

The New Deal

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's program to address the challenges of the Great Depression, which focused on providing relief, recovery, and reform.

The Dust Bowl

Massive dirt storms that occurred across the Great Plains throughout the 1930s.

Erosion

The process of soil, rock, or other earth materials being worn away by wind or water.
The dry soil of the Great Plains was blown away by intense winds in the region.

Legislation

Another word for "laws."
During the Great Depression, a number of laws were passed as part of the New Deal to provide relief, recovery, and reform to the American people.

Sam Rayburn

He served in the U.S. Congress as the longest-serving Speaker of the House and was instrumental in helping to pass important New Deal legislation.

Unemployment

The number or percentage of people who are out of work. During the Great Depression this number rose to 25% in 1933.

John Nance Garner

He served in the state and U.S. legislature, as well as serving as vice president to Franklin D. Roosevelt during his first time in office.

Boom & Bust Cycle

Periods of economic growth following by economic decline. During the Great Depression, the Texas oil industry produced excess oil, causing prices to fall and leading to a decline in the oil industry.

Economic Depression

A severe period of financial decline in a society. The Great Depression was the worst of these in U.S. history, leading to increased unemployment, and bank and business failures.

Relief, Recovery, and Reform

These were the goals of President Roosevelt's New Deal program. He wanted to help struggling Americans find work and get back on their feet, and fix the issues that led to the depression.

Stock Market

A financial market in New York that allows people to buy portions of different businesses to share in the profits of the businesses. It crashed on October 29, 1929, initiating the Great Depression.

On Margin

Some people who took part in the stock market bought stocks in this fashion, meaning they borrowed money to buy stocks, which was risky and put them in debt.

Ecology

The study of how all living things in an environment interact. The Dust Bowl during the Great Depression was the worst ecological disaster in U.S. history.

Regulation

In government and economics, this means to make rules and laws to control and manage economic activity to protect the public and provide financial stability.

Expansion

To increase in size.
During the Great Depression, the U.S. government increased in size under President Roosevelt's New Deal programs. Many supported the New Deal while becoming concerned about the growing power of the government.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

The U.S. President who instituted the New Deal during the Great Depression. He served 4 terms as president from 1933 to 1945.

Rural

Related to the countryside, away from larger cities. In the 1930s, approximately 60% of Texans lived in the countryside, often on small farms. By 1940, the number had decreased to 54%.

Rural Electrification Administration

This New Deal program provided a way for farmers in the countryside to receive low-interest loans in order to pay to have electric companies install power lines in their communities.

Civilian Conservation Corps

This New Deal program focused on environmental projects including reforestation, replanting native grasses in the Plains, and establishing state parks.

Securities and Exchange Commission

This New Deal program was established to protect investors, stabilize the financial markets, and prevent future financial crises.

Drought

A prolonged period of abnormally dry weather. The Great Plains experienced this dry weather, causing the exposed top soil to dry out and blow away in the strong winds.

Causes of the Great Depression

These included buying stock on margin, panic selling of stocks, the stock market crash of 1929, and subsequent runs on the banks.

Effects of the Great Depression

These included increased unemployment, bank and business failures, growing poverty, and extreme financial hardship.

Causes of the Dust Bowl

These included decades of harmful farming practices and overgrazing of cattle which depleted the native grasses of the Plains, and a prolonged period of drought that dried out the loose topsoil.

Effects of the Dust Bowl

These included respiratory problems, farm failures, and millions of people fleeing the Great Plains region, including thousands in the Texas Panhandle.

J. Frank Dobie

He was a famous Texan author whose writings focused on Texas traditions, culture, folklore and the experiences of people in the American Southwest.

Texas Railroad Commission

The state agency, whose responsibility it is to regulate the oil markets in Texas. During the Great Depression, this agency attempted to address boom and bust issues related to the oil fields in east Texas.

East Texas Oil Wars

Oil wells in places like Kilgore and Longview overproduced oil, flooding the market and causing a decline in value. The Texas government attempted to address and regulate oil production in the region, and it led to conflicts between the oil drillers and the state.