Boom, Bust, Dust

Trace causes and effects across the 1920s and 1930s

SS24.5.7 "Describe the economic developments in the United States during the Roaring Twenties that caused the 1929 stock market crash. 7a Explain how the Great Depression impacted Alabamians and the nation, including increased labor tensions..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the two stock-buying actions that helped push prices up, circle one hardship in Alabama and one across the nation, and number the two conditions that made Dust Bowl storms possible.

When Trouble Spread

1. In the 1920s, factories made more cars and other goods, and many Americans bought them with borrowed money. Investors also borrowed money to buy stocks, or shares of businesses. This was called buying on margin. Stock prices climbed as more people rushed to buy, even when prices grew higher than businesses seemed worth. In October 1929, nervous investors sold shares, prices plunged, and many borrowers could not repay their loans.

2. The crash did not cause every problem of the Great Depression, but it made a weak economy worse. Across the nation, banks failed, businesses closed, and millions lost their jobs. In Alabama, falling cotton prices left farm families with little money. Mill owners cut workers' pay or hours. Some workers protested or joined unions to demand better pay, while employers resisted. These disagreements increased labor tensions as families struggled to buy food.

3. At the same time, another disaster struck parts of the southern Great Plains, including western Oklahoma, the Texas Panhandle, and parts of Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico. Years of drought dried the soil. Farmers had plowed up grasses whose roots once held it in place. Strong winds swept loose dirt into huge dust storms that damaged farms and homes. Some families left to seek work elsewhere. This region became known as the Dust Bowl.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did two actions by stock buyers help set up the 1929 crash?

2. Describe one hardship during the Great Depression in Alabama and one across the nation. How could each affect a family?

3. Why did labor tensions increase when Alabama mill owners cut pay or hours?

4. What two conditions helped cause Dust Bowl storms, and what areas did the storms affect?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five-sentence newspaper report from 1935 about a family in a Dust Bowl area considering a move to Alabama. Link the stock rush and crash to job losses, explain why the family might leave, and show a labor conflict they might face in Alabama.

ANSWER KEY # Boom, Bust, Dust

GRADE 5 · SS24.5.7

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the two stock-buying actions that helped push prices up, circle one hardship in Alabama and one across the nation, and number the two conditions that made Dust Bowl storms possible. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did two actions by stock buyers help set up the 1929 crash?	**Investors borrowed money to buy stocks, and more people rushed to buy shares. Prices rose beyond what businesses seemed worth, then plunged when investors began selling.**
2	Describe one hardship during the Great Depression in Alabama and one across the nation. How could each affect a family?	**Falling cotton prices left Alabama farm families with little money. Across the nation, job losses left families without wages.**
3	Why did labor tensions increase when Alabama mill owners cut pay or hours?	**Workers needed money for food, so some protested or joined unions to demand better pay, while employers resisted.**
4	What two conditions helped cause Dust Bowl storms, and what areas did the storms affect?	**Drought dried the soil, and plowing removed grasses that held it in place. The storms affected parts of the southern Great Plains, including western Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In 1935, a family in western Oklahoma watched wind carry away the dry soil from their farm. Drought and plowing up grass had helped turn the land into dust, so they considered moving to Alabama. Years earlier, people borrowed to buy stocks and rushed to buy shares, but falling prices in 1929 left many borrowers unable to repay loans. As banks and businesses failed, jobs became hard to find across the nation. In Alabama, the family might find mill workers protesting because owners had cut their pay or hours.

Accept other named Dust Bowl areas from the passage. Reports should connect the events without claiming that the crash alone caused every hardship of the Great Depression.