

Answer Key: How do we know what we know?

Warm-up

- Responses will vary

Lesson

Grade Level and Foundations Work

Part I: An Era of Challenges and Hardship

Response taken from the Foundations work and should serve as a guide for grade level work.

Incorrect responses have been crossed out.

What were THREE challenges that many people faced during the Great Depression era?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Lack of electricity for industries | ☐ Business and bank closures |
| ☐ New farming techniques | ☐ Flooding and natural disasters |
| ☐ Unemployment and homelessness | ☐ Programs creating new jobs |
| ☐ Excessive cotton and oil production | ☐ Severe dust storms on the Plains |

Advanced Work

Part I: An Era of Challenges and Hardship

Responses will vary but should include any of the following, written in paragraph form:

- Millions lost their entire life savings, their jobs, and their homes.
- People were not buying Texas products like cotton and oil.
- Businesses closed and thousands of Texans lost their jobs.
- People in the Great Plains experienced severe drought and dust storms known as the "Dust Bowl."

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Part II: Primary Source Analysis

The following information should be used to evaluate student responses for each excerpt.

Excerpt 1: The Beginning of the Great Depression

- Topic: The stock market crash
- Summary: Many people in Texas initially did not believe that the stock market crash would be a problem, especially not for Texans.

Excerpt 2: Bill Oakley's First-Hand Account of the Great Depression

- Topic: Daily life / Challenges and Hardship
- Summary: Oakley compares living through the Depression to surviving a war because, although people weren't being killed, many were struggling to survive.

Excerpt 3: George Riley's First-Hand Account of the Great Depression

- Topic: Daily life / Challenges and Hardship / Urbanization
- Summary: Riley and his family moved from their farm to the city for opportunities and his mother worked for the WPA, but life was still very difficult.

Excerpt 4: Requirements of the Civilian Conservation Corps

- Topic: New Deal Programs / The CCC
- Summary: CCC enrollees worked 8 hours a day, 5 days a week for \$30, \$25 of which they were required to send home. There were many jobs in construction.

Excerpt 5: The Dust Bowl

- Topic: The Dust Bowl / Challenges and Hardship
- Summary: This was a report of an especially bad dust storm in Shamrock, Texas that covered the whole area in dust, blocking out the sun for hours during the middle of the day.

Excerpt 6: The Exploitation of Soil

- Topic: Dust Bowl / Causes and Effects
- Summary: The Dust Bowl was the result of people misusing the land which led to massive dust storms causing numerous health issues and making the Plains like a desert.

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Excerpt 7: The Rural Electrification Administration (REA)

- Topic: New Deal Programs
- Summary: The REA goals included providing affordable loans to small towns in order to allow them to have access to electricity, which would in turn improve the quality and standard of living.

Excerpt 8: Urbanization and the Decrease of Small Farms

- Topic: Urbanization / Agriculture
- Summary: Thousands of Texans were leaving their farms during the Great Depression to move to big cities because they couldn't afford to stay on their farms. Even with government financial assistance to farms, mostly it just made big farms more successful and caused smaller farms to close down.

Excerpt 9: A Political Cartoon

- Topic: Texas political leaders
- Summary: U.S. Vice President John Nance Garner and Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn were both prominent Texans who played a significant role in the New Deal.

Excerpt 10: The Rural Electrification Administration

- Topic: Electricity on farms
- Summary: Electricity on farms made farm labor much easier, for example doing the laundry could now be done by a washing machine, rather than solely by hand.

Exit Ticket

- Responses will vary