Instructional Resources

http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/fsac/  
http://www.historicalfolktoys.com/guide/depress.html

http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/life\_20.html

<http://newdeal.feri.org/eleanor/index.htm>

Indiana Memory:

* (Monopoly Game) <https://digital.library.in.gov/Record/IMCPL_tcm-1443>
* (Speedway Motor Race Game) <https://digital.library.in.gov/Record/IMCPL_tcm-2052>
* (Homemade Monopoly Board) <https://digital.library.in.gov/Record/IMCPL_tcm-2101>

Focus Questions

1. What leisure activities took place in American depression era homes?
2. What effect did these pastimes have on families during the Great Depression?
3. Why are some of these pastimes still popular?
4. How does the popular game Monopoly relate to real-world business then and now?

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Abstract

This unit promotes understanding of the personal lives of those affected by the Great Depression. This unit features a focus on leisure activities and pastimes that were popular during this era. By exploring the concepts of the stock market crash, and its impact on economics and living standards, student gain understanding of what it was like to live without many luxuries.

**Course Title: America During the Great Depression**

Grade Level: 3rd-9th (standards at 9th)

Unit: Depression Era Pastimes

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| Benchmarks | Assessment Tasks | Key Concepts |
| **SS.USH.4 2007 - STANDARD**  The Modern United States in Prosperity and Depression: 1920s and 1930s. Students will examine the political, economic, social and cultural development of the United States during the period from 1920 to 1939.  **SS.USH.4.4 2007 - SUB**  Describe the stock market crash of 1929 and the impact it had on politics, economics and America's standard of living. | Students will:   1. Design a leisure activity of their choosing based upon the pastimes of the Great Depression, using ordinary, everyday household objects. (SS.USH.4.2007) 2. Write to Mrs. Roosevelt asking for help (requesting clothing, money, and assistance), demonstrating understanding of living and financial hardships during the Great Depression. (SS.USH4.4 2007) | * Great Depression * Leisure * Pastimes * Monopoly |

**Teacher Made Materials**

* Scenario cards for Lesson 3

**Catalog of Lessons**

**Lesson 1: The Great Depression**

In this lesson the students will examine primary sources exhibiting the lifestyle of persons during the Great Depression. The students will cast themselves in roles of Great Depression era citizens and dramatize the experiences of a family that faced the hardships of the Great Depression.

**Lesson 2: Games**

Various games and objects, such as dominoes, marbles, jacks, cards, metal hoops, and wooden tiles, will be placed upon tables. Without direction, the students will interact with these objects and construct game play rules of their own. The purpose of the activity being, depression era folks often had to use everyday objects to entertain themselves.

**Lesson 3: Monopoly**

The students will engage in a role-play in which, they are business owners. Each student will be given a scenario and choices to make that affects the outcome of the dramatization. In reality, the scenarios are staged so that one student gains control of all other businesses and become a monopoly over the market. From this, the students will have a better idea of how a monopoly is formed and be able to make connections between the game and the real life monopolization occurring the Great Depression.

**Lesson 4: Other Pastimes**

The students will be challenged to fill a full days schedule using the depression era as a lens for what they can and cannot use to fill a schedule (if it was not available during the Depression, they cannot use it). Possible topics to be discussed will include, but not limited to: dancing, storytelling, reading, and sewing. In addition, the students will listen to depression era music, and learn a dance that was popular during that time.

**Lesson 5: Now v. Then**

The students will, once again, use primary sources to compare everyday life occurrences. Each group of students will be responsible for researching and becoming the “experts” on a certain facet of depression era life. After researching, the students will present their findings and engage in discussion regarding how life differs now as opposed to then.

Source: http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/fsac/

**DIRECTIONS**

“We have been taking a look at the lifestyles of the less fortunate Americans that lived during the Great Depression. Regardless of their situation, these folks still found it possible to have fun. Unfortunately, they did not have a lot of ready-made games and activities at their disposal. Your task today is to create a game. The game design and rules are only limited by your imagination. However, there is a challenge. As I have mentioned, not a lot of resources were available to those living during the Great Depression. So, in the spirit of living without, you may only use the resources available in this room to create your game. Once you have created your game, please be ready to share it with your classmates. Your games will also be on display here at Maplelawn Farmstead to be seen by our other visitors. Additionally, consider President Roosevelt’s role during the Great Depression. Should he have provided more funding relief? How that might have helped or not helped? Would it have changed the leisure activity people engaged in? Please prepare a statement regarding this.”

**PROCEDURE**

Supplement the classroom with items that can help aid in the creation of depression era games. Read the directions to the students. To communicate expectation, share the scoring rubric with the students. Finally, respond to any questions the students might have about the assessment task. Students are allowed to ask questions throughout this task to gain clarification regarding what is allowed and what is not.

**ABSTRACT**

Through this task, the students are to design a leisure activity/game of their choosing based upon the pastimes of the Great Depression. The twist is that the only materials available to the students are the items available in the room.

**PROMPT**

Many who lived during the Great Depression lived without many luxuries. During the little leisure time the affected American’s possessed, they often had to rely upon what was readily available to them to have a bit of fun. In a situation such as this, creativity was a definite asset.

Primary source photos are available to help the students step into the Great Depression frame of mind.

\*Additional materials including: cards, string, knitting needles, glass bottles, a light bulb, scissors, or any assortment of common household items should be strewn across the classroom to give the students something to work from. Unless of course, one wants to make the lesson incredibly challenging, forcing the students to truly create something out of nothing.

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GRADE LEVEL: 3rd-9th (standards at 9th)

UNIT: Depression Era Pastimes

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| **BENCHMARK** |  | |
| * Design a leisure activity of their chooing based upon the pastimes of the Great Depression, using ordinary, everyday household objects. * The students will justify why their activity could have been created in the depression era. * The student will additionally discuss how these games might relate to the current state of US affairs and economy.   (SS.USH.4.2007) | 1 | 2 | | | 3 | 4 |
| Student partially created a game based on activities from the depression era. | Student created a game incorporating one-two themes from the Great Depression. | | | Student created a game incorportating three themes from the Great Depression. | Student created a game incorportating more than three themes from the Great Depression. |
| The rules and purpose of game play are understood in an explaination 3 minutes or longer. | The rules and purpose of game play are understood in an explaination lasting 2-3 minutes. | | | The rules and purpose of game play are understood in an explaination lasting 1-2 minutes or longer. | The rules and purpose of game play are understood in an explaination lasting 1 minute or les.. |
| From the lesiure actiity design, the student demonstrates a low degree of understanding regarding relationship of this task to current US economics by providing one example/idea. | From the lesiure actiity design, the student demonstrates a moderate degree of understanding regarding relationships of this task to current US economics by providing two examples/ideas. | | | From the lesiure actiity design, the student demonstrates a high degree of understanding regarding relationships of this task to current US economics by providing 3 examples/ideas. | From the lesiure actiity design, the student demonstrates a high degree of understanding regarding relationships of this task to current US economics by providing more than 3 examples/ideas. |
| The student articulates one reason his/her activity could have been created during the depression era. | The student articulates two reason his/her activity could have been created during the depression era. | | | The student articulates three reasons his/her activity could have been created during the depression era. | The student articulates more than thre reasons his/her activity could have been created during the depression era. |
| 0 | | | 5 | | |
| Student prepares consideration of alternatives statement and shares statement with the class. | | | Student prepares consideration of alternatives statement. | | |
| Student does not submit work for display at Maplelawn Farmstead. | | | Student submits work for display at Maplelawn Farmstead. | | |
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**ASSESSMENT RUBRIC**

**DIRECTIONS**

“We have discussed the personal lives of those living during the Great Depression. Since many lived in poverty, sometimes hopelessly, people tended to reach out to those that had more. One person many youth reached out to was the first lady during that time period, Eleanor Roosevelt. They asked for things such as money, clothing, or other forms of assistance. Knowing what they lived through, and channeling the spirit of those in need during that time period, it’s your goal to write a letter much like the youth of that era would have. Pretend you are living during the Great Depression and demonstrate a great understanding of needs of the time through your thoughtful words. Be prepared to share your letter. Also, be prepared to discuss possible responses from Mrs. Roosevelt. We’ve also discussed that the writers often received responses from Mrs. Roosevelt’s secretary. Do you consider her responses to be adequate? Be prepared to share your thoughts on what Mrs. Roosevelt’s might have done differently to perhaps evoke a different result.”

**PROCEDURE**

The students must be informed of this letter writing behavior as a common occurrence for youth living during the Great Depression. This information is shared by verbally sharing some of the letters written to Mrs. Roosevelt. The letters are available at the following website: http://newdeal.feri.org/eleanor/index.htm

Read the students the directions, show/explain the scoring rubric, and respond to any further questions. Remind the students that proper grammar and spelling conventions are to be used when writing letters.

**ABSTRACT**

Much like the people of the Great Depression, the students will write a letter to Mrs. Roosevelt asking for help. Through this letter, the students will demonstrate understanding of living, and financial hardships faced by many during the Great Depression.

**PROMPT**

Students will have access to many of the letters to Mrs. Roosevelt and the responses from Mrs. Roosevelt.

Primary source photos of depression era youth will be available for student use.

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UNIT: Depression Era Pastimes

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| **BENCHMARK** |
| Write to Mrs. Roosevelt asking for help (requesting clothing, money, and assistance), demonstrating understanding of living and financial hardships during the Great Depression. SS.USH4.4 2007) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Student writes a letter to Mrs. Roosevelt. | Student writes a historically accurate letter to Mrs. Roosevelt and disccusses possible responses from Mrs. Roosevelt. | Student writes a historically accurate letter to Mrs. Roosevelt and disccusses possible responses from Mrs. Roosevelt. | Student writes a historically accurate letter to Mrs. Roosevelt and disccusses possible responses from Mrs. Roosevelt. Additionally, the student relates events in his/her life to the the hardships faced during the Great Depression. |
| 0 | | 5 | |
| The student does not offer an alternative regarding Mrs. Roosevelt’s letter response. | | The student offers an alternative regarding Mrs. Roosevelt’s letter response. | |
| Student does not submit letter to local library for Great Depression display. | | Student submits letter to local library for Great Depression display. | |
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**ASSESSMENT RUBRIC**