Washington Steps In

How New Deal programs changed federal responsibility

IS.1.21 "Explain the significance of the expansion of federal power during the New Deal Era in the areas of agriculture, money and banking, industry, labor, social welfare, and conservation."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each federal action you find in the passage, then circle a problem or intended effect it addressed. Use these pairs to track how the federal government's role expanded.

Who Would Respond?

1. In 1933, a family might see a bank close while a farm nearby struggled to sell its crops. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal gave Washington a larger role in both crises. Federal bank inspections and deposit insurance through the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) aimed to restore confidence in savings. The government also changed the dollar's value in gold, seeking to raise prices and ease debts. In agriculture, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration paid farmers to cut production, hoping scarcer crops would bring higher prices. These actions extended federal influence over banking, the dollar's value, and what farmers grew.

2. Factories also faced collapsed sales and widespread layoffs. The National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 let federal officials approve industry codes covering wages, hours, and competition. Its goal was to steady production and jobs, but the Supreme Court struck down the codes in 1935. Labor policy moved in a more lasting direction. The Wagner Act of 1935 protected workers' right to organize unions and bargain collectively, and it created a federal board to investigate unfair labor practices. Instead of treating disputes only as matters for employers and employees, Washington took responsibility for protecting a place for unions in workplace negotiations.

3. The New Deal also changed what people could expect during unemployment and old age. The Social Security Act of 1935 established old-age benefits, unemployment insurance, and aid for some vulnerable families. Its original rules excluded many farm and domestic workers from old-age coverage, so protection was uneven. For conservation, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) hired unemployed young men to plant trees, reduce soil erosion, and improve parks. Federal spending thus addressed joblessness while protecting land used by future generations. Together, these programs did not end the Depression, but they made federal action a more familiar part of economic security and natural resource care.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the federal role in banking and the dollar change, and what problems were these changes meant to address?

2. How did federal actions in agriculture and industry try to change production, and what limit did the industry program face?

3. How did the Wagner Act and Social Security Act expand federal responsibility in different ways? Identify one limit of the social welfare program.

4. Why was the CCC both a response to the Depression and an expansion of federal responsibility for the land?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a 1930s town where families fear losing savings, factory workers have been laid off, and a hillside is eroding. In four sentences, apply two New Deal approaches from different areas to this town, explain how each could change life there, and identify one limit of either approach.

ANSWER KEY

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each federal action you find in the passage, then circle a problem or intended effect it addressed. Use these pairs to track how the federal government's role expanded. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the federal role in banking and the dollar change, and what problems were these changes meant to address?	**Federal bank inspections and deposit insurance aimed to restore confidence in savings. Changing the dollar's value in gold was meant to raise prices and ease debts.**
2	How did federal actions in agriculture and industry try to change production, and what limit did the industry program face?	**The government paid farmers to cut production to raise crop prices and approved industry codes to steady production and jobs. The Supreme Court struck down the industry codes in 1935.**
3	How did the Wagner Act and Social Security Act expand federal responsibility in different ways? Identify one limit of the social welfare program.	**The Wagner Act protected union organizing and collective bargaining through federal oversight. The Social Security Act provided benefits and assistance, but its original old-age coverage excluded many farm and domestic workers.**
4	Why was the CCC both a response to the Depression and an expansion of federal responsibility for the land?	**The CCC hired unemployed young men to plant trees, reduce erosion, and improve parks, using federal jobs to protect land.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Federal deposit insurance could make families less afraid of losing savings held at an insured bank. A CCC project could hire some unemployed young men to restore the eroding hillside. The town would gain greater confidence in banking and healthier land because the federal government had taken on new responsibilities. However, the CCC would not provide jobs for every laid-off factory worker.

Accept accurate explanations that connect a federal action to its intended effect, not just the name of a program. For Part 3, the two approaches must come from different areas, fit the town's conditions, and include a plausible limit.