

TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES AND THE LOUISIANA DIGITAL LIBRARY

Louisiana Gumbo Lesson Resource

Louisiana Gumbo: A Recipe for Empowerment Project is funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Grant partners include the State Library of Louisiana, the LOUISiana Digital Library, the Louisiana State Museum, and The Historic New Orleans Collectio

HERBERT HOOVER'S UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF AGENCY: RELIEF FOR LOUISIANA

Subject: Social Studies

Grade Level: 11

Overview

Through the Herbert Hoover's Unemployment Relief Agency: Relief for Louisiana lesson, students examine Hoover's approach to solving unemployment problems during the Great Depression. Students examine funding and work projects in six Louisiana cities to determine whether federal funding had a direct impact on the number of work projects that existed in the state.

Approximate Duration: 1 day

Content Standards:

- **History: Time, Continuity, and Change**
Students develop a sense of historical time and historical perspective as they study the history of their community, state, nation, and world.

Benchmarks:

- **H-1A-H3** interpreting and evaluating the historical evidence presented in primary and secondary sources;

Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs):

- **Historical Thinking Skills**
Grade 9-12
9. U.S. History: Evaluate and use multiple primary or secondary materials to interpret historical facts, ideas, or issues (H-1A-H3)

Interdisciplinary Connections:

English/Language Arts : Standard 5 Students locate, select, and synthesize information from a variety of texts, media, references, and technological sources to acquire and communicate knowledge.

Educational Technology Standards:

- Use appropriate technology to locate, retrieve, organize, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information for problem solving and decision-making.

Objectives:

The student will

1. Select and use available/appropriate technology to access and analyze electronic primary artifacts stored in the LOUISiana Digital library database;

2. Compare and contrast two or more primary sources concerning Louisiana work projects for accuracy of historical information;
3. Prepare and interpret a chart that documents the progress of Louisiana-based work projects;
4. Use reading comprehension skills and available technology to locate, select, and synthesize information from primary and secondary sources to acquire and communicate knowledge about events, ideas, and issues related to the great Depression;
5. Demonstrate historical perspective by participating in a class discussion concerning the political, social, and economic context of Depression-era federal aid programs.

Lesson Materials and Resources:

1. Background Essay. Great Depression: Relief for Louisiana
Directed Browsing Guide: Relief for Louisiana (guide sheet, essay rubric, chart rubric)
2. Websites: Louisiana Digital Library louisdl.louislibraries.org
3. Background Information: "Relief for Louisiana."

Lesson Procedures:**Pre-Lesson Preparation**

1. Divide class into sets of partners.
2. Arrange access to computer lab; 1 computer per group of students.
3. Make copies of the Directed Browsing Guide: Relief for Louisiana (student instruction sheet, essay and chart rubrics included)

Procedure

1. Explain that this lesson will ask students to work together in a case study investigation into depression-era government relief programs that existed in Louisiana. In their investigation, they will use a primary document, Board of Directors Minutes 1932-1933, from the LOUISiana Digital Library. This document contains information about how Herbert Hoover's Great Depression-era Unemployment Relief Agency attempted to relieve the depression in Louisiana. Explain that each set of research partners (or group) will use their research information to prepare a chart that compares and contrasts aid in various Louisiana parishes.
2. Distribute the Relief for Louisiana Browsing Guide and Chart. If necessary, illustrate how to open and view documents in the LOUISiana Digital Library (see Technology Tips under Reproducible Materials).
3. Illustrate how to open the chart using Microsoft Word, how to enter information, and how to exit the chart to view the resultant graph.
4. Is there a direct relationship between federal funding by the Unemployment Relief Agency and the number of work projects that existed in Louisiana? Explain that each set of partners will use their graph information to determine whether amount of funds granted by the Unemployment Relief Agency impacted the number of work projects that existed in each of the six cities. Each set of partners will then write a short essay in which they use specific information from the readings and/or graph to support their answer.
5. Provide access to computers and adequate research time. Students A) select and use available/appropriate technology to access and analyze electronic primary artifacts stored in the LOUISiana Digital library database and B) compare and contrast two or more primary sources
6. LOUISiana Digital library database and B) compare and contrast two or more primary sources concerning Louisiana work projects for accuracy of historical information.

7. **Debrief:** Ask students to volunteer to read their essays. Discuss the impact the Unemployment Relief Agency had on Louisiana. This can be used to culminate a discussion on Hoover's administration and his approach to solving the problems related to the Great Depression. Students A) demonstrate historical perspective by participating in a class discussion concerning the political, social, and economic context of Depression-era federal aid programs, and B) communicate knowledge about events, ideas, and issues related to the Great Depression.

Assessment Procedures:

1. Graph Rubric
2. Essay Rubric

Accommodations/Modifications Built Into the Lesson

- Cooperative grouping
- Small class segments
- Whole class debriefing sessions
- Pre-teach vocabulary words
- Extensions/Explorations can be modified for individual needs
- Debriefing provides systematic feedback

Reproducible Materials:

- Relief for Louisiana Browsing Guide
- [Relief for Louisiana Chart and Graph](#)

Explorations and Extensions:

1. WPA Photos: Children of the WPA, New Orleans Public Library (www.nutrias.org)
2. Depression Era to World War II ~ FSA/OWI ~ Photographs ~ 1935-1945, American Memory (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/fsowhome.html>)

Lesson Development Resources:

Helenak, Roman. Local Reaction to the Great Depression in New Orleans, 1929-.1933, Louisiana History, X. Fall 1969), 289-306.

Richard, C.E. Louisiana: An Illustrated History. 1st ed. Baton Rouge: Foundation for Excellence in Education, 2003.

Contact Information:

Memory Seymour

memory.seymour@sos.louisiana.gov

LOUISiana Gumbo Education Coordinator

Relief for Louisiana Case Study Investigation
Student Instructions and Directed Browsing Guide

INSTRUCTIONS

Chart Activity: Relief by Parish**Historical Question: “How does government funding affect social and economic aid?”**

1. Use the link and page numbers listed under Research Links below to read extracts from the primary document, Board of Directors Minutes 1932-1933. This document provides information concerning Herbert Hoover’s Unemployment Relief Agency as it existed in Louisiana through early 1933.
2. Use the chart/graph template on the next page to create a graph that shows
 - a. relief funds requested by specific Louisiana cities (see graph for cities),
 - b. relief funds actually granted, and
 - c. work projects in progress from January 1933 through April 1933.
3. Examine your graph information and provide a written summary to answer the following question: **“How does government funding affect social and economic aid?”**

RESEARCH LINKS

From the Louisiana Digital Library (<http://louisdl.louislibraries.org>), open the following document and read the indicated pages. For background information, read the **Great Depression: Relief for Louisiana** essay.

Document: [Board of Directors Minutes 1932 - 1933](http://louisdl.louislibraries.org/cgi-bin/docviewer.exe?CISOROOT=/ABW&CISOPTR=105); <http://louisdl.louislibraries.org/cgi-bin/docviewer.exe?CISOROOT=/ABW&CISOPTR=105>

Individual pages:

1. For information on total funding by the Unemployment Relief Agency through January 1933: Select **“[Financial Statement \(Nov. 1932 - Mar. 1933\)](#)” Page 38**
2. For information on Louisiana work projects in progress in April 1933: Select **“[Report of the Field Director \(4/29/33\)](#)” Page 52**
3. For information on budget request and actual amount funded per city in April 1933: Select **“[District Budget Request](#)” Page 38**

Graph Scoring Guide

Graph contains the following correct information for each of the required 6 cities:

- a. relief funds requested by specific Louisiana cities (see graph for cities),
- b. relief funds actually granted, and
- c. work projects in progress from January 1933 through April 1933.

Great Depression: Relief for Louisiana Background Essay

The ideas of rugged individualism and self-help have historically shaped American attitudes toward social welfare. Through the early years of the twentieth century, Americans remained adamantly opposed to public relief, insisting that only private charity should provide for the needy. From the outset of the Great Depression, President Hoover reaffirmed this practice and expressed his belief that relief for the needy was a local, not national, responsibility. In 1930, the city of New Orleans put this theory of local responsibility to the test.

A Case in Point: New Orleans. On March 6, 1930, New Orleans Mayor T. Semmes Walmsley called a conference of labor leaders and businessmen to deal with the problem of unemployment in New Orleans. To identify the intensity of the problem, a subcommittee was established to register the unemployed. A total of 10,345 individuals were identified, although given the reluctance of many to identify themselves as needy, the number in need of assistance may have been much higher. In 1931 the New Orleans Welfare Committee was formed for the purpose of locating jobs for the unemployed.

Although the city provided \$10,000, the chief source of funds, \$500,000 in one year, was a contribution made by city employees who donated 5 per cent of their salary. By the summer of 1932 the New Orleans Welfare Committee replaced job-finding efforts with work relief, giving part-time work to about two thousand persons. Some additional help was received from the State Unemployment Relief Committee when it obtained from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation a loan of \$1 million, part of which was allocated to New Orleans. At the end of 1932 the State Unemployment Relief Committee employed more than seven thousand persons in the Orleans district, and 8.3 per cent of the population benefited from this assistance.

Struggling with mounting case loads and diminishing revenues, social workers questioned the validity of Hoover's "local responsibility" doctrine. By 1932 most welfare spokesmen recognized unemployment relief as a public obligation to which the jobless were entitled. An August 1932 report from the relief director entitled *Protecting the Moral Fiber*, (from the Louisiana State Archives) stresses the state's moral responsibility to the people during this time of extreme financial stress.

The *Great Depression: Relief for Louisiana* resource documents illustrate relief programs in Louisiana as organized by the Unemployment Relief Committee, initiated during Hoover's administration, and the New Deal Federal Emergency Relief Administration. In April of 1933 the Board of Directors of the Unemployment Relief Committee made their final reports and transferred all funds and documents to the newly established Federal Emergency Relief Administration.

On August 25, 1933 Harry Hopkins, Federal Emergency Relief Administrator, spoke to the Board of Directors of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration of the State of Louisiana concerning the status of FERA programs and future funding for Louisiana.

RELIEF FOR LOUISIANA PRIMARY DOCUMENTS

[Policy for guidance of Relief Aid](#): guidelines for granting aid to individuals.

Primary Documents that Provide a Comparison of the Unemployment Relief Agency and the Federal Emergency Relief Agency programs

HERBERT HOOVER

Progress and Decline of the Herbert Hoover's Unemployment Relief Administration:

DOCUMENT: *Guidelines of the Unemployment Relief Administration as established by the Emergency Relief and Construction Act of 1932* (<http://louisdl.louislibraries.org/cgi-bin/docviewer.exe?CISOROOT=/ABW&CISOPTR=105>) and funded by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation

- Governor's Proclamation Issued July 29, 1932; Page 21
- Guidelines for establishing relief aid in Louisiana, Unemployment Relief Committee; Page 1
- Analysis Report; Page 8
- Cost of caring for each relief case; page 9
- Report of the State Supervisor of Relief (1/28/33); Page 25
- Final Report of Relief Director (4/29/33); Page 49
- Summary of Relief programs provided by URA; Page 52
- Closing of the Unemployment Relief Administration; page 56
- Chairman's Final Report (4/29/33);Page 42
- Unemployment Relief Administration, Field Director's Final Report (4-29-33); Page 52
- Explanation of the future Federal Emergency Relief Administration; Page 57
- Closing Proclamation; Page 59

FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT

Birth of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration

Board of Directors Minutes 1933, Emergency Relief Administration for the state of Louisiana

(<http://louisdl.louislibraries.org/cgi-bin/docviewer.exe?CISOROOT=/ABW&CISOPTR=106>)

[Discussion with Harry Hopkins \(Federal Emergency Relief Administrator\) Conversations, August 25, 1933, New Orleans, LA \(Page 15\)](#)

- Food Relief; Page 25
- Teachers and Education; Page 26
- Funds for subsistence homes and action through liberal interpretation; Page 27
- The effect of ten cent cotton; Page 30
- Taking farmers off relief rolls; Page 31
- Concerning farmers on relief rolls, Page 32-33
- The Work projects in progress in April 1933, Budget request and funding by district April 1933; Page 39

Total funding by URA through January 1933, Unemployment Relief Administration (see Funding document available under Reproducible Materials from lesson plan) documents provide students with an opportunity to graph expenditures for Louisiana-based work projects and to assess the value of these project