



THE EFFECT OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS ON EAST TENNESSEE'S ECONOMY

Introduction:

During the 1930s, the Southern economy lagged behind the rest of the nation. Under President Franklin Roosevelt, the federal government intervened in the economy of Tennessee and lives of Tennesseans by instituting a number of programs including the Tennessee Valley Authority, Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Manhattan Project in Oak Ridge

Guiding Questions:

1. What was the South like prior to the New Deal?
2. How did TVA, Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Manhattan Project in Oak Ridge benefit Tennessee?
3. What were the costs of TVA, Great Smoky Mountains and the Manhattan Project in Oak Ridge for Tennessee?

Learning Objectives:

The learner will analyze primary and secondary sources related to TVA, Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Manhattan Project in Oak Ridge.

The learner will determine the costs and benefits of TVA, Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Manhattan Project in Oak Ridge.

The learner will write a persuasive essay that argues for or against the creation of TVA, Great Smoky Mountains National Park or the Manhattan Project in Oak Ridge.

Materials Needed:

1. [FDR's 1938 letter to the Conference on Economic Conditions in the South](#)
2. [Oak Ridge and the Manhattan Project](#) Content Essay from TeachTNHistory.org
3. [Tennessee Valley Authority and the New Deal](#) Content Essay from TeachTNHistory.org
4. [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](#) Content Essay from TeachTNHistory.org

Optional Materials:

5. **TVA website:** www.tva.com/abouttva/history.htm
6. **Great Smoky Mountains National Park website:** www.nps.gov/grsm,
7. **Manhattan Project website:** <http://www.historynet.com/oak-ridge-the-town-the-atomic-bomb-built.htm>

Lesson Activities:

- **Lesson Activity 1- Franklin Roosevelt's Letter to the Conference on Economic Conditions in the South**
Partner or Small Group Activity
Have students work in small groups or with a partner to read Roosevelt's letter and identify the conditions that existed in the South prior to the implementation of the New Deal. If time is limited, direct students to focus on the third full paragraph. Have the class discuss the problems they identified.



- **Lesson Activity 2- Content Essays**

Partner or Small Group Activity

Divide students into small groups or assign partners. Give each pair or group one of the content essays. Have the students identify the benefits and drawbacks of each of the government interventions described in the essays. If time allows, have the groups share their findings with the class.

- **Lesson Activity 3 Internet Research (Optional)**

Partner or Small Group Activity

If time allows, have students conduct additional research using the websites listed in the Optional Materials section.

Assessment:

Students will be instructed to write a two to three paragraph editorial in favor of or opposing the government intervention (TVA, Great Smoky Mountains National Park or Oak Ridge) described in the content essay. The students should reference the problems highlighted in Roosevelt's letter as well as information from the content essay.

Extending the Lesson:

Have students research one of the other New Deal programs in Tennessee including:

- Social Security
- Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
- Civilian Conservation Corps
- Cumberland Homesteads
- Works Progress Administration



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Questions?

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