

U.S. HISTORY

**Great Depression**  
and the **New Deal**

**COMMON  
CORE**

**A S S E S S M E N T S**

**MindSparks**  
CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO THINK HISTORICALLY



# The Great Depression and the New Deal

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# Teacher Introduction

These Common Core History Assessments are designed to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they learn about America during World War I. The assessments are intended to be formative more than summative. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Similar sets of assessments are available (or planned) for each unit in a typical American History class.

## ★ *Historical Thinking and the Challenge of the Common Core*

This set includes nine assessments aligned with the first nine Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards. We have left out the tenth Common Core History/Social Studies Reading standard, which does not lend itself to assessments of the sort provided here. The set also includes two writing tasks aligned with two key Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards.

These Common Core standards challenge history teachers to develop in students the complex literacy skills they need in today's world and the ability to master the unique demands of working with historical primary and secondary source texts. The Common Core standards are supportive of the best practices in teaching historical thinking. Such practices include close reading, attending to a source's point of view and purpose, corroborating sources, and placing sources in their historical context. These are the skills needed to make history less about rote learning and more about an active effort to investigate and interpret the past.

These assessments are also useful in many ways for ELA teachers. They assess many of the skills specified in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards, which put a good deal of emphasis on the reading of informational texts. The Anchor Standards form the basis for all of the various Common Core standards for English Language Arts.

## ★ *What Are These Assessments Like?*

- *A group of nine reading skills assessments and two writing tasks for each major era of American History*

Each reading skills assessment is based on one of the key Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards. Two writing tasks are based on the first two College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing, which are the basis for the Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards. The two writing standards focus on writing arguments to support claims and writing informative/explanatory texts.

- *Based on primary or secondary sources*

In most cases, one primary source is used. In some cases, an assessment is based on more than one primary source or on a primary and a secondary source. The sources are brief. In most cases, texts have been slightly altered to improve readability, but without changing meaning or tone.

- *Brief tasks promoting historical literacy*

For each assessment, students write brief answers to one or two questions. The questions are not tests of simple factual recall. They assess the student's mastery of the skills addressed by that assessment's Common Core History/Social Studies Standard.

- *Two versions of each of the nine reading standards assessments*

A *Basic* and an *Advanced* version of each assessment are provided. The *Basic* Assessment addresses the Common Core Standard for grades 6–8. The *Advanced* Assessment is based on the Common Core Standard for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. Each version uses the same source or sources. In some cases, sources have been somewhat shortened for the *Basic* version.

- *Easy to use both as learning and assessment tools*

These assessments do not take valuable time away from instruction. The primary sources and background information on each source make them useful mini-lessons as well as tools to assess student historical thinking skills. The sources all deal with themes and trends normally covered when teaching the relevant historical era.

- *Evaluating student responses*

Brief but specific suggestions are provided defining acceptable and best responses to each question asked in the assessment. The suggestions are meant to aid in evaluating students, but even more importantly they are a way for teachers to help students better understand and master the skills on which the assessment is focused.

# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 1

*Basic Level*

### Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 1 for grades 6–8

#### ★ Key Ideas and Details

1. **(6–8)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

#### ★ Using this Assessment

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*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 1* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 1 for grades 6–8. It asks students to cite specific textual evidence from two documents. It also challenges students to adapt that reading skill to the unique demands of thinking historically as they carefully interpret textual evidence in a primary source from a time in the past and a secondary source account of that same time in the past.

#### ★ Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should develop an answer by referring to such details in Document 1 as the huge dust storms, the crops withering away, farmers unable to “pay off their debts since they had nothing to sell,” farms lost to foreclosure, and farmers becoming refugees to California only to find “more hardship.” Acceptable responses to the second assessment question may vary. Several technological, economic or political factors are mentioned. The tenant and share-cropping system is seen as playing a key role in some of the other factors as well. However, answers should be assessed mainly for how well they identify and then explain accurately details associated with one or another of the factors listed.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 1

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read a primary source document and a secondary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the documents. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

### Document 1: A Secondary Source

Not all of the impact of the Depression was the result of business and consumer practices—weather was also a factor. The Midwest was hit by dust storms in the early 30s, then drought combined with the wind to turn these once fertile plains into what became known as the “Dust Bowl.” Farmers watched helplessly as their crops withered away, then found themselves unable to pay off their debts since they had nothing to sell. Many lost their land to foreclosure and effectively became refugees in their own country. Among the hardest hit were the farmers from Oklahoma, many of whom traveled west to California in search of work, but often found more hardship. John Steinbeck immortalized the plight of the “Okies” in his classic novel “The Grapes of Wrath.”

**Source Information:** This document is a secondary source account of the impact of drought and dust storms on Western farmers in the 1930s. A secondary source is an account of past events written later by someone who did not experience or take part in those events. As a secondary source, this document is not evidence from the 1930s. It is a later account by someone writing about those years. This passage is adapted from “Overview: The Great Depression and the New Deal,” in *African Americans and the NRA*.

Source: Gordonson, Kerry and Bill Williams. *The Great Depression and New Deal*. Document-Based Activities in U.S. History. Culver City, C.A.: Social Studies School Service, 2010.

## Document 2: A Primary Source

*Much has been written of our droughts here in Oklahoma, and how they have driven the farmers from the land. Droughts alone would not have permanently displaced these farmers. The great majority of migrants had already become share-tenants and sharecroppers. The droughts hastened a process that had already begun.*

*1. High interest rates. Very high rates are charged when crops are good and when they fail. Through such practices the farmer loses his ownership; he becomes a tenant, then a sharecropper, then a migrant.*

*2. The tenant and sharecropping system. When sharecroppers are charged 50 to 75 percent of all he produces to the landlords, plus 10 percent for the bank's share on money invested; when these robbing practices are carried on in a community or a state, is it surprising that 33,241 farm families have left Oklahoma in the past 5 years?*

*3. Land exhaustion, droughts, soil erosion, and the one-crop system of farming. Lacking capital and equipment, small farmers have been unable to terrace their land or conduct other soil-conservation practices. The tenant and sharecropping system is chiefly responsible for the one-crop system. The landlord dictates what crops are to be planted—invariably cotton—and the tenant either plants it or gets off.*

*4. Unstable markets [that is, prices go up and down uncontrollably].*

*5. Tractor farming.... A small farmer who is unable to equip his farm with a tractor loses out and is driven from the land.*

*6. The AAA [New Deal] program. A program of cutting down on the acreage under cultivation limits the amount of work for laborers in agriculture, creating a surplus of this type of labor, and it always results in lowering wages. The workers then go from place to place and from state to state in search of work.*

**Source Information:** This document describes other aspects of the crisis facing farmers in the 1930s. It speaks of farm owners forced to become tenants and sharecroppers. In sharecropping, the landowner lets the tenant use some land in exchange for a share of the crops produced. Usually the landlord's share is a large one. These excerpts are from a report by Otis Nation, an organizer for the Oklahoma Tenant Farmers' Union. He gave the report to a committee in the U. S. House of Representatives on September 19, 1940.

Source: "Testimony of Otis Nation." *New Deal Network: Document Library*. Accessed September 27, 2013.  
<http://newdeal.feri.org/tolan/tol07.htm#report>.



# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 1

*Advanced Level*

### Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 1 for grades 9–12

#### ★ Key Ideas and Details

- 1. (9–10)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- 1. (11–12)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

#### ★ Using this Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their American History coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 1* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 1 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to cite specific textual evidence from two documents. It also challenges students to adapt that reading skill to the unique demands of thinking historically as they carefully interpret textual evidence in a primary source from a time in the past and a secondary source account of that same time in the past. As called for by the Common Core Standard for grades 11–12, it also prompts students to relate the textual details to “an understanding of the text as a whole.”

#### ★ Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should correctly explain the term “Dust Bowl” as a label for the entire drought-stricken region and the huge dust storms that swept it in the 1930s. Answers should then refer to such details in Document 1 as the destruction of crops these droughts caused, the inability of farmers to pay off debts, the resulting loss of farms to foreclosure, and the need then for farmers to become refugees. Answers should be able to use details to correctly explain this sequence of events. Acceptable responses to the second assessment question may vary. Economic factors center on the tenant and sharecropping system, which left farmers vulnerable to huge debts with excessive interest charges, while also encouraging poor farming practices. Fluctuating prices were another economic factor. Technical factors were an inability to afford tractors, poor soil conservation practices, lack of terracing, etc. A political factor mentioned is the AAA program to limit overall supply (by restricting acreage) and drive up crop prices. This limited demand for farm laborers.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 1

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read a primary source document and a secondary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the documents. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 1: (9–10)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information. **(11–12)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

### Document 1: A Secondary Source

Not all of the impact of the Depression was the result of business and consumer practices—weather was also a factor. The Midwest was hit by dust storms in the early 30s, then drought combined with the wind to turn these once fertile plains into what became known as the “Dust Bowl.” Farmers watched helplessly as their crops withered away, then found themselves unable to pay off their debts since they had nothing to sell. Many lost their land to foreclosure and effectively became refugees in their own country. Among the hardest hit were the farmers from Oklahoma, many of whom traveled west to California in search of work, but often found more hardship. John Steinbeck immortalized the plight of the “Okies” in his classic novel “The Grapes of Wrath.”

**Source Information:** This document is a secondary source account of the impact of drought and dust storms on Western farmers in the 1930s. A secondary source is an account of past events written later by someone who did not experience or take part in those events. As a secondary source, this document is not evidence from the 1930s. It is a later account by someone writing about those years. This passage is adapted from “Overview: The Great Depression and the New Deal,” in *African Americans and the NRA*.

Source: Gordonson, Kerry and Bill Williams. *The Great Depression and New Deal*. Document-Based Activities in U.S. History. Culver City, C.A.: Social Studies School Service, 2010.

## Document 2: A Primary Source

*Much has been written of our droughts here in Oklahoma, and how they have driven the farmers from the land. Droughts alone would not have permanently displaced these farmers. The great majority of migrants had already become share-tenants and sharecroppers. The droughts hastened a process that had already begun.*

*1. High interest rates. Very high rates are charged when crops are good and when they fail. Through such practices the farmer loses his ownership; he becomes a tenant, then a sharecropper, then a migrant.*

*2. The tenant and sharecropping system. When sharecroppers are charged 50 to 75 percent of all he produces to the landlords, plus 10 percent for the bank's share on money invested; when these robbing practices are carried on in a community or a state, is it surprising that 33,241 farm families have left Oklahoma in the past 5 years?*

*3. Land exhaustion, droughts, soil erosion, and the one-crop system of farming. Lacking capital and equipment, small farmers have been unable to terrace their land or conduct other soil-conservation practices. The tenant and sharecropping system is chiefly responsible for the one-crop system. The landlord dictates what crops are to be planted—invariably cotton—and the tenant either plants it or gets off.*

*4. Unstable markets [that is, prices go up and down uncontrollably].*

*5. Tractor farming.... A small farmer who is unable to equip his farm with a tractor loses out and is driven from the land.*

*6. The AAA [New Deal] program. A program of cutting down on the acreage under cultivation limits the amount of work for laborers in agriculture, creating a surplus of this type of labor, and it always results in lowering wages. The workers then go from place to place and from state to state in search of work.*

**Source Information:** This document describes other aspects of the crisis facing farmers in the 1930s. It speaks of farm owners forced to become tenants and sharecroppers. In sharecropping, the landowner lets the tenant use some land in exchange for a share of the crops produced. Usually the landlord's share is a large one. These excerpts are from a report by Otis Nation, an organizer for the Oklahoma Tenant Farmers' Union. He gave the report to a committee in the U. S. House of Representatives on September 19, 1940.

Source: "Testimony of Otis Nation." *New Deal Network: Document Library*. Accessed September 27, 2013.  
<http://newdeal.feri.org/tolan/tol07.htm#report>.



# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 2

Basic Level

### Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 2 for grades 6–8

#### ★ Key Ideas and Details

- 2. (6–8)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

#### ★ Using this Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their American History coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 2* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 2 for grades 6–8. It asks students to summarize the central ideas in a source from the text itself without imposing ideas or attitudes external to the text. This is not easy to do. This activity assesses the ability to read closely in order to build an overall understanding of the source out of the text itself.

#### ★ Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should note that the first three of the paragraphs of the story detail the unfair treatment of African American CCC worker Eddie Simons. However, it is not until the last paragraph that readers learn the actual outcome of this story—that the head of the CCC did in fact reverse the act of racial discrimination against Eddie Simons. Some will see the central idea as the overcoming of racial discrimination in the CCC. Others may feel that racial discrimination in the CCC is still the central idea, given that the story is about a reversal of only one example of it. Even in that case, however, answers should recognize that this reversal is still the central idea of this particular story. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question may vary. Some may see in this story a complete reversal of an act of racial discrimination. Others may feel it only partially made up for the humiliation Eddie Simons endured. Some may feel the story clears the CCC of charges of racism, while others may see it as an exception to what may have been a much deeper problem. The headlines created should reflect these varying interpretations.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 2

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

### A Primary Source Document

*NEW YORK, N.Y.—The story is an interesting one, illustrating as it does some of the difficulties confronting young Negroes in the forestry service officered largely by white Southerners, as well as the Willingness of the administration to do justice when pressed for action.*

*Young Simons was dishonorably discharged and his last month's pay withheld at Camp No. 5, North Lisbon, N.J., on September 26, when he refused to stand and fan flies from a white officer, Lt. J. A. Elmore of the 16th Infantry, temporarily in charge of the camp.*

*Simons told the officer he did not think fanning flies was part of his duty. Lt. Elmore thereupon dishonorably discharged the lad and denied him his last month's pay although admitting that Simons' record was good.*

*The N.A.A.C.P. immediately took up the case and protested to Robert Fechner, director of the Emergency Conservation Work, who acknowledged his letter, and promised investigation. Three weeks later director Fechner again wrote the N.A.A.C.P. that he had directed that Eddie Simons be given an honorable discharge "free from any charge of insubordination" and that "he be paid all cash allowances and allotments due."*

**Source Information:** The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was a key New Deal relief program. It recruited young unemployed men to work on conservation projects. Many of the projects were in national parks and other publicly owned lands in rural areas. Over its nine years (1933–1942), about three million men worked for the CCC. Robert Fechner was director of the program. This document is a news story titled "CCC Youth Refuses To Fan Flies Off Officer; Is Fired." It appeared in the *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, January 13, 1934.

Source: *Norfolk Journal and Guide*. "CCC Youth Refuses to Fan Flies Off Officer; Is Fired." *New Deal Network: Document Library*. Accessed September 27, 2013. <http://newdeal.feri.org/aaccc/aaccc02.htm>.

**Assessment Questions**

1. Is the central idea of this story racial discrimination within the CCC, or is it the overcoming of racial discrimination within the CCC? Explain your choice.

2. Come up with your own idea for a headline that best sums up this story. Briefly explain and defend your headline.

# The Great Depression and the New Deal Assessment 2

*Advanced Level*

## Teacher Instructions

*Based on Common Core Reading Standard 2 for grades 9–12*

### ★ Key Ideas and Details

- 2. (9–10)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- 2. (11–12)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

### ★ Using this Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their American History coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 2* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 2 for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. It asks students to summarize the central ideas in a source from the text itself without imposing ideas or attitudes external to the text. This is not easy to do. Moreover when it comes to the unique demands of thinking historically we do also want students to use knowledge of historical context to help them interpret sources. But that sort of contextualizing also demands that students suspend their own present-day ideas while studying a source. This activity assesses the ability to read closely in order to build an overall understanding of the source out of the text itself.

## ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should note that the first three of the paragraphs of the story detail the unfair treatment of African American CCC worker Eddie Simons. However, it is not until the last paragraph that readers learn the actual outcome of this story— that the head of the CCC did in fact reverse the act of racial discrimination against Eddie Simons. Some will see the central idea as the overcoming of racial discrimination in the CCC. Others may feel that racial discrimination in the CCC is still the central idea, given that the story is about a reversal of only one example of it. Even in that case, however, answers should recognize that this reversal is still the central idea of this particular story. Answers to the second assessment question may vary, but acceptable answers will recognize that it is hard to infer much from one case. Some may see the reversal as a sign the CCC was taking steps to counter racial discrimination. Others will note that the reversal only came after the head of the CCC intervened. Coupled with the first paragraph’s remark about “difficulties confronting young Negroes in the forestry service,” this could suggest that the problem was quite deep-seated.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 2

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 2: (9–10)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text. **(11–12)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

### A Primary Source Document

*NEW YORK, N.Y.—The story is an interesting one, illustrating as it does some of the difficulties confronting young Negroes in the forestry service officered largely by white Southerners, as well as the Willingness of the administration to do justice when pressed for action.*

*Young Simons was dishonorably discharged and his last month's pay withheld at Camp No. 5, North Lisbon, N.J., on September 26, when he refused to stand and fan flies from a white officer, Lt. J. A. Elmore of the 16th Infantry, temporarily in charge of the camp.*

*Simons told the officer he did not think fanning flies was part of his duty. Lt. Elmore thereupon dishonorably discharged the lad and denied him his last month's pay although admitting that Simons' record was good.*

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**Source Information:** The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was a key New Deal relief program. It recruited young unemployed men to work on conservation projects. Many of the projects were in national parks and other publicly owned lands in rural areas. Over its nine years (1933–1942), about three million men worked for the CCC. Robert Fechner was director of the program. This document is a news story titled "CCC Youth Refuses To Fan Flies Off Officer; Is Fired." It appeared in the *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, January 13, 1934.

Source: Norfolk Journal and Guide. "CCC Youth Refuses to Fan Flies Off Officer; Is Fired." *New Deal Network: Document Library*. Accessed September 27, 2013. <http://newdeal.feri.org/aaccc/aaccc02.htm>.



# The Great Depression and the New Deal Assessment 3

*Basic Level*

## Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 3 for grades 6–8

### ★ Key Ideas and Details

- 3. (6–8)** Identify key steps in a text’s description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

### ★ Using this Assessment

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*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 3* is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 3 for grades 6–8. It asks students to follow the way a set of ideas or sequence of events in a text interact together to describe a process or develop a central idea. This activity assesses the student’s ability to read closely in order to understand various connections between each detail and the next in a text.

### ★ Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should note that the strike forced many more people to apply for welfare relief. The relief agency suddenly had to decide whether to give public relief funds to all these new people in need, strikers as well as non-strikers. Answers to the second assessment question should produce an outline that includes these points:

1. Many in Flint sympathized with non-strikers at first and felt that taxpayers should not have to pay for relief for strikers.
2. Others soon realized everyone in the community would suffer if strikers received no help.
3. The relief agency decided their job as professionals was to give out relief without considering who was or was not a striker.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 3

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment question that follows.

**CCS Standard 3:** Identify key steps in a text’s description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

### A Primary Source Document

*A sharp reminder that “emergency” is the middle name of public relief agencies came home to Genesee County, Michigan, Welfare Relief Commission last month. That was because of the United Automobile Workers’ “sit-down strike” in Flint. The local relief load increased from about 2500 families to more than 7800 within five weeks. The community was tense due to the conflict between strikers and non-strikers. This put relief workers through an acid test of strength and spirit.*

*When the strike broke in late December the question of relief to the strikers became an issue. It was loaded with controversy. “If you give relief the strike will never be over.” “We are all taxpayers and we object to our money helping these ungrateful people.” These were typical protests. There was strong public sympathy for non-strikers, “thrown out of work through no fault of their own.”*

*Then a new thought seemed to sweep the community. It was hinted that the situation for the community and for non-strikers undoubtedly would be much worse if there were no relief. There were whispers of possible violence if relief were withheld, of public sympathy swinging over toward the strikers if they had to solicit funds for subsistence.*

*The County Emergency Welfare Relief Commission settled the question with dispatch. On the agenda was “Attitude Toward Strikers.” The commission’s answer was: “The matter is settled. We can’t know who are strikers—our business is relief.” Other problems crowded to the fore. The strike-ridden town accepted the assumption that relief workers, like doctors who care for those hurt in riots, are professionals whose one job is to give relief where it is needed. The organization has been so nearly neutral that workers do not even know how many strikers and how many non-strikers receive relief.*

**Source Information:** Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal backed labor unions in many ways. Unions grew in strength in these years. The United Auto Workers, for example, led huge strikes against General Motors. In early 1937, strikers in Flint, Michigan, occupied GM Fischer plant #1. The workers stayed in the plant for several weeks. It was a dramatic moment in labor history. During this “sit-down strike,” government welfare relief workers had a difficult decision to make. This document is adapted from an editorial on that topic titled “Relief in the Sit-down Strike.” It appeared in a magazine called *The Survey*, March, 1937.

Source: “Relief in the Sit-down Strike.” *New Deal Network: Document Library*. Accessed September 27, 2013. <http://newdeal.feri.org/survey/s373.htm>.



# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 3

*Advanced Level*

### Teacher Instructions

*Based on Common Core Reading Standard 3 for grades 9–12*

#### ★ Key Ideas and Details

- 3. (9–10)** Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.
- 3. (11–12)** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

#### ★ Using this Assessment

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*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 3* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 3 for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. It asks students to follow the way a set of ideas or sequence of events in a text interact together to describe a process or develop a central idea. The activity assesses the student's ability to read closely in order to understand various connections between each detail and the next in a complex text. It also asks them to evaluate the explanation offered in the passage and consider how adequate it is.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should note that the strike led to a huge increase in those applying for welfare relief. The relief agency suddenly had to decide whether they should give public relief funds to all these new people in need, strikers as well as non-strikers. The article suggests public opinion shifted from sympathy for non-strikers and taxpayer concerns to a realization everyone might suffer if strikers received no help. In that context, the relief agency decided their job as professionals was to give out relief without considering who was or was not a striker. Answers to the second assessment question may vary. Some will see the “professionalism” explanation as sufficient. However, some may question how complete the account is. For example, they could note that the account does not actually say how the relief agency viewed the shifting opinion in the community. Nor does it say what the relief workers themselves felt about the strike or what pressures they might have been subjected to both by the union and those fighting the union.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 3

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 3: (9–10)** Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them. **(11–12)** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

### A Primary Source Document

*A sharp reminder that “emergency” is the middle name of public relief agencies came home to Genesee County, Michigan, Welfare Relief Commission last month. That was because of the United Automobile Workers’ “sit-down strike” in Flint. The local relief load increased from about 2500 families to more than 7800 within five weeks. The community was tense due to the conflict between strikers and non-strikers. This put relief workers through an acid test of strength and spirit.*

*When the strike broke in late December the question of relief to the strikers became an issue. It was loaded with controversy. “If you give relief the strike will never be over.” “We are all taxpayers and we object to our money helping these ungrateful people.” These were typical protests. There was strong public sympathy for non-strikers, “thrown out of work through no fault of their own.”*

*Then a new thought seemed to sweep the community. It was hinted that the situation for the community and for non-strikers undoubtedly would be much worse if there were no relief. There were whispers of possible violence if relief were withheld, of public sympathy swinging over toward the strikers if they had to solicit funds for subsistence.*

*The County Emergency Welfare Relief Commission settled the question with dispatch. On the agenda was “Attitude Toward Strikers.” The commission’s answer was: “The matter is settled. We can’t know who are strikers—our business is relief.” Other problems crowded to the fore. The strike-ridden town accepted the assumption that relief workers, like doctors who care for those hurt in riots, are professionals whose one job is to give relief where it is needed. The organization has been so nearly neutral that workers do not even know how many strikers and how many non-strikers receive relief.*

**Source Information:** Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal backed labor unions in many ways. Unions grew in strength in these years. The United Auto Workers, for example, led huge strikes against General Motors. In early 1937, strikers in Flint, Michigan, occupied GM Fischer plant #1. The workers stayed in the plant for several weeks. It was a dramatic moment in labor history. During this “sit-down strike,” government welfare relief workers had a difficult decision to make. This document is adapted from an editorial on that topic titled “Relief in the Sit-Down Strike.” It appeared in a magazine called *The Survey*, March, 1937.

Source: “Relief in the Sit-down Strike.” *New Deal Network: Document Library*. Accessed September 27, 2013. <http://newdeal.feri.org/survey/s373.htm>.

# *Student Handout*

## **Assessment Questions**

1. The sit-down strike created a painful dilemma for the Relief Commission. Describe the two options it considered, which one it chose, and why it chose as it did.

2. Does this account explain the Commission's thinking well enough? Why or why not?

# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 4

Basic Level

### Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 4 for grades 6–8

#### ★ *Craft and Structure*

4. (6–8) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

#### ★ *Using this Assessment*

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*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 4* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 4 for grades 6–8. It asks students to recognize that words and phrases must be understood in relation to the meaning of the text as a whole. In seeking to understand historical sources, this is an especially important challenge. Words and phrases need to be understood as they were used within their historical context. This activity assesses the student's ability to read closely in order to understand terms in these ways.

#### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should translate these words more or less as follows: *relief*—any program to give material help to people in need; *works*—relief programs that provide jobs to people as a way to help them; *dole*—government grants of food, money, clothing or funds to the needy; *unemployment problem*—the problem of people who are seeking jobs but unable to find any; and *unemployables*—people who are unable to work at all.

Responses to the second assessment question should be able to use the above definitions to write a brief paragraph such as this one:

*We need to think through the unemployment problem and the works plan first proposed for it. That plan is only one of a group of measures we need. The Administration may not want to only give out relief funds to the unemployed. It would be nice to find jobs for everyone instead, but the public can see that is not likely. Even the work program itself is a kind of relief program in that it does not create real, full-time and permanent jobs. The real task is how to organize all forms of relief for the long run.*

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 4

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

### Primary Source Document

*The slow progress of the \$4,880,000,000 works and relief bill through Congress prior to its passage April 5 gave the country an opportunity to think over its unemployment problem and to realize how complicated it is. This must be counted as a gain. A few months ago when the works plan was first proposed there was a tendency to expect too much from it as a way out from all our troubles. Debate and delay have cleared the air somewhat.*

*We now see the works measure as one preferred method out of a group of relief procedures. These will inevitably include some continuation of "the dole," local poor relief to "unemployables" and a variety of forms of social insurance and targeted aid. So far, the Administration has not admitted that continued outright relief to the unemployed (the dole) is going to be necessary even on a reduced scale, but public opinion has begun to show a more realistic attitude on this point. It has responded in large measure to the President's idealistic desire to wipe out relief and substitute work, but now questions his practical ability to do this completely. Moreover, there is insistence, and with considerable reason, that the work program is only another form of relief and will not bring about a bona-fide reduction of unemployment through the creation of full and permanent opportunities for self-support. In short, the American people have begun to see relief as a continuing problem and seem willing to face the issue as to how it can best be organized for the long pull*

**Source Information:** New Deal relief programs gave temporary aid to people suffering in the Depression. This document is adapted from an article about American attitudes toward New Deal government relief efforts. The article is titled "Relief and the American Temperament," by Russell H. Kurtz, Contributing Editor, *The Survey*, May 1935.

Source: Kurtz, Russell H. "Relief and the American Temperament." *The Survey*, May 1935. Accessed September 27, 2013. [http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA01/Davis/survey/articles/relief/relief\\_may35\\_2.html](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA01/Davis/survey/articles/relief/relief_may35_2.html).

**Assessment Questions**

1. The underlined phrases in the document include the key words *relief*, *works*, *dole*, *unemployment problem*, and *unemployables*. Define these words as they appear to be used in this document.

2. Now explain the central point of the passage by rewriting it in a brief form in your own words.

# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 4

*Advanced Level*

### Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 4 for grades 9–12

#### ★ *Craft and Structure*

- 4. (9–10)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
- 4. (11–12)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

#### ★ *Using this Assessment*

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*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 4* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 4 for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. It asks students to recognize that words and phrases must be understood in relation to the meaning of the text as a whole. In seeking to understand historical sources, this is an especially important challenge. Words and phrases need to be understood as they were used within their historical context. This activity assesses the student's ability to read closely in order to understand terms in these ways.

## ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question will rewrite the passage while maintaining its meanings in context. Here is one possible model of such a paragraph:

*We need to think through the unemployment problem and the works plan first proposed for it. That plan is only one of a group of measures we need. The Administration may not want to only give out relief funds to the unemployed. It would be nice to find jobs for everyone instead, but the public can see that is not likely. Even the work program itself is a kind of relief program in that it does not create real, full-time, and permanent jobs. The real task is how to organize all forms of relief for the long run.*

Acceptable responses to the second assessment question may vary. Answers should note that the author contrasts works program jobs with “full and permanent opportunities for self-support.” In other words, he seems to suggest that the government work is temporary and cannot really be considered likely to last as a permanent solution to unemployment. Answers should grasp this distinction and decide whether they agree or disagree with it.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 4

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 4: (9–10)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science. **(11–12)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

### A Primary Source Document

*The slow progress of the \$4,880,000,000 works and relief bill through Congress prior to its passage April 5 gave the country an opportunity to think over its unemployment problem and to realize how complicated it is. This must be counted as a gain. A few months ago when the works plan was first proposed there was a tendency to expect too much from it as a way out from all our troubles. Debate and delay have cleared the air somewhat.*

*We now see the works measure as one preferred method out of a group of relief procedures. These will inevitably include some continuation of “the dole,” local poor relief to “unemployables” and a variety of forms of social insurance and targeted aid. So far, the Administration has not admitted that continued outright relief to the unemployed (the dole) is going to be necessary even on a reduced scale, but public opinion has begun to show a more realistic attitude on this point. It has responded in large measure to the President’s idealistic desire to wipe out relief and substitute work, but now questions his practical ability to do this completely. Moreover, there is insistence, and with considerable reason, that the work program is only another form of relief and will not bring about a bona-fide reduction of unemployment through the creation of full and permanent opportunities for self-support. In short, the American people have begun to see relief as a continuing problem and seem willing to face the issue as to how it can best be organized for the long pull.*

**Source Information:** New Deal relief programs gave temporary aid to people suffering in the Depression. This document is adapted from an article about American attitudes toward New Deal government relief efforts. The article is titled “Relief and the American Temperament,” by Russell H. Kurtz, Contributing Editor, *The Survey*, May 1935.

Source: Kurtz, Russell H. “Relief and the American Temperament.” *The Survey*, May 1935. Accessed September 27, 2013. [http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA01/Davis/survey/articles/relief/relief\\_may35\\_2.html](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA01/Davis/survey/articles/relief/relief_may35_2.html).

**Assessment Questions**

1. Note the underlined words in this passage. Think about how to explain them in everyday language. Now rewrite this document in a way that makes it easier to understand.

2. The author says that jobs created by the government's works program cannot bring about a "bona-fide reduction of unemployment." What do you think he means? Do you agree with his opinion? Why or why not?

# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 5

*Basic Level*

### Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 5 for grades 6–8

#### ★ *Craft and Structure*

**5. (6–8)** Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

#### ★ *Using this Assessment*

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*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 5* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 5 for grades 6–8. It asks students to pay attention to a text's "structure"—that is, to the overall pattern or organizational arrangement of its headings, sentences, paragraphs, stanzas, chapters, as well as its various stylistic features. These formal elements can contribute to a text's meanings in many ways. This activity assesses the student's ability to read closely in order to understand the impact of the way one historical primary source is structured to present its information.

#### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should note that Keynes specifically explains this at the end of the paragraph. He says that "in bad times" such as those in 1933, the first factor, consumer spending, is weak; the second factor, business capital spending, will only pick up after the third factor, "public authority," or government expenditures lead the way. As to the second assessment question, the "Problem/Solution" text structure is the correct choice. In the paragraph, Keynes first poses a problem: How to get national output and employment to rise in a stagnant economy. The rest of the paragraph then presents and explains briefly his solution, which is to increase government borrowing and spending over the other two main kinds of spending, by consumers and businesses.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 5

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 5:** Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

### A Primary Source Document

*The object of recovery is to increase the national output and put more men to work. In the economic system of the modern world, output is primarily produced for sale; and the volume of output depends on the amount of purchasing power [how much consumers have to spend] . . . Broadly speaking, therefore, an increase of output depends on the amount of purchasing power which is expected, compared with the prime cost of production. Therefore, an increase of output cannot occur unless by the operation of one or other of three factors: 1) Individuals must be induced to spend more out of their existing incomes. 2) The business world must be induced, either by increased confidence in the prospects or by a lower rate of interest, to create additional current incomes in the hands of their employees. They do this when they increase either the working or the fixed capital of the country. 3) Or public authority [government] must be called in aid to create additional current incomes through the expenditure of borrowed or printed money. In bad times the first factor cannot be expected to work on a sufficient scale. The second factor will come in as the second wave of attack on the slump after the tide has been turned by the expenditures of public authority. It is, therefore, only from the third factor that we can expect the initial major impulse.*

**Source Information:** The New Deal greatly expanded government’s role in the economy. Famous British economist John Maynard Keynes is sometimes seen as a major thinker guiding the New Deal. Actually, Keynes wanted more government borrowing and spending than Roosevelt did. On December 16, 1933, Keynes explained his ideas in an “Open Letter to President Roosevelt.” The letter was published in the *New York Times*. This document is adapted from one key paragraph in that letter. In it, Keynes explains the heart of his theory. It has to do with the different kinds of spending, and the role of government borrowing and spending in boosting a slow economy’s output. (When Keynes speaks of “national output,” he means the total amount of goods and services produced for sale by the whole economy.)

Source: Keynes, John Maynard. “An Open Letter to President Roosevelt.” *New Deal Network: Document Library*. Accessed September 27, 2013. <http://newdeal.feri.org/texts/583.htm>.

# Student Handout

## Assessment Questions

1. Keynes says consumers, businesses, and government could all play a part in pushing up national output and employment. Given conditions in 1933, why does he see government as most important?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. “Text structure” refers to the way paragraphs and longer texts are organized, with different structures serving different purposes. Here are three types of text structure:
  - *Compare and Contrast*: A pattern showing what is similar and what is different in two events, examples, processes, etc.
  - *Problem/Solution*: A problem or question is presented and a solution or series of steps in a solution follows.
  - *Description/Events*: A topic presented as a series of events, examples, or variations on a theme.

Of these three text structures, choose the one you think most accurately describes the text structure of this document. Explain your choice.

# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 5

*Advanced Level*

### Teacher Instructions

*Based on Common Core Reading Standard 5 for grades 9–12*

#### ★ *Craft and Structure*

- 5. (9–10) Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.
- 5. (11–12) Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

#### ★ *Using this Assessment*

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*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 5* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 5 for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. It asks students to pay attention to a text's "structure"—that is, to the overall pattern or organizational arrangement of its headings, sentences, paragraphs, stanzas, chapters, as well as its various stylistic features. Students should see how structure is deliberately used to enable the text to achieve certain goals. Such formal elements can contribute to a text's meanings in many ways. This activity assesses the student's ability to read closely in order to understand the impact of the way one historical primary source is structured to present its information.

#### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should note that Keynes first poses a problem: How to get national output and employment to rise in a stagnant economy. The rest of the paragraph then presents and briefly explains his solution, which is to give priority to efforts to increase government borrowing and spending over the other two main kinds, consumer spending and business investment. As to the second assessment question, Keynes does not offer all that much in the way of explanation of his solution in this one paragraph. However, he does suggest the outlines of an explanation. At the end of the paragraph, he says that "in bad times," the first factor, consumer spending, is weak. People out of work have little extra money to spend to push up output. The second factor, business capital spending, will pick up only after other spending has boosted overall purchasing power. Presumably this is because businesses hesitate to invest and expand when demand for their goods is already low. The third factor, "public authority," must first borrow extra funds and spend them, thereby boosting employment, consumer spending and new business investment.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 5

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 5: (9–10)** Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis. **(11–12)** Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

### A Primary Source Document

*The object of recovery is to increase the national output and put more men to work. In the economic system of the modern world, output is primarily produced for sale; and the volume of output depends on the amount of purchasing power [how much consumers have to spend] ... Broadly speaking, therefore, an increase of output depends on the amount of purchasing power which is expected, compared with the prime cost of production. Therefore, an increase of output cannot occur unless by the operation of one or other of three factors: 1) Individuals must be induced to spend more out of their existing incomes. 2) The business world must be induced, either by increased confidence in the prospects or by a lower rate of interest, to create additional current incomes in the hands of their employees. They do this when they increase either the working or the fixed capital of the country. 3) Or public authority [government] must be called in aid to create additional current incomes through the expenditure of borrowed or printed money. In bad times the first factor cannot be expected to work on a sufficient scale. The second factor will come in as the second wave of attack on the slump after the tide has been turned by the expenditures of public authority. It is, therefore, only from the third factor that we can expect the initial major impulse.*

**Source Information:** The New Deal greatly expanded government’s role in the economy. Famous British economist John Maynard Keynes is sometimes seen as a major thinker guiding the New Deal. Actually, Keynes wanted more government borrowing and spending than Roosevelt did. On December 16, 1933, Keynes explained his ideas in an “Open Letter to President Roosevelt.” The letter was published in the *New York Times*. This document is adapted from one key paragraph in that letter. In it, Keynes explains the heart of his theory. It has to do with the different kinds of spending, and the role of government borrowing and spending in boosting a slow economy’s output. (When Keynes speaks of “national output,” he means the total amount of goods and services produced for sale by the whole economy.)

Source: Keynes, John Maynard. “An Open Letter to President Roosevelt.” *New Deal Network: Document Library*. Accessed September 27, 2013. <http://newdeal.feri.org/texts/583.htm..>



# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 6

*Basic Level*

### Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 6 for grades 6–8

#### ★ *Craft and Structure*

- 6. (6–8)** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

#### ★ *Using this Assessment*

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*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 6* is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 6 for grades 6–8. It asks students to note a text’s point of view as expressed by looking closely at details in the text itself. These details may take the form of emotional language, distorted or exaggerated descriptions, stereotyped labeling, etc. However, even a text with a neutral tone may express bias or point of view by selectively emphasizing some facts while omitting others. Therefore, students also need to go outside the text to interpret point of view by considering sourcing information such as the author’s background, purpose, and audience. In addition, students need to see that when sources express conflicting points of view, they may still be reliable in certain ways—for example, by what they share in common or by backing up their claims with solid evidence.

#### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should note the emotional language and Biblical images (“a plague of locusts,” moneychangers who “have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization.”) Along with this Biblical metaphor for failing banks and bankers, Roosevelt uses the metaphor of waging war against what is not really a military crisis. These metaphors should be seen as ways to evoke the strong emotions connected with such imagery, not ways to reason about the complex economy. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question should note its many references to “bewilderingly revolutionary” plans that it clearly disapproves of for having “overturned American principles.” Moreover, its claim is that Roosevelt and Congress have acted “without a submission of any of the revolutionary changes” to the approval of the people. The changes are linked to socialism, fascism, and communism—unpopular terms in American political culture. Some responses may note that both Documents speak of a great increase in executive power over society, and so in that sense agree somewhat in their portrayal of what is happening.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 6

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read two primary source documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand these documents as historical primary sources, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 6:** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

### Document 1: A Primary Source

*Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror.*

*We are stricken by no plague of locusts. Plenty is at our doorstep, but a generous use of it languishes in the very sight of the supply. Primarily this is because rulers of the exchange of mankind’s goods have failed through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and have abdicated ... The money changers have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization. We may now restore that temple to the ancient truths.*

*I shall not evade the clear course of duty that will then confront me. I shall ask the Congress for the one remaining instrument to meet the crisis—broad Executive power to wage a war against the emergency, as great as the power that would be given to me if we were in fact invaded by a foreign foe.*

**Source Information:** On March 4, 1933, Franklin Roosevelt took office as U.S. President and gave his first inaugural address. At that point, one in four workers was without a job. Thousands of factories were shut. In most states, governors had closed the banks to keep people from taking all their money out of them. Roosevelt would close them all temporarily in what he called a “bank holiday.” In this moment of crisis, he outlined in broad terms his ideas for the nation and tried to restore a spirit of hope. These excerpts are from his address that day.

Source: Roosevelt, Franklin D. “First Inaugural Address of Franklin D. Roosevelt.” *Avalon Project*. Accessed September 27, 2013. [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/froos1.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/froos1.asp).

# Student Handout

## Document 2: A Primary Source

*Observant citizens know that never before in the history of the republic were so many revolutionary changes made in the American scheme. What the effect of these changes will be upon American law, customs, habits of thought, and social relations cannot now be fully estimated. The people have seen a rush toward state socialism which might have Fascism or communism at the end of the road.*

*The industrial control act [National Industrial Recover Act] confronts the nation with an uncharted industrial future. Even six months ago no citizens interested in public affairs could have been made to believe that by now their federal government would be committed to the guaranty of bank deposits, the licensing of all industry, the acceptance of farm, home, and building mortgages, the rent of uncultivated farm lands, the taxing of food processing to pay farm subsidies, or that it has become the general creditor to public and private borrowers, with virtually everything in its control and nearly everybody in its debt.*

*The legislation has been bewildering and revolutionary. Whatever offset there may be must be found in the administration of the acts which have overturned American principles and political practices. The people are asked to believe that these departures from every tried and proved method are emergency acts; that when the industrial, social, and political exigencies have been met and dispersed, the country can retrace its steps to its old ideas of government and the place of the individual in it. Such may be the case.*

*Just at present the American citizen sees that within four months he has been lifted out of one scheme of government and put in another, and he knows that this has been done without a submission of any of the revolutionary changes to his determination and consent. It has just been done. There has not been any red shirt, black shirt, or brown shirt march, but within the processes to which the citizens have been accustomed these strange things have happened.*

**Source Information:** President Roosevelt took office on March 4, 1933. There followed several months of major activity in Congress. Sweeping social and economic reforms and relief measures were passed. They greatly expanded the government's powers. This time of intense activity came to be known as "The First Hundred Days." Not everyone was an admirer of what this session of Congress did. These passages are from a June 16, 1933, *Chicago Tribune* newspaper editorial titled, "The Great Relief—Congress Adjourns." The owner of the paper, Robert McCormick, was deeply hostile to Roosevelt and the New Deal.

Source: *Chicago Tribune*. "The Great Relief—Congress Adjourns." June 16, 1933. [http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ma02/volpe/newdeal/docs/trib\\_ed\\_6.16.33.html](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ma02/volpe/newdeal/docs/trib_ed_6.16.33.html).



# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 6

*Advanced Level*

### Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 6 for grades 9–12

#### ★ *Craft and Structure*

- 6. (9–10)** Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- 6. (11–12)** Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

#### ★ *Using this Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their American History coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 6* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 6 for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. It asks students to note a text's point of view as expressed by looking closely at details in the text itself. These details may take the form of emotional language, distorted or exaggerated descriptions, stereotyped labeling, etc. However, even a text with a neutral tone may express bias or point of view by selectively emphasizing some facts while omitting others. Therefore, students also need to go outside the text to interpret point of view by considering sourcing information such as the author's background, purpose and audience. In addition, students need to see that when sources express conflicting points of view, they may still be reliable in certain ways—for example, by what they share in common or by backing up their claims with solid evidence.

#### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should note the emotional language and Biblical images (“a plague of locusts,” moneychangers who “have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization”). Along with this Biblical metaphor for failing banks and bankers, Roosevelt uses the metaphor of waging war against what is not really a military crisis. These metaphors evoke strong emotions connected with Biblical images and stories and with warfare and the sense of national unity war often calls forth. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question should note the big differences in how the two documents depict the crisis. For Roosevelt, it is due to the failures of “moneychangers” (bankers, etc.), a society of plenty that is somehow unavailable to people. For the *Chicago Tribune*, it is due to Roosevelt and Congress engaging in “bewilderingly revolutionary” change (associated with socialism, fascism, and communism) without the approval of the people. However, both Documents use extreme language to describe the crisis confronting society, and both in different ways acknowledge a great increase in executive power over society.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 6

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read two primary source documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand these documents as historical primary sources, read and make use of the source information just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 6: (9–10)** Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts. **(11–12)** Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

### Document 1: A Primary Source

*Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror.*

*We are stricken by no plague of locusts. Plenty is at our doorstep, but a generous use of it languishes in the very sight of the supply. Primarily this is because rulers of the exchange of mankind's goods have failed through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and have abdicated ... The money changers have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization. We may now restore that temple to the ancient truths.*

*I shall not evade the clear course of duty that will then confront me. I shall ask the Congress for the one remaining instrument to meet the crisis—broad Executive power to wage a war against the emergency, as great as the power that would be given to me if we were in fact invaded by a foreign foe.*

**Source Information:** On March 4, 1933, Franklin Roosevelt took office as U.S. President and gave his first inaugural address. At that point, one in four workers was without a job. Thousands of factories were shut. In most states, governors had closed the banks to keep people from taking all their money out of them. Roosevelt would close them all temporarily in what he called a “bank holiday.” In this moment of crisis, he outlined in broad terms his ideas for the nation and tried to restore a spirit of hope. These excerpts are from his address that day.

Source: Roosevelt, Franklin D. “First Inaugural Address of Franklin D. Roosevelt.” *Avalon Project*. Accessed September 27, 2013. [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/froos1.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/froos1.asp).

# Student Handout

## Document 2: A Primary Source

*There can be no doubt that the country now has commissars ... in the picture of the American soviet, commissars of industry, of transportation, and of power, the latter emerging out of the misty wastes of the Tennessee valley.*

*The industrial control act [NIRA] confronts the nation with an uncharted industrial future. It is a strong dosage of the Mussolini precept, and no alarm is quieted because some industrialists find it agreeable ... Even six months ago no citizens interested in public affairs could have been made to believe that by now their federal government would be committed to the guaranty of bank deposits, the licensing of all industry, the acceptance of farm, home, and building mortgages, the rent of uncultivated farm lands, the taxing of food processing to pay farm subsidies, and have become the general creditor to public and private borrowers, with virtually everything in its control and nearly everybody in its debt.*

*The legislation has been bewildering and revolutionary. Whatever offset there may be must be found in the administration of the acts which have overturned American principles and political practices. The people are asked to believe that these departures from every tried and proved method are emergency acts; that when the industrial, social, and political exigencies have been met and dispersed, the country can retrace its steps to its old ideas of government and the place of the individual in it. Such may be the case.*

*Just at present the American citizen sees that within four months he has been lifted out of one scheme of government and put in another, and he knows that this has been done without a submission of any of the revolutionary changes to his determination and consent. It has just been done. There has not been any red shirt, black shirt, or brown shirt march, but within the processes to which the citizens have been accustomed these strange things have happened.*

**Source Information:** President Roosevelt took office on March 4, 1933. There followed several months of major activity in Congress. Sweeping social and economic reforms and relief measures were passed. They greatly expanded the government's powers. This time of intense activity came to be known as "The First Hundred Days." Not everyone was an admirer of what this session of Congress did. These passages are from a June 16, 1933, *Chicago Tribune* newspaper editorial titled, "The Great Relief—Congress Adjourns." The owner of the paper, Robert McCormick, was deeply hostile to Roosevelt and the New Deal.

Source: *Chicago Tribune*. "The Great Relief—Congress Adjourns." June 16, 1933.  
[http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ma02/volpe/newdeal/docs/trib\\_ed\\_6.16.33.html](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ma02/volpe/newdeal/docs/trib_ed_6.16.33.html)

**Assessment Questions**

1. Identify the metaphors Roosevelt uses in these passages and explain their power to shape emotional responses in his audience.

2. One historian says about both of these documents, “They express opposing points of view, and yet they share a similar sense about the state of the country.” What do you think the historian means? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

# The Great Depression and the New Deal Assessment 7

*Basic Level*

## Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 7 for grades 6–8

### ★ Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- 7. (6–8)** Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

### ★ Using this Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their American History coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 7* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 7 for grades 6–8. It asks students to do something historians must do all the time—integrate evidence found in several primary sources presented in a variety of visual and textual formats.

### ★ Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should make a reasonable effort to define these terms in relation to an understanding of the New Deal as a complex political reform program. That is, answers should define *philosophy* as a set of economic ideas organized into some kind of systematic plan for change, whereas a *temperament*, means a mood or a strong motivation to bring about change and reform. Answers to the second assessment question should see that FDR's speech (Document 1) specifically rejects the idea of any single philosophy or plan and calls for trying one thing after another until something can be found that works. Document 2 reflects very much the same spirit, with all the New Deal agencies as medicines that may or may not help the patient recover. Document 3 supports Hofstadter's quote somewhat, in that it shows a substantial increase in government spending as the New Deal did try one thing after another. However, some may feel it could reflect something more systematic about the New Deal—a "philosophy" of expanded federal government power to regulate social and economic life in general.



## Student Handout

Year	Federal Spending (in \$ billions)	Federal Revenues (in \$ billions)
1927	\$2.9	\$4.0
1932	\$4.8	\$2.0
1934	\$6.5	\$3.1
1936	\$7.6	\$4.2
1938	\$7.2	\$7.0
1940	\$9.6	\$6.9

### Document 3: A Primary Source

**Source Information:** This table shows federal government spending and revenue for each of several years. All figures are in billions of dollars.

Source: *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*. Bicentennial edition. Washington: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1975.

### Assessment Questions

1. Historian Richard Hofstadter once said, “At the heart of the New Deal there was not a philosophy but a temperament.” What do you think he meant by “philosophy” and by “temperament”?

2. Do *all three* of these documents support Hofstadter’s view? Why or why not?

# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 7

*Advanced Level*

### Teacher Instructions

*Based on Common Core Reading Standard 7 for grades 9–12*

#### ★ Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- 7. (9–10)** Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
- 7. (11–12)** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

#### ★ Using this Assessment

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*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 7* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 7 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to do something historians must do all the time—integrate evidence found in a wide variety of primary sources presented in many visual and textual formats. It also asks them to judge the relative strengths and weaknesses of visual as compared with written sources.

## ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

Responses to the first assessment question should make a reasonable effort first to define the two terms *philosophy* and *temperament* in relation to the New Deal. That is, answers should define *philosophy* as a set of ideas organized into some kind of systematic plan for change, whereas a *temperament*, means a mood or a strong motivation to bring about change and reform. Acceptable responses then should deal with all three documents. FDR's speech (Document 1) specifically rejects the idea of any single philosophy or plan and calls for a pragmatic effort to try one thing after another until something works. Document 2 reflects very much the same spirit, with all the New Deal agencies as medicines that may or may not help the patient recover. "Dr. Roosevelt" is determined to keep trying them until one helps the patient recover. Document 3 supports Hofstadter's quote somewhat, in that it shows a substantial increase in government spending as the New Deal did try one thing after another. However, some may feel it could support a view of the New Deal as a more systematic effort to increase the federal government's role in social and economic life in general. Answers to the second assessment question might build on that idea about Document 3. The quote in the question may suggest to some a broader philosophy that unifies reform efforts around the central idea that government's role is to correct basic economic inequality.



# Student Handout

Year	Federal Spending (in \$ billions)	Federal Revenues (in \$ billions)
1927	\$2.9	\$4.0
1932	\$4.8	\$2.0
1934	\$6.5	\$3.1
1936	\$7.6	\$4.2
1938	\$7.2	\$7.0
1940	\$9.6	\$6.9

## Document 3: A Primary Source

**Source Information:** This table shows federal government spending and revenue for each of several years. All figures are in billions of dollars.

Source: *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*. Bicentennial edition. Washington: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1975.

## Assessment Questions

1. Historian Richard Hofstadter once said, “At the heart of the New Deal there was not a philosophy but a temperament.” Do *all three* of these documents support Hofstadter’s view? Why or why not?

2. Earlier in this same speech, Roosevelt said this:

*“I believe that we are at the threshold of a fundamental change ... Do what we may have to do to inject life into our ailing economic order, we cannot make it endure for long unless we can bring about a wiser, more equitable distribution of the national income.”*

Does this still fit with Hofstadter’s view of the New Deal is lacking a philosophy? Why or why not?

# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 8

*Basic Level*

### Teacher Instructions

*Based on Common Core Reading Standard 8 for grades 6–8*

#### ★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

**8. (6–8)** Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

#### ★ *Using this Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their American History coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 8* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 8 for grades 6–8. It asks students to pay attention to the way a text reasons about its factual claims and to distinguish between these and expressions of opinion. This could mean paying close attention to the factual evidence offered or to the reasoning process and logic used to support a claim— as well as an ability to distinguish these from the text's biases or expressions of opinion. This activity assesses the student's ability to read closely in order to understand a text in these ways.

#### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

Responses to the first assessment question should explain constitutional *separation of powers* as the idea that each branch of government has its own special powers, while *checks and balances* means each branch can “check,” or limit, the other branches to keep any one branch from becoming all-powerful. La Follette claims the Court in recent years is exercising powers that belong to Congress and the President. He refers to the “unchecked supremacy of the Supreme Court” as something the Constitution does not allow. Responses to the second assessment question may vary, but they should note that La Follette does not really detail in any way the Court decisions he thinks violate separation of powers. Appeals to authority are attempts to strengthen a claim in an argument by referring to highly respected individuals who supposedly agree with the claim. Answers should note La Follette's many references to the Founding Fathers, and to past Presidents he says agree with him. Appeals to authority of this sort do nothing to prove or support a claim with evidence or reasoning processes.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 8

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 8:** Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

### A Primary Source Document

*Do not be misled. The same forces which opposed the President in November are opposing him now. The same basic issue is at stake. It is raised because the President and the Congress are determined to restore the Constitution to the people and to prevent the further abuse of judicial power.*

*The Founding Fathers were firm believers in a system of checks and of balances. They believed in the separation of powers, but they did not believe in the uncontrolled supremacy of any one of the three great branches of government over the other two. The Founding Fathers, and those who built the spiritual and material foundations of this country, were opposed to judicial usurpation. They did not regard the Supreme Court as sacred. Those views have been maintained throughout our history by liberal leaders including Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and my father.*

*The idea of an unchecked supremacy of the Supreme Court has been built up only over the last forty years. It has been built up by corporation lawyers who have tried in the Court to counteract the reforms, like popular election of Senators, which are designed to make the will of the people the law of the land. It has been indoctrinated in our schools and in our thinking with the same conscious direction as the propaganda of the public utilities. If the Congress continues to agree to such a pernicious doctrine, it will be abandoning its constitutional rights and duties. The Constitution provides for a separation of powers, not for a judicial supremacy. The idea of judicial supremacy is not found in the Constitution or the writings of the Constitutional fathers. It is an idea of smart lawyers who, beaten in the Congress, have sought for their own advantage to twist and distort the Constitution ever since its adoption.*

**Source Information:** The Supreme Court stopped several New Deal reforms by declaring them to be unconstitutional. In frustration, President Roosevelt proposed a law that would let him add several new Justices to the Court. His hope was this would change the Court's votes in favor of New Deal programs. This so-called "court-packing" plan was widely opposed. However, it did have some defenders. Wisconsin Senator Robert M. La Follette was one of them. This document is adapted from a radio address he gave, titled *Backing the President's Court Proposal*. It was broadcast over NBC, February 13, 1937.

Source: La Follette, Robert M. "Backing the President's Court Proposal." *New Deal Network: Document Library*. Accessed September 27, 2013. <http://newdeal.feri.org/cong/congress001.htm>.



# The Great Depression and the New Deal Assessment 8

*Advanced Level*

## Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 8 for grades 9–12

### ★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 8. (9–10) Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author’s claims.
- 8. (11–12) Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

### ★ *Using this Assessment*

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*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 8* is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 8 for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. It asks students to pay attention to the way a text backs up or seeks to explain its factual claims. This could mean paying close attention to the factual evidence offered in the text as compared with expressions of opinion. Or it could mean attention to the reasoning process and logic used to support a claim. It may also require students to examine underlying assumptions and bias in order to see how they shape or distort the reasoning process presented by the text. This activity assesses the student’s ability to read closely in order to understand a text in these ways.

## ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

Responses to the first assessment question should identify the constitutional principles as *separation of powers* and *checks and balances*. Together, these sum up the idea that the three branches of government (legislative, executive, judicial) have their own special powers, yet each branch also has the ability to “check,” or limit, the other branches in order to keep any one branch from becoming all-powerful. La Follette claims the Court has sought an “unchecked supremacy.” His evidence consists mainly of assertions that in recent decades the Court has been making decision that should be left to Congress and the President, but he does not specify what these decisions are or why they take away powers belonging to the other branches. Responses to the second assessment question may vary, but they should note that La Follette does not really present specific evidence. He relies mainly on appeals to authority, arguing by referring to highly respected individuals who supposedly agree with his claim—individuals such as the Founding Fathers and several past Presidents. Also, he criticizes the Court mainly by disparaging its supporters— as “corporation lawyers” or those who produce “propaganda” for public utilities. Some may also note instances of loaded language—about the Court’s “pernicious doctrines,” for example.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 8

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 8: (9–10)** Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author’s claims. **(11–12)** Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

### A Primary Source Document

*Do not be misled. The same forces which opposed the President in November are opposing him now. The same basic issue is at stake. It is raised because the President and the Congress are determined to restore the Constitution to the people and to prevent the further abuse of judicial power.*

*The Founding Fathers were firm believers in a system of checks and of balances. They believed in the separation of powers, but they did not believe in the uncontrolled supremacy of any one of the three great branches of government over the other two. The Founding Fathers, and those who built the spiritual and material foundations of this country, were opposed to judicial usurpation. They did not regard the Supreme Court as sacred. Those views have been maintained throughout our history by liberal leaders including Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and my father.*

*The idea of an unchecked supremacy of the Supreme Court has been built up only over the last forty years. It has been built up by corporation lawyers who have tried in the Court to counteract reforms, like popular election of Senators, which are designed to make the will of the people the law of the land. The Court’s supremacy has been indoctrinated in our schools and in our thinking with the same conscious direction as the propaganda by the public utilities. If the Congress continues to agree to such a pernicious doctrine, it will be abandoning its constitutional rights and duties. The Constitution provides for a separation of powers, not for a judicial supremacy. The idea of judicial supremacy is not found in the Constitution or the writings of the Constitutional fathers. It is an idea of smart lawyers who, beaten in the Congress, have sought for their own advantage to twist and distort the Constitution ever since its adoption.*

**Source Information:** The Supreme Court stopped several New Deal reforms by declaring them to be unconstitutional. In frustration, President Roosevelt proposed a law that would let him add several new Justices to the Court. His hope was this would change the Court’s votes in favor of New Deal programs. This so-called “court-packing” plan was widely opposed. However, it did have some defenders. Wisconsin Senator Robert M. La Follette was one of them. This document is adapted from a radio address he gave, titled *Backing the President’s Court Proposal*. It was broadcast over NBC, February 13, 1937.

Source: La Follette, Robert M. “Backing the President’s Court Proposal.” *New Deal Network: Document Library*. Accessed September 27, 2013. <http://newdeal.feri.org/cong/congress001.htm>



# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 9

*Basic Level*

### Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 9 for grades 6–8

#### ★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

**9. (6–8)** Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

#### ★ *Using this Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their American History coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 9* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 9 for grades 6–8. It asks students to understand the relationship between primary and secondary sources. This means students must know the difference between the two kinds of sources— that primary sources provide the evidence for secondary source claims and interpretations. This should lead them to adopt a critical approach to secondary sources themselves. That is, such secondary accounts should not be regarded as final and complete. They are interpretations of the past, not the past itself. Students should learn to weigh secondary source accounts against the relevant primary source evidence.

#### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

Responses to the first assessment question should note that both accounts explain in a similar way the problems these two farmers faced as sharecroppers who had to turn over a huge portion of their crop to their landlords, who faced high interest charges, and who had very little money left over to pay for basic needs. Document 2 is a bit more detailed about these matters. Its key additions have to do with observations about McKay's character, and his wife's as well, factors that aided the project manager in deciding whether or not to help them out. Answers to the second assessment question should note that Document 2 provides a general understanding of the scope of the Farm Security Administration as a whole, along with the idea that its purposes were somewhat undercut by the impact of the AAA, another New Deal program. In addition, it offers insight into the difficult political position of FSA administrators, given the criticisms many aimed at the program. Best responses may relate this last point to the caution shown by the project manager in Document 2 in making sure the McKays were dependable risks for the project's help.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 9

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read two documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. One document is a secondary source; the other is a historical primary source. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 9:** Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

### Document 1: A Secondary Source

The Farm Security Administration, formerly part of another agency, was established in 1937. Its purpose was to help the seven million poorest farmers—the tenants and sharecroppers who did not own the land on which they lived and toiled. Alfred Dulaney (not his real name) was typical of these impoverished Americans. Delaney sold his crop, consisting of seven bales of cotton, in 1935 for \$14 less than the \$184.12 he owed his landlord. Dulaney lived in an unpainted three-room shack without electricity or running water. He received none of the money the AAA paid his landlord not to plant cotton, and he was too poor to see a doctor or dentist, or educate his children.

In the short years before its funding got curtailed in 1943, the FSA helped 12,000 families like Dulaney’s to buy farms of their own, helped 300,000 families join cooperatives that could share the cost of tractors, and established medical clinics in 31 different states.

However, opposition developed to lending money to poor farmers, to helping others form cooperatives, and to funding clinics. Many of those opposed to these activities claimed they were similar to collective farms communists forced on Russian peasants; others feared that help from the FSA reduced the number of farm laborers willing to work for them. All activities to help millions of landless farmers ended by 1946, and these rural Americans were left to do the best they could on their own.

**Source Information:** This passage is a brief secondary source account of the Farm Security Administration (FSA) and its efforts to aid tenant farmers and sharecroppers. The “AAA” mentioned in the passage was another New Deal program, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. It paid farmers not to plant some of their land. The aim was to limit supply of certain crops as a way to drive up their prices. As the passage suggests, farm owners taking advantage of the AAA often failed to share its benefits with tenants and sharecroppers on their lands. This passage is found in *More New Deal Initiatives*.

Source: Ladenburg, Thomas. *The Twenties and the Depression*. U.S. History Readers. Culver City, C.A.: Social Studies School Service, 2009.

# Student Handout

## Document 2: A Primary Source

*In the spring of 1935, Richard McKay sat in the office of an ex-county agent who had just been made project manager of "Roanoke Farms," North Carolina. Mr. McKay was worried. He had been a tenant farmer for eighteen years, and today he was broke, in debt, discouraged and hungry. But he still had his nerve with him. He wanted to buy a farm on the government's tenant-purchase plan. The project manager looked him over. He knew that he had been a tenant for the past seven years on a 500-acre North Carolina cotton farm. On a 40-acre lot McKay had been raising a \$750 cash crop a year in cotton. The landlord took two thirds, and with the balance McKay bought groceries and clothing for his family of seven. (Average southern tenant family's income is \$73 per person for a year's work.)*

*A local storekeeper had already advised the project manager that he considered McKay a good risk. He had been charging him only 25 percent interest on time payments for his groceries as against 65 percent for his more doubtful customers. Mr. McKay laughed when the project manager asked him what equipment he could bring with him if the government decided to make him the loan. He said he had two broken down beds, some kitchen utensils, and the clothes on his family's backs. He had been forced to sell his mules and farm equipment to meet his debts.*

*The project manager accepted the McKays for his tenant purchase project for the same reason he had accepted most of the other applicants, because they worked hard and didn't drink. In his judgment, they were smart farmers who had been licked by unscientific farming methods, soil exhaustion, and an indefensible system of land tenure. Because, too, in the opinion of the home supervisor, Mrs. McKay had the instincts of a good housekeeper.*

**Source Information:** This is part of a longer report on Farm Security Administration efforts to help poor farm tenants in the South. The description accompanying the report reads: "Farm Security Administration's experiment in resettling southern tenants on land of their own, here described by a recent visitor to several projects, demonstrates that, given a boost by government, America's poorest pioneers can rise from relief to self-support." The report is titled "Homesteaders—New Style," by Charles R. Walker, *Survey Graphic*, June 1939.

Source: Walker, Charles R. "Homesteaders—New Style." *New Deal Network: Document Library*. Accessed September 27, 2013. <http://newdeal.feri.org/survey/39a06.htm>.

## Assessment Questions

1. Compare the case of Alfred Delany in Document 1 with the case of Richard McKay in Document 2. Which document gives you a more complete description of a single tenant farmer? Explain your answer.
2. What do you learn about New Deal farm programs in general from Document 1 that you do not learn from Document 2

# The Great Depression and the New Deal

## Assessment 9

*Advanced Level*

### Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 9 for grades 9–12

#### ★ Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- 9. (9–10)** Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.
- 9. (11–12)** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

#### ★ Using this Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their American History coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 9* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 9 for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. It asks students to understand the relationship between primary and secondary sources. This means students must know the difference between the two kinds of sources—that primary sources provide the evidence for secondary source claims and interpretations. This should lead them to adopt a critical approach to secondary sources themselves. That is, such secondary accounts should not be regarded as final and complete. They are interpretations of the past, not the past itself. Students should learn to weigh secondary source accounts against the relevant primary source evidence.

#### ★ Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment

Responses to the first assessment question should note that Document 1 provides general information about the vast scope of the farm tenant and sharecropper problem. It also suggests the intense political criticism the FSA encountered. Finally, its reference to the AAA indicates how other New Deal programs at times added to the difficulties facing poor farm tenants and sharecroppers. Answers to the second assessment question should note that each account, using a single case as an example, explains the problems of tenant farmers who had to turn over a huge portion of their crops to the landlord, who faced high interest charges, and who had very little money left over to pay for basic needs. Document 2 provides insight into problem local project managers faced in deciding which farmers to assist, given limited resources and the need to show results. In this case, the project manager has to make difficult judgments about McKay's character, and his wife's as well, in deciding whether or not to help them become farm owners.

## The Great Depression and the New Deal: Assessment 9

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read two documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. One document is a secondary source; the other is a historical primary source. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 9: (9–10)** Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources. **(11–12)** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

### Document 1: A Secondary Source

The Farm Security Administration, formerly part of another agency, was established in 1937. Its purpose was to help the seven million poorest farmers—the tenants and sharecroppers who did not own the land on which they lived and toiled. Alfred Dulaney (not his real name) was typical of these impoverished Americans. Delaney sold his crop, consisting of seven bales of cotton, in 1935 for \$14 less than the \$184.12 he owed his landlord. Dulaney lived in an unpainted three-room shack without electricity or running water. He received none of the money the AAA paid his landlord not to plant cotton, and he was too poor to see a doctor or dentist, or educate his children.

In the short years before its funding got curtailed in 1943, the FSA helped 12,000 families like Dulaney’s to buy farms of their own, helped 300,000 families join cooperatives that could share the cost of tractors, and established medical clinics in 31 different states.

However, opposition developed to lending money to poor farmers, to helping others form cooperatives, and to funding clinics. Many of those opposed to these activities claimed they were similar to collective farms communists forced on Russian peasants; others feared that help from the FSA reduced the number of farm laborers willing to work for them. All activities to help millions of landless farmers ended by 1946, and these rural Americans were left to do the best they could on their own.

**Source Information:** This passage is a brief secondary source account of the Farm Security Administration (FSA) and its efforts to aid tenant farmers and sharecroppers. The “AAA” mentioned in the passage was another New Deal program, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. It paid farmers not to plant some of their land. The aim was to limit supply of certain crops as a way to drive up their prices. As the passage suggests, farm owners taking advantage of the AAA often failed to share its benefits with tenants and sharecroppers on their lands. This passage is found in *More New Deal Initiatives*.

Source: Ladenburg, Thomas. *The Twenties and the Depression*. U.S. History Readers. Culver City, C.A.: Social Studies School Service, 2009.

## Document 2: A Primary Source

*In the spring of 1935, Richard McKay sat in the office of an ex-county agent who had just been made project manager of "Roanoke Farms," North Carolina. Mr. McKay was worried. He had been a tenant farmer for eighteen years, and today he was broke, in debt, discouraged and hungry. But he still had his nerve with him. He wanted to buy a farm on the government's tenant-purchase plan. The project manager looked him over. He knew that he had been a tenant for the past seven years on a 500-acre North Carolina cotton farm. On a 40-acre lot McKay had been raising a \$750 cash crop a year in cotton. The landlord took two thirds, and with the balance McKay bought groceries and clothing for his family of seven. (Average southern tenant family's income is \$73 per person for a year's work.)*

*A local storekeeper had already advised the project manager that he considered McKay a good risk. He had been charging him only 25 percent interest on time payments for his groceries as against 65 percent for his more doubtful customers. Mr. McKay laughed when the project manager asked him what equipment he could bring with him if the government decided to make him the loan. He said he had two broken down beds, some kitchen utensils, and the clothes on his family's backs. He had been forced to sell his mules and farm equipment to meet his debts.*

*The project manager accepted the McKays for his tenant purchase project for the same reason he had accepted most of the other applicants, because they worked hard and didn't drink; in his judgment were smart farmers who had been licked by unscientific farming methods, soil exhaustion, and an indefensible system of land tenure. Because, too, in the opinion of the home supervisor, Mrs. McKay had the instincts of a good housekeeper.*

**Source Information:** This is part of a longer report on Farm Security Administration efforts to help poor farm tenants in the South. The description accompanying the report reads: "Farm Security Administration's experiment in resettling southern tenants on land of their own, here described by a recent visitor to several projects, demonstrates that, given a boost by government, America's poorest pioneers can rise from relief to self-support." The report is titled "Homesteaders—New Style," by Charles R. Walker, *Survey Graphic*, June 1939.

Source: Walker, Charles R. "Homesteaders—New Style." *New Deal Network: Document Library*. Accessed September 27, 2013. <http://newdeal.feri.org/survey/39a06.htm>.

## Assessment Questions

1. The Farm Security Administration faced many kinds of challenges. What sorts of challenges does Document 1 reveal more clearly than Document 2?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What challenges facing FSA personnel on a local level does Document 2 reveal more clearly than Document 1?

# The Great Depression and the New Deal

*Writing Assignment 1*

## Teacher Instructions

*The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing*

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

*[This standard is the basis for the corresponding No. 1 Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.]*

### ★ *Using this Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their American History coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Writing Assessment 1* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing 1. The Anchor Standards are the basis on which the various Common Core History/Social Studies Standards are based. This assessment asks students to write an essay that makes meaningful claims and that develops those claims using relevant evidence and sound reasoning. The essay should make clear the strengths and limitations of the claims it makes while also considering possible challenges or counter claims.

### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to Writing Assignment 1*

Essays for this assignment should be scored according to these criteria.

- How well does the essay state a claim addressing all elements of the prompt?
- Does the essay use evidence from all or most of the documents assigned for this task?
- Is the evidence explained effectively using careful reasoning and a logical flow of one idea to the next?
- Does the essay defend the claim in relation to any relevant alternative claims?
- Are ideas presented using precise language, effective transitions, and domain-specific vocabulary?
- Does the essay include an effective conclusion supporting its claims?
- How well does the essay follow rules of usage, spelling and punctuation?

# The Great Depression and the New Deal: Writing Assignment 1

**The Standard:** Write a brief essay that presents a well-reasoned argument focused on historical content.

## The Question

Using your background history knowledge and the primary source documents listed here, explain why you *do or do not agree* with the following statement: *“In 1933, The Nation magazine criticized Roosevelt for not moving farther toward socialism. Roosevelt did not do that, it is true, and he was right not to do it.”*

**Documents:** Base your essay on your general background knowledge and all of the primary and secondary source documents in *The Great Depression and the New Deal Assessments*.

## Instructions

- Write a brief well-organized essay that includes an introduction, one to three internal paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Introduce a specific claim that you can defend in response to the question.
- Support your claim with an argument based on evidence from the documents and sound reasoning about that evidence.
- Consider other possible claims that may differ from your own.
- Include related outside information based on your background knowledge of history.
- Use transitions and a logical arrangement of ideas to connect all parts of your essay to the claim you are making.
- Write a conclusion that follows from the argument your essay has made.

# The Great Depression and the New Deal

*Writing Assignment 2*

## Teacher Instructions

*The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing*

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

*[This standard is the basis for the corresponding No. 2 Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.]*

### ★ Using this Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their American History coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*The Great Depression and the New Deal: Writing Assessment 2* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing 2. The Anchor Standards are the basis on which the various Common Core History/Social Studies Standards are based. This assessment asks students to write an essay that uses sources effectively to provide strong support and evidence clarifying and explaining a central idea or set of ideas and concepts.

### ★ Evaluating Student Responses to Writing Assignment 2

Essays for this assignment should be scored according to these criteria.

- How well does the introduction address the prompt with a clear, well-defined central idea and a preview of supporting ideas?
- Does the essay use evidence from many of the documents assigned for this task?
- Is the evidence used effectively to support the essay's key ideas and concepts?
- Does the essay engage in careful reasoning and a logical flow of one idea to the next?
- Are ideas presented using precise language, effective transitions, and domain-specific vocabulary?
- Does the essay include an effective conclusion supporting its key ideas?
- How well does the essay follow rules of usage, spelling and punctuation?

## **The Great Depression and the New Deal: Writing Assignment 2**

**The Standard:** Write an informative/explanatory essay clearly describing and explaining historical events and trends.

### **The Question**

A local history museum is planning a major exhibit on the Great Depression and the New Deal. The museum plans to publish a short brochure on the exhibit. They have supplied you with all of the documents in this set of assessments on *The Great Depression and the New Deal*. They tell you to choose only four of these documents for use in the brochure. They want you to pick ones that will best reveal the most important aspects of this era of American history. They also ask you to write an essay explaining why you chose your four documents from those they have made available to you. Your task in this assignment is to write that essay.

**Documents:** Base your essay on your general background knowledge and all of the primary and secondary source documents in *The Great Depression and the New Deal* Assessments.

### **Instructions**

- Write a brief well-organized essay that includes an introduction, one to three internal paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Introduce the topic with a clear, well-defined central idea and preview in a general way other key ideas your essay will develop.
- Support each of your key ideas with evidence from many of the documents and with sound reasoning about that evidence.
- Include related outside information based on your background knowledge of history.
- Use transitions and a logical arrangement of ideas to connect the major parts of your essay.
- Write a conclusion that follows from and summarizes the main points your essay has made.

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