High School U.S. History
The Great Depression and New Deal
Content Module

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The Great Depression and the New Deal

This guide is designed to help you understand and analyze the causes and effects of the Great Depression along with the policies implemented to bring an end to the economic crisis. To begin our look at this era of history, let's start with your opinion on the role the government should play in the economy.

Read the statement concerning the role of the government in the U.S. economy. Mark the continuum with your initials in the place that best represents your opinion. (Do not mark the center.)

The U.S. government should be actively involved in the economy.

Strongly Agree ___________________________ X ____________________________ Strongly Disagree

Characteristics of the Era

As you read the following paragraph that summarizes the characteristics of the Great Depression and the New Deal, highlight key ideas. Use these ideas to complete the sentences that follow the passage.

The Great Depression of the 1930s was characterized by bank and business failures and high unemployment. Even the agricultural sector was not immune as a severe drought and dust storms, known as the Dust Bowl, hit the Midwest. The New Deal was President Franklin Roosevelt's program to address the problems of the Depression. He focused on economic relief to the unemployed by providing jobs through government work projects. His focus on recovery created programs to stimulate the economy and increase production because factories had stopped producing goods in many cases. This also included a jobs program for individuals that would allow them to purchase items with their salary, resulting in an increased demand for production. Finally, the president sought to reform the parts of the economy that led to the Depression, including the banking industry. Critics of the New Deal believed this legislation expanded the power of the executive too much. They also believed it gave the federal government too much power to regulate private business and free enterprise.

After reading the characteristics of the Great Depression and New Deal era,

The three most important things I learned are...

1. 

2. 

3. 

The characteristics of this era remind me of...

This passage had an impact on me because...
Presidents Responding to the Great Depression

Two individuals had different points of view concerning the role of government in responding to the Great Depression. Both served as President of the United States; Herbert Hoover served from 1929 to 1933 and Franklin D. Roosevelt from 1933 to 1945.

As you read the short biographies and quotes by both men, highlight their key ideas about the role the government should play in the economy during the Great Depression.

Herbert Hoover served as a Republican president from 1929 to 1933. He brought impressive qualifications to the office. He served as head of the American Relief Administration which provided food to the inhabitants of Central and Eastern Europe after World War I. He had also served as director of the U.S. Food Administration and U.S. Secretary of Commerce. When the stock market crashed shortly after he took office, he attempted to lift the economy with policies that did not directly involve the federal government. His belief in laissez-faire capitalism and American "rugged individualism" was based on the idea that welfare programs sponsored by the government would reduce the desire to work. Instead, he believed it was up to private organizations and charitable individuals to provide needed relief.

Herbert Hoover, 1932 Campaign

“We are challenged with a...choice between the American system of rugged individualism and a European philosophy of diametrically opposed doctrines, doctrines of paternalism and state socialism. The acceptance of these ideas would have meant the destruction of self-government though centralization...and the undermining of the individual initiative and enterprise through which our people have grown to unparalleled greatness.”

Herbert Hoover, 1932 Campaign

When the economic crisis deepened and the economy failed to rebound, he cut taxes, increased federal spending on public projects, and began buying surplus farm crops. The Hoover Dam was an example of a public project. It was one of the largest man-made dams in the nation. Built between Nevada and Arizona, it created a massive man-made lake for irrigation, flood control, and electric power in one of the driest areas in the nation. Hoover also attempted to provide low-interest loans to small businesses and banks. He hoped by providing relief to these groups, the effects of increased business would “trickle down” to the average American. Most felt this was not enough, and he was soundly defeated by the Democratic candidate, Franklin D. Roosevelt, in the 1932 election. Hoover retired from public office until he was asked by Democratic president, Harry S. Truman, to oversee the Hoover Commission. The Commission was responsible for reorganizing the executive departments and determining the food needs of Europe, especially in American and British occupied Germany following World War II.

“We are turning the corner.”

Herbert Hoover, 1932 Campaign
Presidents Responding to the Great Depression

"Happy Days Are Here Again"

Franklin D. Roosevelt served as a Democratic president from 1933 to 1945, leading the nation through two of the most significant events of the 20th century—the Great Depression and World War II. He was born to a privileged family. He was also a fifth cousin of former President Theodore Roosevelt. He contracted the deadly disease of polio in 1921 and became crippled, confined to a wheelchair for the remainder of his life. His wife, Eleanor Roosevelt, often served in place of her husband as the President’s eyes and ears. She became quite popular with the American people and the rest of the world.

When Roosevelt was elected president in 1932, the nation was in the grips of the Great Depression. Unemployment was as high as 25% at its peak. Faced with the fact that several states were financially ruined and several more were on the brink, Roosevelt was told by the outgoing Secretary of the Treasury the night before his inauguration, that he might be the last president of the United States. Roosevelt changed his speech, delivering instead one of the most famous inaugural addresses in presidential history. In the address, he attempted to bolster the American public with the famous line, “The only thing we have to fear, is fear itself.”

He began to develop programs known as the New Deal to help the American economy by providing relief, reform, and recovery. This led to a significant expansion of the power of the executive branch. Opposition to this growth resulted in constitutional challenges in the Supreme Court. When the Supreme Court declared several New Deal laws unconstitutional, Roosevelt responded by trying to increase the number of justices on the Supreme Court. This became known as “Court Packing.” He hoped the new justices would change the vote in his favor. Roosevelt’s plan was rejected because there were signs of economic recovery and the country’s attention was turning toward the growing threat of totalitarian governments, especially Nazi Germany. (NOTE—the last years of Roosevelt’s presidency will be addressed with World War II.)

Use the biographical information, campaign quotes and slogans to identify beliefs Hoover and Roosevelt held about the role of government in the U.S. economy. Decide which candidate you would have voted for in the 1932 election. Mark your 1932 ballot and write a short explanation for your vote in the space provided.

"The country needs and, unless I mistake its temper, the country demands bold, persistent experimentation. It is common sense to take a method and try it. If it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something."
Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1932

“Every man has a right to life; and this means that he has also a right to make a comfortable living.”
Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1932

1932 Ballot
☐ Herbert Hoover
☐ Franklin Roosevelt

The reason for my vote is..
### The Great Depression and New Deal

**Before we begin a deeper look at this era of U.S. history, let’s explore the key vocabulary terms. After reading each term and definition, create your own “Draw It Out” symbol to illustrate the term and help you remember it.**

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<tr>
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<th>Definition</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banking Crisis</td>
<td>Caused by people panicking and pulling their money out of the bank, which resulted in bank closures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Holiday</td>
<td>Declared holiday for banks in an attempt to stop people from withdrawing money; lasted until banks proved to federal officials they were able to meet the requirements to be solvent and able to stay in business.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Tuesday</td>
<td>October 29th—the day the Stock Market crashed causing prices to fall to all-time lows and fortunes and life savings lost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonus Army</td>
<td>World War I veterans converged on Washington, D.C., demanding immediate bonus payment for wartime services to provide relief from the economic hardship during the Great Depression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bull Market</td>
<td>Time when the prices of stock on the market continue to rise; 1920s prices continued to rise leading to many wanting to invest even if they had to borrow money to do so</td>
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<td>Buying on a Margin</td>
<td>Borrowing money from a broker to buy stock; Usually only having to put down a 10% down payment on the total amount borrowed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checks and Balances System</td>
<td>A principle of the U.S. Constitution giving each of the three branches of government power to check the other two branches; Example-the power of the executive branch to veto a law passed by the legislative branch; the power of the judicial branch to strike down a law or action of the other two branches if it violates the Constitution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court Packing</td>
<td>An unsuccessful attempt by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to expand the Supreme Court by adding up to six new justices; critics claimed Roosevelt was trying to control the Court</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficit spending</td>
<td>Spending public funds raised by borrowing rather than by taxation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>A long-term downturn in economic activity that occurs when a nation’s economy is unstable and production is low</td>
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<td>Dust Bowl</td>
<td>Result of severe dust storms and drought conditions in the Midwest that led to a mass exodus of farmers on the Great Plains who had lost their land due to bank foreclosures; Many left the Great Plains to find work in California</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiat Money</td>
<td>Using a paper currency system rather than the gold and silver system to back U.S. money supply</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fireside Chats</td>
<td>Radio broadcasts by Franklin D. Roosevelt to the American people in order to explain his ideas and policies; helped to restore the confidence of the people and give them hope</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawley-Smoot Tariff (sometimes called Smoot-Hawley Tariff)</td>
<td>High tariff on imports passed in 1930 in an attempt to protect American-made goods; resulted in 25 countries raising the tariff on American goods, which caused global trade to plummet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoovervilles</td>
<td>Term used to describe the makeshift shelter towns (known as shanty-towns) where many of the unemployed lived during the Depression</td>
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The Great Depression and New Deal

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<td>Mexican Repatriation</td>
<td>As the economy slowed, close to 500,000 Mexican-American workers were sent back to Mexico even though many were American citizens. Example of the racial prejudice toward immigrants and minorities during the Depression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Deal</td>
<td>Series of programs and regulations Franklin D. Roosevelt endorsed to end the Great Depression after he was elected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>Programs of Franklin D. Roosevelt designed to stimulate the economy and its industries to produce again; Examples --National Recovery Administration, and Agricultural Adjustment Acts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform</td>
<td>Regulations and measures sponsored by Franklin D. Roosevelt to prevent the American economy from collapsing again in this manner--Examples--Social Security Act, Tennessee Valley Authority, Securities and Exchange Commission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief</td>
<td>Programs of Franklin D. Roosevelt designed to help people pay basic expenses until the economy was back on its feet; Examples--Public Works Administration, Civilian Conservation Corps, Public Works Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Separation of Powers</td>
<td>A principle of the U.S. Constitution that divides the power of government between the three branches—Legislative makes the laws; Executive carries them out; Judicial interprets and explains the laws and actions of the other two</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speculation</td>
<td>Practice of making a profit such as buying stock even though there is a risk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soup Kitchens</td>
<td>A place where the hungry and unemployed could come and receive a meal of soup and bread; usually run by private organizations and churches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock Market Crash</td>
<td>Speculation and buying on margin caused a dramatic decline on the price of stocks in 1929 resulting in a sharp decline in the economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteerism</td>
<td>Freely giving service, labor, and/or money to assist those who are less fortunate; Herbert Hoover encouraged Americans to practice this rather than providing government relief during the Great Depression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Causes and Effects of the Great Depression

By 1933, 13 million Americans—25% of the workforce were out of work. Those who were able to keep their jobs often took pay cuts of one-third or more. By 1931, one-third of the banks failed. Factories ground to a halt as the need for their products dropped. Farmers in the Midwest suffered a terrible drought which devastated their crops. This was the most serious economic crisis in United States history.

To understand this critical period, read the long term causes of the Great Depression and then make an inference about what you think or wonder by predicting what might happen as a result of each.

After you finish, rank the five causes with 1 being the most significant and 5 being the least and record your choices in the space provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Long Term Cause</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>What I think... OR What I wonder...</th>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial Problems</td>
<td>Encouraged by prosperity in the 20s, the production of cars, radios, telephones, and other household goods increased resulting in factories producing more than they could sell domestically or overseas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uneven distribution of income</td>
<td>5% of the population held 30% of the total income; ½ of the nation was living below the poverty line; and wages were low for factory workers. Farmers experienced low crop prices as the demand for food dropped after World War I.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstable banking practices</td>
<td>Banks made money by using deposits to make loans with interest and/or making investments. During this time, some banks made unwise investments and loans by allowing people to <strong>over speculate</strong> on stocks and <strong>borrow on the margin</strong> by only putting a 10% down payment on the loan.</td>
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<td>Weak international economy</td>
<td>The world, especially post World War I Europe, experienced an economic slowdown coupled with having to pay heavy war debts. At the same time American farmers and factory owners lobbied Congress for higher tariffs on foreign imports to protect American made products. When the high Hawley-Smoot protective tariff was passed, 23 nations retaliated by imposing tariffs of U.S. exports.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monetary Policy and use of the Gold Standard</td>
<td>One of the Federal Reserve’s responsibilities was to set the interest rate charged on a loan. In the late 20s, the Fed raised the interest rate making borrowing money more expensive. They felt this rate hike was necessary to maintain the gold standard the U.S. used to value the nation’s currency as well as hoping it would stabilize the economy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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Rank the five causes with 1 being the most significant and 5 being the least and record your choices in the space provided.

____ Industrial Problems
____ Uneven distribution of income
____ Unstable banking practices
____ Weak international economy
____ Monetary Policy and use of the Gold Standard
Immediate Cause--The Great Crash of 1929

During the month of October, 1929 stock prices began to fall and stockholders began to sell. On October 29, 1929 also called “Black Tuesday,” the stock market crashed. Within days, fortunes were wiped out almost overnight and the nation began a rapid descent into the Great Depression.

A. Industrial Problems
B. Uneven distribution of income
C. Unstable banking practices
D. Weak international economy
E. Monetary Policy and use of the Gold Standard

Short-term Effects of the Great Depression

As you read the short term effects, match each to one of the five major causes you feel was most responsible.

_____ 1. By mid-November, $25 billion of the value of stocks had disappeared.
_____ 2. By 1932, 22% of all the banks in the U.S. failed.
_____ 3. In the first two years following the crash, over 50,000 businesses failed.
_____ 4. Unemployment rose to 25% and the percentage was even higher in the major industrial cities such as Chicago.
_____ 5. Total wages for those that kept their jobs dropped from $12 billion to 7 billion.
_____ 6. U.S. exports dropped further hurting the U.S. economy.
_____ 7. Over 3 million people lived in makeshift shacks known as “Hoovervilles.”
_____ 8. Approximately ¼ of the nation’s farmers lost their land when they were crippled by the drought, low food prices and the inability to pay loans.
_____ 9. Immigrant factory and farm workers, especially those from Mexico, were targets of hostility and prejudice.
As you read the long term effects, decide if the effect is a political, economic, or social effect and record your answer below each statement.

1. Major public works projects provided employment along with much needed internal improvements such as dams, highways, bridges, and public buildings. Many of these improvements are still standing today.

2. The power of the federal government increased significantly due to government regulations and new taxes to support the economy.

3. The Treasury changed to a fiat or paper currency system rather than the gold/silver standard to back U.S. money and increase the money supply.

4. Federal agencies such as FDIC and the SEC were established to be a watchdog over banks and the stock market.

5. The federal government instituted programs such as Social Security insurance, farm subsidies, and the idea of a minimum wage to provide a “safety net” for Americans.

6. A shift in the relationship between the federal government and the states when the federal government became more directly involved in the lives of individuals.

7. The worldwide depression led to the rise of extremist ideologies in European countries such as Spain, Italy, and Germany.

Using your analysis of the causes and effects of the Great Depression, complete the following summary.

The _______________ was the catalyst that began the Great Depression. The two most important causes that contributed to the Great Depression were (1) ____________________________ because _____________________________________ and (2) ____________________________ because _____________________________________.

The most important short term effect was ____________________________________ because ____________________________________.

The long term effect that has had the most significant impact is ____________________________ because ____________________________________.
Interpreting the Pictures

Part of understanding the Great Depression is to realize just how difficult it was for most Americans.

For each group of pictures below, identify the term from the vocabulary study it represents.

Select one set of pictures to personalize by writing a short narrative below the set. Be sure to include answers to the following questions: Who are you? Where are you? What are you doing? How are you feeling?

Set One

Term:

Set Two

Term:
The Great Depression and the Arts

Just as the freewheeling Twenties were depicted in the literature and jazz of the decade, the literature, music, and photographs symbolized the despair of the people in the United States.

This era produced one of America's greatest novels, The Grapes of Wrath, by John Steinbeck, published in 1939. His novel was based on the lives of workers, he called "Oakies," who had migrated from Oklahoma during the Dust Bowl to California to find work. NOTE—It is estimated that over one million farmers lost their land and left searching for a better opportunity.

Read the following quotes from the novel and explain what you think it means and how it characterizes the Great Depression.

1. “...and in the eyes of the people there is the failure; and in the eyes of the hungry there is a growing wrath. In the souls of the people the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy for the vintage.” — John Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath

2. “‘Sure,’ cried the tenant men, ‘but it’s our land...We were born on it, and we got killed on it, died on it. Even if it’s no good it’s still ours...That’s what makes ownership, not a paper with numbers on it.” — John Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath

3. “We’re sorry. It’s not us. It’s the monster. The bank isn’t like a man.”
   “Yes, but the bank is only made of men.”
   “No, you’re wrong there--quite wrong there. The bank is something else than men. It happens that every man in a bank hates what the bank does, and yet the bank does it. The bank is something more than men, I tell you. It’s the monster. Men made it, but they can’t control it.” — John Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath

4. “One man, one family driven from the land; this rusty car creaking along the highway to the west. I lost my land, a single tractor took my land. I am alone and bewildered. And in the night one family camps in a ditch and another family pulls in and the tents come out. The two men squat on their hams and the women and children listen. Here is the node, you who hate change and fear revolution. Keep these two squatting men apart; make them hate, fear, suspect each other.” — John Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath

5. “The works of the roots of the vines, of the trees, must be destroyed to keep up the price...Carloads of oranges dumped on the ground. The people came for miles to take the fruit, but this could not be. How would they buy oranges at twenty cents a dozen if they could drive out and pick them up?...A million people hungry, needing the fruit and kerosene sprayed over the golden mountains...Burn coffee for fuel in ships. Burn corn to keep war, it makes a hot fire. Dump potatoes in the rivers and place guards along the banks to keep the hungry people from fishing them out.” — John Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath
The Great Depression and the Arts

In 1932 Yip Harburg wrote a song that symbolized the feelings and frustration of the people in the Great Depression. This song often played on the radio and became one of the most popular songs in 1932.

As you read the words of the three stanzas of “Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?” consider what message Harburg was trying to convey.

They used to tell me I was building a dream
And so I followed the mob
When there was earth to plow or guns to bare Meaning—
I was always there right on the job

They used to tell me I was building a dream
With peace and glory ahead
Why should I be standing in line Meaning—
Just waiting for bread?

Once I built a railroad, I made it run
Made it race against time
Once I built a tower, now it’s done Meaning—
Brother, can you spare a dime?

Yip Harburg, “Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?”

In conclusion, what was Harburg trying to say? Why do you think this song became so popular?

Finally, study this iconic photograph of a young mother with seven children from the Great Depression.

What do you think she is thinking? Why do you think this picture has become a symbol of the despair in the Great Depression?
The New Deal

As you read about President Roosevelt’s plans to bring the nation out of the Depression, be sure you understand the three types of programs he proposed.

After his inauguration, President Franklin D. Roosevelt announced plans or a “New Deal” for a series of programs designed to help end the depression gripping the nation. They consisted of relief programs which provided relief for people affected by the depression until the economy stabilized; recovery programs designed to stimulate the economy; and reform programs to prevent future economic problems such as those that had caused the depression. The programs, often called the Alphabet Soup because they were known by the initials of the program, fit one of these three categories.

### Read about each program and then decide if it is a relief, recovery, or reform program and explain why it fits into that category.

<table>
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<th>Program</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps)</td>
<td>This program put young men to work building roads, parks, and helping in erosion control projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPA (Works Progress Administration)</td>
<td>This program provided the unemployed with jobs in construction, teaching, and the arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIRA (National Industrial Recovery Act)</td>
<td>This established the National Recovery Administration which had the power to set rules and regulations for the economy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAA (Agricultural Adjustment Administration)</td>
<td>This program protected farmers from by providing subsidies to reduce production (which would increase the price) and to teach methods of preventing soil erosion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation)</td>
<td>This created federal insurance of bank deposits. This was intended to strengthen confidence in banks and prevent future bank failures.</td>
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**The New Deal**

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<td>SEC Securities and Exchange Commission</td>
<td>This regulated the stock market and restricted the practice of buying on margin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA Social Security Act</td>
<td>This program provided pensions, unemployment insurance, and aid to families with dependent children. It also provided aid to those with some disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVA Tennessee Valley Authority</td>
<td>This provided for the federal funding of dams to prevent flooding and to generate electricity that could be sold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLRB National Labor Relations Board (also known as the Wagner Act)</td>
<td>This allowed workers to join unions and prevented management from outlawing unions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FHA Federal Housing Administration</td>
<td>This program was created under the National Housing Act. It provided for home mortgages and repairs and still exists today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Banking Act</td>
<td>After Roosevelt declared a bank holiday by closing the banks. He convinced Congress to pass this and have the Treasury Department inspect banks. Only those that were sound could reopen right away. Those that needed help would get loans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil Conservation Act</td>
<td>This law provided guidelines for proper soil maintenance to make sure that another dust bowl could be avoided.</td>
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President Roosevelt and the Supreme Court

As Roosevelt’s programs took effect, many conservatives began to question whether the New Deal programs overstepped the powers given to the federal government in the U.S. Constitution, especially those given to the executive branch. In the first hundred days of his administration, President Roosevelt sent measure after measure to Congress, and his bills met with little organized opposition in either house. The executive and legislative branches worked cooperatively to make changes to the American economy. The third branch of government, the judiciary, did not have an opportunity to become involved in the New Deal until the middle of Roosevelt’s first term. Since the Supreme Court only hears actual cases and controversies, the people had to wait until a person with ‘standing to sue’ challenged a New Deal law before anyone could know whether the Court would uphold the new laws.

As you complete the reading below,

- highlight three key ideas from the passage.
- identify a possible argument supporting Roosevelt’s plan and another argument that is not in favor of his plan?
- what is your opinion of the President’s plan to change the number of Justices on the Supreme Court? Use your highlighted portions to complete the 3-2-1 graphic organizer that follows the reading.

In the winter of 1934-35, the answers to the questions of whether the New Deal was a radical and unconstitutional departure from traditional governmental involvement in the economy began to come. The Supreme Court approved parts of the New Deal but struck down many important New Deal measures. The National Industrial Recovery Act, The Agricultural Adjustment Act, and attempts from both federal and state attempts to establish minimum wages were declared unconstitutional. Never before had a Supreme Court majority taken on almost the entire governmental program of a powerful president whom Congress solidly backed and vetoed the program law by law. The Court showed the President and Congress what a powerful check judicial review could be.

These decisions became a key issue during the presidential election campaign in 1936. Republicans defended the Court’s recent decisions and the Democrats argued the Supreme Court’s interpretation was fit for “horse and buggy times, not today’s economic crisis.” Most Americans widely accepted the New Deal. As a result, President Roosevelt won every state’s electoral vote except Vermont and Maine and defeated the Republican candidate, Alfred Landon, by more than 10 million votes.

Roosevelt interpreted his landslide victory as a mandate for further reforms. With his personal popularity and prestige, and his huge congressional majorities, only the Supreme Court appeared to stand in his way. Most presidents can influence the Court through their appointments, but during Roosevelt’s first five years in office not one justice died or retired. Roosevelt was confident that the people approved of his policies, but would they approve of his efforts to restructure the Supreme Court?
President Roosevelt and the Supreme Court

Just two weeks after his second inaugural speech, Roosevelt sent a proposal to Congress. Its supporters called it a “court reform” measure, while its opponents called it an effort to “pack the court.” Simply stated, Roosevelt’s bill provided that whenever a federal judge who had served ten years or more failed to retire within six months after reaching his seventieth birthday, the President could appoint an additional judge. This additional judge would be assigned to the same court on which the older jurist was serving. No more than fifty such additional judges could be added to the entire federal judicial system, and the maximum number of Supreme Court justices was set at fifteen.

The Supreme Court was frequently characterized as the “Nine Old Men.” In 1937 it was an accurate, if unflattering, description. The youngest justice was 62; the oldest, 81. All four of the justices who had regularly voted against New Deal measures were over 70. The intended effect of Roosevelt’s court proposal was obvious even if the President emphasized other reasons for supporting his bill.

Interpreting an Editorial Cartoon

*Study the editorial cartoon below. Then, answer the questions that follow.*

1. **What do you see happening in the cartoon?**

2. **What is happening in history at this time?**

3. **What is the cartoonist saying about the Chief Executive (President Roosevelt)? What 3 pieces of evidence from the cartoon supports your interpretation?**

4. **How does the cartoon illustrate the idea of separation of powers with the three branches of government?**
Reviewing the Great Depression and New Deal

Review the New Deal programs (on pages 17 and 18) and consider the categories you identified for each: Relief, Recover, or Reform.

For each of these categories identify the program you feel would have been the most effective and explain why.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>I feel it was the most effective because…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relief</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Refer back to your answer on the continuum at the beginning of the study. Mark the place on the continuum that now reflects your position on the statement and explain if and how your opinion has changed.

The U.S. government should be actively involved in the economy.

Strongly Agree_____________________________________________Strongly Disagree

What connections do you see with the causes and effects of the Great Depression to the political, social, or economic problems of today?

Is the coronavirus aid packet an example of relief, recovery, or reform? Explain your answer.