Change Reaches Alabama

New Deal goals and effects across the state

SS24.US2.5a "Describe the effects of New Deal programs on Alabama, outlining the problems they sought to address."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the problems New Deal programs aimed to address, circle each program's name, and draw a line from each circled name to one effect it had in Alabama.

What Changed in Alabama?

1 On a cold morning in the 1930s, an Alabama farm family might light a kerosene lamp while a factory in town used electric power. The Great Depression had cut jobs and incomes, and many rural homes still had no electricity. In northern Alabama, the Tennessee Valley Authority, or TVA, built dams on the Tennessee River to control flooding, improve navigation, and generate power. Construction created jobs, while electricity supported homes and businesses that could connect to the new lines. The Rural Electrification Administration, or REA, helped local cooperatives borrow money to extend power lines into the countryside.

2 Unemployment also left young men without wages, while damaged land made farm life harder. The Civilian Conservation Corps, or CCC, hired young men for conservation work in Alabama. Crews planted trees, fought soil erosion, and built trails and park facilities, including work at Cheaha State Park. Their pay helped workers and often their families, and the projects protected land and expanded public recreation. Another agency, the Works Progress Administration, or WPA, paid unemployed adults to build or repair roads, schools, and other public facilities. These projects provided wages immediately and left communities with useful structures after the jobs ended.

3 Cotton farmers faced a different crisis: large crops and weak demand had driven cotton prices down. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration, or AAA, paid participating landowners to plant less cotton, hoping a smaller supply would raise prices. Some owners gained income, but tenant farmers and sharecroppers could lose land or work when fewer acres were planted. Federal rules required owners to share certain payments with tenants, but enforcement was uneven. In Alabama, where many Black farming families worked as tenants or sharecroppers, the program's benefits were especially unequal. New Deal programs addressed real problems, yet their effects depended on who controlled land, jobs, and access to services.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the TVA and REA each help address the lack of electricity in rural Alabama?

2. What problem did WPA projects address, and what did Alabama communities gain from them?

3. How did CCC work address both unemployment and damage to the land in Alabama?

4. What problem was the AAA meant to address, and why could its effects differ for landowners and tenant farmers?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you advise an Alabama county in 1936 with damaged farmland, few electric lines, and struggling tenant families. In one paragraph of 75 to 100 words, recommend two New Deal programs from the passage, explain the problem and likely effect of each, and identify one group that might not benefit equally.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 11 · SS24.US2.5a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the problems New Deal programs aimed to address, circle each program's name, and draw a line from each circled name to one effect it had in Alabama. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the TVA and REA each help address the lack of electricity in rural Alabama?	**The TVA generated electricity at dams in northern Alabama. The REA helped cooperatives borrow money to extend power lines into rural areas.**
2	What problem did WPA projects address, and what did Alabama communities gain from them?	**The WPA addressed unemployment by paying adults to work. Communities gained repaired or newly built roads, schools, and other public facilities.**
3	How did CCC work address both unemployment and damage to the land in Alabama?	**The CCC paid young men for work, including planting trees and fighting soil erosion, which helped protect damaged land.**
4	What problem was the AAA meant to address, and why could its effects differ for landowners and tenant farmers?	**The AAA sought to raise low cotton prices by paying landowners to plant less. Owners could receive payments, while tenants could lose work or land when acreage was reduced.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would ask the CCC to hire local young men to plant trees and fight erosion on damaged land. Their wages would support households while conservation work helped protect soil. I would also seek REA loans for a cooperative to extend electric lines to farms. Electricity could replace kerosene lamps and make work at home easier. These programs would not reach everyone equally: families unable to pay for wiring might remain without power, and CCC jobs would not provide steady wages for every tenant family.

Accept other pairs of programs if the response accurately connects each to a problem and an effect described in the passage. The limitation should name a group and give a plausible reason its benefits might be unequal.