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Dear Educator:

On behalf of the National Archives and Records Administration – Southeast Region, please accept this copy of the Curriculum Guide for “*This Great Nation Will Endure*”- *Photographs of the Great Depression*.

This Curriculum Guide was created by the National Archives Southeast Region with the assistance of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library and Museum. The purpose of this guide is to provide materials to help your students gain a better understanding of the difficult conditions Americans faced during the Great Depression along with the government’s efforts to stabilize and document the problems. In addition, this guide will familiarize students with the use of primary sources and acquaint them with using document-based historical research techniques.

For general information or questions regarding this guide please contact Karen Kopanezos at 770.968.2530. For questions regarding tours of our facilities, please contact Mary Evelyn Tomlin, Southeast Region Public Programs Specialist at 770.968.2555.

We hope that this Curriculum Guide will be of assistance to your students. We are grateful for your dedication to education and we look forward to your next visit to the National Archives Southeast Region.

Sincerely,

James McSweeney  
Regional Administrator,

**The National Archives Records and Administration  
Southeast Region**



**“This Great Nation Will Endure”:  
Photographs of the Great Depression**

**Curriculum Guide**

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# Curriculum Guide Objectives

The purpose of this curriculum guide is to provide material aimed at meeting two goals. The first is to help students gain an understanding of the difficult living conditions faced by Americans during the Great Depression. The second is to familiarize students with the use of primary sources, and to train them in using document-based historical research techniques. Interpreting historical documents and photographs helps students gain a better understanding of history as the rich tapestry that it is, rather than a series of loosely connected facts, dates, and events. It also helps them to develop and refine their critical thinking skills.

Students will learn that a primary source is a record created by someone who participated in, or who had first-hand knowledge of an event. Examples of primary sources include letters, reports, diary entries, maps, drawings, newspaper and magazine articles, sound recordings, films and videos, artifacts, and photographs. The exhibition entitled "*This Great Nation Will Endure*": *Photographs of the Great Depression* at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum uses photographs as primary sources presenting documentary evidence of the hardships of life during the Great Depression.

## General Objectives: Document Based Questions

When students have successfully completed the exercises included in this packet they should be able to examine a primary source and

- identify factual information;
- identify points of view;
- gather, arrange and evaluate information;
- compare and contrast information;
- draw conclusions;
- prepare, present and defend arguments.

## Specific Objectives: The Great Depression

Students should also be able to

- identify specific challenges faced by people during the Great Depression;
- describe the living conditions endured by people during the Great Depression;
- empathize with people facing major economic difficulties;
- explain the attitudes and values of people living under duress;
- compare and contrast conditions in the various regions of the United States.



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## What Does It Mean to Think Historically?

In order to really understand history, students need to *think historically*. They have to be taught the mental skills needed to not just listen and repeat “facts,” but to *examine*, *evaluate*, and *understand* history. Thinking historically requires a complex set of skills similar to those used by a detective trying to solve a mystery.

These skills include:

**Finding Evidence:** The first step to understanding history is to know where to find the photographs, documents, and artifacts that tell the story of the time, place, people, and events under examination.

**Classifying and Categorizing:** Organizing bits of information from both primary and secondary sources in a manner that reveals a broader story is an important skill.

**Checking and Cross Checking:** Information must be checked and then rechecked in order to build a contextual understanding. This is called corroboration. Special attention must be paid to make sure that information is both valid and reliable.

**Identifying Sub-Texts:** Are there political, social, economic, cultural or other sub-texts at play?

**Constructing a Viable Interpretation of Events:** What “story” does the information seem to tell? Is this a plausible account of what may have happened?

**Filling in the Blanks:** Sometimes historians must fill in the gaps when specific evidence does not exist. Great care must be taken to do so in a way that does not introduce excessive bias or contemporary beliefs and attitudes. Historic events must be viewed within the context and attitudes of their own time. However, no matter how pure the intentions, interpretation is always tainted by the assumptions and prejudices of the interpreter.

**Promoting and Arguing your Point:** Once a plausible story has developed, it needs to be told so that it can be examined and scrutinized by outside, objective sources.





# Ten Dollars Cash Means Prosperity to Sharecroppers in the South Aided by FSA

## Visit to Low-Income Farms Shows Study Group Educational as Well as Financial Value of Federal Loans

By MARY LAMM BALESTRO

**A** visit to the low-income farms of the South, which is being made by a study group of the Federal Security Administration, has shown that the educational value of the Federal loans is as great as the financial value.

The study group, which is composed of representatives of the Federal Security Administration, the Federal Reserve Board, and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, is making a tour of the South to study the conditions of the sharecroppers and the value of the Federal loans.



Plowing using the Georgia sharecropper, in Georgia.



Family of five live quarters cramped in a shack.



Vegetable garden built for the sharecropper by FSA.



Sharecropper with his wife and children in front of his shack.

The study group, which is composed of representatives of the Federal Security Administration, the Federal Reserve Board, and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, is making a tour of the South to study the conditions of the sharecroppers and the value of the Federal loans.

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### SHREDS and PATCHES

By ROBERT FELLOWS WOOD

#### Unrelated Subjects



This is a picture of a group of people sitting together.

The study group, which is composed of representatives of the Federal Security Administration, the Federal Reserve Board, and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, is making a tour of the South to study the conditions of the sharecroppers and the value of the Federal loans.

#### Only Black-Fly Males Are Harmless to Man

By JOHN N. MERRISON

THE ONLY black-fly males are harmless to man, according to a study by John N. Merrison, a biologist at the University of California, Berkeley.

#### THIS WILD WORLD

By JOHN N. MERRISON

THE ONLY black-fly males are harmless to man, according to a study by John N. Merrison, a biologist at the University of California, Berkeley.



Black flycatcher in a domestic scene.



Woman sitting at table, kitchen in the sharecropper's shack.



Black fly.

## Overview: The Farm Security Administration

For those born after the 1930s, the Great Depression is something that can be visualized only through photography and film. Certain images have come to define our view of that uncertain time: an anxious migrant mother with her three small children; a farmer and his sons struggling through a dust storm; a family of sharecroppers gathered outside their spartan home. These photographs are icons of an era.

Remarkably, many of these familiar images were created by one small government agency established by Franklin Roosevelt: the Farm Security Administration (FSA). Between 1935 and 1943, FSA photographers produced nearly eighty thousand pictures of life in Depression-era America. This remains the largest documentary photography project of a people ever undertaken.

President Roosevelt created the Farm Security Administration (FSA) in 1937 to aid poor farmers, sharecroppers, tenant farmers and migrant workers. It developed out of an earlier New Deal agency called the Resettlement Administration (RA). The FSA resettled poor farmers on more productive land, promoted soil conservation, provided emergency relief and loaned money to help farmers buy and improve farms. It built experimental rural communities, suburban “Greenbelt towns” and sanitary camps for migrant farm workers.

One of the New Deal's most progressive—and controversial—agencies, the Farm Security Administration (FSA) advocated government planning and economic intervention to improve living conditions in rural America. Conservative critics attacked the FSA and its predecessor, the Resettlement Administration (RA), as “socialistic.”

To defend and promote the Resettlement Administration director Rexford Tugwell created a publicity department to document rural poverty and government efforts to alleviate it. It included a photographic unit with an odd name—the “Historical Section.” In 1937, the RA and its Historical Section were merged into the newly created FSA.

Tugwell chose Roy Stryker, a college economics instructor, to run the Historical Section. Though not a photographer, Stryker successfully directed an extraordinary group of men and women who today comprise a virtual “Who's Who” of twentieth century documentary photography. Many later forged careers that helped define photojournalism at magazines like *Life* and *Look*.

The FSA photographic unit was not a “jobs program” like the New Deal's Federal Arts Project. Photographers were hired solely for their skills. Most were in their twenties or thirties. They traveled the nation on assignments that could last for months.

# The Waterbury Democrat

A Pictorial Story of Tragedy Under the Searing Sun

## Drouth :-: Dust :-: Despair

On Parched Plains



Dramatically presenting the story of America's "Dust Bowl" tragedy, these pictures were made by Resettlement Administration Photographers.

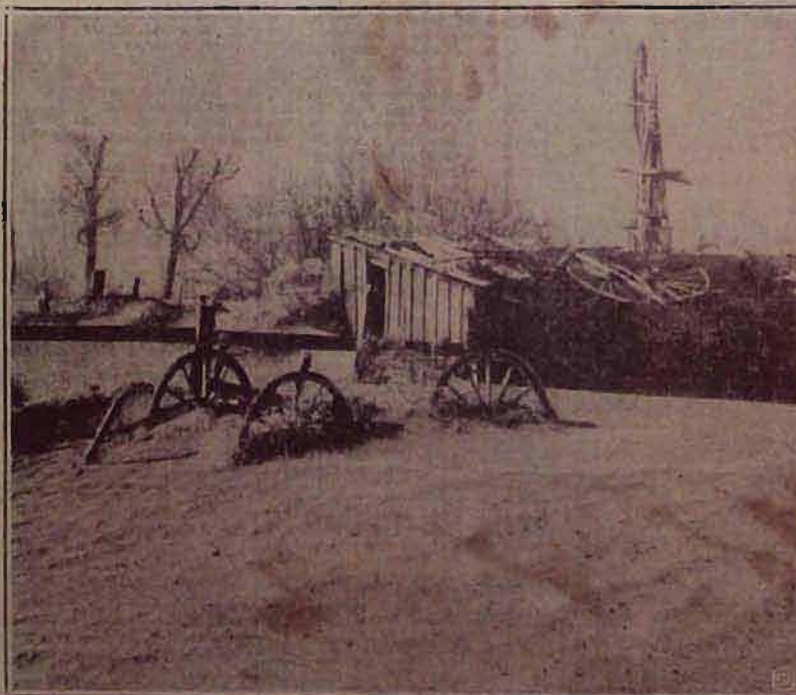
LEFT ABOVE:

**B**ONES whitening at thousands of sun-parched water-holes like this at Pennington, S. D., symbolize the doom that hovers over the vast plains country so long denied soothing, saving rain.

—O—

BELOW:

**L**AID waste by man's greedy farming methods and Nature's niggardliness with rain, dust and drouth turn whole counties of once-

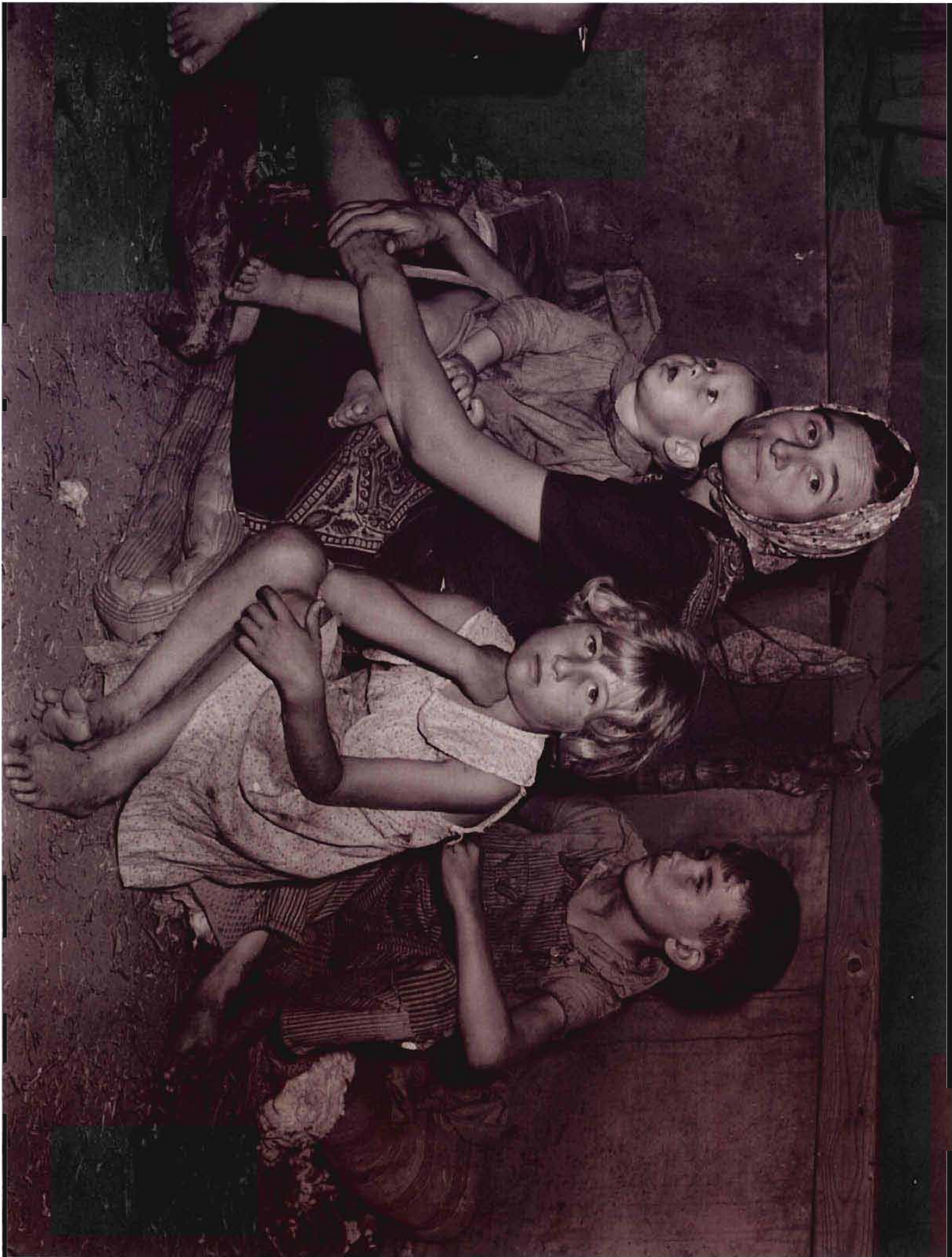


prosperous farm land into a bleak desert. As on this Oklahoma farm, even deep-probing trees shrivel in hot winds that smother machinery and buildings in dust drifts.

—O—

RIGHT ABOVE:

**N**OMADS of the drouth, in flight from the land that no longer will support them, huddle among their few pitiful belongings at Bakesfield, Okla., in a council over their foodless, jobless misery.

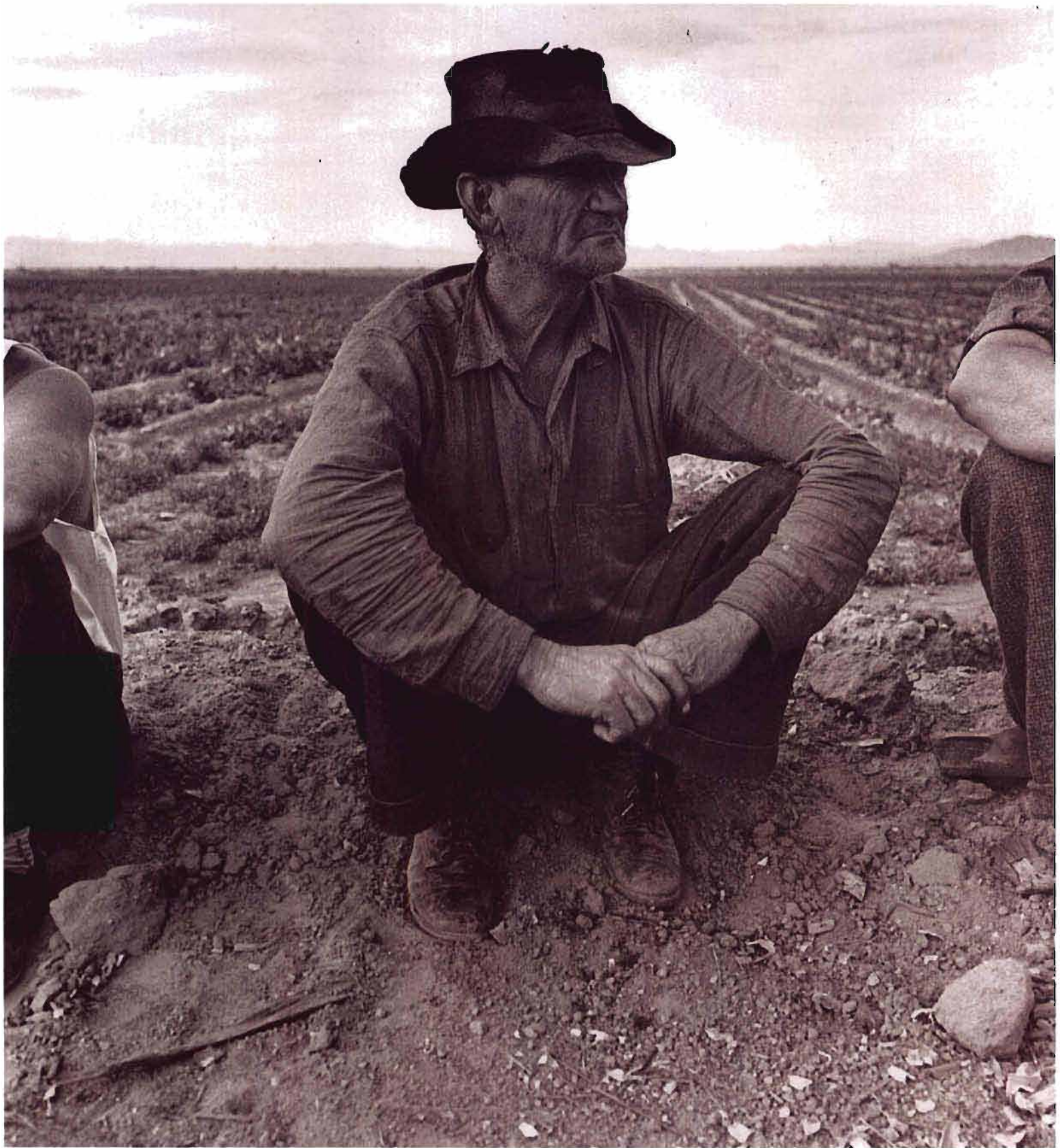


## The Great Plains and the Southwest



The most enduring image of rural America during the Great Depression is one of dust and human migration. This image was formed in the nation's heartland, where the people of the Great Plains and Southwest suffered both natural and economic disasters during the 1930s.

Decades of intensive farming and inattention to soil conservation had left this region ecologically vulnerable. A long drought that began in the early 1930s triggered a disaster. The winds that sweep across the plains carried away its dry, depleted topsoil in enormous "dust storms." Dramatic and frightening, the dust storms turned day into night as they destroyed farms. The hardest hit area—covering parts of Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico and the Texas Panhandle—was nicknamed the "Dust Bowl." FSA photographers recorded the hardships that drought, economic depression and low crop prices created throughout the Great Plains and Southwest. They documented the plight of farm families forced to abandon the land and join the ranks of migrant workers toiling for low wages on distant commercial farms. The migrant flow out of the region included people from cities and small towns and farm laborers who'd been replaced by motorized farm machinery.



## California and the Far West



For thousands of struggling rural people in the Great Plains and Southwest, California represented hope. During the 1910s and 1920s, some began traveling to California and other Far Western states in search of work. When the Depression hit, news of jobs picking crops on the state's large commercial farms swelled the migration. Hundreds of thousands of people packed their belongings into cars and trucks and headed west. Most found more hardship at the end of their long journey. The new arrivals, dubbed "Oakies" or "Arkies," often struggled to find employment. Wages were low and living conditions abysmal. Many migrants were crowded into shanty towns or squalid "ditchback camps"—unsanitary housing located along irrigation ditches.

The Farm Security Administration tried to assist migrant farm workers by creating clean residential camps with running water and simple, sturdy living quarters. The camps were organized democratically and governed by the residents. They became islands of stability for migrants enduring grinding poverty and dislocation. In John Steinbeck's 1939 novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*, the Joad family spends time in a government-run migrant camp.



# Humanity Hits Bottom

## ... In The Deep South

### Sharecroppers Declare War

Sharecroppers have organized a union. The plantation owners are fighting it.

Floggings, kidnappings and lynchings by night riders have resulted. Black terror stalks the cotton fields.

But the union is growing and sticks to its demands for better pay (it asked \$1.00 for a 10 hour day last spring).



### Homeless

Joining the union has meant eviction for hundreds of sharecroppers.

They wander the rutted roads—no shelter, no relief, no food. Some are living in tents and old autos.

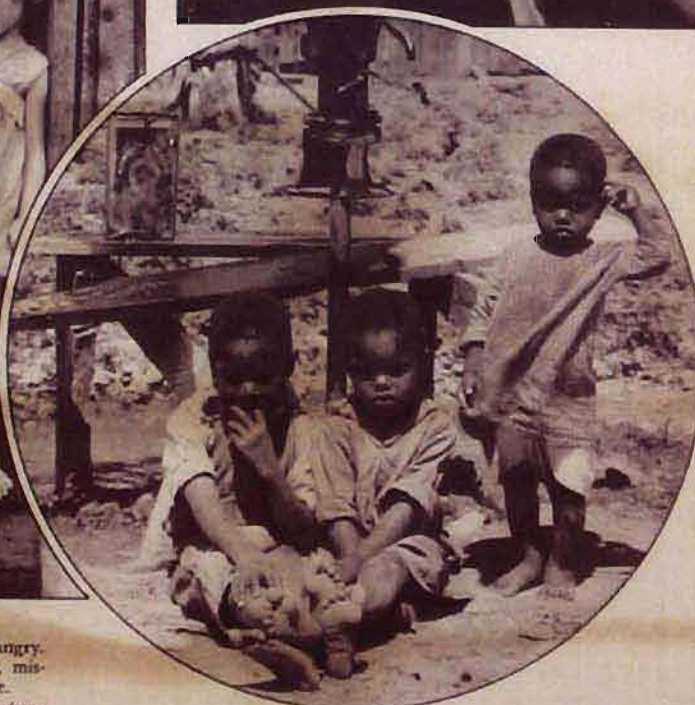


### More Children Indoors

Sharecropper children are often hungry. Undersized, scrawny, with large heads, misshapen bones, they are easy prey of disease.

Sharecropper food is bought on credit from plantation stores which charge high prices for sow-belly, corn meal, molasses.

Sharecropper store accounts are kept in a "doodlum" book and interest runs between 10 and 25 cents on each dollar.



### Many Sharecroppers Are Negroes

But not as many in proportion to whites as there used to be. Fifteen years ago 65 out of 100 croppers were Negroes. The tables are turned now and there are 60 whites and only 40 Negroes in every 100 sharecroppers.

### The Future?

President Roosevelt wants Congress to pass a law to aid the Resettlement Administration to make loans available to sharecroppers and to move the poorest onto better land.

The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union is fighting for better conditions for sharecroppers.

But one cotton picking machine can do the work of 75 men. When it is perfected, what new tragedy awaits the sharecroppers?

## The South



Long before the Great Depression, the South was marked by deep poverty. Largely rural and agricultural, it was home to millions of tenant farmers and sharecroppers. In exchange for cash rent (or, for sharecroppers, a portion of the crop), they farmed the fields of large landowners.

Even in good times, life for these workers was harsh, with little hope for the future. The Depression—and, ironically, some New Deal programs—deepened their economic plight. To increase sagging crop prices, the government paid farmers to reduce production. Large landowners chose to evict thousands of sharecropper and tenant families from unplanted land. The growing use of gas-powered farm machines eliminated the need for many tenant farmers.

The region's large African American population carried the heaviest burden. In 1930 more than eighty percent of American blacks lived in the South. Jim Crow segregation laws and the legacy of slavery forced them to endure poverty, discrimination, and racial violence.

FSA photographers captured the varied worlds of black and white farm workers throughout the South. They also explored the region's mill towns and cities.



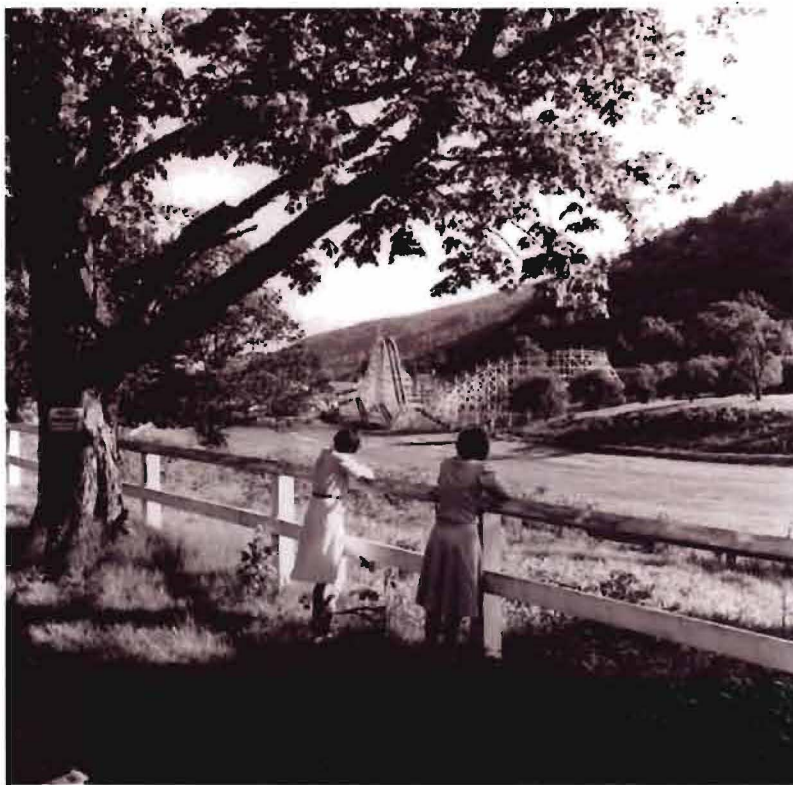
## The Northeast and Midwest



The FSA photography unit is best known for its images of rural life in the South, the Great Plains and the West. But in thousands of images FSA photographers also created a vivid record of life in the farms, towns, and cities of the Northeast and Midwest. Agency photographers documented mining towns in Pennsylvania, slum housing in Chicago and Washington D.C. and rural life in Ohio, New England, and upstate New York. They studied the lives of migrant farm workers in Michigan and the homes of packinghouse employees in New Jersey. Their work offers glimpses into everything from unemployment lines and child labor to social life and leisure activities.

## The Photo Project Goes to War

With the outbreak of World War II, the focus of the FSA photo project began to change. As the nation's attention turned from economic and social issues at home to the war against Germany, Italy and Japan, the photo unit reflected this shift. Roy Stryker encouraged his photographers to take more “positive” images of American life to bolster America's war effort. And while FSA photographers continued to document poverty and inequality, they were told to increase their output of photographs featuring reassuring images of American life. Pictures of defense factories, war workers and patriotic activities on the home front also began entering the FSA files.



In October 1942 the FSA photo unit became part of the new Office of War Information (OWI), created to direct America's wartime propaganda efforts. The following year the unit formally went out of existence. Director Roy Stryker left government and a few FSA photographers went to work for the OWI.

## Saving the FSA Photographs

As the FSA photo project neared its end, Director Roy Stryker faced a dilemma. From 1935 to 1943, he had created a vast trove of nearly eighty thousand photographs (and 68,000 unprinted negatives). Stryker recognized the importance of this collection to history and feared it might be dispersed when it came under the full control of the Office of War Information (OWI).

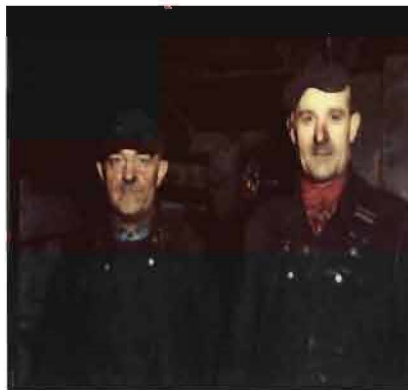


A seasoned Washington bureaucrat, Stryker had been maneuvering as early as 1939 to secure a safe harbor for the collection in the Library of Congress. Now, working with his friend Archibald MacLeish --who was both the Librarian of Congress and Assistant Director of the OWI-- Stryker helped arrange a transfer of the entire FSA photo file to the Library's custody under unusual terms. The Library took title to the collection in 1944, but loaned it back to the OWI for the duration of the war. In 1946, the collection was physically moved to the Library, where it is available to all for study and reproduction.

This curriculum guide draws from that collection and presents a new generation the opportunity to examine the role of photographs as historical evidence. By examining, thinking, and asking questions about photographs, students will learn to better understand how and why they were created and used.

Nearly all of the photographs shot by the FSA are black and white. But during the photo unit's later years a few photographers began experimenting with color photography. In some cases, these photographers shot the same subjects in both black and white and color.

These photographs are drawn from the 644 color transparencies and 35 mm Kodachrome slides in the FSA photo collection. None of these color images were published during the 1930s and 1940s. The entire group was only discovered at the Library of Congress during the 1970s.



These images can seem startling, because we are accustomed to experiencing the 1930s and 1940s in black and white. But color photography draws the viewer into the past in a different way. Color makes the photographs appear more immediate and intimate. Faces in color appear more real--more like us. The effect is often arresting.

These are just a few technical and editorial considerations that need to be kept in mind when viewing photographs as historical evidence. The activities that follow will allow your students the opportunity to explore these and other considerations in greater detail.

# The New York Times Magazine

APRIL 11  
1937

Section  
8

Copyright, 1937, by The New York Times Company

The New York Times Magazine, April 11, 1937

## WHEN BITING DUST SWEEPS ACROSS THE LAND



By HARLAN MILLER

**A**N earthquake shocks and writes the people. It has punch. Few acts of nature are so dramatic and spectacular as a hurricane. In a flood something can be done, there is escape, and restoration. But when the dust rises and storms across the land, as it has begun to do again in the Middle West, it numbs and paralyzes and silences. Against this conspiracy of earth and wind there is no retreat, in the hot sun that matches away the water, there is no answer.

Across the Dust Bowl an Eastern tourist is driving toward the West. Without knowing it he has just crossed the hundredth meridian of longitude west from Greenwich, a line which splits the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas and Texas. It is not marked on the road maps. Behind him, early this morning, he has left Wichita and the rich fields of Eastern Kansas. Ahead of him now lies the immediate theatre of the tragedy. The rough circle formed by the adjacent corners of five States—Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Texas. If he could drive diagonally southwest from Richfield, Kan., directly to Chapman, N. M., he would leave in just 115 miles, his tire tracks in the swirling dust of all five.

**S**O far the day has been clear and brilliant. But now a weird yellow haze begins to obscure the blue light ahead. A few eddies of dust follow across the road in front of him. He is traveling fifty miles an hour. That ambiguous cloud ahead hugs the ground at twenty. In fifteen minutes he is in the thick of it.

Quickly he switches on the headlights of his car, though it is only 2 o'clock. The radiator cap is scarcely visible. The doors and windows of his sedan are tightly shut, the ventilator is closed, yet the dust sticks in. It is thick on the smoked glass of his white-rimmed driving goggles. It is thick in his nostrils. His wife motions some handkerchiefs from the vacuum jug and covers the children's mouths and noses. Her hands turn a handkerchief. It is difficult to breathe.

With alarm he notices that the headlights of cars coming from the opposite direction are invisible until they are almost even with his own. He swerves to the side of the highway until he feels the deeper dust of the shoulders beneath his right wheels. He is tempted to stop. But if he does, another car

bugging the side of the road may ram his car in the rear. If he goes on he may collide with a car ahead which has stopped.

There is a slight lull in the wind. For a mile or two the visibility is better. He observes that most of the farmhouses seem abandoned, stars and gaunt, with dust lashed higher than their window sills. The land is as barren of grass as a concrete tennis court or the floor of a gymnasium. There is a dead pine thicket burned so that only its topmost twigs rise above the dust. The only living things are the fuscous thistles.

**A**ND now the dust storm envelopes him again. Would it be safe to turn off and drive across the range? No, the dust is too soft and deep; there is no ground to see. And there will be fences. There is another lull in the flying earth. He begins to notice that some of the dust clouds are black, others are gray, still others a yellow which refracts an unearthly light from its earthen molecules. These are samples from the previous topsoils of Kansas, Colorado and Texas.

A little later as he is crawling along, nervous and shaken, the dust begins to strike the windshield with a distinct gravelly note. This is the deluge of sand from New Mexico, falling into the glass and paint. This evening when he reaches his destination he will need a new windshield, which will cost 125, and when he returns home he will need a paint job on the car. The left side is puffed and scarred. He hopes his insurance will cover the cost. His wheels wobble on

**T**HIS is the Dust Bowl, which he will remember as a nightmare tomorrow, when he reaches the hills. His has been only the brief agony of the traveler. Multiply it by the days in a year, by the years in the lifetime of a Dust Bowl dry farmer, add the total loss of a slender pitiable, and you have part of the agony of an inhabitant of this scorched, stripped, insulated circle of land.

But this is merely the most desolate realm of the dust storms. There led for the grace of God lies the whole vast area between the hundredth meridian and the foothills of the Rockies, a region as great as France, Germany and Austria combined, an empire of 250,000 square miles just beginning to suffer the same skin trouble, the same ruinous malady of its grass and soil. So far the Dust Bowl is only a little bigger in area than the

New England States with New Jersey and Maryland thrown in. But symptoms of the same ailment grow more sinister from the Canadian border to the Rio Grande.

The fury of the dust storms is flattered with the stigma of man's own guilt and folly. The aftermath demands penance and atonement and slow tedious regeneration. Not in a day or a year or a decade can the black speckler of the plains be laid.

To blame the eager pioneer is as futile as to blame the sharp plow that breaks the plains. To blame the 47 winds of the war days, which tempted the eager pioneer, is as inconclusive as to blame the appetite of the wolf in the trenches who demanded bread, or the German imperial policy which put them in the trenches. To blame the dauntless exploiters of the last sixty years who skinned the high plains is as fruitless as to blame the first lusty pioneers who tramped over the Appalachians and drove their cattle toward the free open grasslands.

**B**EYOND the Eastern mountains the miles of lush green grass flowed toward the setting sun like green gold. To the first land-hungry pioneers the sight of this grass spilling westward across the continent, across the central prairies and up the high plains, was as intoxicating as barrels of gold spilled in the street of a city slum. And the government wooed the pioneers on. The westward surge across the free grass solved many an Eastern economic and political problem. The early reports of the first waves of trappers and traders were as incendiary as the tales of Marco Polo about the wealth of the Far East.

Nature had tended well her Western fields. The buffaloes were wiser than the herdsmen who followed them. Today the riches of the grasslands are almost inconceivable. The Spaniard Castaneda was standing where the Dust Bowl whirled today when he wrote, 400 years ago (that the passage of a caravan of a hundred Spaniards and 1,500 Indians and 8,000 horses and oxen and sheep left no trace in the strong knee-high and waist-high grass. Millions of buffaloes had ranged widely and with sure instinct across the grassy grass and the buffalo grass, the early mesquite and bluegrass and bunch grass. They left it unscathed. Then the violent out-thrust of the berry young nation, the blind, vigorous gesture of national policy. It was a nation's mistake, and now it is a nation's problem.

**AFTER THE CRISIS** (Continued on Page 26)

In the top of a dust storm—Farmer and son seeking an oasis of clear air in the "unsifted dust" under the Dust Bowl.





## Overview: The Great Depression



*“This great nation will endure as it has endured, will revive, and will prosper...”*

Franklin D. Roosevelt  
March 4, 1933

As Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke these simple and inspiring words, Americans from coast to coast, weary from years of economic hardship, were willing to take the freshly minted President at his word. He was offering them hope, which was all that many people had left. The economic hardships brought on by the Great Depression had reached a pinnacle by the spring of 1933. The banking system was near collapse, a quarter of the labor force was unemployed, and prices and production were down by a third from their 1929 levels. Just a few short years before, Herbert Hoover had proclaimed, “We in America today are nearer to the final triumph over poverty than ever before in the history of any land.” How could things have gone so wrong, so fast?

Conventional wisdom places the beginning of the Great Depression on “Black Tuesday” October 29, 1929, but the factors undermining the economic stability of American and world markets had been in play for some time. One of those factors was a lack of diversification in the American economy throughout the 1920’s. American prosperity had been built on a few core industries, most noteworthy automobiles and construction. As the 1920’s progressed, market saturation began to take hold and automobile and construction expenditures began to drop dramatically.

In addition to the declining demand for products, purchasing power began to skew against those at the lower end of the economic ladder. As demand for products decreased, so did wages - especially for farmers and factory workers. More and more consumers found themselves unable to afford the goods and services the economy was producing. This resulted in even less demand and sparked layoffs and factory shut downs.

Yet another factor contributing to the economic woes of the nation was the dubious debt structure of the economy. Farmers who traditionally lived on or near the edge of economic prosperity, were being hit with the double whammy of declining crop prices and a continuing drought that was literally turning their land to unusable dust. Crop prices were too low to cover the fixed costs of machinery, taxes, mortgages and other debts. By 1933, nearly 45 percent of farms were behind in their mortgage payments and faced foreclosure. Many farmers in the southwest region of the country that had come to be called the Dust Bowl simply abandoned their farms. These "Arkies" and "Oakies" loaded up their families and whatever possessions they could carry and headed west.

A final factor came from beyond our borders. When World War I finally concluded, the Allied nations of Europe owed American banks huge sums of money. With the European economies in shambles, not even the victorious countries were able to make their payments to American banking institutions. They had insisted on reparations from the defeated nations in hopes of using those resources to repay their American creditors. The defeated nations were even less able to muster the necessary funds. American banks refused to forgive the debts, but they did allow European governments to take out additional loans to pay down the original debts. This created a dangerous cycle of paying debts by incurring still more debt. By the end of the 1920's, the American economy was beginning to weaken due to the factors mentioned above. In an effort to protect American manufacturing, protective tariffs were put in place making it more and more difficult for European goods to enter the United States, and many soon defaulted on their loans bringing about a world wide economic crisis.

# The Buffalo Times

BUFFALO, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1937



TO THE MANY AMERICANS who live on the nation's run-down, exhausted land, the Resettlement Administration, one of Washington's "alphabet" agencies, is bringing new homes, new life, new hope. Typical of the kind of shacks these people live in is this house near Story, Minn. Mountain, Va. with its sun-baked elements about it.

## Hope for the Despairing



THIS YOUNG LAD IS LUCKY—He's still not too old to forget the ways and the misery forced on some of these people by their battle to make a living from inhospitable soil. Modern schools and training for a useful life await him in a new community.



THE AMBITIOUS MEMBER OF THE FAMILY—This man left his farm home to find work, got a job as deckhand on a Mississippi boat—but his circumstances still show in his clothing.



FOR THIS SHARECROPPER'S CHILD, suffering from rickets and emaciation, there is hope of a happy life in the better land his family is being moved to. He lives in Alabama.



THE RESULT OF THE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM—This farmer has been resettled on good land, is beginning to enjoy life, looks confidently to the future with a smile on his face.



IT'S HARD FOR SAM NICHOLS, poverty-stricken farmer of Blaine County, Arkansas, to understand what the change will mean. To men of his age, the Resettlement program comes almost too late.



ALL HIS LIFE has been spent on barren land, but now, this 83-year-old settler—one of the few who have attained old age in the sub-marginal farm areas—is being resettled on good farmland near Chillicothe, O. The twilight of his life, at least, will pass in good surroundings.

## Overview: The New Deal

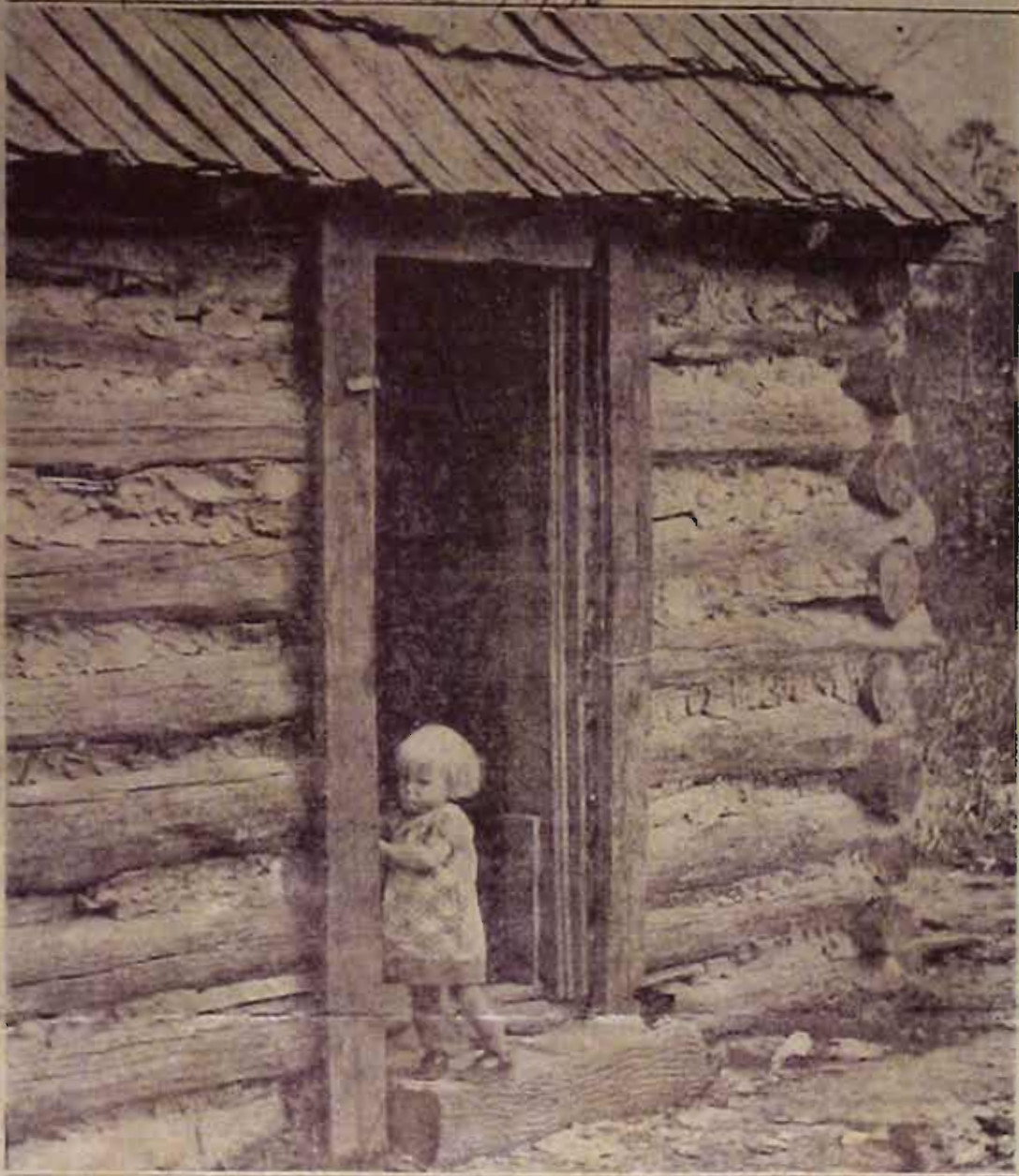
Upon taking office, the new President began immediately to make good on his pledge to get the country moving again. The pace of his first one hundred days in office, beginning in March of 1933, was a whirlwind which produced and passed no less than fifteen major pieces of legislation. Roosevelt sought to establish broad relief measures, major new programs in industrial and agricultural planning, and banking reform. Though the scope of the programs he proposed seemed to some to go in all directions, the threads that held the New Deal together were Roosevelt's unbridled confidence in himself and the American People, and his commitment to bring about three R's - Relief, Recovery and Reform.

Relief for the millions of Americans who suddenly found themselves without work, without food, without shelter and without hope, was the President's first priority. He had concluded that help for the down-trodden must come from beyond the traditional private or local government sources. He believed that the federal government needed to take on a larger role in providing for the well-being of the American people. Though today this concept seems quite natural, the idea of such government involvement in the affairs of business and industry was relatively new and untested in FDR's time. Critics from the political right accused him of exerting too much government influence, while critics from the left complained his programs were not ambitious enough. Roosevelt steered a steady course and kept the American public informed about his plans and their progress through a series of radio addresses that came to be called "fireside chats". These broadcasts were centered on specific topics and issues, and were delivered in warm, folksy language that made people feel they were partners in the efforts the President was putting forth.

The experiment of the New Deal yielded varied results. Some programs were nearly universally applauded such as the CCC, TVA, or the FDIC. Others such as the NRA were attacked in the media or overturned in the courts. Still others such as Social Security have become so interwoven in our social and political fabric that it is difficult to imagine a time when they did not exist. Regardless of the fate of the individual programs, the fact remains that the New Deal forever changed the political, social, and economic landscape of the United States. Historians and scholars continue to debate just how successful the relief, recovery and reform efforts of the New Deal programs were and their lingering impacts today.

## This Child Deserves A Better Chance, Says Roosevelt

*Harris Sentinel 5/1/36*



The Resettlement Administration, a New Deal agency, is resettling the family of this little girl in an area where she will have higher living standards and a greater opportunity to get more out of life. The picture was taken in Indiana.

Editor's Note—This is the first article of a series on the work of the Resettlement Administration. Judge Joseph L. Dailey, assistant administrator, discusses Indiana's part in the National Land Use Program. In this article Judge Dailey discusses other phases of the Resettlement Administration.

By J. L. DAILEY  
Assistant Administrator  
Resettlement Administration

Land is the basis of our rural economy, and represents the long-time phase of the Resettlement

Administration program. But there is a more immediate and pressing problem of rural need. This activity which is the emergency phase has been termed rural rehabilitation.

Rural rehabilitation means precisely what the term implies—to rebuild and rehabilitate needy farm families. By rehabilitating we do not mean the task of furnishing a minimum of food, clothing, implements, feed and livestock. We do mean assistance which will enable farm families to become once more self-supporting and self-respecting members of their communities.

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 2)

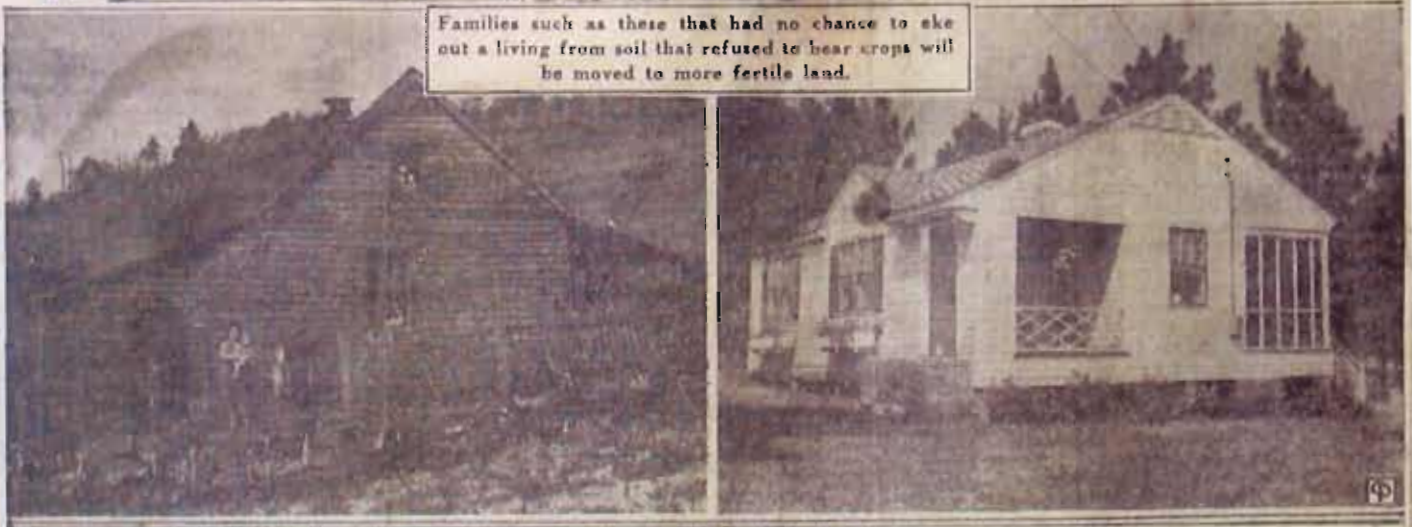
112

WHAT THE RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION IS DOING

A REVIEW OF ITS WORK INDICATES MOVEMENT ON THREE BROAD FRONTS IN RURAL REGIONS



Families such as these that had no chance to eke out a living from soil that refused to bear crops will be moved to more fertile land.



Left, this family will be moved into a new home, right, built by the U. S. Resettlement Administration.







# Curriculum Guide

*"This Great Nation Will Endure": Photographs of the Great Depression*

## Thumbnails: FSA Photographs

This curriculum guide contains a complete class set of FSA photographs. So that students may draw their own conclusions about the meaning and significance of the images, we have deliberately not identified the place, date, subject or photographer on the student copies. These thumbnails provide that information and can be shared with the students at the teacher's discretion.



**Arthur Rothstein**

*Farmers at auction, Zimmerman farm near Hastings, Nebraska.*  
March 1940



**Arthur Rothstein**

*Father and Sons Walking in the Face of a Dust Storm.*  
April 1936



**Russell Lee**

*Tent home of family living in a community camp, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.*  
July 1939



**Russell Lee**

*Christmas dinner in the home of Earl Pauley near Smithfield, Iowa. Dinner consisted of potatoes, cabbage and pie.*  
December 1936



# Curriculum Guide

*"This Great Nation Will Endure": Photographs of the Great Depression*



**Russell Lee**

*Transient Mexican worker's family from Texas. East Grand Forks, Minnesota.*

September 1937



**Dorothea Lange**

*Dust Bowl farm, Coldwater District, north of Dalhart, Texas. This house is occupied; most of the houses in this district have been abandoned.*

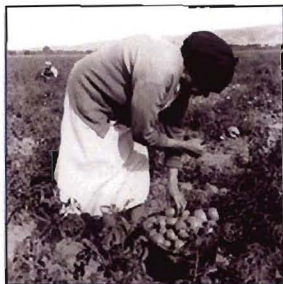
June 1938



**Russell Lee**

*Daughter and son of [an] agricultural day laborer living near Webbers Falls, Oklahoma. The furnishings of this shack were meager and broken and filthy. Muskogee County, Oklahoma.*

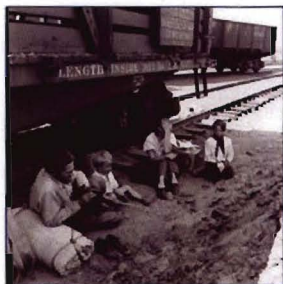
June 1939



**Dorothea Lange**

*Mexican migrant woman harvesting tomatoes, Santa Clara Valley, California.*

November 1938



**Dorothea Lange**

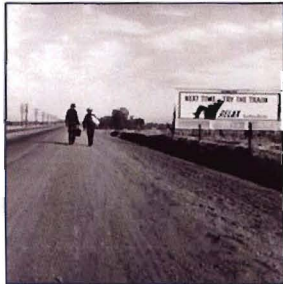
*Family who traveled by freight train, Toppenish, Yakima Valley, Washington.*

August 1939



# Curriculum Guide

*"This Great Nation Will Endure": Photographs of the Great Depression*



**Dorothea Lange**  
*Toward Los Angeles, California.*  
March 1937



**Dorothea Lange**  
*Unemployment benefits aid begins. Line of men inside a division office of the State Employment Service office at San Francisco, California, waiting to register for benefits on one of the first days the office was open.*  
January 1938



**Dorothea Lange**  
*Migrant Mother.*  
February 1936



**Russell Lee**  
*Labor contractor's crew picking peas, Nampa, Idaho.*  
June 1941



**Dorothea Lange**  
*Migrant workers' camp, outskirts of Marysville, California. The new migratory camps being built by the Resettlement Administration will remove people from unsatisfactory living conditions such as these and substitute at least the minimum of comfort and sanitation.*  
April 1935



# Curriculum Guide

*"This Great Nation Will Endure": Photographs of the Great Depression*



**Ben Shahn**

*A destitute family, Ozark Mountains area, Arkansas.*

October 1935



**Ben Shahn**

*Untitled [Pulaski County, Arkansas].*

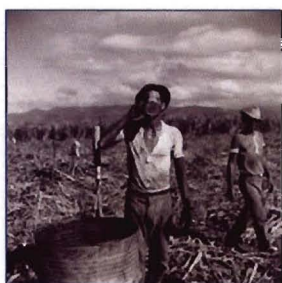
October 1935



**Arthur Rothstein**

*Picking beans, Belle Glade, Florida.*

January 1937



**Edwin Roskam**

*Sugar workers taking a drink of water on a plantation, Ponce (vicinity), Puerto Rico.*

January 1938



**Edwin Roskam**

*Funeral of a child, Ponce, Puerto Rico.*

January 1938



# Curriculum Guide

*"This Great Nation Will Endure": Photographs of the Great Depression*



**Arthur Rothstein**

*Tenant farmer moving his household goods to a new farm, Hamilton County, Tennessee.*

1937



**Arthur Rothstein**

*State highway officials moving evicted sharecroppers away from roadside to area between the levee and the Mississippi River, New Madrid County, Missouri.*

January 1939



**Marion Post Wolcott**

*Child of migratory packinghouse workers, Belle Glade, Florida.*

February 1939



**Dorothea Lange**

*Cotton sharecroppers, Greene County, Georgia. They produce little, sell little, buy little.*

June 1937



**Walker Evans**

*Houses, Atlanta Georgia.*

March 1936



# Curriculum Guide

*"This Great Nation Will Endure": Photographs of the Great Depression*



**Marion Post Wolcott**

*Children and old home on badly eroded land near Wadesboro, North Carolina.*

December 1938



**Ben Shahn**

*Cotton pickers, Pulaski County, Arkansas.*

October 1935



**Marion Post Wolcott**

*Children in the bedroom of their home, Charleston, West Virginia. Their mother has tuberculosis.*

September 1938



**Arthur Rothstein**

*Homes of oyster packinghouse workers, Shellpile, New Jersey.*

October 1938



**Russell Lee**

*Unemployed workers in front of a shack with Christmas tree, East 12th Street, New York, New York.*

January 1938



**Ben Shahn**

*Young boy who salvages coal from the slag heaps, Nanty Glo, Pennsylvania.*

1937

## **Related Documents**

### **President Roosevelt's 1933 Inaugural Address**

In August 1928, shortly before his election to the presidency, Herbert Hoover had proclaimed, "We in America today are nearer to the final triumph over poverty than ever before in the history of any land." Yet by the end of his term nothing could have been farther from the truth. The Great Depression had reached a pinnacle by the spring of 1933. The banking system was near collapse, a quarter of the labor force was unemployed, and prices and production were down by a third from their 1929 levels. The nation was looking for new leadership, and it found it in Franklin D. Roosevelt, the two-term Governor of New York. As a candidate for the presidency, Roosevelt had promised, 'a New Deal for the American people.' Upon taking office, he began immediately to make good on his pledge. Roosevelt seemed fully aware of the challenges he and the nation faced and he spoke with confidence and determination. His inaugural address, delivered on the steps of the United States Capitol building on March 4, 1933 gave the weary nation a much needed glimmer of hope.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

March 25, 1933.

This is the original of the Inaugural Address - March 4th, 1933 - and was used by me at the Capitol. Practically the only change, except for an occasional word, was the sentence at the opening, which I added longhand in the Senate Committee Room before the ceremonies began.



\*\*\*\*\*



INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF  
PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT  
MARCH 4, 1933.

*This is a Day of consecration.*

I am certain that my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into the Presidency I will address them with a candor and a decision which the present situation of our nation impels. This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today. This great nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So first of all let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself, - nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.

In such a spirit on my part and on yours we face our common difficulties. They concern, thank God, only material things. Values have shrunken to fantastic levels; taxes have risen; our ability to pay has fallen; government of all kinds is faced by serious curtailment of income; the

means of exchange are frozen in the currents of trade; the withered leaves of industrial enterprise lie on every side; farmers find no markets for their produce; the savings of many years in thousands of families are gone.

More important, a host of unemployed citizens face the grim problem of existence, and an equally great number toil with little return. Only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment.

Yet our distress comes from no failure of substance. We are stricken by no plague of locusts. Compared with the perils which our forefathers conquered because they believed and were not afraid, we have still much to be thankful for. Nature still offers her bounty and human efforts have multiplied it. Plenty is at our doorstep, but a *generous* ~~vast~~ use of it languishes in the very sight of the supply. Primarily, this is because the rulers of the exchange of mankind's goods have failed through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure and abdicated. Practices of the unscrupulous money changers stand indicted in the court of public opinion, rejected by the hearts and minds of men.

True, they have tried, but their efforts have been cast in the pattern of an outworn tradition. Faced by failure of credit they have proposed only the lending of more money. Stripped of the lure of

profit by which to induce our people to follow their false leadership they have resorted to exhortations, pleading tearfully for restored confidence. They know only the rules of a generation of self-seekers. They have no vision, and when there is no vision the people perish.

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. The measure of the restoration lies in the extent to which we apply social values more noble than mere monetary profit.

Happiness lies not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort. The joy and moral stimulation of work no longer must be forgotten in the mad chase of evanescent profits. These dark days will be worth all they cost us if they teach us that our true destiny is not to be ministered unto but to minister to ourselves and to our fellow-men.

Recognition of the falsity of material wealth as the standard of success goes hand in hand with the abandonment of the false belief that public office and high political position are to be valued only by the standards of pride of place and personal profit; and there must be an end to a conduct in banking and in business which too often has given to a sacred trust the likeness of callous and selfish wrongdoing. Small

wonder that confidence languishes, for it thrives only on honesty, on honor, on the sacredness of obligations, on faithful protection, on unselfish performance: without them it cannot live.

Restoration calls, however, not for changes in ethics alone. This nation asks for action, and action now.

Our greatest primary task is to put people to work. This is no unsolvable problem if we face it wisely and courageously. It can be accomplished in part by direct recruiting by the government itself, treating the task as we would treat the emergency of a war, but at the same time through this employment accomplishing greatly needed projects to stimulate and reorganize the use of our natural resources.

Hand in hand with this we must frankly recognize the over-balance of population in our industrial centers and, by engaging on a national scale in a redistribution, endeavor to provide a better use of the land for those best fitted for the land. The task can be helped by definite efforts to raise the values of agricultural products and with this the power to purchase the output of our cities. It can be helped by preventing realistically the tragedy of the growing loss through foreclosure, of our small homes and our farms. It can be helped by insistence that the federal, state and local governments act forthwith

on the demand that their cost be drastically reduced. It can be helped by the unifying of relief activities which today are often scattered, uneconomical and unequal. It can be helped by national planning for and supervision of all forms of transportation and of communications and other utilities which have a definitely public character. There are many ways in which it can be helped, but it can never be helped merely by talking about it. We must act and act quickly.

Finally, in our progress toward a resumption of work we require two safeguards against a return of the evils of the old order: there must be a strict supervision of all banking and credits and investments; there must be an end to speculation with other people's money, and there must be provision for an adequate but sound currency.

These are the lines of attack. I shall presently urge upon a new Congress in special session detailed measures for their fulfillment, and I shall seek the immediate assistance of the several states.

Through this program of action we address ourselves to putting our own national house in order and making income balance outgo. Our international trade relations though vastly important, are in point of time and necessity secondary to the establishment of a sound national economy. I favor as a practical policy the putting of first things first.

I shall spare no effort to restore world trade by international economic readjustment, but the emergency at home cannot wait on that accomplishment.

The basic thought that guides these specific means of national recovery is not narrowly nationalistic. It is the insistence, as a first consideration, upon the interdependence of the various elements in and parts of the United States -- a recognition of the old and permanently important manifestation of the American spirit of the pioneer. It is the way to recovery. It is the immediate way. It is the strongest assurance that the recovery will endure.

In the field of world policy I would dedicate this nation to the policy of the good neighbor -- the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and because he does so, respects the rights of others -- the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors.

If I read the temper of our people correctly we now realize as we have never realized before our interdependence on each other: that we cannot merely take but we must give as well; that if we are to go forward we must move as a trained and loyal army willing to sacrifice for the good of a common discipline, because without such discipline no progress is

made, no leadership becomes effective. We are, I know, ready and willing to submit our lives and property to such discipline because it makes possible a leadership which aims at a larger good. This I propose to offer, pledging that the larger purposes will bind upon us all as a sacred obligation with a unity of duty hitherto evoked only in time of armed strife.

With this pledge taken, I assume unhesitatingly the leadership of this great army of our people dedicated to a disciplined attack upon our common problems.

Action in this image and to this end is feasible under the form of government which we have inherited from our ancestors. Our constitution is so simple and practical that it is possible always to meet extraordinary needs by changes in emphasis and arrangement without loss of essential form. That is why our constitutional system has proved itself the most superbly enduring political mechanism the modern world has produced. It has met every stress of vast expansion of territory, of foreign wars, of bitter internal strife, of world relations.

It is to be hoped that the normal balance of executive and legislative authority may be wholly adequate to meet the unprecedented task before us. But it may be that an unprecedented demand and need

for undelayed action may call for temporary departure from that normal balance of public procedure.

I am prepared under my constitutional duty to recommend the measures that a stricken nation in the midst of a stricken world may require. These measures, or such other measures as the Congress may build out of their experience and wisdom, I shall seek, within my constitutional authority, to bring to speedy adoption.

But in the event that the Congress shall fail to take one of these two courses, and in the event that the national emergency is still critical, 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.

For the trust reposed in me I will return the courage and the devotion that befit the time. I can do no less.

We face the arduous days that lie before us in the warm courage of national unity; with the clear consciousness of seeking old and precious moral values; with the clean satisfaction that comes from the stern



performance of duty by old and young alike. We aim at the assurance of a rounded and permanent national life.

We do not distrust the future of essential democracy. The people of the United States have not failed. In their need they have registered a mandate that they want direct vigorous action. They have asked for discipline and direction under leadership. They have made me the present instrument of their wishes. In the spirit of the gift I take it.

In this dedication of a nation we humbly ask the blessing of God. May he protect each and every one of us. May He guide me in the days to come.

  
\_\_\_\_\_

*This is the original reading copy I used March 4<sup>th</sup>*

# Vocabulary

**Arkies**—Migrant workers from Arkansas displaced by crop failures and dust storms.

**Black Tuesday**—Tuesday, October 29, 1929. The New York Stock Market crashed. Generally referred to as the event which marked the beginning of the Great Depression, more accurately, it was only the first major visible sign of the Depression.

**Ditchback Camps**— Slang term for shanty-town buildings located in the fields near irrigation ditches. These small unsanitary shacks were generally located in the back of the camps.

**Drought**—A long period without precipitation.

**Dust Bowl**—Term used to describe much of the south western Great Plains in the 1930's, which experienced frequent dust storms and loss of agricultural income.

**Dust Storm**—Huge clouds of dirt caused by a combination of drought, high winds, and poor conservation practices. A dust storm could last up to three days, and cover large areas.

**Evict**—To remove people from someplace against their will; usually land or a building such as a home.

***The Grapes of Wrath***—The John Steinbeck novel about an Oklahoma farm family that moved west to California and became migrant workers.

**Great Depression**—(1929-1941) Period of economic downturn during which wages decreased dramatically and nearly 25% of the US labor force was unemployed; the Great Depression had worldwide effects.

**Greenbelt Towns**—An experimental federal housing program consisting of a planned town surrounded by agricultural land. There were Greenbelt towns constructed by the Resettlement Administration in Maryland, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

**Jim Crow Laws**—Laws passed in the South after the Civil War that segregated or separated people by race in public places.

**Jobs Programs**—Unemployed people are given work by the federal government building roads and bridges, planting trees and even painting murals and writing guide books.

**Migrant Worker**—A person, generally an agricultural laborer, who moves from place to place in search of work.

**My Day**—The series of daily newspaper columns written by Eleanor Roosevelt beginning in 1936 and continuing until just before her death 1962. These articles chronicled her many interests and activities.

**Okies**—Migrant workers from Oklahoma displaced by crop failures and dust storms.

**Propaganda**—Information designed to promote or refute a particular cause or idea.

**(Anna) Eleanor Roosevelt (1886-1962)** —Wife of Franklin D. Roosevelt, she served as First Lady of the United States from 1933 to 1945 and was known as a reformer and humanitarian intent on advancing social justice, human rights, freedom and liberty. She was called “The First Lady of the World” by President Harry Truman and served on the first United States delegation to the United Nations, where she helped draft the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882-1945)** —As the Thirty-second President of the United States, Roosevelt was elected four times and led the country through the two major crises of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Great Depression and World War II. Roosevelt believed that the government should take an active role in ensuring the economic well-being of the average citizen and brought relief, recovery and reform through his many New Deal programs. During World War II Roosevelt along with the leaders of England and the Soviet Union, crushed Hitler and the Axis powers.

**Rural**—Having to do with farming, a way of life outside the city.

**Urban**—Having to do with life in an industrialized, city environment.

**Sharecroppers**— Farmers who work land owned by someone else in return for a portion (share) of the crops grown. This practice gained popularity in the South following the Civil War and was common during the Great Depression.

**Socialistic**—A system of government or community control of land, capital, and industry.

**Tenant Farmer**—A person who rents land from a landowner for the purposes of growing crops or raising livestock.

**Tenement**—A low rent apartment building that generally includes very few amenities and is usually characterized by overcrowded conditions.

## **Government Agencies, Organizations and/or Programs**

**Farm Security Administration (FSA)** — Tasked with improving conditions for the rural poor. This goal was advanced by photographing the severe conditions faced by American farmers during the Great Depression, and the government's efforts to bring relief.

**Federal Arts Project (FAP)** — The FAP was a part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) which provided work for unemployed artists, actors, musicians and writers.

**Library of Congress**—This is the oldest federal cultural institution in America and the largest library in the world. It serves as the research arm of the Congress and has countless collections housed on more than 530 miles of bookshelves. The FSA photos are kept in the Library of Congress.

**New Deal**—The term given to the collection of more than forty federal government programs created by Franklin D. Roosevelt to help America out of the Great Depression and through World War II. Examples include the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA), Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), Social Security, and the Farm Security Administration (FSA).

**Office of War Information (OWI)** — This agency was set up to educate people on the major issues of World War II and the importance of American involvement in postwar issues.

**Resettlement Administration (RA)** — This agency was formed to improve land-use practices and help those affected by land misuse such as exploitative farming, lumbering, mining, and oil drilling. It also constructed camps for migrant workers and resettled farmers to more productive land.

## **Geographic Regions**

**Northeast**—A region of the United States generally considered to include New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine.

**South**—A region of the United States generally considered to include Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas.

**Midwest**—A region of the United States generally considered to include Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota.

**Great Plains**—A region of the United States generally considered to include North

Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma.

**Southwest**—A region of the United States generally considered to include Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Nevada.

**Rockies**—A region of the United States generally considered to include Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah.

**Pacific (Northwest)**—A region of the United States generally considered to include Oregon, Washington.

**California**—The western most state in the continental United States. It comprises nearly two-thirds of the west coast.

# LIFE



## DUST BOWL FARMER IS NEW PIONEER

This man is one of the great army of farmers driven from their land by the dust blight. A Resettlement Administration photographer met him in a battered car on the Oklahoma-California highway, took his picture but not his name. He has joined the pioneers who are seeking new lives on the Pacific Coast, as their fathers trekked

went to Oklahoma before them. His courageous philosophy was expressed to the photographer thus: "A man can't make out no ways by standin' and watchin' his crop burn up. I heard about this here migration [in California]. I figured that in a place where some people can make a good farm I can make one a little."



A WOMAN PACKING HOUSE WORKER, near Belle Glade, Fla., tries to bathe her child.



MOST MIGRANT VEGETABLE PICKERS live in shacks like this, without water or light.



CHILDREN OF THE MIGRANT WORKERS are often left alone all day—rarely go to school.



AN AGRICULTURAL WORKER eats his dinner in an old toolhouse near Homestead, Fla.



MIGRANT WORKERS really want to be clean—living conditions make it almost impossible.

## 'GRAPES OF WRATH' GROW IN GEORGIA, TOO

LOOK out, Georgia! Here they come, 50,000 strong—the migratory farm workers. What are you going to do about them?

They're in Florida now, picking beans, and they'll stay there through the strawberry, celery, fruit and cabbage seasons. But along about February they'll be moving north again. And when you move north from Florida, you move right into Georgia.

Some of the workers will find jobs here—temporary ones, picking tomatoes and digging potatoes or maybe working in the cotton fields. Such jobs don't pay much, but a man can make a living at it if his wife and kids join him in the fields. And if there "ain't" much work in Georgia, maybe he'll send the kids to school and rest up for a spell. Maybe he'll live on his savings, if he has any, for a while. He and the wife and kids won't have three square meals every day, but corn meal is cheap and filling. They can always live in shanties or barns, or maybe just out under a lean-to if they haven't got the price of a regular shelter.

Along about April some of these workers will move on to South Carolina, where there's jobs to be had picking fruit. They'll get along somehow until early May, when the "season" gets going in North Carolina. There are strawberries, peaches, beans and cantaloupes to be picked.

And so these workers move on, out of North Carolina into Virginia for the apple season, up into Maryland, New Jersey, and even as far north as Maine. By the end of summer they have worked their way straight up the east coast. They're ready to go back to Florida and start all over again.

Where do these migratory workers come from? Don't they have permanent homes somewhere? The Farm Security Administration has just completed a study of these workers and their living conditions. Between 40 and 50 per cent of these migratory families once owned or rented farms in Georgia. The remainder come from North and South Carolina, Alabama and Florida. When times got hard and they couldn't make a living on the farms they moved on, helping with harvests whenever they went, picking up a dollar here, a dollar there, but never making enough money to buy a little piece of land and settle down anywhere.

When they descended on Florida late last summer, they created quite a problem. There weren't homes enough to go around, and even if there had been, who could have paid rent for a nice house? The migrant families settled down near Belle Glade where there were jobs to be had picking vegetables. A few lucky families got homes in the Florida Migratory Labor Camps, built by the FSA to solve the migratory housing problem, but they don't solve the problem. There are only two such camps in Florida (none in Georgia) and they cannot possibly accommodate the thousands of workers. Three other camps are under construction in the Florida lake region, but even these will not help much.

What's to be done about the workers? They want to be clean, they want to eat three meals a day and settle down on their own farms. They want to send their children to school. But can they? That's what the FSA is trying to find out now, with the co-operation of the various state departments of labor. The pictures on the left give you an idea of Florida workers' living conditions outside the labor camps. Georgia will be faced with Florida's problems in about a month when the workers come north.

Pictures on the right were taken at the Osceola Migratory Labor Camp, Belle Glade, Fla., where the families have decent, sanitary quarters and medical care. Unfortunately, there are more workers than there are camps to accommodate them.

—Photos by F. S. A.



THERE ARE MADONNAS, even among the laborers.



WASH DAY is a problem when water costs a cent a bucket.



THERE ARE complete laundry facilities in the FSA camps.

The Atlanta Journal, January 5, 1941



THERE ARE SHOWERS for everyone and water aplenty at the Osceola Migratory Labor Camp.



COMPARE THESE NEAT, clean houses at the FSA camp with the shack across the page.



CHILDREN AT THE GOVERNMENT CAMP play games in clean buildings; are taught to read.



WORKERS AT THE FSA CAMPS are taught to can food, to keep their homes tidy.



WATER IS EASILY AVAILABLE at the head of each shelter unit at the government camps.

# 'Oakies' at Our Door

Misery and Squalor of Migratory Workers Along Eastern Seaboard Matches 'Grapes of Wrath,' Says FSA Report





## Teaching Activities and Assignments

The following activities have been developed for teachers to use in the classroom or as homework assignments. They are grouped under the following topics: history; civics, citizenship, and government; writing; geography; fine arts; and hands-on-learning. Each assignment has been designed in a way that allows students to utilize a variety of skills including: reading for understanding; interpreting audiovisual materials; analyzing photographs, letters, reports, correspondence, and speeches; writing with clarity; roleplaying; and researching historic evidence. Each of the activities can be adapted to suit your students' needs and your own teaching style.

The educational impact of these activities will be greatly enhanced by a class visit to the National Archives Southeast Region. There is no fee for this field trip. We encourage you to contact our public programs department at 770-968-2100.

### History

- 1) **Photographs used as historical evidence:** Use the photographs provided as the basis for a discussion on the use of photography as historical evidence. When doing so have your students consider the following questions:
  - a. What is happening in the photograph?
  - b. What are the specific details that provide clues to what is happening?
  - c. Are there any details that suggest a date or a time of the event?
  - d. Are there any details that suggest the event is happening in a particular place?
  - e. What is your general impression of the photograph?
  - f. What general conclusions can be drawn from the photograph?
  - g. What do you think prompted the photographer to take this particular picture?
  - h. What might an appropriate caption be for this photograph?
  - i. What biases or assumptions surround the photograph?
  
- 2) **The importance of keeping and maintaining historic records:** Describe the importance of keeping and maintaining historic records. Remind students that historical evidence can come in the form of photographic images, written and printed documents, three dimensional objects and artifacts, sound recordings, and oral histories. Have students read letters and diaries, examine period objects and artifacts from the Great Depression, and discuss how they contribute to our understanding of the era.

## Fine Arts

- 3) **Photographs used for observation:** Use the photographs provided to engage students in photographic observation. Encourage them to discover and observe such elements as: composition, balance, rhythm, focal point, perspective, cropping, lighting, modes of transportation, style and condition of clothing, architectural styles and features, geographic and topographic features, fixtures and furnishings, and technology. Ask students to consider the possible points of view and motivations of the photographer. Ask students to compare each of these elements to conditions today.
- 4) **Art imitates life.** Have students read John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, or arrange for them to view the classic film version of the book. How do the images conjured up in their minds, or presented on the screen, compare to those taken by the photographers of the FSA? What are the sub-themes that run throughout the book, film, and FSA images?

## Civics, Citizenship, and Government

- 5) **Documenting government efforts:** Explain that the photography project was begun by the Farm Security Administration to document rural poverty and the government efforts to alleviate it. Lead a discussion of the use and effectiveness of images in conveying a story and influencing public perception. Share and discuss how more modern examples, such as President Bush flying on to an aircraft carrier anchored just off the coast of California or the 1988 image of Michael Dukakis driving around in a tank have influenced public opinion.
- 6) **Photographs then and now:** Ask students to select one of the photographs provided in this packet and find a contemporary photograph from a current newspaper or magazine that shows a similar situation or a totally contrary situation. Then have them explain the similarities or differences. Ask them to research if there is a government agency or program designed to address the situation and have them assess the success or failure of the program.
- 7) **A President speaks to the nation:** Have students listen to a copy of President Roosevelt's March 4, 1933 Inaugural Address in which he proclaims, "This great nation will endure." Ask the students to juxtapose the upbeat, confident and, enthusiastic tones and phrases of the President's speech with the conditions facing the subjects featured in the FSA photographs.

## Writing and Journalism

- 8) **In their own words:** Ask students to select a photograph and complete one of the following writing assignments:
  - a. A diary entry that describes in detail a typical day in their life of one of the people shown.
  - b. A diary entry that describes in detail the hopes and fears of one of the people shown.
  - c. A letter to a friend written from the perspective of one of the people shown in the picture, which describes in detail his or her feelings about the FSA photography project.
- 9) **A picture is worth a thousand words:** Ask students to select the ten most moving or meaningful photos in the exhibit or the packet provided. Have them write a brief statement about each photograph that explains why they think it important and meaningful. Ask them to write a caption that captures the essence of the image as they see it.
- 10) **FSA cub reporter:** Assign students one of the photographs included in this packet. Have them imagine that they are newspaper or magazine writers, and ask them to write an article that would accompany the photograph if it were to appear in print. Remind them that they must completely and carefully answer the who, what, when, where, and how questions that are the basis of good journalism. Have them prepare a catchy headline for the article and an appropriate caption for the photograph.

## Geography

- 11) **From sea to shining sea:** Copy the map provided in this packet and ask students to outline the following geographic areas: the Northeast, the South, the South West, the Great Plains, Midwest and California. Have them identify where the “Oakies” and “Arkies” originated and where they were going. Ask them to circle the area considered to be the Dust Bowl.

## Hands-on Learning

- 12) **Jr. FSA agent:** Provide your students with inexpensive disposable cameras and a ‘shoot script’ similar to the one provided to the Farm Security Administration photographers. Allow them time to photograph people and places in their communities and then collect the pictures and organize them into a photo exhibit that mirrors the *‘This Great Nation Will Endure’* exhibit at National Archives.

- 13) **Living history:** Have students review the brief biographies of the FSA photographers and select one that they will role-play in a presentation before the rest of the class. Ask each student to select one representative photograph from among those taken by his or her preferred photographer to present and interpret for the class. Encourage the other students to study the photographs and to ask questions that probe the photographer's background and possible biases.
- 14) **Can we talk?** Provide students with the following copy of Carl Mydan's 1964 quote:

*"[I] don't think that the quality of the Farm Security Administration's pictures was notably great. I think what they portrayed was notably great. . . They were great pictures then and they are now, many of them because they told the universal story of people . . . of all qualities that we find in ourselves and in each other."*

Then have the students prepare a list of interview questions they can use to prepare their own 'oral histories' of individuals in their community who experienced the Great Depression firsthand.

# Photograph Analysis Worksheet

(Created by the National Archives and Records Administration Education Staff)

## Step 1. Observation

Study the photograph for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photograph and then examine individual items. Observe the people, objects, and activities that take place in this photograph.

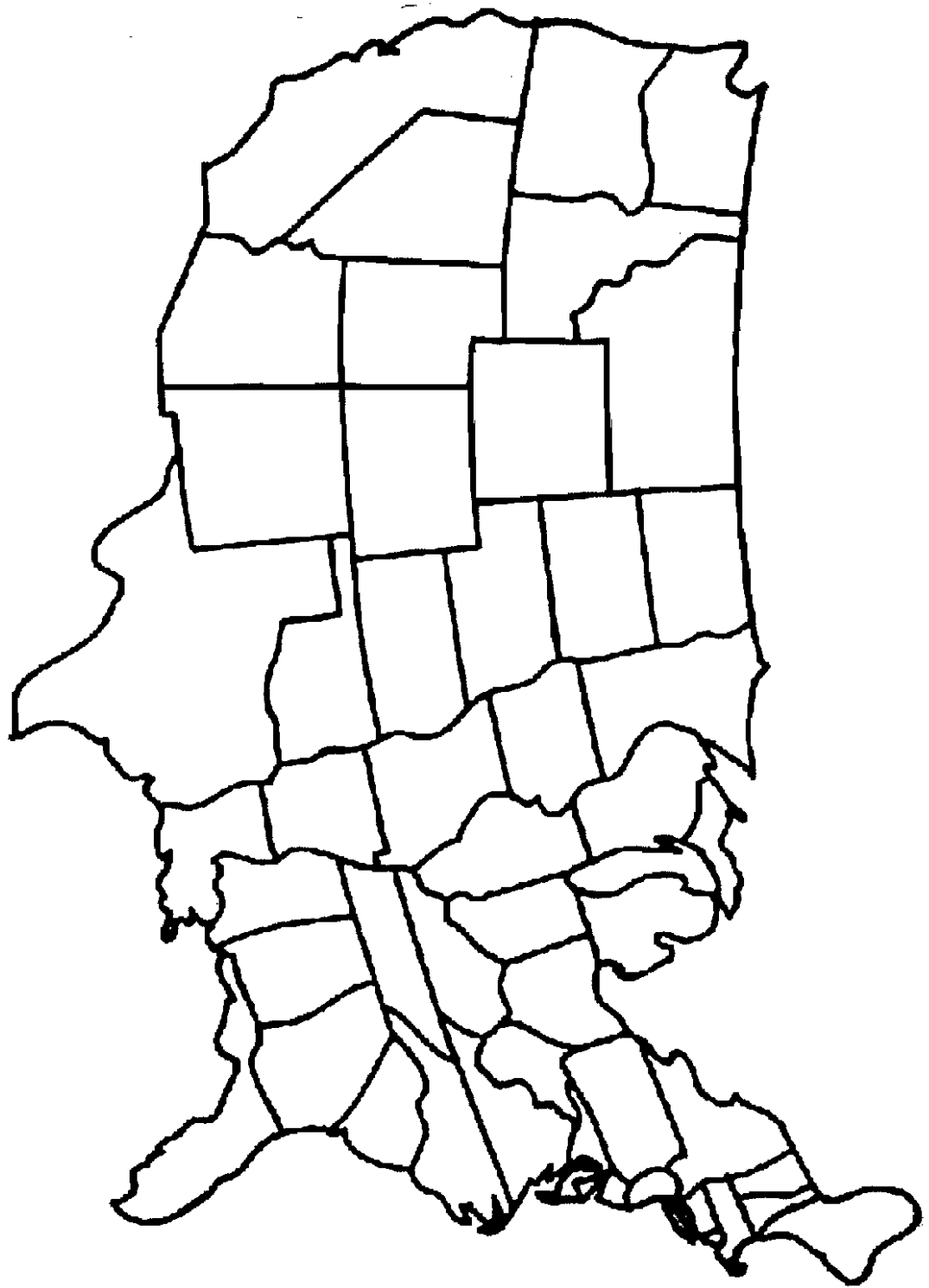
## Step 2. Inference

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Step 3. Questions

- A. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?
  
- B. Where could you find answers to them?



## Written Document Analysis Worksheet

1.	<p>TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one):</p> <table><tr><td><input type="radio"/> Newspaper</td><td><input type="radio"/> Map</td><td><input type="radio"/> Advertisement</td></tr><tr><td><input type="radio"/> Letter</td><td><input type="radio"/> Telegram</td><td><input type="radio"/> Congressional Record</td></tr><tr><td><input type="radio"/> Patent</td><td><input type="radio"/> Press Release</td><td><input type="radio"/> Census Report</td></tr><tr><td><input type="radio"/> Memorandum</td><td><input type="radio"/> Report</td><td><input type="radio"/> Other</td></tr></table>	<input type="radio"/> Newspaper	<input type="radio"/> Map	<input type="radio"/> Advertisement	<input type="radio"/> Letter	<input type="radio"/> Telegram	<input type="radio"/> Congressional Record	<input type="radio"/> Patent	<input type="radio"/> Press Release	<input type="radio"/> Census Report	<input type="radio"/> Memorandum	<input type="radio"/> Report	<input type="radio"/> Other
<input type="radio"/> Newspaper	<input type="radio"/> Map	<input type="radio"/> Advertisement											
<input type="radio"/> Letter	<input type="radio"/> Telegram	<input type="radio"/> Congressional Record											
<input type="radio"/> Patent	<input type="radio"/> Press Release	<input type="radio"/> Census Report											
<input type="radio"/> Memorandum	<input type="radio"/> Report	<input type="radio"/> Other											
2.	<p>UNIQUE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DOCUMENT (Check one or more):</p> <table><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Interesting Letterhead</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Notations</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Typed</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Other</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Seals</td><td></td></tr></table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Interesting Letterhead	<input type="checkbox"/> Notations	<input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten	<input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp	<input type="checkbox"/> Typed	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Seals					
<input type="checkbox"/> Interesting Letterhead	<input type="checkbox"/> Notations												
<input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten	<input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp												
<input type="checkbox"/> Typed	<input type="checkbox"/> Other												
<input type="checkbox"/> Seals													
3.	<p>DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT:</p>												
4.	<p>AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT:</p> <p>POSITION (TITLE):</p>												
5.	<p>FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN?</p>												
6.	<p>DOCUMENT INFORMATION (There are many possible ways to answer A-E.)</p> <p>A. List three things the author said that you think are important:</p> <p>B. Why do you think this document was written?</p> <p>C. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Quote from the document.</p> <p>D. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written.</p> <p>E. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document:</p>												







Transcripts from “Stories from the Great Depression”

Opening Text: **The Great depression affected many people from coast to coast: the young and the old, the rich and the poor.**

**These are the stories of those who endured, those who survived, and those who remembered...**

Opening Music

(Title Screen) The National Archives Southeast Region presents  
“Stories from the Great Depression”

FDR quote, “This great nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.”

**Narrator: Henry Smith** As Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke these simple and inspiring words in 1933, Americans from coast to coast, weary from years of economic hardship, were willing to take the freshly minted President at his word. He offered them hope, which was all that many people had left. The economic hardships brought on by the Great Depression had reached a pinnacle by the spring of 1933. On March 4 an unprecedented event had occurred: each and every bank had closed its doors. For some this measure was only temporary, but for a large number the economic crisis was a permanent reality. The banking system was near collapse, a quarter of the labor force was unemployed, and prices and production were down by a third from their 1929 levels.

During his first inaugural speech, President Roosevelt looked over the tense crowd in front of the capital, anxiously gathered before him and with unquestionable conviction stated, “This nation asks for action, and action now.”

**Bob Arnold:** My father was a cotton mill worker, and so we moved a lot (laughter). By the time I was 21 years old I had moved 21 times. But uh, we didn’t have a big house back then and uh, you didn’t have carpet or anything like that, you had uh, linoleum floors, uh wooden floors with linoleum rugs down on top them to keep the air out. Because, uh, some of the places we lived in you could see the ground through the floor...

**Ed Trippe:** We ran a country grocery store; we ran a grits mill, and a cotton gin. In the south cotton was the king and you couldn’t get anything for the cotton. And then the government came along and had us take and uh, cut out cotton production.

**Jack Gray:** Back in the depression, uh, we saw a lot of people come from the southeast Kentucky and eastern Tennessee because they wanted to get better jobs. There was nothing going in the coal mines, so we had a lot of people come in and uh, that we’re in

bad shape and they also went across the river to Cincinnati. There were almost, uh, little enclaves of them, the people, hoping they'd get some day of to Detroit.

**Peggy Sides:** People found ways to get money, to do a job, to get employment, to keep the family going

**Text: The New Deal**

**Narrator: Henry Smith** In the first one hundred days of the new administration, fifteen measures flowed from the White House to Congress. Fifteen new laws assured absolute government action: to employ the jobless, to improve the Tennessee Valley, to support crop prices, to prevent home foreclosures, to insure bank deposits, and to stabilize the economy. Franklin D. Roosevelt called these programs a "New Deal" for the nation.

**Mary Evelyn Tomlin:** My mother got a job with the W. P. A., one of the New Deal agencies. She worked in the public library and I think she really enjoyed that job; she talked about it a lot and it was the only job that she ever had in her entire life. Later on after she married she did not work outside the home, and uh, but she talked a lot when she would take us to the library as small children she would tell us about her experiences working for the WPA and the public library.

**Fred Munguia:** During the Depression, many people from Oklahoma and other states affected by the Dust Bowl moved to San O'Quinn valley looking for work. Some families were lucky and were able to get jobs in Tehachapi, working in the cement plants and the women's state prison. My parents bought a house on the edge of town, and we had no gas or sewer line. I can still remember when the gas line was laid through the alley, the workers wrapping a material that looked like Saran Wrap around the pipes. The house next door was rented mostly by family from Oklahoma. One family built a small square shack behind the house using rolls of roofing material to cover the outside walls and migrant families would live in the shack for a while before moving somewhere else looking for work.

Our house was close to the railroad tracks and I remember men knocking on our back door, asking for water and something to eat. My mom would make them a bologna sandwich on white bread. Back then these men were not called homeless people but were called hobos or tramps that rode the trains.

**Bob Arnold:** A lot of people will remember what things cost but they don't remember what they made and that makes a whole lot of difference. You know, you could buy a coke for a nickel or a hamburger for a nickel, but the trouble was you didn't have a nickel to buy them with mostly and just things like that, so, you know your memory clouds things a little bit and uh, you tend to remember the good things.

**Peggy Sides:** My husband uh, when he was a small boy, he was brought up in Walker County, Alabama. It is the coal mining district, and uh, he was paid ten cents a shot to go into the coal mines and to light the fuse on the blasting powder and then run like blazes to get out before the thing exploded and (laughter) men wouldn't do it, grown men wouldn't

do it, because they couldn't move fast enough so they hired him, because he was small and wiry, and he would just "shhh" get out of there, before it blew up. Well when his father found out about it he whooped the tar out of him (laughter).

Text: **Relief, Recovery, Reform**

**Narrator: Henry Smith** The President's first priority was relief for the millions of Americans who suddenly found themselves without work, without food, without shelter and without hope. He concluded that help for the down-trodden must come from beyond the traditional private or local government sources. He believed that the federal government needed to take on a larger role in providing for the well-being of the American people. Of his many initiatives, the Works Progress Administration was the largest. It was created in the spring of 1935 and further extended the national relief effort. The primary goal of the WPA was to alleviate the high unemployment rate and provide assistance for the discouraged American work force.

**Brenda Wright:** One of the benefits from working with the WPA was that he was given fabric and my mother has told me several times of this story of where they got the fabric and it seems that the fabric was all one color and one design, so everybody knew if you had that fabric, that it was the WPA type part of their job, uh, part of their pay. My grandmother made dresses for all the girls, and my mother was real excited because that meant that she had two dresses and uh, in this day and time we don't think of that many, but uh, she was very excited about wearing her new dress to school, but when she got there the other girls who had a little bit more money, uh kind of laughed at her because she had on the WPA but I laughed at her, at her statement she said I didn't care I had another dress and that was the most important thing.

**Suzanne Munguia:** My uh, grandmother was a seamstress, she worked all of her life, all of her married life, and uh, she would send this aunt out to collect remnants from the clothing factories and uh, so clothes was not a problem, it was not an issue because my grandmother could make something out of nothing always. She said however shoes, they didn't have shoes because grandma couldn't make shoes (laughter). One of my aunts who was 85 shared so many stories with me she said that she didn't feel that the depression had made that much of an impact on them because they were a family of nine children so life was just always a struggle and uh, she didn't really notice that much because everyone in the neighborhood and all the other family members were working just as hard and struggling just as hard.

**Brenda Wright:** One of the stories that my mother tells is that the Rolling Truck would come to their farm once a week, and if they had worked hard for their family that week they got one egg, each child. There was twelve children and they got one egg, and when the truck came they could trade that egg for a piece of candy. And my mother tells to this day, how good that candy tasted because that was the only candy they got for another whole week.

**Jack Gray:** When we were little, we had to go out near the dump and play ball, you know, use rocks and stones for bases.

**Mary Evelyn Tomin:** My brother and I, one of the things that we'd love to do all the time in the summertime was to go and pick blackberries, blackberries are plentiful if their free; they grow wild in the woods and we would always come home and I would help her make a pie, blackberry pie and we loved it and she would tell me that we were using her mother's recipe and blackberry pie is very simple dish to make, it doesn't cost very much if the blackberries are free, uh it's just a little sugar and then a little crust made with flour and lard and a she would tell me that there were times during the depression when blackberry pie was all that they had to eat.

**Text:** "...for economic and political progress as a nation, we all go up, or else we all go down, as one people."

**Jim McSweeney:** "We were raised in the sunset district of San Francisco, my dad had an office job and like so many people in the prosperous nineteen-twenties he was doing well then the great depression hit. My dad lost his job in 1930, his savings were depleted. We were forced to accept charity. The term welfare was not in vogue at the time. The procedure was once a week the associated charities of San Francisco would deliver boxes of food to needy families. We would watch as the boxes were brought to the men. At first one or two families were getting aid, but as the depression deepened, most of the families were receiving assistance. It was sad to see men selling apples on the street corners, their clothes were old and shabby and usually consisted of a pair of old pants with a suit coat, trying to stay warm on a typical foggy day. We lost our house, a cottage at 1933 Eighth Avenue, which still stands and is presently occupied." Edward McSweeney June, 1994."

**Stanley Blackburn:** My grandfather used to talk a whole lot about the depression and he often stated that uh, during the depression that money was real tight and I remember a story he telling me about his oldest son he said, uh, if you do it right living on the farm you could always eat and he said he didn't have to stand in the soup line or anything like that because he was able to raise his own food and also uh, he had plenty of cows and chickens and hogs for food so he wasn't hungry but some of the other things like clothing, his family didn't have many clothes or anything like that they didn't have much money to buy and he stated that his son was barefooted and he wanted him to go to school and he didn't have shoes. And he found a nickel and with that nickel he went and bought his son a pair of shoes. My grandmother, she stated that she was mad at President Hoover at the time and she felt at that particular time that the work she had to do was not much better than the work that her grandparents had to do and you know, they were slaves and she stated that wasn't much better than slave labor.

**Guy Hall:** My maternal grandmother was born in Maine in 1920. In the summer of 1929, when she was nine years old her parents decided to move to Michigan because some other family members had found work there. They had a substantial amount of money in

the bank when the stock market crashed in October of 1929; the banks closed and they had no access to their funds. Over time they both lost their jobs. They struggled for a couple of years in Michigan, in fact, they lived near a state prison and my great uncle told me that he remembered people talking about breaking into the prison because the prisoners were able to get a lot of fresh foods from the gardens that they grew. After struggling for a couple of years in Michigan, my great grandparents received a letter from a relative in Maine who said that he could provide a job for my great grandfather in the logging industry. The relative who offered this job wrote to the state officials on behalf of my great grandfather. And the state agreed to provide him \$25 and a model T. Ford to travel back to Maine with. It was a journey of mishaps, the model T. Ford that they were given had no fuel pump like modern cars, and the gas was gravity fed into the engine so that the car had to go up steep hills in reverse. In fact, the car was so slow at times that the family would just get out and walk beside it. But they eventually made it back to the Maine woods where my great grandfather worked as a logger for a while near the town of Andover. I know that during that time loggers who worked hard could make about a dollar a day cutting cordwood. They used bucksaws and axes and hauled the trees out of the woods using horses and if they were lucky, they could cut 4 to 6 cord of wood the day.

**Narrator: Henry Smith** The 1930s was a decade of tremendous technological advancement and by 1939 over 80% of Americans had a radio set. Although primarily used for entertainment, radio broadcast quickly became a tool to inform the public of the increasing crisis in Europe. Roosevelt steered a steady course and kept the American audience informed about his plans and progress through a series of radio addresses which came to be called “fireside chats.” These broadcasts were centered on specific topics and issues and were delivered in a warm and simple language that made people feel they were partners in the efforts the President was putting forth. When Franklin Roosevelt, poised and self-assured, addressed his audience as “my friends” most Americans believed they were exactly that.

**Mary Evelyn Tomlin:** My grandfather had a store, a little country store, and he sold food but also some other types of items too and he was very successful with his business until the depression came along. And he had extended credit to a lot of people and of course people were out of work and they were not able to pay, if they didn't pay him, he then could not afford to operate the store so he lost his business. The family's struggled for a long time after that because, uh, there were no jobs, and it took a long time for him to find work, particularly in that part of the country.

**Suzanne Munguia:** My grandfather was a grocer, always had been a grocer, and that I noticed in the city directories that they were always moving and she said that was because he was always looking for a better location, a better neighborhood where business would be better and they might be able to improve their finances. But uh, he eventually went out of business after 25 years of being a grocer. His ruin had been his compassion for the poor people; he gave credit and they couldn't pay him back.

**Brenda Wright:** They didn't know that they were poor as such, because they had food, they had a place to live, she knew she didn't have a lot of things but she did know that she had the basics things that she needed, and a big family and they all take care of each other.

**Jim McSweeney:** My mom was born in 1918; my dad was born in 1920. Both have passed way in the last eighteen months or so. What I remember most about them, they were great parents, great providers, and they were great teachers to all the McSweeney children. As a kid growing up, I remember them speaking not about the hard times during the 1930s, they spoke rather about Roosevelt's hope and the optimism and they would tell us stories over and over again about old time radio, Jack Armstrong, the All-American boy, Jack Benny, Amos and Andy. They would talk about all the famous sports teams, the Gas House Gang, and baseball, the New York Yankees. They told us about how they would go to the cinema for 5¢ and see the Marx brothers, a young Betty Davis, Walt Disney films etc. Just a tremendous period to be a young child growing up and I guess as testimony to their own parents they kept that side of the Great Depression, in terms of the negative image, away from us.

**Bob Arnold:** We were aware to a degree, but most of our friends were in the same boat we were. So, we, we didn't know much about the discrepancy. We would see the big houses, uh, people had big homes and things like that but we never came in contact with them much or talked to them much. So we just knew they had a lot more than we had, but uh, there was no hope out there. We never really,uh, desired to be rich because we knew it was hopeless.

Text: **"We face the future with confidence and with courage. We are Americans.**

**Susanne Pike:** When I met President Roosevelt in 1935, I don't remember too much about the dinner but I was uh, saw him standing at the door, uh he was shaking hands with all the patients that was coming to dinner that day and he asked me my name. He said, "Little girl, what is your name?" and I said, "Suzanne." "I love the name Suzanne but I would like to call you Susie, is that alright?" And I said, "Uh-Huh", and guess what we called him "Rosie." And the other children called him "Doc Roosevelt."

Text: **April 12, 1945**

**(News Reel)**We have a late bulletin, here is a flash, President Roosevelt passed away this afternoon...he died in Warm Springs, Georgia...this afternoon at his little white pine cottage a top of Pine Mountain...the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt in his sixty-third year in his home in Warm Springs, Georgia...at the home which was affectionately called the Little White House. They said that beyond a doubt it was cerebral hemorrhage. The grieved allied world is pouring out its sympathy. The president's death came without warning...at 4:35 p.m. eastern war time the president died without pain...at 5:45 p.m.

eastern war time in Washington, former press secretary Steve Hurley announced the earth shaking news...

**Suzanne Pike:** He was sick when he got back from Yalta; he thought well, if I can get down to Warm Springs, I can get my strength back. And uh, he looked bad, he was 63 years old and um, but he had been, he looked like he was tired, and um, but he would always smile when you would see him.

**Narrator: Henry Smith** When the news came on April 12, 1945 that President Roosevelt had died, all Americans felt the severity of this loss. Millions mourned over the death of a man that most had never met. President Roosevelt died, confidently believing that victory was assured, but never able to fully realize the success of all that he had accomplished.

**Henry Smith:** In the Federal programs there seem to be no discrimination, so that a black person could get a job with the WPA just as soon as a white person. They loved FDR and uh, they loved the Federal programs because as black families they felt that they were uh, really benefiting this program's.

**Jack Gray:** My mother you know, who was uh, she came over here in 1914 but she thought Roosevelt was the greatest thing walking. So, uh, yeah, she took it badly, and a lot of the neighbors did, it was a labor town ...

**Bob Arnold:** He was a savior back then, (laughter) because as things were so bad...

**Mary Evelyn Tomlin:** It was a very difficult time and it had uh, uh, it just left so many memories with people and I think sometimes they are reluctant to talk about those.

Text: **The FSA Project**

**Narrator: Henry Smith** During the 1930s and early 1940s, the Farm Security Administration, a federal agency created to ease the plight of the farmer, employed a remarkable group of photographers— Dorothea Lange, Gordon Parks, and many others—to document the lives and struggles of Americans enduring the Great Depression. Their work includes some of the most powerful images of the nation to emerge from those difficult years. Many of these photographs have reached iconic status in American culture.

For those born after the 1930's, the Great Depression is something that can only be visualized through photography and personal oral histories. These photographs, on exhibit at the National Archives Southeast Region, inspire family historians to examine their past and reflect on their family's life during one of the most difficult times in American history. Through the public programs of the National Archives Southeast Region these histories will be remembered and preserved for future generations.



Through our holdings, students, educators, family historians, and the general public have the opportunity to “rub elbows” with presidents, war heroes, civil rights leaders, and the greatest scientific minds that the world has ever known. Just as importantly, our records give voice to immigrants fleeing war –ravaged homelands, small town merchants in the Depression-era, parents opposing segregated schools and communities, and military heroes from our own families.

The National Archives in Atlanta, GA is home to thousands of original records documenting the settlement and development of the southeast. These documents tell intriguing stories of the people who once inhabited this land and the history of this unique area. We invite you to visit us in Georgia and discover “your” history. Visit us at [www.archives.gov/southeast](http://www.archives.gov/southeast).

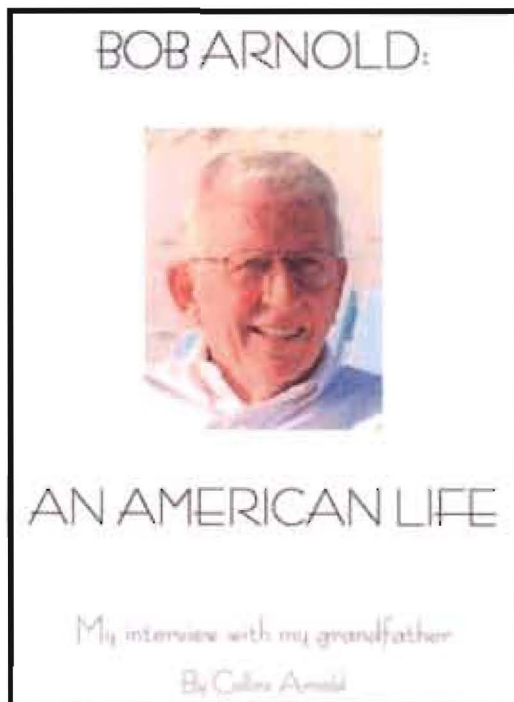
## **Exhibits and Educational Programming at the National Archives Southeast Region**

The Southeast Region of the National Archives is a center for the study of the history of the South, a diverse region rich with family tradition. Native Americans were living on the land when the first settlers arrived. African slaves were then brought over, and later came Irish, English, Italian, Russian, and Cuban immigrants. Their stories, told in the seemingly incongruous records of the federal government, provide evidence of the universal human drama that is American family life. Records in the National Archives tell the story of southern families and communities, technological advances that changed lives, and social and economic forces that shaped the makeup of our society.

In addition, the Southeast Region works continuously to further our long and distinguished work in public outreach and education programs. We engage Americans in the study of their own history through records that document that history, that tell the stories of the American people. We safe-guard the records of our Government, ensuring that all people can discover, use, and learn from this documentary heritage.

From March 10 through May 20, 2007, the Southeast Region held its first oral history and essay contest in conjunction with *The Way We Worked*, an exhibit created by the National Archives with the support of the Foundation for the National Archives and organized for travel by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibit Service. Local sponsors included the Georgia Humanities Council and Barnes & Noble Booksellers. *The Way We Worked* includes 86 black-and-white and color photographs from the National Archives holdings spanning the years 1857-1987. It explores five themes: WHERE we worked, what we WORE to work, HOW we worked, CONFLICT at work, and DANGEROUS or UNHEALTHY work.

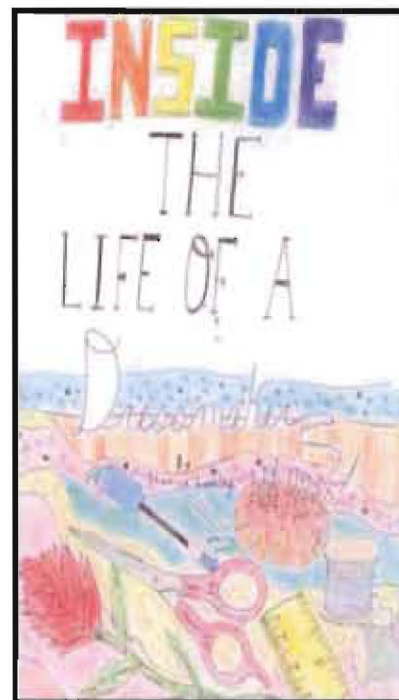
The Southeast Region's contest for elementary, middle, and high school students consisted of two parts: an oral history interview and an essay based on the interview. Subjects of the essays were individuals who were in the workforce prior to 1975 and who witnessed changes in how Americans work.



**Bob Arnold: An American Life**

By Collins Arnold

**First Place Winner - Elementary School**



**Inside the Life of a Dressmaker**

By Shanice Lumley

**First Place Winner - Middle School**

To assure broad participation, the Southeast Region secured the support of a group of social studies coordinators who disseminated the information to local schools. A total of 112 students conducted an interview and submitted an essay. Winners were recognized at a special ceremony at the regional office. Over \$1,000 was awarded in prizes, and all students received a certificate of participation. All winning essays are posted at [www.archives.gov/southeast/education/essay-contest](http://www.archives.gov/southeast/education/essay-contest).

From July-November of 2007, the Southeast Region held another statewide challenge, encouraging students to explore both their artistic and written talents in a photography/essay contest. Students were asked to capture images similar to those taken by FSA photographers during the Great Depression and to write a brief essay explaining the photograph's historical significance. This contest was based on the Southeast Region's latest exhibit, *"This Great Nation Will Endure" Photographs of the Great Depression*.



Over 75 students participated from across the state. Winners were honored at a formal ceremony at the regional office. Once again, over \$1,000 was awarded in prizes, and all students received a certificate of participation that was presented by special guest "Eleanor Roosevelt" from Warm Springs, Georgia. The winning photographs are now on display at the Southeast Region and are also available for viewing at [www.archives.gov/southeast/education/photo-contest](http://www.archives.gov/southeast/education/photo-contest).