

Topic #23 Overview

Main Themes:

1. That neither the efforts of local and private relief agencies nor the early volunteerism of Herbert Hoover were able to halt the spiral of rising unemployment and declining production.
2. How the economic pressures of the depression affected the American people, especially minorities.
3. How the misery of those affected by the depression swept Franklin Delano Roosevelt into the presidency. How Franklin Roosevelt, although limited by his basically traditional economic views, pushed through programs of economic planning and depression relief.
4. How popular protests against New Deal policies from rightists, leftists, and those who defied categorization inspired Roosevelt to launch a new burst of action known as the Second New Deal.
5. That, despite Roosevelt's overwhelming reelection in 1936, the New Deal was virtually moribund by 1938, thanks to increasing conservative opposition, his own political blunders, and continued hard times.
6. That the New Deal helped give rise to a new role for the national government as a "broker state" among various organized interests.

Objectives: [You should be able to explain each of these in some detail]

1. The problems of unemployment and the inadequacy of relief.
2. The particular problems of farmers in the Dust Bowl.
3. The impact of the depression on minorities.
4. The impact of the depression on working women and the American family.
5. The reflection of the economic crisis in American culture.
6. President Herbert Hoover's plan for fighting the Depression.
7. The series of emergency measures designed to restore confidence that were enacted during the first 100 days.
8. The New Deal programs for raising farm prices and promoting industrial recovery.
9. The first federal efforts at regional planning.
10. The New Deal program for reforming the financial system.
11. The federal relief programs and Social Security.
12. The political pressures from both the left and the right that caused Franklin Roosevelt to move in new directions from 1935 on.
13. The changes in organized labor during the New Deal period.
14. The effects of the court-packing scheme and the recession of 1937 and 1938 on Roosevelt and the New Deal.
15. The impact of the New Deal on minorities and women.
16. The lasting significance of the New Deal to the American economy, political system, and popular culture.