

THE GREAT DEPRESSION RESEARCH PAPER AND PRESENTATION

The Great Depression is one of the three areas of focus and concentration for our IB History of the Americas course. It will be two of the six questions you will need to answer on your diploma exam at the end of your senior year.

For each critical area of the Great Depression, each one of you will dissect the area of concentration and prepare the following:

- 1. Research paper- Outside of class; 1500-2000 words; approx. 10% of semester grade**
- 2. Presentation; 12-15 minutes; use of power point or some other dynamic media; approx. 7% of grade**

Your primary source for your investigation will be *The Great Depression, America 1929-1941* by Robert S. McElvaine. In order to get a perspective of effects on Latin America and Canada, you can use *A History of Latin America* by Keen and Haynes (pp. 274), and *The History of Canada* by McNaught (pp. 246). I have other books available and as you decide and choose your topic, you will see if I reference those books, as well. Also, there are numerous websites documenting the history of the Great Depression. They will be essential to your research.

There are 20 different focus areas of research. I will give you guiding questions and statements on each area for your assistance in starting the projects. Areas of concentration 8 and 18 can be split between two students. Be sure to coordinate your research and presentations to avoid duplication of information.

AREAS OF CONCENTRATION:

- 1. Causes of the Great Depression**
 - a. How did WWI and its resolution affect world economies?**

- b. What was our recent (1850 forward) history of recessions and how do they impact the Great Depression?

- 2. The Roaring 20's and the lead up to the Great Depression
 - a. The presidencies of Coolidge and Hoover
 - b. The world in the 1920s
 - c. Economic theories regarding the lead up to the GD, including Say's Law
 - d. Key industrialists and their impact on the 20s

- 3. Politics and Market Speculation in the late 20's
 - a. Key government policies and legislative actions
 - i. Dawes Plan
 - b. Rise of materialism and market leverage
 - c. The Crash of 1929
 - d. Role of income distribution

- 4. The Role of Herbert Hoover
 - a. Background and rise to presidency
 - b. Doctrine of "laissez-faire"
 - c. How he handled the Crash
 - d. Loss of popularity

- 5. The First Years of the Depression: 1929-1932
 - a. Government actions to relieve economic hardships
 - i. Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act
 - ii. Revenue Act of 1932
 - iii. Glass-Steagall Act
 - b. Impact of foreign issues
 - c. Impact of the RFC
 - d. Hoovervilles

- 6. The Road to Election and Initial Impact of Franklin Delano Roosevelt
 - a. The road to election of 1932
 - b. Impact of his wife, Eleanor
 - c. FDR's strengths and weaknesses
 - d. FDR's political moves toward 1932

- 7. The Election of 1932 and its Impact**
 - a. Political impact based on Democratic victory**
 - b. State of the Great Depression in the country and world**
 - c. Compare and contrast policies of FDR with Hoover**

- 8. The First Hundred Days**
 - a. Impact of FDR's personality and policies**
 - b. The New Deal and its impact**
 - c. "The New Dealers"**
 - d. Monetarism and The Gold Standard**
 - e. CCC, TVA, NIRA, NRA, Schechter v. U.S.**
 - f. Gold Reserve Act, Silver Reserve Act**
 - g. "Gabriel Over the White House"**

- 9. The Great Depression and Canada**
 - a. Impact across the expanse of Canada**
 - b. Canadian government policies**
 - c. Political impact**
 - d. The Bank of Canada**
 - e. The Canadian Supreme Court**
 - f. MacKenzie King's foreign policy**
 - g. Run up to WWII**

- 10. The Great Depression and Latin America**
 - a. Import Substitution Industrialization**
 - b. Effect on Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Puerto Rico**
 - c. Changes in Cuba**
 - d. Rise of Populism and key leaders**

- 11. Great Depression Life**
 - a. Psychological impact on men and unemployment**
 - b. Effect on wives and children**
 - c. How the Roosevelts combated the negativity**
 - d. Effect on blacks and minorities**
 - e. The Dust Bowl**

- 12. Changes in American Values and Culture**
 - a. Impact on economic perceptions**
 - b. Rise of government dependence**
 - c. "The Red Decade"**
 - d. Effect on popular culture**

- 13. Rising Discontent in 1934-1935**
 - a. Union uprisings**
 - b. Election of 1934**
 - c. Effects at the state level**
 - d. Huey Long, Charles Coughlin, and Dr. Francis Townsend and their impact**

- 14. The Second New Deal**
 - a. Reasons that led to the Second New Deal**
 - b. Roosevelt's relationship to big business and labor**
 - c. Key government policies and legislative actions**
 - i. Social Security Act**
 - ii. The Wagner Act**

- 15. The Election of 1936 and the Court Packing Scheme**
 - a. Establishment of the WPA**
 - b. Art's Project**
 - c. Changes after the 1936 election**
 - d. The Court Packing Scheme and why it was initiated**

- 16. Late 30s Impact on Labor Unions**
 - a. John L. Lewis**
 - b. Eugene Debs**
 - c. Committee for Industrial Organization**
 - d. The slow economic recovery of 1937**
 - e. The new recession of 1937-38 and why it occurred**
 - f. Concept of "Keynesian Economics" and how it impacted recovery**
 - g. Wagner-Steagall Housing Act, Fair Labor Standards Act**

- 17. End of the Recession: 1939-1941**
 - a. Run up to WWII and impact on economy**
 - b. Impact of Social Security Act**

- c. AFDC**
- d. Impact of Wendell Willkie run for president in 1940**
- e. When did the Great Depression end and why**

18. Impact of the Great Depression on Modern America

- a. Keynesian Economics**
- b. 22nd Amendment**
- c. Impact of Eleanor Roosevelt on women's rights**
- d. Changes in minorities**
- e. Impact on government's role- liberalism v conservatism**
- f. Income inequality**
- g. Analogies to recent recessions: 1980s, 2008**