

Lesson Two (SS8H8a) – The student will *describe* the impact of the boll weevil and drought on Georgia.

## GEORGIA AGRICULTURE TAKES A HIT!!!

During the “New South” era, agricultural experts had urged farmers to *diversify*, rather than to continue their heavy dependence on cotton. Before farmers made changes, however, disaster struck:

### 1. The Boll Weevil:

- The boll weevil is a destructive insect that laid its eggs in cotton plants. As the larvae matures, it devours the cotton bolls.
- The insect was first swept into GA in 1915 in dust clouds from the west. By the early 1920s, it had destroyed nearly 2/3 of Georgia’s cotton crops.



By 1923, Georgia’s total cotton crop had dropped from 1.75 million bales a year to 588,000 bales.

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### 2. The 1920s Drought:

- Soon after the boll weevil crisis, a severe drought struck Georgia and the entire southeastern from 1924-1927.
- The 1920s drought was the worst drought in Georgia history on record. The year 1925 was the year “you could walk across the Chattahoochee River.”



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### 3. The Cost of Farm Equipment:

- Farm machinery producers began to stop producing old equipment, and began to turn to new farm technology, such as the motorized tractor.
- Unfortunately, the boll weevil and the drought drastically cut farm production, making it impossible for farmers to buy new equipment.



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### 4. The Migration of Farmers:

- The boll weevil catastrophe, the great 1920s drought, and the rising cost of farm equipment made it difficult for many farmers to survive.
- In the late 1920s, many farmers began to leave the farm and move to the city to find work.



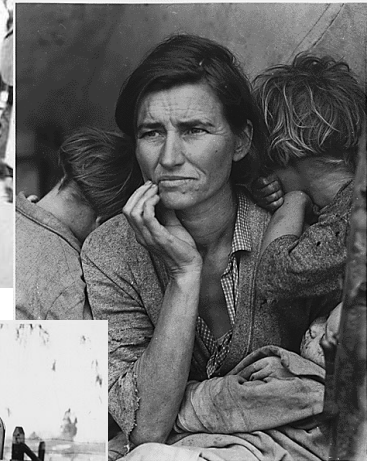
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Lesson Three (SS8H8b) – The student will *explain* economic factors that resulted in the Great Depression.

## THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Troubled times in Georgia throughout the 1920s were followed by an economic disaster on a national scale, with the Great Depression, lasting from 1929 to the late 1930s.

- The Great Depression was the longest period of high unemployment and low economic activity in modern history.
- The stock market crash of 1929 triggered the collapse of banks, the failure of businesses, and the start of the Great Depression.
- By 1932, 1/4 of all Americans were unemployed, and already struggling farm incomes dropped by 50%.



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## THE GREAT DEPRESSION



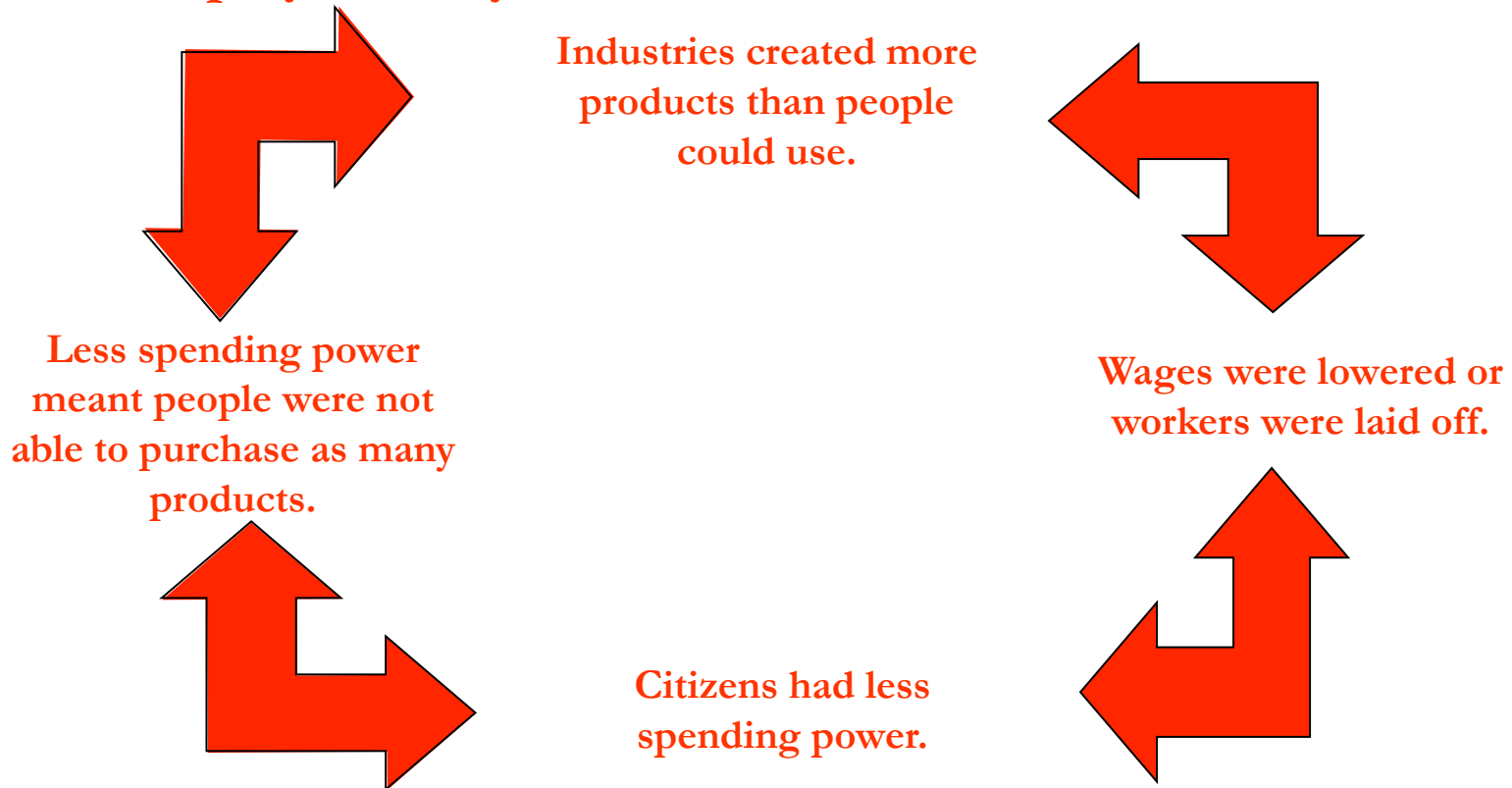
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## THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Multiple factors contributed to the Great Depression:

### 1. The Unemployment Cycle:



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## THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Multiple factors contributed to the Great Depression:

2. Workers, being paid low wages, bought on credit they couldn't repay.
3. The U.S. loaned money to struggling European nations after World War 1, but placed high tariffs on European goods, making it difficult for them to repay the loans.



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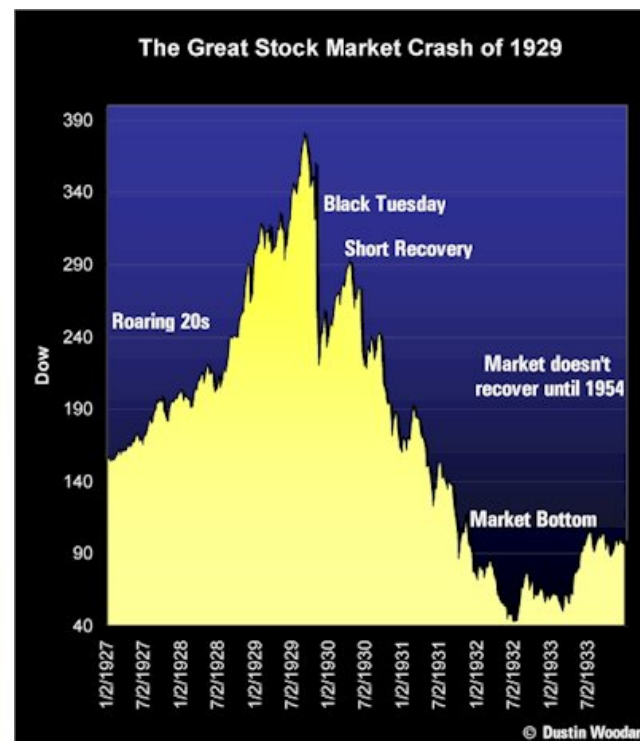
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## THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Multiple factors contributed to the Great Depression:

4. People over-specified on stocks, using borrowed money they couldn't repay when the stock-market crashed.

The Stock Market crashed in 1929 and would not fully recover until 1954!!!



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## What do you remember about... ...the Great Depression ???

1. Instead of relying exclusively on cotton, agricultural experts encouraged Georgia's farmers to \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Georgia's cotton industry was severely hurt by the \_\_\_\_\_ insect, which destroyed approximately \_\_\_ of Georgia's cotton crop.
3. From 1924-1927, Georgia experienced a \_\_\_\_\_, receiving the lowest amounts of rainfall in recorded history.
4. The natural hardships experienced by farmers resulted in a \_\_\_\_\_, as farmers left the farms to find work in the cities.
5. Over-speculation in the stock market, unwise loans to foreign governments, and a high unemployment cycle resulted in the \_\_\_\_\_, the longest period of high unemployment and low economic activity in modern history.

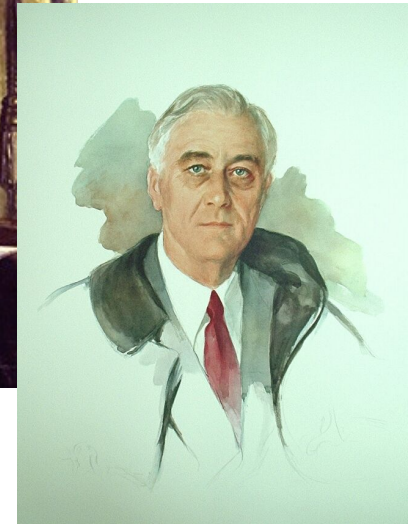
SS8H8 – The student will *analyze* the important events that occurred after World War I and their impact on Georgia.

Lesson Four (SS8H8d) – The student will *discuss* the effect of the New Deal in terms of the impact that the Civilian Conservation Corps, Agricultural Adjustment Act, rural electrification, and Social Security had on Georgia.

## THE NEW DEAL

American's turned to the leadership of Franklin Delano Roosevelt to end the Great Depression and return America to economic prosperity.

- Because Herbert Hoover was U.S. President when the Great Depression began, many in the nation blamed him for the nation's hardships.
- Franklin Delano Roosevelt promised to act immediately and to use all of the government's resources to end the hardships.
- FDR's program to end the Great Depression was called the "New Deal."



FDR is the only President to have been elected to more than two terms. He was elected to four!!!

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- Four of FDR's "New Deal" programs had particularly significant impact on Georgia:
  1. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) – This agency was created to put young men to work in projects aimed at conserving the nation's natural resources (soil conservation, tree planting, improving national parks, etc.).



The CCC improved Kennesaw Mt. National Battlefield, Cloudland Canyon State Park, and helped to construct the Appalachian Trail.

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  2. The Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) – Because many agricultural products had been overproduced (including cotton and peanuts), the AAA was passed to pay farmers subsidies in order to *not* grow certain products, restrict supply, and drive prices up



"I think I'll plow under every third parsnip."

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  3. Rural Electrification – In 1935, only 3% of Georgia's farms had power. The Rural Electrification Administration offered low-interest loans to organizations to build power lines in rural areas. By 1950, over 90% of GA farms had electricity.



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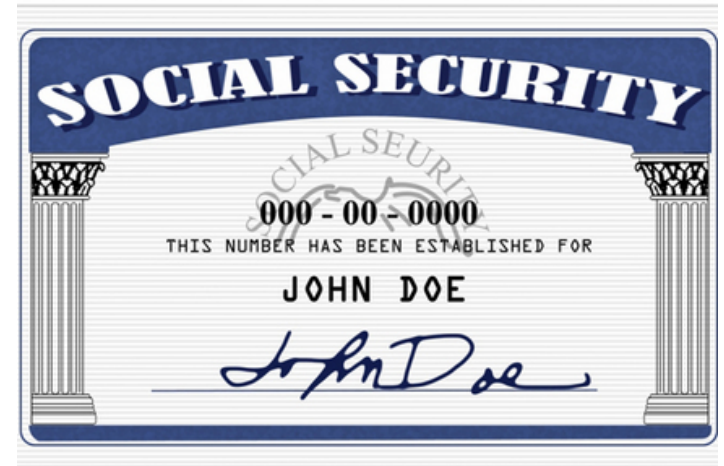
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4. Social Security – The Social Security Act created insurance for elderly, unemployed, and disabled people through contributions made by employees and their employers.



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Lesson Five (SS8H8c) – The student will *discuss* the impact of the political career of Eugene Talmadge.

## EUGENE TALMADGE

President Franklin Roosevelt's greatest political rival in the state of Georgia was Eugene Talmadge, a powerful, colorful, and controversial figure in Georgia politics from 1926-1946.

- Talmadge served three times as the commissioner of agriculture and three times as governor.
- Farmers backed Talmadge passionately, and he fought for farmer's issues throughout his entire career.
- As governor, Talmadge resisted efforts to give more civil rights to African-Americans.



UGA lost its *accreditation* when Talmadge forced the University to dismiss two faculty members who favored integrating the school.

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- Talmadge believed in low taxes and limited government, and he became a bitter opponent of increased government under FDR's "New Deal."
- Though many Georgians, especially farmers, loved Talmadge, his opposition to the New Deal and to civil rights created negative publicity for the state.
- In 1936, the pro-Talmadge forces suffered defeat when the pro-"New Deal" E.D. Rivers was elected Governor of Georgia.



In 1936, governors could not serve consecutive terms, so Talmadge was not eligible to run for office against E.D. Rivers.

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- Despite the election of Rivers, the popularity of Talmadge remained high, and many considered him a potential candidate to run for President against FDR.
- For decades, Georgia's Democratic Party was divided between big-government Democrats who supported the New Deal and the small-government, pro-farmer Democrats who supported Talmadge.



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What do you remember about...  
...the “New Deal”???

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| ___ 1. Paid farmers to not grow certain crops that were in large supply.                                  | A. E.D. Rivers                 |
| ___ 2. Powerful Georgia leader who was pro-farmer, anti-New Deal, and opposed to civil rights for blacks. | B. Civilian Conservation Corps |
| ___ 3. Provided insurance for the elderly, unemployed and disabled.                                       | C. Rural Electrification       |
| ___ 4. Georgia governor who supported the New Deal.   | D. Social Security Act         |
| ___ 5. Employed young men in jobs that conserved America’s natural resources.                             | E. Agricultural Adjustment Act |
| ___ 6. Provided low-interest loans to organizations that would build power lines to benefit farms.        | F. Eugene Talmadge             |

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