

US History

Name _____

New Deal DBQ

Date _____

Directions: You will be examining various primary and secondary documents about President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal and his plan to fix the problems that our country was facing during the Great Depression. With each document, highlight the author and the main idea of each document, as well as anything that seems confusing or difficult to understand. After examining each document you will answer the questions to each one. At the very end you will answer the following essay question and support your answer with evidence from the documents.

The Big Question: Were the Roosevelt Administrations and the New Deal programs effective in overcoming the Great Depression and rebuilding the U.S. economy?

Document 1

The Century is a national best-selling book written by news anchor Peter Jennings and journalist Todd Brewster. It was also turned into a documentary that was shown on ABC and the History channel.

"My father walked the streets everyday. . . . My mother went to work. I even worked, playing the piano for dancing class on Saturday mornings for fifty cents an hour. My mother would find a few pennies and we would go to the greengrocer and wait until he threw out the stuff that was beginning to rot. We would pick out the best rotted potato and greens and carrots that were already soft. Then we would go to the butcher and beg a marrow bone. And then with the few pennies we would buy a box of barley, and we'd have soup to last us for three or four days. I remember she would say to me sometimes, 'You go out and do it. I'm ashamed.'"

—Clara Hancox, quoted in *The Century*, by Peter Jennings and Todd Brewster

1. How did the Great Depression affect Clara and her family?
2. What sort of things were Clara's family forced to resort to in order to survive?
3. Does the image that is being portrayed here resemble a strong country?

Document 2

Below is a list of a select group of New Deal programs implemented by FDR and the federal government:

Act or Program	Acronym	Year Enacted	Significance
Agricultural Adjustment Act	AAA	1933	Protected farmers from price drops by providing crop subsidies to reduce production, educational programs to teach methods of preventing soil erosion.
Civil Works Administration	CWA	1933	Provided public works jobs at \$15/week to four million workers in 1934.
Civilian Conservation Corps	CCC	1933	Sent 250,000 young men to work camps to perform reforestation and conservation tasks. Removed surplus of workers from cities, provided healthy conditions for boys, provided money for families.
Federal Emergency Relief Act	FERA	1933	Distributed millions of dollars of direct aid to unemployed workers.
Glass-Steagall Act	FDIC	1933	Created federally insured bank deposits (\$2500 per investor at first) to prevent bank failures.
National Industrial Recovery Act	NIRA	1933	Created NRA to enforce codes of fair competition, minimum wages, and to permit collective bargaining of workers.
National Youth Administration	NYA	1935	Provided part-time employment to more than two million college and high school students.
Public Works Administration	PWA	1933	Received \$3.3 billion appropriation from Congress for public works projects.
Rural Electrification Administration	REA	1935	Encouraged farmers to join cooperatives to bring electricity to farms. Despite its efforts, by 1940 only 40% of American farms were electrified.
Securities and Exchange Commission	SEC	1934	Regulated stock market and restricted margin buying.
Social Security Act		1935	Response to critics (Dr. Townsend and Huey Long), it provided pensions, unemployment insurance, and aid to blind, deaf, disabled, and dependent children.

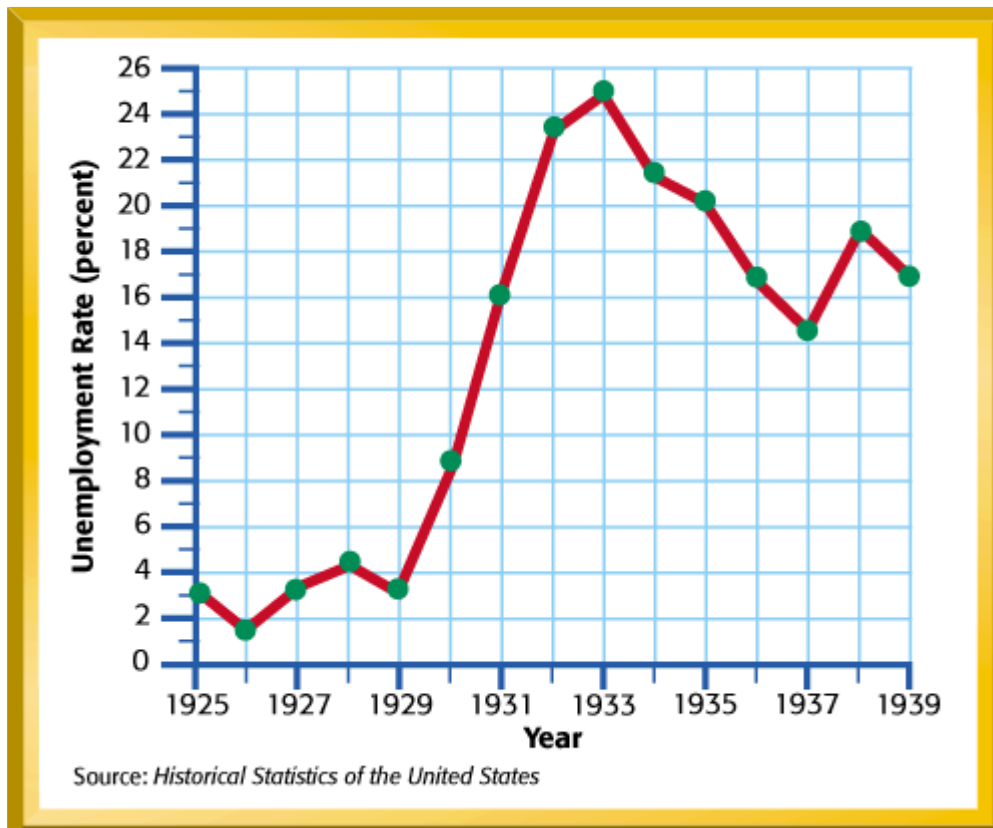
Tennessee Valley Authority	TVA	1933	Federal government built series of dams to prevent flooding and sell electricity. First public competition with private power industries.
Wagner Act	NLRB	1935	Allowed workers to join unions and outlawed union-busting tactics by management.
Works Progress Administration	WPA	1935	Employed 8.5 million workers in construction and other jobs, but more importantly provided work in arts, theater, and literary projects.

4. Highlight any of these acts or programs that are still used today.

5. What were the common effects of most of these acts and programs?

Document 3

The following chart displays the unemployment rate during the Great Depression.



6. How much does the unemployment rate go up from 1929 to 1933?

7. What is the unemployment rate in 1937?

8. How does the unemployment rate in 1939 compare to the unemployment rate in 1929?

Document 4

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FINANCES, 1929-1941

(in billions of dollars)

FISCAL YEAR	EXPENDITURES	SURPLUS OR DEFICIT(-)	TOTAL PUBLIC DEBT
1929	\$3.125	\$0.734	\$16.9
1930	3.320	0.738	16.2
1931	3.577	-0.462	16.8
1932	4.659	-2.735	19.5
1933	4.598	-2.602	22.5
1934	6.645	-3.630	27.1
1935	6.497	-2.791	28.7
1936	8.422	-4.425	33.8
1937	7.733	-2.777	36.4
1938	6.765	-1.177	37.2
1939	8.841	-3.862	40.4
1940	9.589	-2.710	43.0
1941	13.980	-4.778	44.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970, Bicentennial Edition, Part 2 (1975)*

10. How much are the government's expenditures at the beginning of the Great Depression in 1929, and how much are the expenditures in 1936 when FDR's New Deal Programs are fully implemented? Why do you think the expenditures went up?

11. What was the total public debt in 1929? 1933? 1937?

12. Does this document come from a reliable source? Why or Why Not?

Document 5

This excerpt is from a speech given by Senator Huey Long. Long was a Democratic senator from Louisiana. Long planned to run against FDR in the next election, but was assassinated.

“President Roosevelt was elected on November 8, 1932. People look upon an elected President as the President. This is January 1935. We are in our third year of the Roosevelt depression, with the conditions growing worse . . . We must become awakened! We must know the truth and speak the truth. There is no use to wait three more years. It is not Roosevelt or ruin; it is Roosevelt's ruin.”

Senator Huey Long's "Share Our Wealth" Speech, 1935

13. What is the basis of Long's criticism of Roosevelt's New Deal policy?

14. What does this tell you about some people's feelings toward FDR's New Deal programs?

Document 6



Source: *Franklin D. Roosevelt Library*

The following political cartoon includes Harry Byrd and Harry Hopkins. Hopkins was one of FDR's closest advisors, and helped to create many of the New Deal programs. Byrd, was a democratic senator from Virginia who opposed many of FDR's programs. Byrd felt that too much government spending was occurring.

15. What is the message of the political cartoon?

16. What does this tell you was a common criticism of the New Deal?