

Northwest History Consortium

As the Milk Churns. . . .

Denise Swager
7th Grade

National Standard

Era 8: The Great Depression and World War II (1929-1945) / Standard 1

Standard 1: The causes of the Great Depression and how it affected American society.

US Geography Standards

14: The student understands how human actions modify the physical environment.

17: The student understands how geography is used to interpret the past.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

Tie to a contemporary migration of people in other parts of the world:

- The Mexican migration to this country was initially to agricultural jobs, then to jobs in service industries, and finally to becoming entrepreneurs.
- Chinese movement from agricultural lands outside the cities into the cities looking for better paying, less physically demanding jobs, which often do not exist.
- Guinea, West Africa, where the agrarian countryside villages are run almost entirely by women because the men have gone into the cities seeking jobs that do not exist.

BACKGROUND

Read the first chapter of *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck. The first chapter from the novel that describes what it was like to experience the Dust Bowl especially relates the problem of the dust.

Pre-writing assignment: Ask students to note in their own words the problems farmers encountered because of the Dust Bowl.

Because of the Dust Bowl, the farmers in the mid-west were struggling to grow any crops and thus were having a hard time earning an income.

PROBLEM

Do you and your family stay and hope the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) works; or, do you leave, like everyone else?

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SCENARIO

You and your large family are one of many farming families living in Stickney, South Dakota, a rural Dutch farming community. You, and the rest of the farmers in town, have immigrated to the United States in the last ten years.

It's June of 1933, and you have just planted 15 acres of corn. A dust storm appears out of nowhere, and you are forced to run into the house for shelter from the storm. After the storm has cleared, you and your family go outside to survey the damage. There's inches of dust on top of everything, and in your American optimism, you shrug off this storm and plan on you and the four boys replanting tomorrow. This scenario has happened several times during the last several years. You and your sons are getting really sick of replanting your corn. That's money wasted that you and your family do not have.

Things are getting really bad for farmers everywhere, and there is no longer any money to be made in farming. At church you heard a rumor of President Roosevelt coming out with new legislation to help farmers who are hurting due to the continuance of the dust storms. Some of the farmers are hopeful that the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) will help "restore the purchasing power of American farmers to pre-World War I levels." While most of the men at church are hopeful, some are skeptical and are ready to "throw in the towel" and move their families to California, where work is rumored to be.

Throughout the entire conversation you're listening intently. You're not eager to give up everything that you and your family have spent the last five years working for in America, but at the same time you're tired of living in the red. You're not sure what to do. Should you remain in Stickney and hope that FDR and the AAA will fix the farming problems; or, should you pack everything up again and move to California.

The Stickney Farmer's Association has called a meeting to decide whether or not the town's farmers are going to accept the AAA monies. The association wants to know how each family is feeling about the AAA and whether or not this new farm subsidy will work.

Vader (father) has decided a family meeting is needed in order to hear everyone's view on the AAA monies. As a family, come up with a position; make sure that the family has valid reasons for accepting or rejecting the monies from the AAA.

"Agricultural Adjustment Act: Laws, 1933." [Online Highways](http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1639.html). Florence, OR. 31 Dec. 2010 <<http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1639.html>>.

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TASK

Vader (father) has decided a family meeting is needed in order to hear everyone's view on the AAA monies. As a family, come up with a position; make sure that the family has valid reasons for accepting or rejecting the monies from the AAA.

The council has decided that it must take action. They must decide what action(s) to take to deal with this growing problem.

RESOURCES

Book

Larson, Rachel. American Republic for Christian Schools. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1988.

Internet

Ganzel, Bill. "AAA, Agricultural Adjustment Act." Living History Farm. 2010. York, NY. 29 Dec. 2010 <http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/water_11.html>.

"Agricultural Adjustment Act." Ohio History Central. ©1999-2010. Columbus, OH. 29 Dec. 2010 <<http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/entry.php?rec=1510>>.

"Agricultural Adjustment Act: Laws, 1933." Online Highways. Florence, OR. 31 Dec. 2010 <<http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1639.html>>.

Dimitri, Carolyn, Effland, Anne, and Conklin, Neilson. "The 20th Century Transformation of U.S. Agriculture and Farm Policy" from the *Economic Information Bulletin #3*, June 1, 2005. United States Department of Agriculture (Economic Research Service). Washington, DC. <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/EIB3/EIB3.pdf>>.

Getz, Carl C. "Hard Times Farming: Farming During the Depression" from *Ideals*, 2008. [cached page]. Ideals @ Illinois (University of Illinois). 2010. Champaign, IL. 31 Dec. 2010 <<https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/8775/index.htm?sequence=2>>.

Roosevelt, Franklin D., President. "Address on Agricultural Adjustment Act." 14 May 1935. Public Broadcasting System (WGBH). ©1995 - 2011. Boston, MA. 31 Dec. 2010 <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/presidents/32_f_roosevelt/psources/ps_aaaspeech.html>.

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ASSESSMENT

PBS Self-Evaluation Rubric

PBL Self-Evaluation	4	3	2	1
Quality of Research	Research questions and notes taken were in-depth and appropriate.	Research questions and notes were appropriate but not as in-depth as they should be.	Research is incomplete and notes are not as in-depth as they should be.	Research notes are not appropriate for the topic and there is no clear focus.
Sources and Annotations	All sources were cited and you explained why your sources are credible-minimum 3 primary sources	Comment but 1-2 sources are not cited and/or annotated.	3-4 sources are not cited and/or annotated.	No sources are cited and/or annotated.
Requirements	All steps of process are completed and guided worksheet is turned in. Your personal responsibility was completed.	1-2 steps of the process are not completed or documented	3-4 steps of the process are not completed or documented.	Worksheet requirements were not completed and personal responsibility was not completed.
Presentation	Presentation was loud, clear, neat and organized.	Presentation was almost loud or clear enough for the audience to hear easily. Was organized.	Presentation was way too soft, not very neat or organized.	Presentation was very hard to hear and not organized.

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REFERENCES/CITATIONS

"Agricultural Adjustment Act: Laws, 1933." Online Highways. Florence, OR. 31 Dec. 2010 <<http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1639.html>>.

"History Standards for Grades 5-12 United States." UCLA National Center for History in the Schools. 2005. Los Angeles, CA. 31 December 2010 <<http://nchs.ucla.edu/standards/us-standards5-12.html>>.

"National Geography Standards, Geography Education Standards Project." 1994. National Council for Geography Education. Washington, DC. 31 Dec. 2010 <<http://www.ncge.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3314>>.

Swager, Denise. "As the Milk Churns. . . ." NWESD Organization. 2008- 2010. Anacortes, WA. 31 December 2010 <http://www.nwesd.org/1510101216191755740/lib/1510101216191755740/8.1_DustBowl.GreatDepression.Swager.7>.