

# Recovery, Depression and Crisis

*A Half-Century of Crisis and  
Achievement (1900–1945)*



Recovery and change

The Roaring Twenties

**The Great Depression**

The rise of dictatorships

## Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Religion and thought



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 have learned about the Great Depression, and be able to answer the following key questions:

- What were the causes of the Great Depression?
- How did the U.S. government deal with the depression?
- How did these economic problems affect other countries?





# From the Crash to the Depression



In 1929, the unstable economy in the U.S. collapsed. Watch this animation to learn more about the effects of the stock market crash of 1929 and the beginning of the **Great Depression**.

Press **start** to begin.

**start**







# The effects of the Depression



As the economic crisis worsened, many people became destitute as they lost their jobs and their homes.



In urban areas, the homeless grouped together in shantytowns known as “**Hoovervilles**”, named after the president at the time, **Herbert Hoover**.

Many people felt hostile towards the banks, who they blamed for the economic hardships. Hollywood tapped into the public’s distrust, and often portrayed bankers in a negative light, for example in the classic western *Stagecoach*.





During the early years of the Great Depression, several criminal gangs became famous for robbing banks. One of the most famous was “The Barrow Gang”, led by Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow.

Bonnie and Clyde polarized public opinion. While regarded by the police as ‘public enemies’, popular culture portrayed these bank robbers as modern-day Robin Hoods.

In 1934, Bonnie and Clyde were killed by law enforcement agents.

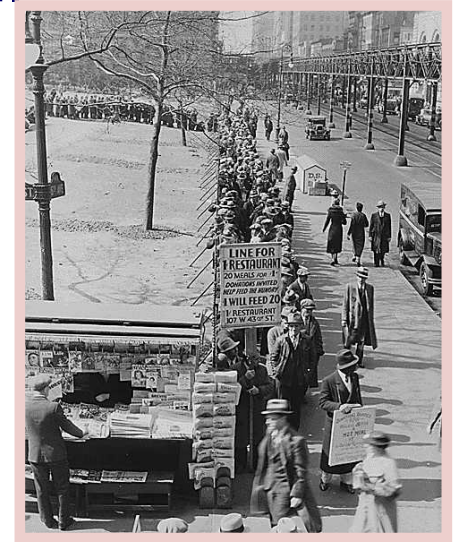


Why do you think some people sympathized with criminals like Bonnie and Clyde in the 1930s?



Before the Great Depression, the U.S. had no public safety net or social security. If someone fell on hard times, they had to rely on their own savings or on charity. President Hoover supported this concept of “rugged individualism.”

However, in the 1930s, charities were overwhelmed and unable to provide for the large number people in need. Many felt that President Hoover had failed to do enough to help those affected by the depression.



In the 1932 presidential election, **Franklin D. Roosevelt** was elected to office. He subsequently enacted a series of plans to help the economy, known as the **New Deal**.





Roosevelt's New Deal included direct payments to states to help the needy and the creation of many jobs to improve the nation's infrastructure. Press on the buttons to find out about some of the most important programs.

Press **start** to begin.

**start**







As well as organizing public work schemes to develop the country's infrastructure, the WPA also ran a Federal Art Project.

The program ran community arts centers, organized educational classes and held regular exhibitions. Many unemployed artists were given work creating posters and paintings that were then loaned to schools and hospitals.



Some of the people employed by the scheme went on to become acclaimed artists, such as Jackson Pollock.

How did the Federal Art Project help people in the U.S. during the Great Depression?





# The Great Depression abroad



The U.S. was not the only country affected by the Great Depression. Press on the tabs to find out about some other countries in the 1930s.

Press **start** to begin.

**start**



Why do you think France remained a democracy?