

# Marking the History

## 6th Grade Social Studies Lesson

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**Big Idea:** Students will learn about the Works Progress Administration (WPA) during Roosevelt's New Deal Program and how it helped individuals as well as created a lasting legacy.

### Essential Questions:

1. How did the United States respond to the Great Depression through the WPA?
2. How did the WPA affect West Virginia?

### West Virginia Career and College Readiness Standards:

**SS.6.2:** Compare and contrast different forms of government worldwide and their influence on historic world events:

- The Great Depression

**SS.6.20:** Explain the global causes and effects of the Great Depression.

- Analyze the political response to the economic and social conditions of the Great Depression in the United States and Germany.

### Learning Plan

1. Students watch the short video about the Great Depression in West Virginia featuring Discovery Room 18 at the West Virginia State Museum and complete the brief video notes handout (attached)
  - a. Link to Video: <https://wvstatemuseum.wv.gov/Videos/DR18.webm>
2. Discuss with students some of the New Deal programs that President Franklin D. Roosevelt initiated to help with the Great Depression.
3. Show students the excerpt of Executive Order 7034. Use the document analysis worksheet from the U.S. Archives.
  - a. Link to U.S. Archives Document Analysis Worksheet:  
<https://www.archives.gov/files/education/lessons/document-analysis/english/analyze-a-written-document-intermediate.pdf>  
*\*A Spanish version of the file is available here: [español analizar un documento escrito](#)*
  - b. Discuss with students questions at the bottom of the document analysis worksheet.
4. Show students webpage: <https://wvnewdealtrail.com/>
  - a. Have students list the projects of the WPA in WV.
5. Show the selected roadside marker to the students. Ask students if they have ever seen one of these markers. Discuss facts from the following website:  
<https://archive.wvculture.org/history/markers/markers.html>
  - a. You will need to navigate to a subpage of your choosing. You can search the database, discuss the program itself, guidelines for markers, the application process, and sesquicentennial markers. There is also a subpage about ordering the *Signs of the Times: West Virginia's Highway Historical Marker Program* book.
6. Tell students they will create their own Historic Marker for the area in which they live. They can choose any place, event, or person. They will need to research the information about the place, event, or person. Using that information, they will create their own Historic Marker (template attached).
7. When complete, students will present their historic markers to the class.

**Extension:**

Students vote on the class historic markers and then make an application to the Department of Arts, Culture and History to have the marker considered for publication.

*Link to Application:* <https://archive.wvculture.org/history/markers/markerapplication1.pdf>

**Notes to Instructor:**

Teacher should select a particular roadside marker from the database located at:

<https://archive.wvculture.org/history/wvmemory/hm.aspx>

Alternatively, the teacher can take a picture of a roadside marker that is located in the community and bring the photo into the class for use.

**Additional Links and Resources**

- Excerpt of Executive Order 7034: Creating Machinery for the Works Progress Administration (attached)
  - *Link to full text:* [Executive Order 7034](https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/executive-order-7034-establishing-the-division-applications-and-information-the-advisory)  
<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/executive-order-7034-establishing-the-division-applications-and-information-the-advisory>
- The Library of Congress | American Memory Project: [“Today in History - April 8th”](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/today/apr08.html)
  - <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/today/apr08.html>
- [History Channel | The Great Depression | New Deal](https://www.history.com/topics/great-depression/new-deal)
  - <https://www.history.com/topics/great-depression/new-deal>

**Attachments**

- Video Notes Handout
- U.S. Archives Document Analysis Worksheet (English)
- Excerpt of Executive Order 7034
- Historic Marker Template

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Video Notes Handout

*As you watch and listen to the video, fill in the blanks to complete these notes.*

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ hit West Virginia as hard as it did the rest of the country.
  - a. This was the worst economic downturn in United States history and it lasted for more than a decade.
  - b. It began in 1929 with the stock market crash and ended during World War II in 1941. In addition to the stock market crash, bank failures, additional collapse in already-low farm prices, and industrial overproduction all contributed to the Great Depression.
  - c. By early 1933, almost 13 million Americans were out of work and the unemployment rate rose to 25 percent.
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ in Preston County is one of the finest examples of \_\_\_\_\_ of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal programs.
  - a. Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) was elected President of the United States in 1932.
  - b. The New Deal expanded the role of the federal government in the economy. It included a number of programs and legislative initiatives and policies meant to help lift the country out of the Great Depression.
  - c. Resettlement communities were a New Deal program that helped relocate struggling families to planned communities by the federal government to offer them new opportunities.
  
3. Many of West Virginia's \_\_\_\_\_ were built during this time as well. Many of the \_\_\_\_\_ are still standing and sturdy today.
  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ reached rural communities during this time. Iceboxes, electric mixers, and even irons made \_\_\_\_\_ easier for women both in the country and the city.

## Excerpt from Executive Order 7034

May 6, 1935

By virtue of and pursuant to the authority vested in me under the “Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935,” approved April 8, 1935 (Public Resolution No. 11, 74th Congress), and of all other authority vested in me, it is hereby ordered as follows:

- I. I hereby establish within the Government certain agencies, and prescribe their respective functions and duties as follows:

...the Works Progress Administration shall have the following powers and duties:

1. To establish and operate a division of progress investigation, and to coordinate the pertinent work of existing investigative agencies of the Government, so as to insure the honest execution of the work relief program.
2. To formulate, and, with the approval of the President, to require uniform periodic reports of progress on all projects; and, where any avoidable delay appears, forthwith to recommend to the President appropriate measures for eliminating such delay, and, similarly, to recommend the termination of projects where it develops that they are not affording the amount of employment warranting their continuance.
3. With the approval of the President, to prescribe rules and regulations:
  - a. To assure that as many of the persons employed on all work projects as is feasible shall be persons receiving relief; and
  - b. To govern the selection of such persons for such employment.
4. To formulate and administer a system of uniform periodic reports of the employment on such projects of persons receiving relief.
5. To investigate wages and working conditions and to make and submit to the President such findings as will aid the President in prescribing working conditions and rates of pay on projects.

In addition to the foregoing powers and duties, the Works Progress Administration shall:

1. Provide for the coordination of such data compiling projects as form a part of the work relief program and of such portions of other research activities as may be necessary or useful in carrying out such program.
2. Coordinate all requests for opinions and decisions addressed to the Executive departments or independent establishments of the Government on questions affecting the administration of the Act or of orders issued thereunder.
3. Recommend and carry on small useful projects designed to assure a maximum of employment in all localities.



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*Write your Historic Marker Title on the line.*

*Write historical information about the person, event, or place in the space below.*

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*Name*

