

The Great Depression and Recession – Understanding Two Market Crashes

Grade: 7-12

Objective: Students will understand the trends within the market that have led to previous crashes and the differences and similarities between the Great Depression (1929) and the Great Recession (2007).

Procedure:

1. In small groups, ask students to go to each of the signs in the room and write words or draw pictures to define each term. *Assign a color to each group so you can see the contribution each group made.
 - a. They may not know each kind of depression so students can make guesses based on their knowledge of the word “depression.”
 - b. If a student agrees with something another student from a previous group wrote, they can circle it, put an exclamation point by it, or write it again.
 - c. Allow a short time (1-2 mins) at each station and give each student in each group a specific color so you know what came from each group. For example, all members of group 1 might have a red marker, and group 2 will all have blue, and so on.
 - d. Give each group a different color marker so you can see each group’s addition to each page.

*Note: Remind students that any time we talk about a medical condition, such as depression, in class we speak about it in terms of knowledge, not individuals. So, no names should be written on any of the boards and no personal stories. If a student would like to share personal information let them know that you or the counselor is available and has information and tools that can help.

Each of the underlined terms are listed below on individual pieces of paper. Have groups rotate through each term, writing their understanding of each in their groups color.

- i. **Clinical Depression** (In People) – In psychotherapy and psychiatry, a state of mind producing serious, long-term lowering of enjoyment of life or inability to visualize a happy future.
 - ii. **Geographic Depression** - An area that is lower in topography than its surroundings.
 - iii. **Atmospheric Depression** - An area of lowered air pressure that generally brings moist weather, sometimes promoting hurricanes and tornadoes.
 - iv. **Economic Depression** - A period of major economic contraction or downturn.
2. After students rotate through all the stations, ask a student from each station to bring you the paper they were working on last. Read through the comments groups made about each question.
3. Ask the students what all these definitions of “depression” have in common. Answers could include a downturn, sadness, a lull, a lower area of something, etc.
4. Ask students to now think of all these things with the word “Great” in front of it. Great Sadness. Great downturn, etc. landing on the final one, Great Depression, a period in which all the other “Greats” can help define.
5. Put the PowerPoint on the board and lead students through learning about the Great Depression and, more recent, the Great Recession. Stop and discuss as you move through PowerPoint to answer questions and highlight important information.
6. Give each student the *Great Depression vs. The Great Recession* handout. Allow students time to research each question. Students can research in pairs or individually – or this part could be assigned as a homework assignment if you run out of time.
7. Discuss *The Great Depression vs. Great Recession* handout.

8. Give students *The Great Depression and Recession: Think and Respond* handout. Allow time to work on their response. Tell students there is no correct answer to the final question: *Which event - the Great Depression or the Great Recession - had a bigger impact on the U.S.?* Students should have a variety of answers based on their research.
9. Conclude class by asking students if they think another recession such as The Great Depression or The Great Recession is possible. Why? If yes, how long until they believe another depression will hit the U.S. and what will be the catalyst? (i.e. housing crash? Stock crash? Other?)

The Great Depression vs. The Great Recession

Directions: Research two economic crises (The Great Depression and the Great Recession). Both events affected the U.S. in profound ways. Complete the chart with your findings. Use your textbook, news articles, and other web sources to help you gather information. **Remember to check the reliability of the web sources you use.

	Depression	Recession
Time period		
US President at the Time		
What was the US like before the downturn?		
Who did it impact most?		
What were the causes?		
How did this event impact the US? (Politics? Economy? Society? Etc.)		

Great Depression and Recession: Think and Respond

Directions: Answer the following questions based on your research and findings.

1. Compare and Contrast the Great Depression and Recession:
 - a. What similarities do you notice between these two events?

- b. In what way were the Great Depression and Great Recession different?

2. How did the preceding time periods create the ***catalysts*** for these crises? What was the government response to these events? Explain.

Define **Catalyst**:

Explain:

Be the Judge: The Great Depression or The Great Recession?

Directions: Using your analysis, answer the following question in a complete paragraph. Your answer should include supporting details from the Recession and Depression (Be Specific!) and should be written in essay style with a **thesis statement** in your **introduction**, **body paragraphs** and a convincing **conclusion**.

Question: Which event— the Great Depression or the Great Recession — had a bigger impact on the U.S.? Justify your response with reasons and evidence. Please use specific details and cite your sources.

CLINICAL DEPRESSION

(IN PEOPLE)

ATMOSPHERIC DEPRESSION

ECONOMIC DEPRESSION

GEOGRAPHIC DEPRESSION