

Farmlands Turn to Dust

Teacher Name: _____ ***Student Name:*** _____

Date: ____ / ____ /20 ____ Per. ____

Use the word bank to fill in the blanks below:

1929
borrowed

crop
livestock

North Dakota
Plains



In the early 1930s, during the worst of the Great Depression, thousands of farmers in the _____ states were forced to abandon their homes, their farms, and their livelihood.

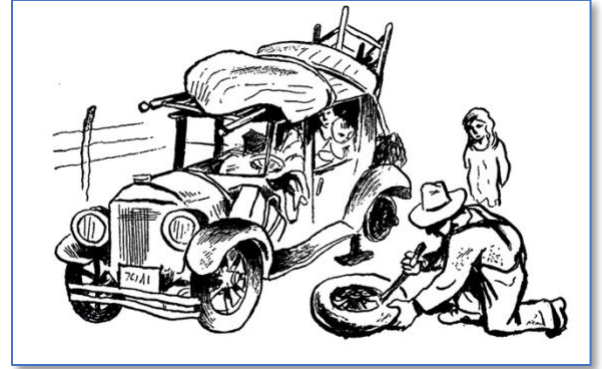
In the previous decade they had been doing well; they had produced abundant crops and their farms thrived, but in an attempt to supply the needs of a clamoring public, they had overworked the land. During boom times, scant attention had been paid to _____ rotation or soil conservation. Trees had been uprooted to give more space to profitable farmland. And, like other people in the United States, farmers had _____ money, assuming that the good times would last.

But the good times didn't last; after the stock market crash of _____, farmers, along with everyone else, faced economic hard times.

Crop prices dropped, and many farms were subject to bank foreclosures. Then, enormous dust storms created by drought and winds swept through the land, making it uninhabitable and unworkable. Most of the

_____ died and the machinery was rendered unusable. By 1934, the Dust Bowl – a name that only hints

at the bleakness – extended over some 25,000 square miles of land, from Texas to _____. In a forced migration under heavy clouds of uprooted soil, farmers and their families, many in beaten up cars, fled west hoping to find work. Most lived for years in poverty and some never recovered.



Questions ~

1. Which states were likely to have been subject to the dust storms and the consequent farmer migrations?
2. To which states did the migrant farmers go?
3. How did geography help aggravate the depression in the United States?
4. What caused the Dust Bowl environmental disaster?
5. What American novel describes the plight of these farmers and the economic state of the country?
6. Did Roosevelt's New Deal help migrant farmers in the Dust Bowl years?
7. What events would eventually help turn the economy around?

More ...

- Underline one sentence in the worksheet above that best summarizes this topic.
- Circle any words that are new to you.
- Write a paragraph about historical events led to other mass migrations in the USA.