



Expansion Resources and Teaching Ideas: Rosie the Riveter

Teaching Ideas

Out of the Dust

Materials: Historical fiction novel “Out of the Dust” by Karen Hesse,

Procedure: Read aloud selected sections of “Out of the Dust” to your students. Compare and contrast difficulties families face today with the hardships felt during the 1930’s. Discuss acts of kindness and the way communities support families faced with difficulty. Have the students’ research recent events like Hurricane Katrina and how those hard times evoked other acts of kindness.

For homework, have the students research the events from 1917 through 1935 that created hardships for people. Have them develop a timeline featuring key events most significant to time period, incorporating pictures and the dates in chronological order. They can present their timelines to the class and explain why they selected the particular events.

Brother, Can You Spare a Dime

Materials: Internet access to “America from the Great Depression to World War II, 1935-1945” available at memory.loc.gov/ammem/fsowhome.htm. You can also use VRHC’s online collections database to find images of Richmond during the 1930’s:
<http://richmondhistorycenter.com/collections/research/online-database>

Using these photographs of America taken during the Great Depression, compare them to photographs seen in the news today. How have things changed? How have things stayed the same? What disasters are American’s struggling with today that are similar to those during the Dust Bowl?

Escape to the Movies

As a class, discuss the types of movies that were made during the Great Depression. Why do you think people frequented the movies during the Great Depression? Tickets to movies were only \$.27 a ticket and provided patrons with a vacation from reality. Screwball comedies and movies, featuring stars such as Shirley Temple, helped people escape from the hardships they faced during the 1930’s, while gangster and crime films symbolized the fear that the economic crisis would negatively impact traditional American values.

Choose to watch one (or more) of the following movies and explore themes that appear relevant to the economic hardship the country was facing at the time.

The Public Enemy (1931)
G Men (1935)
Poor Little Rich Girl (1936)

Mr. Deeds Goes to Town (1936)
Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm (1938)

For more information on film and the Great Depression, visit:

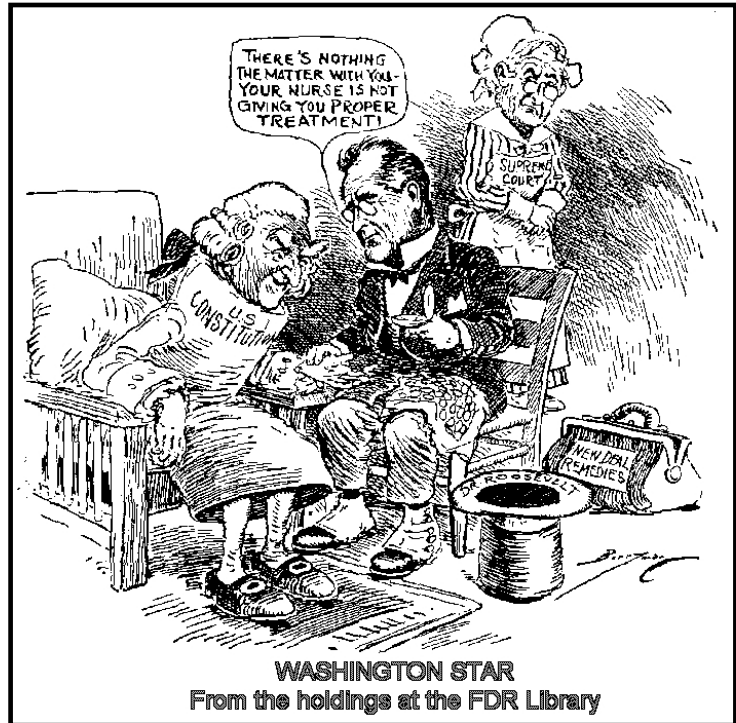
http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/historyonline/hollywood_great_depression.cfm
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~UG03/comedy/historicalcontext.html>

Political Cartoons:

Have students' research political cartoons from the Great Depression Era and identify the policies and situations on which the cartoonist is commenting. In class show students a recently published political cartoon (consider using cartoons published around the time of the housing crisis, the Occupy movement, Hurricane Katrina, etc). What similar policy issues are we dealing with today? What is different about our economic situation? What do these cartoons tell us about the public's concerns during periods of economic hardship? Use the websites below to find examples of political cartoons from the 1930's.

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/herblock/light.html>

<http://www.bearishnews.com/post/1039>



Shopping List

Materials: List of prices for shopping during the Great Depression (below); list of earnings from the Great Depression; newspapers, shopping circulars, and/or internet access; 1 sheet of notebook paper for each student, highlighter for each student.

<http://kclibrary.lonestar.edu/decade30.html>

Procedure: This activity can be preceded by a homework assignment for students to research current prices and salaries listed below. Have them create a graphic organizer (GO) from a sheet of notebook paper that compares prices from the Great Depression to those of today. The paper should be made into four equal-sized columns by folding it lengthwise. Label one column heading as *Depression Shopping*, second as *Shopping Today*, third as *Depression Earnings* and the final heading as *Earnings Today*.

Provide the students with the lists below so that they have the information from the Great Depression to place on their GO. Students should use their research to fill out cost and prices in the today categories. Inform students that the average American

earned \$1,386 per year. Have students compare annual earnings with today's professions and discuss what objects or items they would do without during the 1930's.

Depression Shopping List

Corn Flakes (8 oz. package)	\$.08
Milk (per quart)	.10
Gasoline (per gallon)	.18
Large toothpaste	.25
Leather basketball	1.00
Baseball glove and ball	1.25
Women's leather shoes	1.79
Kodak box camera	2.50
Men's leather shoes	3.85
Tricycle	3.98
Women's cloth coat	6.98
Men's wool suit	10.50
Two-wheel bicycle	10.95
Vacuum cleaner	18.75
Typewriter	19.75
Gas stove	23.95
Electric washing machine	47.95
Living-room radio	49.95
Used 1929 Ford	57.50
New Pontiac coupe	585.00

Average Annual Earnings - Depression

Hired farm hand	\$ 216.00
Live-in maid	260.00
Steelworker	422.00
Waitress	580.00
Coal miner	723.00
Construction worker	907.00
Secretary	1,040.00
Public-school teacher	1,227.00
Civil-service employee	1,284.00
Airline stewardess	1,500.00
Engineer	2,520.00
College teacher	3,111.00
Doctor	3,382.00
Airline pilot	8,000.00

Teacher Resources:

Books

ABC-Clio (Pub), *The Great Depression and the New Deal: Teacher's Guide (Teaching with Documents)*

Beyer, Janet, Kenneth Deitch, and JoAnne Weisman (ed), *Great Depression: A Nation in Distress*. Massachusetts: History Compass LLC, 1996.

Bolden, Tonya, *FDR's Alphabet Soup: New Deal America, 1932-1939*. Knopff Books for Young Readers, 2010.

Cohen, Robert (ed), *Dear Mrs. Roosevelt: Letters from Children of the Great Depression*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.

Collier, James Lincoln, *Worst of Times: A Story of the Great Depression*. Columbus: Waterbird Books, 2007.

Nardo, Don, *Migrant Mother: How a Photograph Defined the Great Depression*. Minnesota: Captured History Series, 2011.

Ely, Melvin, *The Adventures of Amos 'n' Andy*. Massachusetts: Ward & Balkin Agency, 2012.

