

GLOSSARY AND CREDITS

The United States had just seen the successful completion to World War I. Although more than 100,000 doughboys had perished in the Great War, America had not suffered any damage to its economic infrastructure. This time marked a resurgence of the desire for isolation as the nation regrouped. Prosperous times followed the war during the decade of the 1920s. Numerous inventions and innovations—in concert with social and cultural changes—put America on course to becoming a world power.

An unseen economic storm was to bring this era of prosperity to a crashing halt in 1929. Billions of dollars were lost overnight as the world headed into the Great Depression. President Franklin Roosevelt set into motion a New Deal to battle the economic crisis, but ultimately it did not bring about financial stability.

Chapter 1 - Unforeseen Economic Storm

In the midst of prosperity lay a menacing threat, which went unchecked. The economic monster was to rear its head at the end of the decade. A number of factors would come into play as the Great Depression was about to unfold—poor banking practices, lack of financial restraint on the part of consumers, and little to no regulatory oversight of big business. Throw in a prolonged drought and lack of loan payments by foreign nations, and all the pieces were in place.

Chapter 2 - The Great Depression

The onset of the Great Depression came with Black Thursday and the subsequent stock market crash. In just a few months, nearly 25 percent of Americans would be without jobs. More than 30 billion dollars was lost by investors and corporations. People from all walks of life found themselves with nothing as they tried to survive day-to-day. President Hoover did little at first to alleviate the situation and lost the 1932 election to Franklin Roosevelt.

Chapter 3 - Roosevelt Deals with the Depression

President Roosevelt quickly embarked on an ambitious plan to help Americans by instituting a series of programs and acts designed to get the public back on its feet.

Federal spending reached an all-time high as the government employed thousands in an effort to get spending back on track. Even these efforts did not avert the depression; it picked up speed and a major recession hit in 1937. For all the good it did, the New Deal failed to stop the Great Depression. This was finally accomplished by the advent of World War II.

VOCABULARY

burgeoning	something that quickly and methodically grows or expands
causality	the law that states every action has an effect on something else
deprivation	the condition of being without basic necessities for long periods
deride	to put down or show contempt for a person
empirical	knowledge based on observation and experiment rather than theory
exodus	a situation where large numbers of people leave a place fairly suddenly
fundamentalism	a religious doctrine that emphasizes a return to rigid principles
improvisation	the act of ad-libbing or making things up as you go
laissez-faire	in economics, a government's lack of involvement in private industry
lambaste	to strongly criticize a person over decisions that have been made
morph	to change appearance
myriad	numerous and varying amounts of something

normalcy	the state of being normal
obtrusive	to intentionally force ideas or intrude on others
pall	a sad or depressing mood that settles over a group of people
partisan	a person who strongly supports an organization or ideal
pragmatism	the belief that an idea should be evaluated based on how it works
precipitous	to act or do something very quickly without thinking about it first
productivity	the worker's level of output in goods or services over a given period
proverbial	something that is well-known or used as a stereotype
rectify	to fix, repair, or make something right
renege	to break your word or promise
rhetoric	verbal or written words that strongly support a point of view
scrounge	to beg or borrow things without being able to pay them back
secular	not religious or spiritual in nature
solidify	to become stronger, firmer, or more united
solvent	possessing enough cash to meet debts or expenses
syncopation	a musical technique where the accent is placed on the weak beat of a bar
throes	the effects of severe pain, such as spasms
unbridled	to be without restraints or controls
unscathed	to escape something unharmed or damaged