

Out of the Darkness

The Tennessee Valley Authority and the Great Depression



Introduction

The purpose of these lessons is to introduce students to the role that the creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) played in the economic development of the South during the Depression. The length of these lessons can be adjusted to meet your time constraints. Student access to a computer lab with Internet connectivity is recommended but not required. Another option is for the teacher to conduct the lessons in a classroom with one computer with Internet connectivity and an LCD projector.

Tennessee Curriculum Standards

These lessons help fulfill the following Tennessee Teaching Standards for:

The 1920s

- **US.31** Describe the impact of new technologies of the era, including the advent of air travel and spread of electricity. (C, E, H)

The Great Depression and New Deal

- **US.41** Describe the impact of the Great Depression on the American people, including: mass unemployment, migration, and Hoovervilles. (C, E, G, H)
- **US.43** Analyze the impact of the relief, recovery, and reform efforts of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs, including: (C, E, G, H, P, T)
 - Agricultural Adjustment Act
 - Civilian Conservation Corps
 - Fair Labor Standards Act
 - Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
 - National Recovery Administration
 - Securities and Exchange Commission
 - Social Security
 - Tennessee Valley Authority
 - Works Progress Administration
- **US.49** Identify the roles and the significant actions of the following individuals in World War II: (H, P)
 - Winston Churchill
 - Dwight D. Eisenhower
 - Adolf Hitler
 - Douglas MacArthur
 - George C. Marshall
 - Benito Mussolini
 - President Franklin D. Roosevelt
 - Joseph Stalin
 - Hideki Tojo
 - President Harry S. Truman

World War I and the Roaring Twenties (1920s-1940s)

- **5.16** Describe how New Deal policies of President Franklin D. Roosevelt impacted American society with government-funded programs, including: Social Security, expansion and development of the national parks, and creation of jobs. (C, E, G, H, P)

Tennessee in the 20th Century

- **5.48** Describe the effects of the Great Depression on Tennessee and the impact of New Deal policies in the state (i.e., Tennessee Valley Authority and Civilian Conservation Corps). (C, E, G, H, P, T)

Primary Documents and Supporting Texts

- Franklin Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address
- Political cartoons about the New Deal

Objectives

- Students will identify New Deal Programs/Initiatives (TVA).
- Students will analyze how World War II affected the American economy.
- Students will recognize the effects of the New Deal and World War II on the Tennessee Valley.
- Students will explore how World War II had an impact on everyday American life.
- Students will assess the lasting impact of the New Deal policies.



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Mini lessons that meet Tennessee Curriculum Standards that can be taught using Currents of Change online resources.

If you want to teach about the Tennessee Valley before TVA....

Try this...

Show "The Tennessee Valley before TVA" on DVD or online at www.currentsofchange.net

Recall from video: *Who created TVA? In what year was TVA created?*

Think-Pair-Share: *Have students think about the following question for a moment, then pair with a peer and share their response.*

Discuss as a class: *Why was the creation of TVA and the building of dams such an effective solution for the Tennessee Valley during the Great Depression?*

Extension Activity: *Have students write a written response to the following questions: Do you think TVA was the right solution for the Tennessee Valley? Was there anything that would have made it better?*

If you want to teach about eminent domain....

Try this...

Using the Eminent Domain Resource from the Currents of Change website, discuss the definition of eminent domain and its applicability in the Tennessee Valley Authority Act of 1933.

Have students decide whether they agree, disagree, strongly agree, or strongly disagree with eminent domain and its use in TN and why they feel that way.

In the class, have the following four choices posted in different areas of the room: Agree, Disagree, Strongly Agree, or Strongly Disagree. Students go to the area that matches their choice and share with the others why they chose that option.

A group leader from each group explains their choice and once all groups have gone, the floor can be open for debate of the choices (students are able, at this point, to move to a different option if they change their mind).

Watch Norris Dam abbreviated video clip. Give students the opportunity to change their minds again.

If you want to teach about the impact of TVA on the Tennessee Valley....

Try this...

Compare and contrast the before and after TVA photos found online:

Using the photo resource online, have students compare and contrast before and after pictures as a class. Individually, students then write how the pictures demonstrate the impact of TVA on the Tennessee Valley.

