

GROWING A NATION

THE STORY OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURE

From Defeat to Victory, Lesson 2: 1930–1949

Materials

- ◆ *Growing a Nation* CD and necessary projection equipment or computer lab
- ◆ Embedded Resource Cards
- ◆ Photo Analysis Worksheets (Appendix 3)

Activity 1: Embedded Resource

After students view selected slides, assign each student or group of students an Embedded Resource Card (Appendix 2) and ask them to be prepared to answer the Embedded Resource questions either by direct response or by using one of the Teaching and Learning Strategies outlined in Appendix 2. You may want to assign a particular strategy or cut the strategies into strips and ask each student to pick one or two. If the student or group of students is allowed to pick two, ask them to choose the learning strategy they prefer and put the other one back.

The embedded resources that pop up on each *Growing a Nation* screen are designed to be adaptable to a variety of teaching strategies and flexible for diverse learning styles. Each slide contains five or six embedded resources that detail events in American history that can be explored for a greater understanding of the time period or historical cause and effect relationships. Each embedded resource asks higher order questions to not only increase student knowledge but to increase their comprehension to the level of application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation (Bloom’s Taxonomy of educational objectives). The Teaching and Learning Strategies in Appendix 2 can be applied to nearly all the embedded resources in addition to students answering the embedded resource questions.

Activity 2: Dust Bowl Impact

Background

The ballads of Woody Guthrie, the novels of John Steinbeck and the WPA photographs of artists such as Dorothea Lange have embedded images of the Dust Bowl in the American consciousness. Introduce this dramatic era in our nation’s history to today’s students through photographs, songs and interviews with people who lived through the Dust Bowl. Help your students understand the problems Americans were facing during the Great Depression. Students learn from their textbooks what caused the Dust Bowl and where the Dust Bowl occurred, but to better understand the impact of this environmental disaster, students need to use a variety of primary source documents from this time period.

National Standards Explored

National Standards for Eras 7 and 8 are investigated in this lesson. To view the correlated Standards and the student understanding of each Standard visit www.agclassroom.org/gan.

Era 7: Standard 3B

The student understands how a modern capitalist economy emerged in the 1920s.

Era 8: Standard 1B

The student understands how American life changed during the 1930s.

Era 8: Standard 2A

The student understands the New Deal and the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Era 8: Standard 2C

The student understands opposition to the New Deal, the alternative programs of its detractors, and the legacy of the New Deal.

Enduring Understanding

The significant events throughout American agricultural history that have changed American society and the lives of her citizens.

Essential Questions:

- *What was the cause of the Dust Bowl?*
- *How did the Dust Bowl and agriculture contribute to The Great Depression?*
- *How did the Dust Bowl impact the environment?*
- *What was government’s response to help farmers during the 1930s?*
- *What ended The Great Depression?*

This lesson uses the resources from the American Experience PBS website *Surviving the Dust Bowl*. The resources on the site allow students to explore the Dust Bowl through photographs, songs (lyrics), interviews, and other archival documents from the Dust Bowl era.

Primary Source Analysis

1. Assign each student to listen to or read one of the interview transcripts from J.R. Davison, Imogene Glover, or Melt White on the PBS *Surviving the Dust Bowl* website (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/dustbowl/filmmore/reference/interview/index.html>). Each student should complete either the Sound Recording Analysis Worksheet (if they listen to the interview) or the Written Document Analysis Worksheet (if they read the transcript). Both worksheets can be found in Appendix 3.
 2. In addition, the “Eyewitness Account” and primary resource of Lawrence Svobida (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/dustbowl/sfeature/eyewitness.html>) could be used with the Written Document Analysis Worksheet.
 3. As a class listen to or view one or more of the following radio broadcasts or films: (These are engaging, dramatic primary sources. You may want to explain to students that radio was the state-of-the-art media of the time!)
- Fireside Chat 8, The Drought and The Dust Bowl, 1936 (27 minutes)
 - The Westward Movement and Resettlement, 1936 (15 minutes)
 - What Price America? Taylor Grazing Act, 1939 (30 minutes)
 - Food to Win the War, circa 1941 (3 minutes)

Students could complete the Sound Recording or Motion Picture Analysis Worksheets in Appendix 3 or note the three most significant concepts they hear. Discuss the concepts and issues raised in each radio or film program. The audio and movie files can be downloaded or streamed from the Classroom Resources section of the *Growing a Nation* website.



Student Individual or Group Projects

- Listen to an interview with Mrs. Flora Robertson about dust storms in Oklahoma <http://memory.loc.gov/afc/afcts/audio/412/4120a1.ram> and complete a Sound Recording Analysis Worksheet.
- Visit this website <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/dustbowl/peopleevents/index.html> and then select two historical figures or two events or one historical figure and one event and create a Venn diagram after you read your selection. The Venn diagram should note each point of view or event content that the people or event do not have in common in the outside of the circles. Do the viewpoints or events have anything in common? If so, place these commonalities in the place where the circles overlap. Present your historical character or event and your diagram to the class.
- Using the timeline <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/dustbowl/timeline/index.html> note the things the government did to help people out during the Dust Bowl. Which two or three do you think had the most impact?
- Consider creating or have the student create a WebQuest on the Dust Bowl using these websites:

Library of Congress: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afctshhtml/tshome.html>

Library of Congress audio: (This URL must be typed in the address box in your browser.

[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/S?ammem/toddbib:@field\(DOCID\(@range\(4088a1+5146b1\)\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/S?ammem/toddbib:@field(DOCID(@range(4088a1+5146b1))))

PBS Surviving the Dust Bowl: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/dustbowl/>