

# The Great Depression

*The Great Depression and  
World War II (1929–1945)*



Financial collapse

Political failures

**The human cost**

## Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

**Icons:** For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will know about the following human effects of the Great Depression:

- Effects on families
- Extra hardships for minorities
- The Dust Bowl
- Popular entertainment
- Psychological and social changes.



# Poverty in the Depression



As people lost their jobs and homes, they built shacks out of scrap materials. Hoovervilles sprang up in cities across the nation.



Because the government did not provide welfare, people relied on private charity from soup kitchens and **bread lines**. Many were forced to dig through trash piles in search of clothes and food.

Some cities offered **direct relief**. The most generous program was in New York City, which offered homeless families \$2.39 per week.



As unemployment rates and poverty soared, Americans of different ages and races felt the effects of the Depression in different ways.

Press **start** to learn more.

**start**





Farmers who had survived the falling prices of the 1920s soon had other problems to contend with. Overfarming had depleted soil in much of the Midwest. When a massive drought struck the region in 1931, the weakened topsoil turned to dust. Press the numbers to learn more.

Press **start** to begin.

start





# Migrant families

Many families who lost their farms to the banks or the dust took to the road, following rumors of employment.

Hundreds of thousands of people traveled to the fields of California. There they would work for only a few cents a day.



Because many of these migrants were from Oklahoma, people called them “Okies.” Many Californians resented the migrants, and “Okie” became a derogatory term.





For those who could afford it, movies provided a welcome escape from the hardships of the Depression. By the end of the 1930s, 65% of Americans went to the movies at least once a week.

Press **play** to learn more.

Press **start** to begin.

start







Literature can offer a great deal of insight into the culture and society of a specific time period. Press on the book to explore John Steinbeck's famous novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*, to see how it reflects the attitudes and issues of the Great Depression.

Press **start** to begin.

**start**

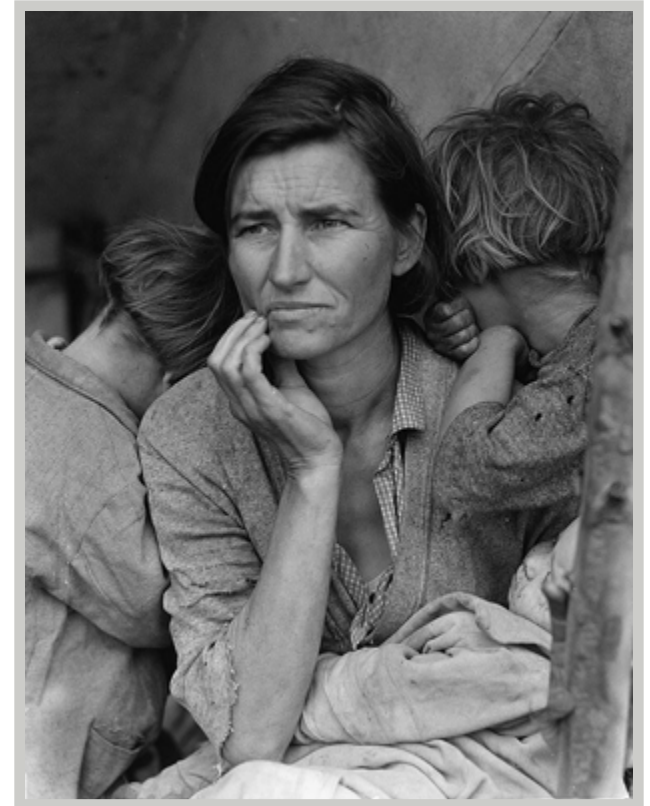




The Great Depression had a profound psychological effect on those who lived through it.

The Depression changed people's habits, values and goals. Americans' attitudes towards money, the economy and the government would never be the same.

Frugality and a sense of local unity shaped a generation of Americans.





Test your knowledge of the Great Depression with the following quiz. Choose the correct answer to see how much you can remember.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Test your understanding of the Great Depression by recapping key terms and important people using this glossary. Press on the tabs and then each term to see a definition.

Press **start** to begin.

**start**

