

# The Great Depression

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The Great Depression started in 1929. It lasted until the late 1930's. An economic depression is an extended amount of time when the economy is extremely poor and many people are without jobs. People and businesses had little or no money to spend during a depression. The government is without much money to help people. The Great Depression was the most serious economic depression the United States ever experienced.

It all started in October of 1929. This is when Wall Street crashed. The stocks completely collapsed. The stocks were no longer valuable. This day is known in history as "Black Tuesday." All of the fun and entertaining things that happened during the "Roaring Twenties," masked the real troubles the American economy was enduring. The Great Depression started under Herbert Hoover's presidency. In 1930, within just a year of the stock market crash, President Hoover had hopes that the bad times were finished. He was wrong. Things only got worse. Families and businesses that had money still were without money. People could no longer pay bills. They couldn't afford food. Farmers suffered financially during this time as well, and food production went down tremendously. In 1931, food riots began to take place. Hungry Americans everywhere robbed grocery stores. The riots led to many charities organizing soup kitchens to feed people all across America.

People no longer trusted that President Hoover could lead them out of the depression. Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected as president in 1932. He had a promise to help the American people with his "New Deal" plan. His plan was designed to create and incorporate many government agencies. The agencies helped get the United States back on its feet. Starting in 1933, Roosevelt's plan of action began to take place as the Emergency Banking Act was passed. This act helped in reopening many of the banks that had shutdown. Another plan was the creation of Social Security Act, passed in 1935. This plan helped provide money to elderly people who could no longer work. There were many other agencies and programs set in place that slowly started to help people during this time.

Just when things were looking up and people were getting jobs back, the economy endured another recession in 1937. A recession is a decrease in economic activity. The unemployment rate averaged around 19% that year. It was not as high as the 25% unemployment rate in 1933, but it was still detrimental to the economy. High unemployment rates indicate a weak and poor economy. The recession lasted for about 13 months. America's economy would not make a turn around until after the beginning of World War II in 1939.

The United States' participation in World War II helped to regenerate American industry and end the Great Depression. The war created many jobs for Americans. It helped to put money back into the hands of poor families, farmers, and banks.

## **FILL IT:**

## THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. When did the Great Depression take place?
2. Define what an economic depression is.
3. What started the Great Depression?
4. Why were there so many hungry people?
5. What is the “New Deal?”
6. What led to the end of the Great Depression?

- I. What is "Black Tuesday?"
  - a. The day when people wore black clothes
  - b. The day when the stocks went back up
  - c. The day the stocks completely collapsed
  - d. The day the stock market was invented
- 2. What did charities organize to feed hungry people?
  - a. Farmer markets
  - b. Grocery stores
  - c. Soup bowls
  - d. Soup kitchens
- 3. How did the Emergency Banking Act help during the depression?
  - a. It reopened many banks that had shutdown
  - b. It closed banks that weren't doing well
  - c. It reopened many banks only in Washington, D.C.
  - d. It closed banks that didn't support the "New Deal" plan
- 4. What does a high unemployment rate indicate?
  - a. A stable economy
  - b. A wealthy economy
  - c. A weak economy
  - d. A wealthy family

## Timeline IT

Make a timeline of the events for the Great Depression. Include all dates.

1929-

1930-

1931-

1932-

1933-

1935-

1937-

1941-

## WRITE IT:

Why do you think the American people choose to elect President Roosevelt in 1932 instead of re-electing Herbert Hoover?