

How do we know what we know? *Foundations*

Unit 12: The Great Depression

Name: Date: Period:

Part I: An Era of Challenges and Hardship

The Great Depression was a period of **extreme financial hardship** for most Americans. The stock market crash of 1929 dragged the United States into the worst economic depression in the country's history.

Most Texans did not take part in the stock market at the time. In fact, many Texans did not even know what the stock market was! Still, this crash had serious effects on Texans as well. People across the nation **lost their entire life savings**, their **jobs**, and their **homes**. As a result, most people were not buying Texas products such as cotton and oil. **Texas businesses closed** and **thousands of Texans lost their jobs**. Texas cotton farmers, who had already experienced decades of financial struggles, were hit especially hard.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "**New Deal**" programs transformed Texas and other states across the nation. The New Deal provided relief through programs **to create jobs, bring electricity to rural areas, and support communities** across the United States.

While millions experienced severe financial hardship, another serious event was taking place across the Great Plains. The Plains experienced a prolonged period of **drought**, making the dirt incredibly dry. At the same time, **harmful farming and ranching practices** had removed much of the natural grasses of the Plains that held the dirt in place. High winds on the Plains caused ongoing dust storms that **covered the region in dirt, destroying farms, and causing health problems** for many. These storms became known as the **Dust Bowl**. A New Deal program called the **Civilian Conservation Corps** educated farmers on farming techniques to restore the soil. They also replanted natural grasses to preserve the soil and prevent future dust storms.

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

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| ☐ 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 |

Part II: Primary Source Analysis

Directions: Choose four of the ten available primary source materials. Read your chosen materials and complete the graphic organizers for each material.

Source #:	Title of Source:
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Place a checkmark next to any and all topics addressed in this source. ☐ Hardships and struggles ☐ The stock market crash ☐ The Dust Bowl ☐ New Deal programs ☐ Farming ☐ Politics ☐ Other: _____	Write a brief summary of the main topic of the excerpt. <i>This excerpt is primarily discussing</i> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
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