

The Great Depression

THE DUST BOWL

INTRODUCTION



A wall of dust approaches
a Kansas town
October 4, 1935

- ✘ Learning about the Dust Bowl is important to understanding this era in history. In order to better comprehend how individuals coped with the devastation of the Dust Bowl, you will create a fictional diary from the point of view of a person who lived through those years.

The Task
Step One

THE DUST BOWL

TASK

- ✘ In order to create the diary, you will research this historical period by answering questions and exploring websites. You will then fulfill a list of requirements as you write the diary in order to produce an authentic, meaningful piece of writing.



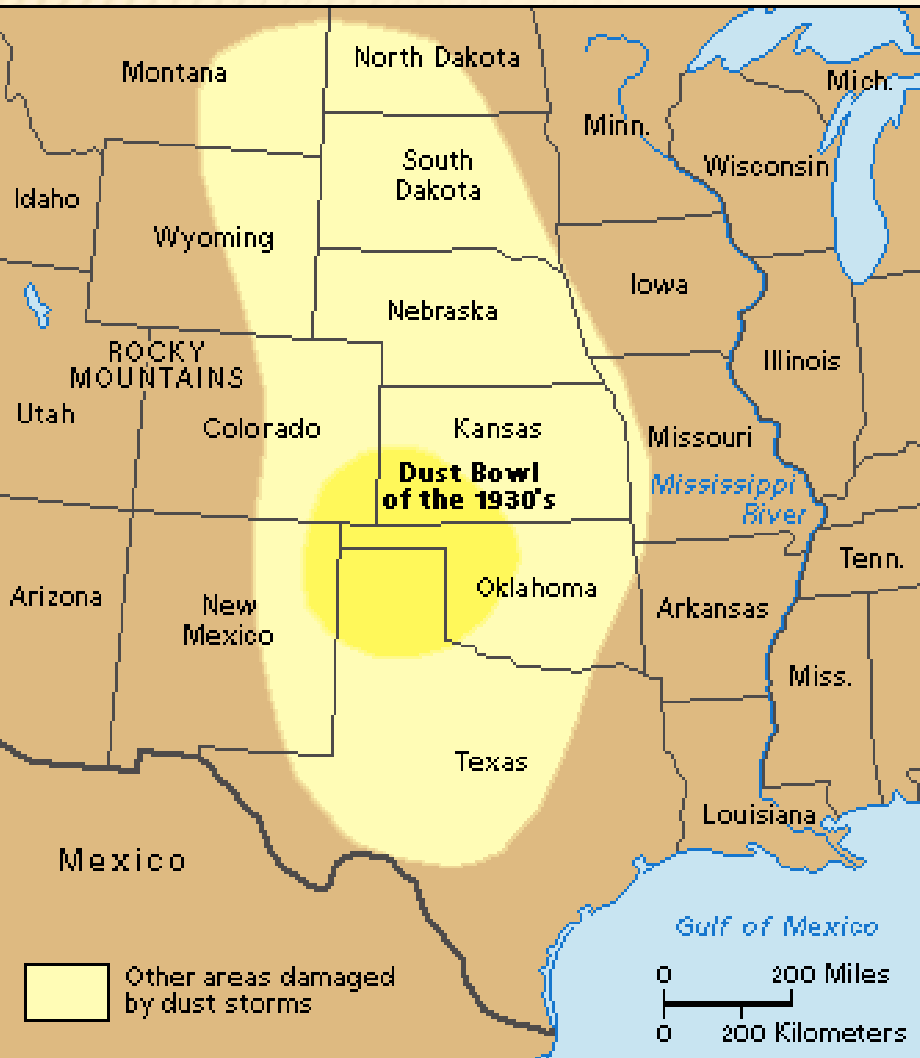
Arthur Rothstein, photographer,
1936.

✘ The Dust Bowl

THE PROCESS

Answering the following questions will help you understand the Dust Bowl era more completely. Use the websites provided to find the answers to these questions. Your answers should be written **IN YOUR OWN WORDS AND IN COMPLETE SENTENCES** on a separate sheet of paper. You may type your answers.

STEP ONE



- ✘ 1. What five states were MOST affected by the Dust Bowl? Use the map from World Book Student to answer this question.

The Dust Bowl era covered most of the 1930s. Go to the [Timeline](#) on the *American Experience* website about the Dust Bowl to answer questions 2 through 5.

- ✘ 2. How many dust storms were reported in 1932? In 1933?
- ✘ 3. The drought of 1934 was the worst in United States history. How many states were severely affected? What percent of the country did this cover?
- ✘ 4. In December of 1934 the Yearbook of Agriculture published facts about the devastation to the land. How many acres of formerly cultivated land were destroyed for crop production? How many acres lost all or most of the topsoil?
- ✘ 5. In 1938 there was a 65% reduction in soil blowing. How was this achieved?

Timeline Website if link will not access:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/timeline/dustbowl/>

Use this page from *American Experience* about the **Drought** to answer questions 6 through 8.

- ✘ 6. The drought was at least partially responsible for the Dust Bowl. How often do dry spells occur in the Plains states?
- ✘ 7. Drought alone did not cause the Dust Bowl; misuse of the land was also a factor. How was the land misused? Be specific.
- ✘ 8. What happened on Black Sunday? Go to **Black Sunday** to find out and then give specific details about what happened to people and/or property on that day.

Website for the Drought if link does not access:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/general-article/dustbowl-drought/>

Website for Black Sunday if link does not work:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/general-article/dustbowl-black-sunday/>

Use this page from *American Experience* about the Mass Exodus to answer questions 9 & 10.

- ✘ 9. The Dust Bowl exodus was the largest migration in American history. How many people moved out of the Plains states by 1940?
- ✘ 10. About 200,000 of the 2.5 million people who left their homes journeyed to California. In what ways was life there hard for these migrants? Give three specific ways.
- ✘ Website for Mass Exodus if the link does not access:
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/general-article/dustbowl-mass-exodus-plains/>

It's hard for us today to imagine what it was like to experience these dust storms. Descriptions and pictures can help. Click on this page about the [Dust Bowl](#) from Kansas State University and scroll down the page to look at the photos, paying special attention to the captions next to the pictures.

✘ 11. Write down one observation about these photos that you found surprising, amazing, or otherwise noteworthy

✘ Website for Dust Bowl if the link does not access:
http://www.weru.ksu.edu/new_weru/multimedia/dustbowl/dustbowlpics.html

It has been said that a picture is worth 1,000 words. The Library of Congress has many pictures from the Dust Bowl available to us online. Go to their [Dust Bowl Migration](#) Primary Source Set to see some of these pictures. For best viewing, click “Download” under the thumbnail views of the pictures (it may take a few minutes to load, but the picture size will be bigger.)

✘ Website for Dust Bowl Migration if the link does not access:

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/dust-bowl-migration/>

-
- ✘ 12. & 13. Choose two of these pictures to write about. For each picture, describe what you see, paying attention to detail, and explain your reaction to what you see (how does it make you feel, what conclusions do you draw, what did you learn).
 - ✘ 14. Choose one of the Recorded Sound MP3 files to listen to. Summarize what you hear in a brief paragraph.

The Task
Step Two

THE DUST BOWL

CREATING THE DIARY

- ✘ You must write a *minimum* of three diary entries. Your entries should contain the following information:
- ✘ Your first journal entry must explain some general facts about yourself and your fictional family. These facts must include your fictional name, number of family members, occupation, location, and any other relevant information you wish to include.
- ✘ Each entry must be dated, and contain relevant facts gathered through the use of this PowerPoint such as time, place, location, and conditions that you and your family experienced.
- ✘ Each journal entry must be at least one paragraph in length, paragraphs must be 5 or more sentences with an introduction sentence, three supporting detail sentences and a closing sentence.

YOU SHOULD TRY TO COVER ALL OF THE FOLLOWING TOPICS/ISSUES:

- ✘ Concerns you have and concerns of your fellow family members.
- ✘ Reactions to the Dust Bowl.
- ✘ How you and your family are dealing with the Dust Bowl and how the Dust Bowl impacts your daily life.
- ✘ Some facts and figures about the Dust Bowl used within your journal entries.

✘ *The best diaries will have more than three entries, and each entry should be longer than one paragraph. If you want to be really creative, create an actual book, with a cover, and write your entries by hand!*

EVALUATION RUBRIC

	Questions (x 2)	Diary Content (x 2)	Diary Presentation
5	All but one or two questions are answered thoroughly and correctly. Answers are all written in complete sentences.	Diary has at least five entries. Each entry is substantial (more than two paragraphs). The entries meet all of the requirements for the assignment.	Student has gone far beyond the basic requirements to create a product that looks like a diary, including a cover and handwritten (or the use of a font that looks like handwriting), dated entries.
4	All but three or four questions are answered correctly. Most answers are written in complete sentences.	Diary has four or five entries. Each entry is thoroughly written (more than two paragraphs). The entries meet nearly all of the requirements for the assignment.	Student creates a product that looks something like a diary, including a cover and separate, dated entries.
3	Four or five questions are answered incorrectly. Some answers have incomplete sentences.	Diary has three entries. The entries are adequate (one thorough paragraph for each entry). The entries meet many of the requirements for the assignment.	Student creates a product that reads like a diary, with separate, dated entries.
2	Six or seven questions are answered incorrectly. Many answers have incomplete sentences.	Diary has three entries. The entries are inadequate (one brief paragraph for each entry). The entries meet some of the requirements for the assignment.	Student creates a product that may not always read like a diary because it does not have separate, dated entries.
1	Fewer than seven questions are answered correctly. Most answers have incomplete sentences.	Diary has fewer than three entries. The entries are inadequate. Many of the requirements for the assignment are missing.	Student creates a product that does not read like a diary.
0	No answers have been submitted.	No diary entries have been submitted.	No diary entries have been submitted.