbeck](http://www.steinbeck.org/Bio.html) (www.steinbeck.org/Bio.html)

EXCLUSIVE CORPORATE FUNDING FOR *AMERICAN EXPERIENCE* PROVIDED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL.  
MAJOR FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION, THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC TELEVISION VIEWERS.  
*AMERICAN EXPERIENCE* IS PRODUCED FOR PBS BY WGBH BOSTON.

