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Introduction

The Great Depression

For more than ten years, the vast majority of Americans lived daily with fear and uncertainty. Millions endured hunger and real misery. And all this suffering began at a time when the nation had nearly convinced itself that such troubles were a thing of the past. That decade, the 1930s, was the time of the Great Depression. Arriving as it did on the heels of an era of unprecedented abundance, the Depression was a shock and a trauma. It was also a turning point. For the nation did rally. Millions of unrecorded heroes faced, coped with, and triumphed over adversity. And public officials took on much greater responsibilities for regulating the industrial economy and providing relief for society's weakest members.

The twelve illustrations in this booklet cannot by themselves reveal all the causes, the complexity, or even all of the drama of this important episode in American life. However, they can provide a set of keys that will help your students understand that era as it was seen and experienced by those who lived through it.

The illustrations are presented in four lessons. Each lesson uses three of the illustrations to explore one broad topic or key aspect in the overall story of the Great Depression. Briefly, the four lessons are as follows:

The Approaching Disaster

The illustrations here help to set the context of the story by focusing attention on the prosperity of the twenties, its incompleteness, and the shock its collapse triggered, even for the well-off.

Hard Times

The illustrations in this lesson convey the sheer human drama and the widespread suffering caused by poverty, hunger, and (for many) the experience of being uprooted and forced to travel the open roads in search of work or relief.

The New Deal

The New Deal was a vast and varied public effort to cope with the Depression, get the economy moving again, and make the permanent reforms necessary to prevent a repeat of the disaster. The illustrations here focus on examples of all three of these aspects of the New Deal.

FDR and His Critics

The decade was dominated by one man, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. His personality was as crucial to understanding the era as his policies. To some he was a great hero. To others he was a misguided, perhaps even dangerous, meddler. But everyone recognized the impact and importance of his leadership. The illustrations in this lesson show FDR as those who lived through the Depression decade viewed him.

Using Photos, Cartoons and Other Visuals to Teach History

Most textbooks today are full of colorful visuals. But all too often these visuals function primarily as window dressing. They make the text more entertaining, or at least more palatable. But only occasionally do the visuals in textbooks do more than offer simple pictorial reinforcement of ideas already presented in the text. In many cases, they pander to the visual orientation of the young while doing little to help young people master the challenges of the visual media that dominate their lives.

By way of contrast, our approach to using visual materials emphasizes their unique strengths as historical documents. The lessons in this booklet focus students on the visual symbols and metaphors in editorial cartoons, the dramatic qualities of certain photographs, the potential of many images to make abstract ideas more specific and concrete, the implicit biases and stereotypes in certain images, their emotional power, and their ability to invoke the spirit of a time and place. In the process, we make every effort to strengthen students' visual literacy skills in general, as well as their ability to think critically and engage in spirited but disciplined discussions.

How to Use this Booklet

The booklet is divided into four lessons, with three illustrations per lesson. Each lesson consists of the following:

A BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET This page provides brief summaries explaining the three illustrations on which the lesson is based and their relevance to the lesson's objectives.

CD-ROM WITH IMAGES The ImageXaminer allows you to project the images for use in your class discussions. The CD-ROM also includes a folder containing all of the discussion questions and follow-up questions in pdf format. All of the images are also in pdf format, should you wish to create overhead transparencies.

DISCUSSION-ACTIVITY SHEETS FOR EACH ILLUSTRATION

Each sheet displays one illustration. It includes a sequence of questions to help you plan an all-class discussion while using the images in the ImageXaminer. The questions take students step by step through an analysis of the illustration. If you wish, you may reproduce these pages and hand them out. In addition to the discussion questions on the illustration itself, one or two follow-up activities are suggested. Some of these can be made into individual assignments. Others will work best as small group or all-class activities.

The Great Depression

OBJECTIVES FOR THIS LESSON:

1. Students will better understand the prosperity of the 1920s and its incomplete nature.
 2. Students will get a sense of the shock caused by the 1929 stock market collapse and the onset of hard times.
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The Approaching Disaster

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS:

Illustration 1

The hen laying the golden egg in this cartoon is the Ford Motor Company. In the 1920s, Ford pioneered in new assembly-line methods of production and turned out cars that millions of average Americans could buy. These consumers also found a large number of other appliances and goods increasingly affordable. This cartoon reflects the sense many Americans had in the 1920s that a golden age of consumer-based prosperity had arrived.

Illustration 2

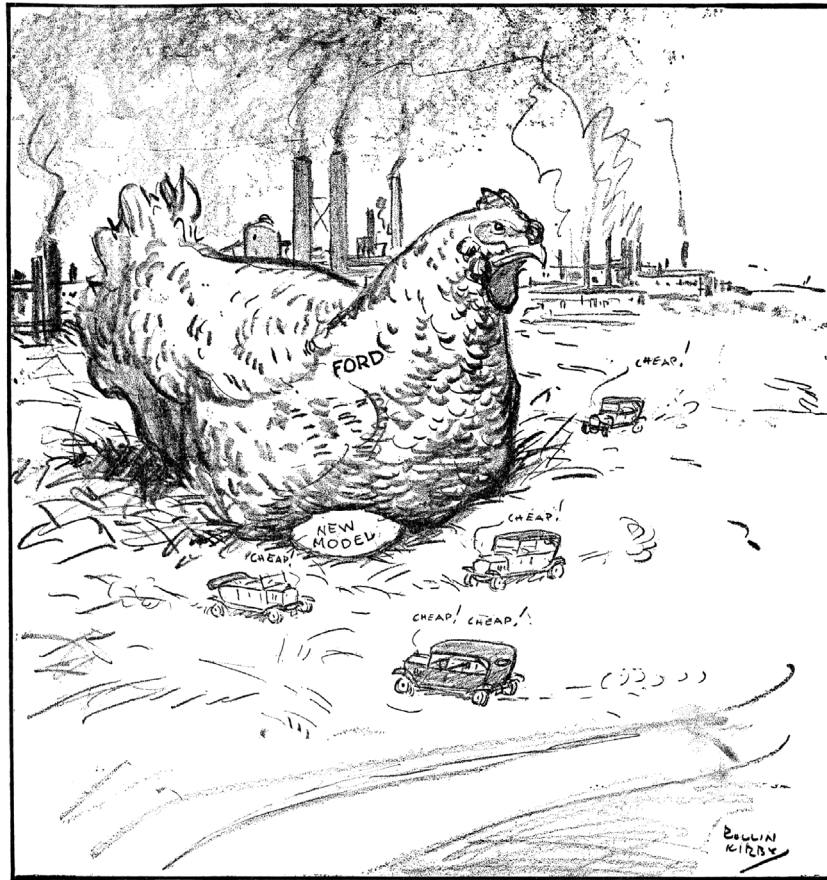
The prosperity of the 1920s brought into existence a large and growing middle class. But not all Americans benefited from the good times. With the end of World War I, a vast international market for the American farmer's produce shrank. In the industrial sector, the large-scale corporation could sometimes control markets and prices, or at least cope adequately with short-term problems. Farmers had no real control over prices. And their growing output only placed constant downward pressure on the prices they could get for their crops. This stark cartoon by D.R. Fitzpatrick highlights the farmer's vulnerability and isolation in the booming U.S. economy of the 1920s.

Illustration 3

The dramatic collapse of the stock market in October of 1929 did not cause the Great Depression. But it was still the start of hard times for thousands of ordinary Americans who had gone into debt in order to invest in what seemed a sure thing. In a scene showing the plight of one man, this photo conveys dramatically the turning-point nature of the crash. It also suggests the psychological shock experienced by those Americans who had placed such faith in the industrial order and its consumer culture.

Lesson 1 — The Approaching Disaster

Illustration 1



HATCHING

Rollin Kirby/*The World*

Discussing the Illustration

1. The giant hen in this cartoon is actually a symbol. That means it stands for some other thing or idea. From what is written on the hen and from the rest of the cartoon, can you explain what the hen stands for?
2. Henry Ford developed an assembly-line method for producing cars. Because of this, the Ford Motor Company began making many cars at low cost. How did this new technique suddenly make cars affordable for millions of average Americans?
3. What other new products sold to Americans in the 1920s helped to make that decade a time of growing wealth and comfort for millions of Americans?
4. This cartoon uses the old tale about the goose that laid the golden egg to make a point about the Ford Motor company and its effect on American life. What is that point? From the details in the cartoon, do you think the hen laying the “golden eggs” here is a symbol only for the Ford Motor company or for all of U.S. industry? Explain your answer.

Follow-up Activities

1. In the library, read what history textbooks or other written sources say about Henry Ford and his early life. Also find out more about his efforts to improve the way cars were manufactured. Finally, read about how Ford dealt with his workers as his company grew larger. Write a brief essay or prepare a short talk to give in class about Henry Ford and this cartoon. Based on what you have learned, explain what this cartoon helps to show about Henry Ford and his importance in U.S. history. Also explain any important aspects of Henry Ford’s life that you feel are not illustrated in any way in this cartoon.
2. The 1920s were a time of growing prosperity in America. They were also years when many social ideas and attitudes were changing. In the library, find old magazines and books about the 1920s. Where possible, make copies of advertisements you think illustrate the changing social attitudes of this prosperous decade. Use the copies of the ads to create a bulletin board display on the 1920s.

Lesson 1 — The Approaching Disaster

Illustration 2



Fitzpatrick in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Discussing the Illustration

1. Industry in the 1920s was growing rapidly and factories were turning out more and more goods. How does this cartoon show that? Do you think its way of showing the prosperity of 1920s is more or less accurate than in the first cartoon for this lesson? Why?
2. Not everyone was better off in the 1920s. One group of Americans found it especially hard to make a good living. From the cartoon, can you guess what group that is?
3. Farmers actually produced more and more crops in these years. But so did farmers in the nations starting to recover from World War I. Why might the rapidly increasing world supply of crops have actually hurt farmers producing these crops?
4. Why do you suppose the artist chose to include the "Farm for Sale" sign in this cartoon?

Follow-up Activities

1. In his famous 1896 "Cross of Gold" speech, Democratic presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan said.

"Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country."

You may wish to read the entire "Cross of Gold" speech. Then, as a class, discuss these three questions:

- A. How might this cartoon be used to back up the words from Bryan's speech quoted above?
- B. How might the cartoon be used by someone who disagreed with these words of Bryan's?
- C. Do you agree or disagree with the point Bryan was making in this part of his "Cross of Gold" speech? Explain your answer.

Lesson 1 — The Approaching Disaster

Illustration 3



The Granger Collection, New York

Discussing the Illustration

1. This photo was taken on October 30, 1929, just after the great stock market crash of 1929. Briefly, explain what the stock market is and what it means to say that stocks “crashed” in October of 1929?
2. In the 1929 stock market crash, millions of Americans lost a great deal of money. Many had used something called “margin” to buy stocks. Explain what it meant to buy stocks on margin in the 1920s. How might a drop in stock prices force someone who bought stock on margin to sell everything in order to get cash right away?
3. What kind of life do you suppose the owner of this car led during the 1920s? How do you think this person’s life changed after October 1929? Do you feel sorry for this person? Why or why not?
4. This photo might be titled *The Sudden Death of the Roaring Twenties*. Do you think this would be a good title for the photo? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. Write a fictional account of what happened to the owner of this car on October 30, 1929, when he tried to sell it for \$100 in cash. Be as imaginative, and as specific, as you can. Share some of these “Day in the Life of ...” accounts in class.
2. Small Group Activity: The 1929 stock market crash took place at the very start of the Great Depression. Most economists say the stock market crash did not actually cause the Great Depression. They say many other factors weakened economies around the world in the late 1920s and helped bring on the Depression. Yet many people still think of the stock market crash as the cause of the Depression. Read accounts of the stock market crash in two or three history textbooks or other sources. Based on what you read, come up with your own list of the factors that caused the Great Depression. Also, talk about why so many people still think of the stock market crash as the key event “causing” the Depression. Report your views to the rest of the class.

The Great Depression

OBJECTIVES FOR THIS LESSON:

1. Students will gain insight into the nature of the suffering of millions of ordinary Americans during the Great Depression
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Hard Times

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS:

Illustration 1

Along the road in Oklahoma, this family of migrant farmers paused to pray and have a meal. Were they praying for desperately needed help, in the hope of finding work at the end of their day's travels? Or were they giving thanks, despite all their troubles, for the meal and the family solidarity they still enjoyed? In a way, the photo conveys both aspects of the Depression experience: fear and worry on the one hand, and a determined hope on the other. It is a combination that appears in many of the era's faces and stories.

Illustration 2

The men in this photo are lined up outside a New York City employment agency. By their clothing, most of them appear to be well-off. Yet it is obvious that they are desperate — and that few of them are likely to find work on this particular day. In this way, the photo is useful in calling attention to the fact that the Great Depression disrupted the lives of all Americans, not just the very poor.

Illustration 3

At the height of the Depression, more than a fourth of the workforce was completely idle. Millions of others worked part time, and often at substantially reduced wages. Male providers hit hardest often had just a few stark choices: sell apples on street corners, take to the road as hobos, or seek relief in public shelters and breadlines. This huge line of men is waiting to get food at a Chicago soup kitchen run by gangster Al Capone.

Illustration 1



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. This is a photo from the years of the Great Depression. It shows a migrant farm family about to share a meal along the side of the road. What does it mean to say that the members of this family are “migrant farmers”?
2. How can you tell that this is not a picnic scene or a happy time in the lives of these people?
3. What do you suppose was happening to this family in the months before this photo was taken? In coming up with your answer, use your imagination and what you already know about the 1930s.
4. What kind of a family do you think this is? If you had been alive in the 1930s, why might you have *not* wanted to be in this family? Why might you have *wanted* to be in this family?
5. The family is praying before having its meal. Do you think they are praying for help, praying to express thanks, or praying for some other reason? Explain your answer.

Follow-up Activities

1. Read more about the plight of migrant farmers during the 1930s. Based on your reading, imagine what a month in the life of one member of this family would be like. Pretend you are one of the people in this photograph. Write at least five imaginary diary entries for this person covering one month in 1939, the year when the photo was taken. Share some of these diary entries as part of a class discussion of the plight of farmer in the 1930s.
2. This is a Farm Security Administration (FSA) photo. The FSA was a New Deal agency set up in the 1930s to help farmers. The FSA hired talented photographers to help show the nation what was happening to poor farmers during the Depression. The photographers often tried to show the farmers and their families both as victims of the hard times *and* as strong and proud. As a class, discuss the way this photo could be seen as showing both of these things. Do you think the photo is a form of propaganda? Why or why not?

Lesson 2 — Hard Times

Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. This photo shows a large number of people waiting outside an employment agency in hopes of finding a job. How do you suppose these people felt at this moment about their chances of getting a good job?
2. Migrant farmers were not the only people to suffer in the Great Depression. The hard times affected many others, as well. In what ways does this photo help to show that the suffering caused by the Depression was very widespread?
3. The people in the photo mostly had “white collar” jobs. What are some “white collar” jobs? Why do you think the phrase “white collar” is used for such jobs?
4. Does this photo of white collar workers out on the street looking for jobs change your idea about the Great Depression in any way? In what ways might the Depression have been easier for such workers than for the migrant family in the first photo in this lesson? In what ways might it have been harder for them? Explain your answers.

Follow-up Activities

1. Small Group Activity: As a group, read about the following three events of the early 1930s.
 - A. President Herbert Hoover’s support for the 1930 Hawley-Smoot Tariff
 - B. The forced removal of the Bonus veterans from Washington D.C. in July of 1932
 - C. Franklin Roosevelt’s Inaugural Address of 1933

In your small group, read and discuss these three events. Then pretend you are all white collar workers on the street in this photo. You are all there seeking jobs. Roll play a discussion among these workers. In this discussion, talk about what is happening in your own lives. But also talk about each of the three events listed above. After trying the roll playing exercise a few times, perform it in front of the entire class.

Illustration 3



The National Archives

Discussing the Illustration

1. This photo shows a long line of people without jobs in Chicago in 1931. They are waiting to try to get free food and coffee. Why do you think long ones like this were becoming common in many cities in the 1930s?
2. Some people say this is a very dramatic photograph from the Depression years. Do you agree? What, if anything, do you think makes this such a dramatic photo?
3. What aspects of this scene seem most unusual or surprising to you? Explain your answer.
4. Some people say this scene shows how helpless people were during the Depression. Do you agree that the people in this line are helpless? What, if anything, do you think they could have done about the situation facing them? What do you think you would have been thinking about and feeling if you had been in this line?

Follow-up Activities

1. Find several older relatives or friends who lived through the 1930s. Show them this photo and the other two in this lesson. Ask them to choose the photo that best shows the Depression years as they remember them. Take notes on what they say, and report your findings back to the rest of the class.
2. Pretend you are in this line. Write an account of the time you spent in the line. What did you think about while you were in the line? Why did you wait in it so long? What, if anything, did you talk about to those around you while you were in the line? If you said nothing to others, why did you remain silent? What decisions, if any, about your life did you make? Be as imaginative and specific as possible. In class, read and discuss some of these imaginary accounts. Use a few of them, along with the photo, in a bulletin board display called "Living Through Hard Times in the 1930s."

**OBJECTIVES
FOR THIS LESSON:**

1. Students will see the New Deal as a varied series of reforms aimed at short-term relief and long-term recovery.
 2. Students will view the New Deal as a vast and active effort by millions to cope with hard times.
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The New Deal

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS:

Illustration 1

The New Deal consisted of a large number of programs. More importantly, it had a variety of goals — immediate relief for the unemployed, efforts to revive the economy, basic reforms to prevent future depressions. Also, many of the programs had a psychological aim — the restoration of hope and energy. On this score, one of the most successful programs was the Civilian Conservation Corps. It put thousands of unemployed youth to work building parks, trails, roads, and various other forestry and soil conservation projects. The program was run with semi-military discipline. This photo of some CCC workers in Oregon shows how the program often took young people from stagnation in the cities to productivity in rural environments.

Illustration 2

The centerpiece of the early New Deal was the National Industrial Recovery Act, which set up the NRA, or the National Recovery Administration. The NRA set uniform codes of fair practices agreed to by the owners and workers in each industry. A key goal was to maintain adequate prices and decent wages by limiting supply. The assumption seemed to be that the Depression was a crisis of “overproduction.” The program was controversial because it gave each industry the power to act in a number of semi-monopolistic ways. In 1935, the Supreme Court declared the program unconstitutional. But this cartoon captures the spirit of cooperation that the program fostered for a time.

Illustration 3

For the most part, the New Deal tried to provide work relief, not direct payments or handouts to those in need. New Deal public works programs abounded. Schools, public buildings, roads and dams were built by a variety of agencies in all parts of the nation. This photo showing the construction of the Hoover Dam captures this aspect of the New Deal — stressing again the degree to which Americans acted vigorously to cope with their difficulties.

Illustration 1



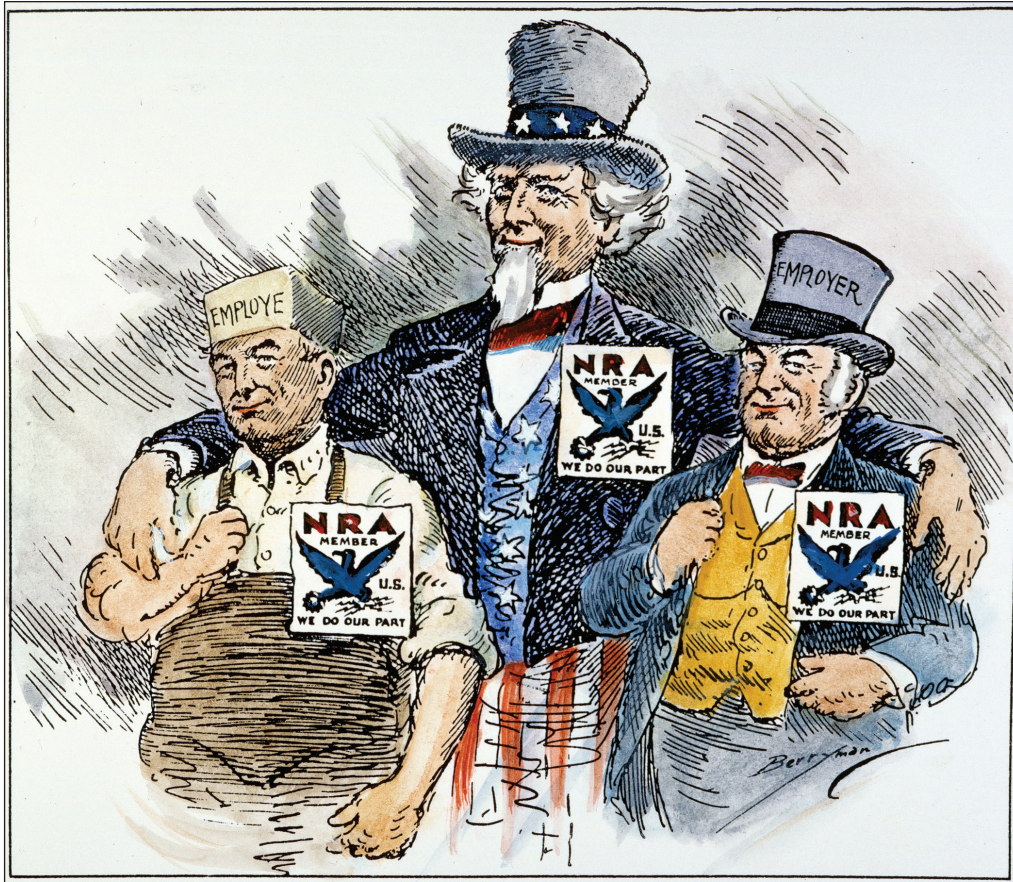
Discussing the Illustration

1. These young men from New York are shown building a mess hall in Rainier National Park in Washington state for the CCC. The CCC was a New Deal relief program. Briefly, what was the New Deal?
2. What did the initials “CCC” stand for? The CCC was one of the New Deal’s many relief programs. What do you think a New Deal “relief program” was? What were some CCC projects, and why could the CCC be described as a relief program?
3. Do these men look like they're properly dressed for their job? Why do you think city dwellers such as these ones would have wanted to go labor in the rural work environments the CCC offered?
4. In later years, business owners were often quick to hire men who had been in the CCC. Why do you suppose that was? Would you have wanted to join the CCC in the 1930s? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. Small Group Activity: The CCC was clearly one of the most popular New Deal programs, if not the most popular. Another early New Deal relief program was CWA, which stands the Civil Works Administration. It also aimed to give government jobs and work to the unemployed. But it was not nearly as popular as the CCC, and it was ended in the spring of 1934. Read more about both the CCC and the CWA. Based on your reading, try to decide why one of these programs was so popular while the other was criticized by a growing number of people in its few months of operation. Prepare a brief report to the class on your findings.
1. Pretend you are one of the young men in this photo. Write four imaginary diary entries. One diary entry should be about your life before joining the CCC. One should be about your CCC experience. One should be about the train trip to Chicago. And one should be about your future plans once you get home.

Illustration 2



The Granger Collection, New York

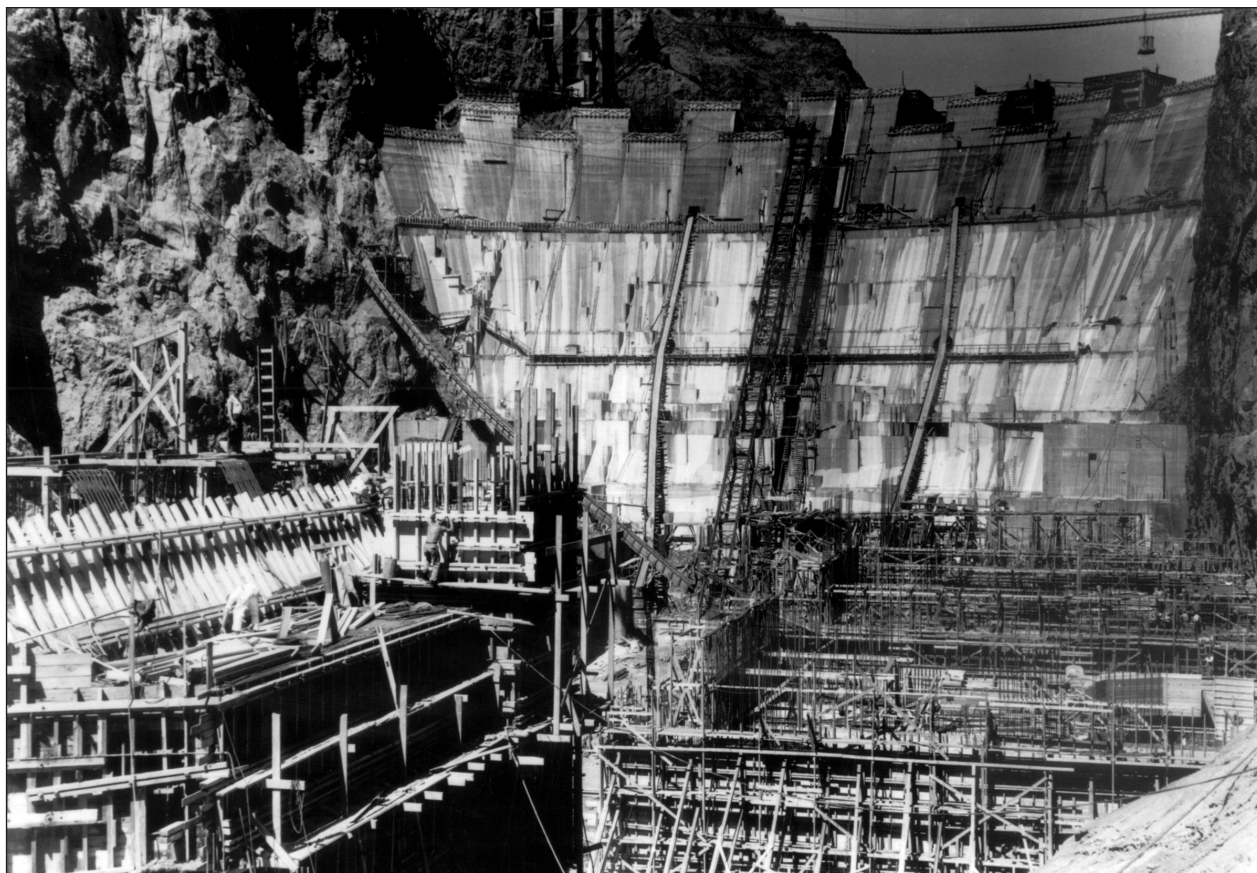
Discussing the Illustration

1. This cartoon is about the NRA, or National Recovery Administration. The NRA was a part of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. What do you know about the NRA? Can you explain the badges on each of the figures in this cartoon?
2. The NRA was a government agency that tried to help U.S. industry recover from the Depression. What figure in this cartoon stands for the government? From the way this figure is drawn, do you think the artist approves of the NRA? Why or why not?
3. The NRA tried to get two big groups of Americans to work together more to help end the Depression. From the cartoon, can you tell which groups?
4. Why might it have been hard during the Depression to get these two groups to work together?
5. How does this cartoon portray these two groups, and how does its portrayal of them add to its overall view of the NRA? Do you think this cartoon's portrayal of these groups is realistic? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. Small Group Activity: The law setting up the NRA was called the National Industrial Recovery Act. This law gave the NRA the power to approve sets of rules for each industry. The rules set minimum prices for products and limited the amount of goods each business could produce. This was supposed to protect each business and help it earn enough from what it sold. The rules also aimed to help workers by setting minimum wages and maximum hours to be worked. But in 1935, the Supreme Court said the NRA was unconstitutional and could not continue to operate. The Court made this ruling in the case known as *Schechter Poultry Corporation v. United States*. President Roosevelt said about the Court's decision in this case and one other: "We have been relegated to the horse and buggy definition of interstate commerce." Read more about this case. As a group, debate the case and Roosevelt's reaction to it. Then present your group's ideas about the case in a discussion with the rest of the class.

Illustration 3



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. Many people remember the New Deal as a time of huge public works projects, such as this one. This photo shows construction of Hoover Dam, otherwise known as Boulder Dam. What river does this dam help to control?
2. What are some of the ways in which dams like this one could help to strengthen the economy?
3. Hoover Dam blocks the Colorado River between Arizona and Nevada. But many people in Southern California were also especially happy to see the dam built. Why was that so?
4. Hoover Dam was begun in 1931, before Franklin Roosevelt became President. But after 1933, it came to be seen as an important part of Roosevelt's New Deal. How might construction of a dam like this have helped the New Deal? Why do you think so many Americans in the 1930s favored big dam construction projects? Would they still favor them if the nation were in a depression today? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. The construction of the Hoover Dam involved more than 4,000 workers. From this one photo, make a list of all the special problems you think would have made it hard to build this dam. Read more about the building of the Hoover Dam. Then pretend you are a worker on the dam. Write an imaginary account of one day on the job. Try to include some comments on each of the problems on your list.
2. Small Group Activity: One of the most important New Deal public works projects was the TVA, or Tennessee Valley Authority. Below are some key benefits the TVA was supposed to bring:
 - Flood Control
 - Electric power generation
 - Navigation and water supply
 - Recreation

Each group member should learn more about how the TVA has done in one of these areas. Then, as a group, create a bulletin board display on the TVA.

**OBJECTIVES
FOR THIS LESSON:**

1. Students will understand why Franklin Roosevelt was such a dominant figure in the 1930s.
 2. Students will see that opinions about Roosevelt varied at the time and are still debated today.
-

FDR and His Critics

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS:

Illustration 1

At his inauguration as President in 1933, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) told the nation: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." And as this photo reveals, the view the public was most likely to get of him was of a man who had indeed conquered fear. Roosevelt's confidence and enthusiasm seemed to rub off on others. Scenes such as this also gave the so-called "forgotten man" of the Depression the sense that the nation's leaders understood his plight and were responding as best they could.

Illustration 2

Not everyone was impressed with FDR's way of coping with the Depression. And in fact, Roosevelt did not have a coherent plan, or a fully developed set of ideas about how the U.S. economy worked and how it could be reformed. His approach was, as he put it, "to take a method and try it. If it fails, admit it frankly and try another." This cartoon by Clifford Berryman takes a somewhat critical view of "Doctor" Roosevelt's hit or miss technique.

Illustration 3

By 1939, the New Deal was six years old. It had given relief to millions. But it had not brought the Depression to an end. Some New Dealers, such as those in this cartoon, wanted even stronger government efforts to direct the economy. But by then, Roosevelt was focusing on another threat. Abroad, in Japan and Germany, the Depression helped bring to power two terrifying military dictatorships. Roosevelt decided early on that neutrality would not work. In 1940, he won an unprecedented third term as President. After Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the nation rallied around FDR again. This cartoon compares the old New Deal donkey to FDR's snappy new "Win the War" car. The comparison is apt in a way the artist (Clifford Berryman again) probably did not intend. For on the home front, war production and the draft quickly put an end to unemployment in a way the New Deal never could. The cartoon once more captures the optimism FDR inspired as he led the nation to victory in the most terrible war in history.

Illustration 1



Discussing the Illustration

1. In 1933, Franklin Delano Roosevelt took over as President. He led the nation through the Depression. Most Americans had very strong feelings about him, both favorable and unfavorable. Photos like this affected the way millions of Americans viewed FDR. What do you think this photo shows about Roosevelt's personality? Why?
2. Do you think this photo's view of Roosevelt is an accurate one? That is, does it show FDR's true personality and character? Or do you think the photo is "staged," or purposely planned, to show him in a particular way? Explain your answer.
3. Roosevelt was actually a very wealthy man who grew up in great luxury. Why do you suppose he was seen by so many people as a great defender of ordinary Americans?
4. What is your own opinion of Roosevelt? Does this photo fit in with your view of him? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. Small Group Activity: To many Americans, Franklin Roosevelt was a hero who saved the country from the Depression. But others disliked him just as strongly. As a group, look through books and other sources for photos, drawings and editorial cartoons about Roosevelt. Select five that portray him favorably and five that are critical of him. Make copies of these illustrations and use them in a bulletin board display called "FDR: The Way We Saw Him." Include your own written comments explaining each illustration.
2. Eleanor Roosevelt played a major role in FDR's Presidency. She backed most of his New Deal plans. But at times, she also disagreed with him. Read more about Eleanor Roosevelt's views and activities during the Depression years. Now pretend you are Eleanor and write a brief diary entry commenting on the photo you see here as you think she would have seen it.

Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. This cartoon shows President Roosevelt as a doctor. What famous cartoon figure is “Doctor” Roosevelt caring for here? What point does the cartoon make about the 1930s by showing this figure as a sick person?
2. Do you think this sick Uncle Sam figure is a good way to show what the 1930s were like? Why or why not?
3. Roosevelt has a doctor’s bag labeled “New Deal remedies.” And he is telling a figure labeled Congress that he may have to change remedies if Uncle Sam doesn’t get better. How do the bottles on the table help you understand what is meant here by “New Deal remedies”?
4. How do the large number of bottles help to make a point about the way Roosevelt dealt with the problems caused by the Great Depression? Do you think this cartoon is mainly favorable or mainly unfavorable in its view of Roosevelt and the New Deal? Explain your answer.

Follow-up Activities

1. This cartoon is from 1934. What does it show about Roosevelt’s dealings with Congress? How accurate a view is this of the way Roosevelt got along with Congress in that year? Did Roosevelt’s dealings with Congress change in the late 1930s and early 1940s? Read more about Roosevelt in order to answer these questions. Report your findings to the class in a brief talk about this cartoon and its view of Roosevelt and the U.S. Congress.
2. In a 1932 speech, Roosevelt said the following:
“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.”
Do you agree with Roosevelt’s idea here about “common sense”? Do you think the artist who drew the above cartoon agreed with Roosevelt about this? Discuss these two questions in class.

Illustration 3



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. This cartoon from the early 1940s shows Franklin Roosevelt telling several of his top advisers to put the New Deal “out to pasture.” From the cartoon and what you know of the early 1940s, explain exactly what Roosevelt means when he says, “We’ve got to get going.”
2. The three figures on the donkey are named “Hopkins,” Wallace,” and “Ickes.” Who were these three men, and why do you suppose the artist choose to put them on the New Deal donkey?
3. What point do you suppose the cartoon is making by showing the New Deal as a stumbling donkey full of patches and bruises? What point is made by showing Roosevelt in the car?
4. According to the cartoon, what was Roosevelt’s attitude about World War II at this point in time? How does the cartoon show that attitude? Is the cartoon favorable or unfavorable toward Roosevelt? Explain your answer.

Follow-up Activities

1. Pretend it is 1941 and you are one of the following:
 - labor union leader
 - small business owner
 - middle class housewife
 - black sharecropper in the South
 - steelworker
 - male high school graduateAs one of the above people, write a letter to the editor expressing your thoughts and feelings in response to this cartoon. Share some of these letters in a class discussion of the cartoon.
2. Compare the three illustrations presented in this lesson. Each offers one particular view of Franklin Roosevelt. In what ways are these three views of Roosevelt similar to one another? In what ways are they different from one another? If you had to choose just one of these illustrations to use in a book about the Great Depression, which would you choose? Why? Discuss these questions in class.

