Texas History for Teachers

Unit 12: The Great Depression

7th Grade Lesson Plan: The Civilian Conservation Corps Extension

(45 – 60 minutes)

Objective	In this optional one-day extension lesson, students will examine primary source excerpts from an interview with a former Civilian Conservation Corps member to determine how the CCC impacted his life, his family, Texas farmers, and the environment. 1. ***We will*** examine how the Civilian Conservation Corps provided relief to Texans and recovery for the state during the Great Depression. 2. ***I will*** examine excerpts from an interview with a former member of the Civilian Conservation Corps to determine how his time in the CCC affected him, his family, and Texas during the Great Depression.
Key Concepts	• The Civilian Conservation Corps played a key role in providing work for young Texas men to help them support their families. • The Civilian Conservation Corps worked on many projects to protect, preserve, and rehabilitate the Texas environment with special emphasis on correcting the issues caused by the Dust Bowl.
Skills	• Analyzing a primary source text • Analyzing and interpreting historical maps • Evaluating a primary source for bias and point of view • Identifying and explaining primary topics and supporting evidence from a primary source text
Essential Question	What was the Civilian Conservation Corps and what role did it play in providing relief for Texans during the Great Depression?
Assignment	**Warm-up** • Students will use a brief excerpt from the lesson's primary source material to draw conclusions about daily life in Texas during the Great Depression.

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	Lesson • Students will use a set of primary source excerpts from an interview with a former Civilian Conservation Corps member to identify and explain how the CCC provided relief and recovery to Texans during the Great Depression. Topics in the interview include daily life, the interviewees opinions on the New Deal, life in a CCC camp, and work in the soil conservation service. **Exit Ticket** • Students observe a map of state parks built by the Civilian Conservation Corps to identify which two Texas regions contained the greatest number of parks and provide an explanation for why these regions held more parks based on prior knowledge about the geography, landscape, and resources of the regions.
Materials	1. Slideshow *(Suggested use: present on the overhead; Upload to an educational platform like google classroom; print extra copies for note-taking assistance)* 2. Warm-up / Exit Ticket *(Suggested printing: 1 per student. Assignment prints two copies per page.)* 3. Primary Source Interview *(Suggested printing 1 per partner group or larger student group)* 4. Assignment *(Suggested printing 1 per student)* a. Advanced Level work b. Grade Level work c. Foundations Level work
Differentiation	1. Scaffolding including classwork at three different levels of academic ability 2. Visual representations of directions 3. Chunking text information 4. Literacy supports including key information presented in bold and vocabulary assistance 5. Sentence Stems and response options for short, constructed response questions 6. Reduction in answer choices and amount of writing

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TEKS	
	• ***7.07(B)*** Analyze the political, economic, and social impact of the Great Depression. • ***7.09(A)*** Identify ways in which Texans have adapted to and modified the environment and explain the positive and negative consequences of the modifications. • ***7.20(A)*** Differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about Texas. • ***7.20(B)***: Analyze information by applying absolute and relative chronology through sequencing, categorizing relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and conclusions. • ***7.20(C)*** Organize and interpret information from outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps. • ***7.20(D)*** Identify bias and points of view from the historical context surrounding an event that influenced the participants. • ***7.21(B)*** Analyze and interpret geographic distributions and patterns in Texas during the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. • ***7.22(B)*** Use effective written communication skills, including proper citations and avoiding plagiarism.

Teacher Guide: The Civilian Conservation Corps Extension

Warm-up	• Students use a brief excerpt from the interview of the Civilian Conservation Corps member to make observations about life in Texas during the Great Depression. • Slides 2 and 3 restate the directions and provide sentence stems to guide student responses when sharing with the class. • Slides 4 and 5 provide the essential question and the "We will / I will" statements for the lesson.
Lesson	<u>Primary Source Interview</u> • This material provides a set of six, one-page excerpts from an interview with a man who served in the Civilian Conservation Corps during the 1930s. • Excerpts include information about daily life during the Great Depression and the struggles facing his family, his service in the CCC including daily life in one camp, and work in the CCC including his time on the Soil Conservation Service. • Challenging academic and content-based vocabulary are identified with footnotes that provide definitions and explanations of terms. • Slide 6 provides an image of Enrollees of the Civilian Conservation Corps camp near Mesquite, Texas, in 1936. The Mesquite camp housed 250 men who worked on soil conservation projects including planting trees, and terracing and fencing farmland in Dallas, Kaufman, and Rockwall Counties. Image taken from *The Portal to Texas History.* <u>Student Work</u> • Student work begins with a short reading introducing the Civilian Conservation Corps and the primary source material students will be using to complete their work. Complete page 1 of the student work before beginning work with the primary source excerpts. • Slides 7 provides a photocopy image of the front page of the interview used in this lesson.

	• Students answer questions in their work based on the information provided in the interview excerpts. • Advanced: Students respond to short, constructed response questions about the interviewees experience in the Civilian Conservation Corps. • Grade Level: Students respond to multiple-choice, multi-select, and short constructed response questions with sentence stems provided to guide student responses. • Foundations: Students respond to multiple-choice and multi-select questions with one answer option eliminated. They also respond to short constructed response questions with sentence stems and response options provided.
Exit Ticket	• Students make observations about a map of Civilian Conservation Corps state parks in Texas. Students are asked to identify which two geographic regions of Texas contain the largest number of CCC parks, and then provide a rationale for why those 2 regions contain the most parks based on their prior knowledge of the characteristics of the regions. • Slide 8 provides an enlarged view of the map. • Slide 9 provides sentence stems to guide student responses when sharing with the class.

Primary Sources and Other Resources Used

- Pickard, Kelli & Hendon, Claude L. Oral History Interview with Claude L. Hendon, March 6, 1994, book, March 6, 1994; Denton, Texas. (https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc99004/: accessed April 23, 2026), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, https://texashistory.unt.edu; crediting UNT Oral History Program.
- Texas. Parks and Wildlife Department. [Trading Card: Civilian Conservation Corps], text, 2011; Texas. (https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth661917/: accessed April 9, 2026), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, https://texashistory.unt.edu; crediting UNT Libraries Government Documents Department.
- Alvarez, Elizabeth Cruce. Texas Almanac, 2008-2009, book, 2008; Dallas, Texas. (https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth1760437/: accessed August 25, 2025), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, https://texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Texas State Historical Association.
- Steely, James Wright. The Civilian Conservation Corps in Texas State Parks, book, 2010; Austin, Texas. (https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth415063/: accessed April 9, 2026), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, https://texashistory.unt.edu; crediting UNT Libraries Government Documents Department.