

The Dust Bowl

Name: _____

Farmers in the Midwestern United States suffered from the downfall of the United States economy during the Great Depression era. The Great Plains were deeply affected. This area endured long seasons of droughts. They led to huge formations of dust storms. The dust storms blew across the region. The Great Plains became known as the "Dust Bowl" region, due to the dust storms.

The Dust Bowl droughts started in 1931. The droughts caused severe soil erosion as the ground's root system became weaker. This caused the soil particles on the ground's surface to become loose. Winds formed large clouds of dust and picked up the soil particles. The clouds swept across the region. It caused dust storms that were often referred to as "black blizzards." The dust covered everything such as people's homes, roads, farm equipment, and even farm cattle.

In 1932, fourteen dust storms were reported. They increased to thirty-eight dust storms in 1933. The reoccurring dust storms caused farmers and families to pack up everything and move. Most moved to California. In May of 1934, it was reported that one particular dust storm carried nearly 350 million tons of dirt 2,000 miles east. The damage from this dust storm killed farm animals, destroyed more farmlands, and forced more families to relocate. Since the Great Depression still affected Americans during this time period, jobs were not readily available for the people moving out of the Dust Bowl region. Families struggled for food and money.

With farmlands being destroyed, agricultural production took a huge drop. Farmers had no way to keep up with demands needed to support America or even their own families. In 1935, through President Roosevelt's New Deal, the Soil Conservation Service was formed. This service was set in place to rebuild the Dust Bowl region. Farmers were helped in the replanting trees and grasses to help prevent soil erosion and reestablish the farmlands. Rainfall started to occur more often in the area. Although immediate change didn't occur, the soil erosion dilemma did decrease. The Dust Bowl region land was rebuilt by 1941.

THE DUST BOWL

Name: _____

CIRCLE IT:

FILL IT:

1. How did the Great Plains earn the name "Dust Bowl?"
2. What affect did the droughts have on the soil?
3. What all did the dust clouds cover?
4. What happened in May of 1934?
5. Why was the Soil Conservation Service formed?
6. How were the farmlands reestablished?

1. Which state was not part of the Dust Bowl region?
 - a. Oklahoma
 - b. Kansas
 - c. Florida
 - d. Colorado

2. What are “black blizzards?”
 - a. Black snow that falls from the sky
 - b. Black dust that comes from the deepest layer of soil
 - c. Dust storms that blow across regions
 - d. Dust clouds that stay in one region

3. Between 1932 and 1933, how many dust storms were reported?
 - a. 38 dust storms
 - b. 52 dust storms
 - c. 14 dust storms
 - d. Unknown

4. Which statement is false?
 - a. Dust storms forced families to relocate
 - b. Farm animals were affected by the dust clouds
 - c. The droughts in the Dust Bowl region caused severe soil erosion
 - d. People had an easy time finding jobs in California

TIME LINE IT

Make a timeline of the events for the Dust Bowl.

Include all dates.

WRITE IT

If you had been a farmer during the 1930's, do you think you would have wanted to stay on your farm or leave? Why or why not?