

Unit 12: The Great Depression

(12 – 15 Estimated Instructional Days; 4 – 6 Optional Extension Days; 3 Optional review days prior to assessment)

(Total Length of all materials in the Unit: 19 – 24 days)

(For a shortened “Just the Basics” view of lessons, see Pacing below)

Era Overview

The Great Depression (1929-1941) was the worst financial crises ever faced by Texans and Americans. When the stock market crashed in October 1929, Americans lost \$40 billion overnight and everything began falling apart. Businesses and banks soon collapsed, which meant that suddenly no one was buying the two major exports offered by Texans: cotton and oil. The Texas economy, as a result, quickly collapsed and by 1934 more than a million Texans needed help just feeding and clothing their families.

In the depths of the crisis, Texans helped elect Franklin Roosevelt as president. Roosevelt had promised to address the Great Depression by giving Americans a “New Deal,” which was a series of programs and agencies that each tackled problems brought on by the Depression. These New Deal programs did a lot of things, but most focused on putting Americans back to work by having the U.S. government hire people to do things like build new roads, bridges, libraries, post offices, and the like. And so the federal government set up new programs like the Works Progress Administration, which hired 8.5 million Americans and eventually built 8,000 parks, 125,000 buildings, and more than 650,000 miles of roads during the 1930s.

In so doing, the New Deal built much-needed infrastructure and transformed the lives of rural Texans by bringing electricity to places like the Hill Country. Yet it did not solve everything. Although the economy had gotten better by the late 1930s, the Depression had not yet ended. Some Texans worried that the federal government might be doing too much and that Franklin Roosevelt might be overstepping his powers as president. Other people, however, worried that Roosevelt and the government had not done enough to end the Great Depression.

Then, suddenly, the United States entered World War II, and everything changed once again. The massive mobilization for war required by World War II would, once again, transform Texas and finally ended the financial crisis of the Great Depression.

Era Overview	
Pacing	
Just the Basics: To meet the TEKS requirements while minimizing the amount of time spent in the unit, educators can focus solely on the following lessons (Approximately 8 - 10 class periods) 1. The Big Picture (1 class period) 2. Vocabulary (2 class periods) 3. What's the Story? (1 - 2 class periods) 4. Stock Market Crash of 1929 (1 class period) 5. The Dust Bowl (1 class period) 6. New Deal Alphabet Soup (2 class periods) 7. Who's Who of the Great Depression – John Nance Garner (1 class period)	
Unit Pacing by Day	

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
45 - 60	What are the major themes, events, and defining characteristics of Unit 12: The Great Depression?	In this one-day introductory lesson, students will be able to identify and explain the key events, major themes, and defining characteristics of the Great Depression era of history and how this era affected Texas.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> The Great Depression era was a period of extreme economic hardship in the U.S. During the Great Depression, banks closed, businesses failed, unemployment rose, and millions of Americans lived in poverty. The Great Depression was caused by the stock market crash of 1929 and lasted throughout the 1930s. During this era, the Great Plains region of the U.S. experienced the Dust Bowl – one of the worst ecological disasters in the nation's history which resulted from	Lesson: The Big Picture

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
			harmful farming and ranching techniques on the Plains. During the era, the federal government under President Franklin D. Roosevelt expanded to include numerous New Deal programs to help people and communities. Reading for key information, context, main ideas, and supporting evidence. Summarizing and paraphrasing key ideas in a text. Making observations, inferences, and predictions about a primary source image. Identifying the main idea and supporting evidence from a primary source text. Identifying and explaining the cause-and-effect relationship between significant events of the era.	
45 - 60	What are the key topics and major themes of the Great Depression, and how were these topics recorded and discussed in the primary source materials of the era?	In this one-day lesson, students will examine and analyze a variety of primary source materials to identify major themes, topics, and events of the era including challenges and hardships related to the Dust Bowl, life in rural and urban areas, agricultural work, and New Deal programs to address these challenges.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> The major themes, topics, and events of the Great Depression era include financial hardship resulting from the stock market crash of 1929, the Dust Bowl in the Great Plains, and federal programs established to address the issues facing many Americans. In Texas, some moved from rural areas into urban areas for opportunities away from the farm. The Dust Bowl was caused by harmful farming and ranching practices including the removal of native grasses combined with severe drought. It affected thousands of Texans on the Plains, forcing many to move and causing severe health problems. New Deal programs including the Rural Electrification Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps played a significant role in relief and recovery in Texas. Analyzing primary source excerpts. Identifying points of view and bias in a primary source excerpt. Identifying the main idea of a primary source and creating	Lesson: How do we know what we know?

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
			a brief summary of each excerpt. Understanding challenging vocabulary in context.	
90 – 120 <i>Lesson</i> Additional 30 – 45 <i>Optional Quiz</i>	What are the key terms we need to know to understand this unit on the Great Depression, and what is the meaning of these terms in the context of our unit?	In this two-day lesson, students will learn key terms related to the Great Depression and be able to identify, define and give an example of each term within the context of the Great Depression era.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> Key terms for the unit include Economic Depression, Stock Market, Relief, Unemployment, and Ecology. This era was characterized by the worst economic depression in U.S. history, which caused a severe increase in unemployment, bank and business failures, and extreme poverty. This era also experienced the worst ecological disaster in U.S. history with the Dust Bowl, which occurred because of the removal of native grasses from the Plains, combined with a severe drought and high winds, leading to dust storms that affected the entire Great Plains region including the Texas Great Plains and Mountains and Basins regions. Reading for key information, context, main ideas, and supporting evidence. Identifying the definition and examples of key terms in the context of the Great Depression in short reading passages. Creating visual representations of key terms. Using the terms in the context of the unit Recognizing references to key terms in a primary source excerpt Using the terms in the context of the unit to analyze primary source excerpts and images in the vocabulary quiz. Identifying cause and effect relationships between events in the unit related to the key terms.	Lesson: Vocabulary <i>with optional Vocabulary Quiz</i>

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
90 - 120	What were the key events of the Great Depression era? What were the details, causes, effects, and significance of each event?	In this two-day lesson, students will examine six readings presenting significant events that took place during the Great Depression and identify their significance to United States and Texas history.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> The prosperity of the 1920s ended with the stock market crash of 1929, which caused the Great Depression affecting banks, businesses, industries, and people across the U.S. The oil and cotton industries in Texas were negatively affected by the Great Depression. Thousands of Texans became unemployed during the Great Depression. President Roosevelt established numerous programs as part of the New Deal to provide relief to Americans including employment programs and affordable electricity to rural farming communities, which had a significant effect on many Texas farmers. Over-farming, over-grazing, and drought gave rise to the immense storms of the Dust Bowl in the Great Plains region of the U.S. Thousands of Texas farmers fled the Panhandle to escape the storms, often seeking opportunities in California. Reading for context and significance information. Identifying and paraphrasing or summarizing main ideas and supporting evidence. Identifying and explaining the significance of historical events. Explaining cause-and-effect relationships between significant historical events	Lesson: What's the story?

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
45 – 60 (Reduced lesson) 135 – 180 (Full Lesson) 120 - 160 (Additional Extension Activities)	Who were some of the important people of the Great Depression, and how were they significant to Texas history?	In this one or multi-day optional extension lesson, students will read passages about key people of the Great Depression to identify and summarize each person's significance to the era. This lesson includes multiple ways to interact with the materials including biographical fact sheets, a dinner party activity, "I have / Who has," a "Job Application" activity, and student worksheets.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> There were many important people who played a significant role in Texas and U.S. history during the Great Depression era including John Nance Garner, Lyndon Baines Johnson, Jesse Holman Jones, Sam Rayburn, James V. Allred, Jessie Harriet Daniel Ames, Charlotte Smith Graham, and Emma Tenayuca. Note: The only person from the list above who is specifically identified in the TEKS is John Nance Garner. Reading for context, main ideas, and key information. Summarizing and paraphrasing significant information from a passage. Identifying and making inferences about different points of view based on historical evidence.	Lesson: Who's Who of the Great Depression With three additional optional Extension Activities
45 - 60	How did the stock market crash of 1929 affect people who had invested in the market, and how did the crash affect the entire U.S. economy?	In this one-day lesson, students will investigate the effects of the stock market crash on people who had invested in the market as well as the American economy as a whole by taking part in an investment simulation activity.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> Buying stocks on margin provided opportunity for enormous profits while being incredibly risky. Many who participated in the stock market lost a large amount of money, especially if they bought stocks on margin. The stock market crash caused investors to go into debt, but it also had far-reaching effects on the U.S. economy including the closure of 9,000 banks and \$1.26 billion in savings accounts lost, business closures, and widespread unemployment.	Lesson: The Stock Market Crash of 1929

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
			Basic math skills (adding and subtracting) Basic comprehension of stock investments Collaborative decision-making skills	
45 – 60 <i>Optional writing activity</i> 30 – 45 min.	What was the Dust Bowl? What were its primary causes and significant effects, and how did it affect the lives of Texans?	In this one-day lesson, students will be able to explain what the Dust Bowl was and provide some of its primary causes and effects by examining and analyzing a set of primary source materials including newspaper articles, transcripts of oral history interviews, and images.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> The Dust Bowl was primarily caused by decades of harmful farming and ranching practices, which depleted the native grasses of the Plains. This, coupled with natural factors including a severe and prolonged drought and high Plains winds caused intense dust storms during the decade of the 1930s. The Dust Bowl had significant effects on Texans including a large-scale migration of people out of the Panhandle, health problems, crop failures, and storms that spread beyond the Great Plains. There were several New Deal programs intended to address the challenges confronting people on the Plains. These included the Civilian Conservation Corps, which worked to replant the native grasses of the Plains and teach farmers restorative farming practices. Analyzing primary source materials. Using context to determine the meaning of new academic vocabulary terms. Identifying cause and effect relationships. Organizing and categorizing historical information from primary source materials. Summarizing	Lesson: The Dust Bowl

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
90 - 120 <i>The lesson can be shortened by omitting the final activity.</i>	What were some of the influential programs of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, which ones would have been most and least beneficial to Texas and Texans, and why?	In this two-day lesson, students will examine the key components and goals of up to 16 New Deal programs. They will determine which programs would have been most beneficial to Texas based on the specific challenges facing Texans during the Great Depression, and they will create a "recipe" of their chosen New Deal programs. The lesson can be shortened by omitting the final activity.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> There were dozens of New Deal programs to address a variety of issues and challenges facing Americans during the Great Depression. Some programs were more beneficial to Texas than others, based on the specific challenges facing Texans including the high rate of impoverished tenant farmers in the state, boom-and-bust cycles in oil and agriculture, rapid urbanization, and the Dust Bowl. Summarizing and paraphrasing Making and justifying a claim Peer review and critique Creating visual representations of history	Lesson: New Deal Alphabet Soup
45 - 60 Optional Extension Activity	What were the "east Texas oil wars," what caused the conflict, and what was the outcome?	In this optional one-day extension lesson, students will examine the events, causes, effects, and significance of the "east Texas oil wars" which played a significant role in influencing the U.S. oil industry and economy during the Great Depression.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> Boom-and-bust cycles in the Texas oil industry had a significant effect on the U.S. economy during the Great Depression. Conflict grew between east Texas oil drillers and the Texas government over the regulations placed by the Texas Railroad Commission in an attempt to stabilize the oil industry and prevent excessive oil flooding the market and lowering prices. The Federal government and courts became involved in the conflict over issues of regulations and martial law in east Texas. The east Texas oil wars ended when regulations were enforced to stabilize the oil market in Texas and the U.S.	Lesson: The East Texas Oil Wars Extension Lesson

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
			Reading for main ideas and supporting evidence Identifying and explaining cause-and-effect relationships Identifying and explaining the significance of a historical event Creating short written responses	
45 – 60 Optional Extension Activity	What was the Civilian Conservation Corps and what role did it play in providing relief for Texans during the Great Depression?	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.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> 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. 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.	Lesson: The Civilian Conservation Corps Extension Lesson
45 – 60	What role did the Civilian Conservation Corps play in the establishment of Texas state parks, and how can we see the legacy of this role today?	In this one day lesson, students will examine the long-lasting influence of the Civilian Conservation Corps as it relates to its work in the establishment of the state park system of Texas.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> The Civilian Conservation Corps played a significant role in Texas in a number of ways, including by helping to establish the state park system of Texas. The work of the Civilian Conservation Corps in the construction of Texas state parks is evidence today in the 29 CCC-built state parks that are still in operation today. New Deal programs like the CCC took part in relief and recovery efforts that are still visible today.	Lesson: Texas Today

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			Map skills Conducting online research using a digital archive (the Portal to Texas History). Identifying and defining new academic terms. Collaboration with classmates and peer teaching.	
45 – 60	What major world event will take place in the next unit, and what significant decision will the U.S. government have to make as a result?	In this one-day lesson, students will examine two primary source materials addressing the initial events that caused the outbreak of World War II and the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Students will make observations, inferences, and predictions about the events of the next unit based on the primary sources.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> World War II broke out in Europe in 1939 with the German invasion of Poland. Initially, the U.S. maintained a policy of isolationism and neutrality regarding the war in Europe. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, caused the U.S. government to decide whether to enter the war. Primary source analysis Using context to determine the meaning of words Making observations, inferences, and predictions about historical information based on primary source excerpts and photographs.	Lesson: Looking Ahead
45 – 60 Optional Review Lesson	What is the key information we need to know to be successful on our Unit 12 test?	In this one-day review lesson, students will identify the significance of key terms, cause and effect relationships between significant events, and answer practice test questions to prepare for the unit 12 test.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> The Great Depression was the worst economic crisis in U.S. history. It was caused by the 1929 stock market crash and caused massive unemployment, bank and business failures, and incredible financial hardship. President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the New Deal to create programs to support struggling Americans and stabilize the economy. Several New Deal programs that were instrumental in relief and recovery in Texas included the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Rural Electrification Administration. Some key Texas figures who were instrumental in the relief and recovery efforts of the New	Lesson: Review Study Guide and Flash Cards

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
			Deal were John Nance Garner and Sam Rayburn. The Dust Bowl was one of the worst ecological disasters in U.S. history. It consisted of enormous dust storms in the Great Plains that were caused by a combination of drought and strong winds which kicked up the topsoil that had been loosened by harmful farming and ranching practices in the decades prior. The oil industry experienced significant boom and bust cycles as east Texas oil fields overproduced oil, flooding the market and drastically decreasing the value of oil. Identifying the significance of key terms, people, places, and events in history. Identifying cause and effect relationships between historical events. Answering questions based on 8th grade Social Studies STAAR question types including multi-response, inline choice, a paper-adapted version of drag and drop, multi-part, and short constructed response. Analyzing primary source materials.	
45 – 60 Optional Review Lesson	What key terms and concepts do we need to know to be successful on our unit 12 test?	In this optional one-day review lesson, students will review key terms, ideas, people, places, events, and major themes of the Great Depression by playing Bingo using terms from the unit and clues about each term.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> The Great Depression was the worst economic crisis in U.S. history. It was caused by the 1929 stock market crash and caused massive unemployment, bank and business failures, and incredible financial hardship. President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the New Deal to create programs to support struggling Americans and stabilize the economy. Several New Deal programs that were instrumental in relief and recovery in Texas included the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Rural Electrification Administration. Some key Texas figures who were instrumental in the relief and recovery efforts of the New Deal were John Nance Garner and Sam Rayburn. The Dust	Lesson: Review Bingo Game

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
			Bowl was one of the worst ecological disasters in U.S. history. It consisted of enormous dust storms in the Great Plains that were caused by a combination of drought and strong winds which kicked up the topsoil that had been loosened by harmful farming and ranching practices in the decades prior. The oil industry experienced significant boom and bust cycles as east Texas oil fields overproduced oil, flooding the market and drastically decreasing the value of oil. Study and review of key concepts. Identifying information based on key words and phrases Recognizing definitions, key information, and significance of key terms and information from the unit.	
Optional Review Lesson	What are the defining characteristics, key terms, people, places, and events of the Great Depression, how do the terms relate to major topics within the unit, and how do they connect with other significant information?	In this one-day review lesson, students will create a visual representation of terms and concepts from the unit in the form of a mind map. Students will be able to identify how information from the unit is connected by making connections between terms on a mind map.	<i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> The Great Depression was the worst economic crisis in U.S. history. It was caused by the 1929 stock market crash and caused massive unemployment, bank and business failures, and incredible financial hardship. President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the New Deal to create programs to support struggling Americans and stabilize the economy. Several New Deal programs that were instrumental in relief and recovery in Texas included the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Rural Electrification Administration. Some key Texas figures who were instrumental in the relief and recovery efforts of the New Deal were John Nance Garner and Sam Rayburn. The Dust Bowl was one of the worst ecological disasters in U.S. history. It consisted of enormous dust storms in the Great Plains that were caused by a combination of drought and strong winds which kicked up the topsoil that had been loosened by harmful farming and ranching practices in the decades prior. The oil industry experienced significant boom and bust cycles as east Texas oil fields overproduced	Lesson: Review Mind Map

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
			oil, flooding the market and drastically decreasing the value of oil. Connecting terms and concepts from across the entire unit. Justifying and providing rationalizations for those connections. Providing debate or arguments based on facts for the correct or best placement of terms that fit into several categories on student Mind Maps. Creating a visual representation of Social Studies information.	