

# The Great Depression Projects



## Lesson 1 – Activity #1 Stock Market Storyboard

Students create a simple four-panel storyboard showing key events that led to the Stock Market Crash. This can be done with AI-generated images, teacher-selected images, or quick student sketches.

**How to Do It:** Display or provide four images showing moments such as:

Americans buying goods on installment plans

Factories producing more goods than people could buy

Panic selling on Black Tuesday

Banks failing after the crash

Students place the images in order and write a short caption for each panel answering: *What happened?* and *Why did it matter?*

**Materials:** Four images (AI-generated or displayed on screen), notebook, pencil

**Optional Extension:** Students add a fifth panel titled *The Beginning of the Great Depression* explaining how the crash affected families.

## Buying on Installment



## Overproduction



## Stock Market Crash



## Bank Closures



## Lesson 1 – Activity #2 Cause and Effect Match-Up – Why the Economy Collapsed

Students build a simple cause-and-effect chain to understand how economic problems led to the Stock Market Crash. This reinforces sequencing and historical reasoning without requiring a worksheet.

**How to Do It:** Students draw a chain of four boxes in their notebooks. In each box, they record one cause from the article and the effect that followed.

Overproduction → unsold goods

Falling sales → workers losing jobs

Borrowing money to buy stocks → risky investments

Panic selling → Stock Market Crash

Students add arrows or symbols to show how each event led to the next.

**Materials:** Notebook, pencil

**Optional Extension:** Students add a final box explaining how the crash led to *bank failures* and *unemployment*.

## Lesson 1 – Activity #2 Cause and Effect Match-Up

<b>unemployment spread nationwide</b>	<b>banks ran out of cash</b>	<b>overproduction</b>	<b>workers losing jobs</b>
<b>risky investments</b>	<b>factories closed</b>	<b>farmers couldn't pay their debts</b>	<b>unsold goods</b>
<b>farm prices dropped</b>	<b>borrowing money</b>	<b>people lost savings</b>	<b>Stock Market Crash</b>
<b>banks loaned too much money</b>	<b>falling sales</b>	<b>panic selling</b>	<b>families stopped spending</b>

## **Lesson 1 – Activity #2 Cause and Effect Match-Up Answer Key**

**overproduction → unsold goods**

**falling sales → workers losing jobs**

**borrowing money to buy stocks → risky investments**

**panic selling → Stock Market Crash Students**

**farm prices dropped → farmers couldn't pay their debts**

**banks loaned too much money → banks ran out of cash**

**people lost savings → families stopped spending**

**factories closed → unemployment spread nationwide**

## Lesson 2 – Activity #1 Cooperative "Hooverville" Shantytown Diorama

Bring the personal stories of the 1930s to life with these cross-curricular projects linking historical fiction and poetry to tactile art.

**Literature Integration:** *Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis (Read Chapter 8).

The Concept: Explore the reality of "cardboard jungles" by having students build a miniature, collaborative shantytown.

### Teacher Instructions:

- 1. Read-Aloud:** Read Chapter 8 of *Bud, Not Buddy*. Focus on the descriptions of the make-shift cloth and cardboard shelters, the sense of community around the campfire, and the train tracks at the edge of town.
- 2. Gather Base Materials:** Collect corrugated cardboard case trays (the shallow cardboard flats used to ship 24-packs of soda or canned foods).
- 3. Build the Shanties:** Have students use empty milk cartons, small boxes, and scraps of cardboard as the frame. Cover them with broken popsicle sticks (leave the ends ragged and splintered to mimic scavenged wood) or scraps of fabric.
- 4. Assemble the Community:** Arrange the shanties inside the cardboard tray. Add details like a small tin foil "campfire" and twine clotheslines.
- 5. Connect the Rails:** Lay down a toy train track through the classroom. Line the students' cardboard flats along the tracks to create a sprawling, interconnected classroom Hooverville.



## Lesson 2 – Activity #2 Dust Bowl Texture Painting

### Literature Integration:

*Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse (Suggested poems: *"Fields of Flashing Light"* or *"Dust Storm"*).

**The Concept:** Recreate the eerie, overwhelming power of a Great Plains "Black Blizzard" using multi-textured art mediums.

### Teacher Instructions:

1. **Read-Aloud:** Read a selection from *Out of the Dust* that details a storm rolling in over the plains, turning day into night.
2. **Sketch the Scene:** On a piece of dark or blue construction paper, have students use colored chalk to draw a simple, static farm scene—a lonely farmhouse, a windmill, or a barren field.
3. **Paint the Storm:** Use white school glue (applied with a paintbrush or squeezed directly from the bottle) to create a swirling, turbulent storm cloud pattern taking over the sky and encroaching on the farm.
4. **Add the Dust:** While the glue is completely wet, generously sprinkle real sand or fine dirt over the paper. Shake off the excess to reveal a textured, gritty storm cloud that physically lifts off the page.




A DEVASTATING BLACK BLIZZARD - BASED ON "OUT OF THE DUST"

Check out the novel studies for these books on Teachers Pay Teachers.

# Bud, Not Buddy

## NOVEL STUDY

Comprehension · Vocabulary · Skills



Includes

**Digital + Printable**

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hosted at **boom** wow.boomlearning.com

Created by Gay Miller


Google Slides

Check out [Bud, Not Buddy Novel Study](#) on TPT.

# Out of the Dust

## NOVEL STUDY

Comprehension · Vocabulary · Skills



Includes

**Digital + Printable**

ELA Skills with Poetry

hosted at **boom** wow.boomlearning.com

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Google Slides

Check out the [Out of the Dust Novel Study](#) on TPT.

## Lesson 3 – Activity #1 Three Way Match-Up

Students complete a three-way matching activity to learn about major New Deal organizations. Each set of cards includes the organization's name, an illustration showing what workers did, and a short description of its purpose.

**How to Do It:** Print or display the cards. Students match each organization's name with the correct illustration and description. This reinforces understanding of how different programs helped people during the Great Depression.

CCC — Civilian Conservation Corps

WPA — Works Progress Administration

TVA — Tennessee Valley Authority

FDIC — Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation

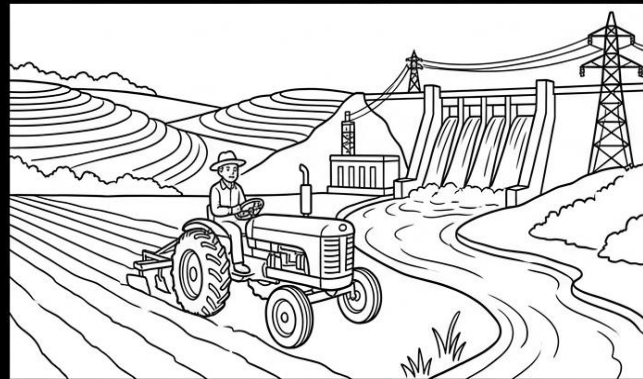
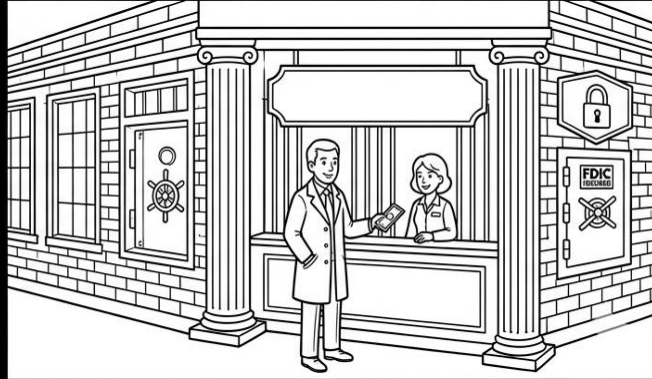
**Materials:** Printed or digital cards, scissors (if printed), notebook for notes

**Optional Extension:** Students design their own card for another New Deal program, such as the Social Security Act or the Agricultural Adjustment Administration.

**CCC – Civilian Conservation Corps**

**created jobs for millions of Americans in public works and arts projects to rebuild communities**

**FDIC – Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation**

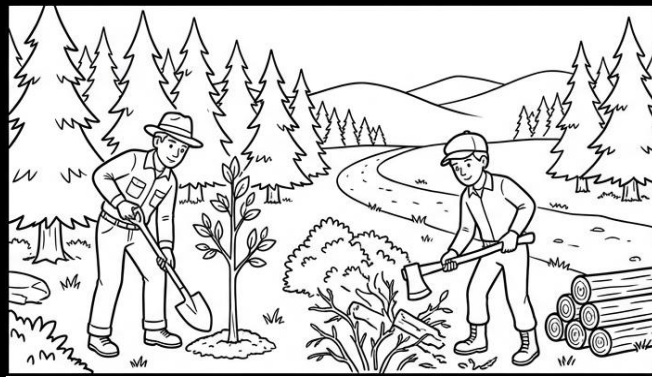


**restored confidence in banks by insuring deposits so people wouldn't lose savings if a bank failed**

**TVA – Tennessee Valley Authority**

**WPA – Works Progress Administration**



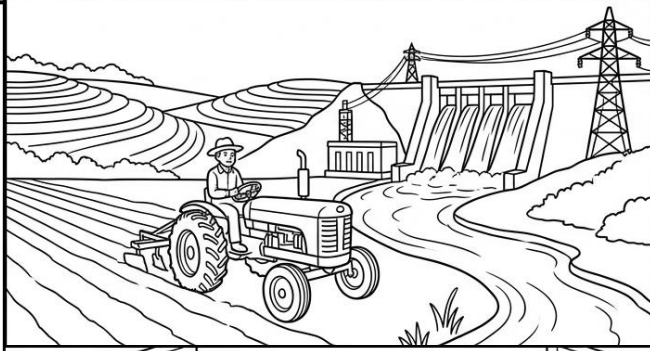

**built dams to control flooding, generate electricity, and improve life in rural southern states**



**provided jobs for unemployed young men to improve parks, forests, and soil conservation projects**



## Lesson 3 – Activity #1 Three Way Match-Up Answer Key

Organization	Illustration	Short Description
CCC – Civilian Conservation Corps		provided jobs for unemployed young men to improve parks, forests, and soil conservation projects
WPA – Works Progress Administration		created jobs for millions of Americans in public works and arts projects to rebuild communities
TVA – Tennessee Valley Authority		built dams to control flooding, generate electricity, and improve life in rural southern states
FDIC – Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation		restored confidence in banks by insuring deposits so people wouldn't lose savings if a bank failed

## Lesson 3 – Activity #2

Students choose between two creative, letter-by-letter research frameworks to review key concepts, figures, and programs from the Great Depression and FDR's First 100 Days.

### How to Do It:

Provide students with the project handout. Students can either complete an expanded acrostic poem using the letters **F-D-R-S-N-E-W-D-E-A-L** where each letter starts a full historical fact phrase, or they can complete an "Alphabet Soup" challenge by finding a New Deal program, event, or key figure for 10–15 different letters of the alphabet.

**FDR'S NEW DEAL Acrostic:** Best for a deep-dive narrative focus (e.g., "Fireside chats were used to reassure the public...").

**Alphabet Soup Challenge:** Best for tracking the whirlwind of "Alphabet Agencies" (e.g., "A is for AAA, B is for Bank Holiday...").

**Materials:** Project handout, colored pencils or markers, classroom research materials or websites

**FDR'S NEW DEAL Acrostic**

**Instructions:** Complete each line of the acrostic with a complete, accurate historical fact beginning with the letter at the beginning to the line.

F	
D	
R	
S	
N	
E	
W	
D	
E	
A	
L	

## FDR'S NEW DEAL Acrostic Sample Answer Key

**Instructions:** Complete each line of the acrostic with a complete, accurate historical fact beginning with the letter at the beginning to the line.

<b>F</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fireside chats were regular radio broadcasts used by FDR to reassure and connect with the American public.</li></ul>
<b>D</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dust Bowl conditions ruined millions of acres of farmland, forcing "Okies" and other families to migrate west.</li></ul>
<b>R</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relief, Recovery, and Reform were the three main goals ("The Three Rs") of the New Deal programs.</li></ul>
<b>S</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social Security Act was passed to provide financial support for elderly, retired, and disabled Americans.</li></ul>
<b>N</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National Recovery Administration (NRA) was created to bring industry, labor, and government together to create fair practices.</li></ul>
<b>E</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergency Banking Act closed all banks for a "bank holiday" until they could be proven safe and stable to reopen.</li></ul>
<b>W</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Works Progress Administration (WPA) employed millions of people to build public parks, roads, schools, and bridges.</li></ul>
<b>D</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dollar devaluation and leaving the gold standard helped stimulate the economy and raise falling crop prices.</li></ul>
<b>E</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Electrification of rural areas, through programs like the TVA, brought modern power and running water to farming communities.</li></ul>
<b>A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) paid farmers to reduce crop production in order to raise agricultural prices.</li></ul>
<b>L</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Labor unions grew stronger during this era as new laws protected workers' rights to organize and protest for fair wages.</li></ul>

Alphabet Soup (A to Z)

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

I

J

K

L

M

N

O

P

Q

R

S

T

U

V

W

X

Y

Z

## Alphabet Soup (A to Z)

<b>A</b>	Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) / <b>A</b> lphabet Agencies
<b>B</b>	Bank Holiday / <b>B</b> rain Trust (FDR's group of close advisors)
<b>C</b>	Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) / <b>C</b> entury of the Common Man
<b>D</b>	Dust Bowl / <b>D</b> epression / <b>D</b> ole (government relief payments)
<b>E</b>	Emergency Banking Act / <b>E</b> lectrification (Rural Electrification Act)
<b>F</b>	Fireside Chats / <b>F</b> ederal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)
<b>G</b>	Gold Standard (dropped by FDR) / <b>G</b> reat Plains (affected by the Dust Bowl)
<b>H</b>	Hoovervilles (shantytowns named after Herbert Hoover) / <b>H</b> undred Days
<b>I</b>	Inauguration Speech ("The only thing we have to fear is fear itself")
<b>J</b>	Job creation programs / <b>J</b> ohn Steinbeck (author of <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> )
<b>K</b>	Keynesian Economics (the economic theory behind government deficit spending)
<b>L</b>	Labor Movement / <b>L</b> ong, Huey (political critic of the New Deal)
<b>M</b>	Migrant workers / <b>M</b> igrant Mother (famous photograph by Dorothea Lange)
<b>N</b>	New Deal / <b>N</b> ational Recovery Administration (NRA)
<b>O</b>	Okies (migrants fleeing the Dust Bowl) / <b>O</b> ld-age pensions
<b>P</b>	Public Works Administration (PWA) / <b>P</b> erkins, Frances (First female Cabinet member)
<b>Q</b>	Quotas on farming crop production (to help stabilize prices)
<b>R</b>	Relief, Recovery, and Reform / <b>R</b> oosevelt, Eleanor or Franklin D.
<b>S</b>	Social Security Act / <b>S</b> upreme Court (which struck down some New Deal laws)
<b>T</b>	Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) / <b>T</b> wenty-First Amendment (repealed Prohibition)
<b>U</b>	Unemployment rates (which reached 25% before the New Deal)
<b>V</b>	Volunteer labor / <b>V</b> alley flooding control (a major goal of the TVA)
<b>W</b>	Works Progress Administration (WPA) / <b>W</b> agner Act (protected labor unions)
<b>X</b>	<b>E(x)pan</b> sion of government power and federal responsibilities
<b>Y</b>	Youth programs (like the National Youth Administration, or NYA)
<b>Z</b>	Zone restrictions on farming land to prevent further soil erosion

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Respond



Write

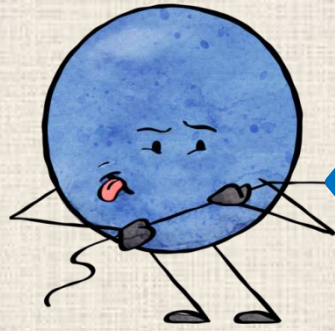
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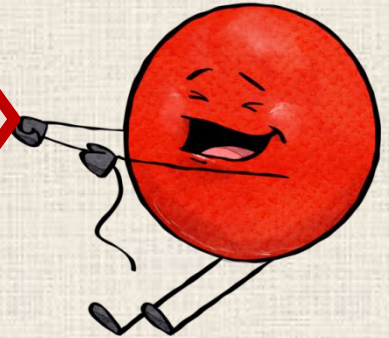




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