



Depression Game

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Depression Game Story

Role:

You are the person whose role you played in the game.

Audience:

You are writing this for future generations.

Format:

You will be writing this as a personal journal.

Topic:

You will be describing what happened to you during the Great Depression based upon the game. You will write a paragraph for each round. Begin by telling what job you were doing. Each paragraph should tell what was happening in the US or the world. Tell how many units you received and explain how you divided the units among the categories. What was happening to you? How did this make you feel?

The evaluation of this activity is based upon staying in the role. You must also demonstrate an understanding of the events and effects of the Great Depression on the individual.

Great Depression Game Rules

Teacher explains this to students:

We are going to play a game that simulates the Great Depression. You and a partner will get a card each round which will tell you your job, and the amount of income you have earned.

During the four rounds, your job, situation and amount of income may change. Your income will be divided into five categories: food, clothing, housing, transportation, and other. You will decide how to spend your income in each round. In rounds 2, 3, and 4, four people will be randomly chosen to receive a "Wild Card." You must follow the directions on the wild card after spending your original number of units. By the end of the game, it is hoped you will be able to describe the person whose role you took and how that person was affected by the events of the Great Depression.



Rules:

1. A tally mark will be placed on the game board to represent each unit spent.
2. You must write your job in the Job box.
3. You must put at least one unit in Food, Housing, Transportation and Clothing, provided you have enough.
4. After putting one unit in each category, the remaining units can be spent wherever you and your partner decide. What you put into savings may be used later in the game. Savings will be recorded as numbers, not tallies, in the Savings box.
5. You have to buy groceries before you can eat out.
6. Bankers and Factory Owners require dress-up clothing.
7. Farmers need to purchase farm equipment in each round, but do not need to buy food. (They can grow their own!)

Directions to assemble the game

Attach each game board to a piece of poster board cut to size. Laminate so that they can be marked with an overhead marker.

Cut out game pieces, and attach to construction paper and laminate to protect.

Narratives

1st Round

Read:

We will begin the game in 1920. The first World War has just ended. Most people have enough money to meet their needs. Farmers have been able to sell their goods in the United States and in Europe. Little or no crops are being grown in Europe right now since they are still recovering from the war. Sending farm goods to them will stop when Europe begins to recover from the war and begins to grow its own food again.

American companies have made money because of the War too. The automobile industry has made money by making cars for people in the United States and by making tanks, planes, and ships for the war in Europe. These companies will not make as much money now because there is no need for tanks, planes and ships.

For a while factories will still keep busy because people begin to borrow money to buy goods. Workers in factories have been receiving good wages because of the



many orders of materials for the war and because people in the United States are buying many things.

I will now divide you into pairs and assign you a game board. You will use the same game board for all four rounds.

Would one of the partners please draw your team's card for round one?

You and your partner will have to make decisions about how to spend your units. Remember you can use any units you put in savings at a later time in the game. Record your job for this round on your game board.



2nd Round

Read:

This round begins in 1930. The stock market crash of October, 1929 has just occurred. People don't yet know for sure how that crash will affect them. Farmers are not able to grow and sell as many crops. The drought and resulting dust bowl has really dealt a serious blow to Midwest and Southwest farmers, especially those in Oklahoma.

Workers all over the country are beginning to see a drop in their wages. They are not able to work as much because people are not buying as many goods. Banks that had money in the stock market are in serious trouble.

Let's brainstorm some ideas of things you might do if you have less money to spend:

- ❖ **Food:** Don't buy extra treats. Eat macaroni and cheese, not meat. Grow your own vegetables. Don't eat out. Eat a lot less.
- ❖ **Clothing:** Buy only necessary clothes. Wear your clothes longer. .Buy used clothes.
- ❖ **Housing:** Use less heat. Take in boarders.
- ❖ **Transportation:** Use the car only when necessary. Car-pool with others.
- ❖ **Other:** Don't spend on entertainment. Use your savings.

I will pass out the cards for this round. With your partner, decide how to spend your units. Record your job for this round on your game board.

After the units have been placed, say:

I will now draw four names. These people will each choose one of the wild cards and add or subtract the units indicated.

Ask:

Do you have less money? How much less? What can you do to spend less? How does it feel to be living at this time? Are you mad at anyone? Who? Why? Do you think the government should do something to help you?



3rd Round

Read:

This round begins in 1935. The lowest point of the depression was in 1933. All people have been affected. Some farmers have lost their farms and are now migrant workers. Many people are out of work. More than 10,000 banks have closed and many people have lost their savings. Many businesses have gone broke. Some people have lost their homes and have moved to Hooverilles. The government under Franklin Delano Roosevelt has started New Deal programs to help people get back to work. More workers are joining unions.

Let's brainstorm some ideas of things you might do to face these hard times:

- ❖ Food: Eat whatever you can find or get by begging. Eat at government soup lines. Become a hobo and seek food on farms.
- ❖ Clothing: Get clothes from government or charities. Move to a warmer area of the country. Do without, for example go barefoot.
- ❖ Housing: Sell your house and rent. Move to a cheaper rental. Live in a Hooverville. Move to California and live in a migrant camp. Live in your car.
- ❖ Transportation: Sell your car. Ride the bus, ride a bike, hitchhike, or walk.
- ❖ Other: Work for lower wages. Look for government jobs in the WPA, CCC, TVA, or PWA. Create new jobs. Move to other other areas seeking work.

I will pass out your new card. With your partner, decide how to spend your units. Record your job for this round on your game board.

After the units have been placed, say:

I will now draw four names. These people will each choose one of the wild cards and add or subtract the units indicated.

Discuss:

Do you have less money? What can you do to spend less? How do you feel about the way things are now? Are you sad, scared, and/or angry?



4th Round

Read:

The final round is in 1940. World War II started in Europe in 1939. The United States has not entered the war yet. Orders are coming in from all over the world for food, tanks, ships, guns, clothes, and medical supplies. We are able to sell our goods here in the United States and to other countries. Factories are making more goods. People are being hired again. Wages are going up.

I will pass out your new card. With your partner, decide how to spend your units. Record your job for this round on your game board.

After the units have been placed, say:

I will now draw four names. These people will each choose one of the wild cards and add or subtract the units indicated.

Discuss:

What has happened to you? Did you change jobs? How did it feel to be alive during the Great Depression? Would you have liked to have been the person you were assigned? Did the government do enough to help you?



Game Evaluation

Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4	
	1920's		1930		1935		1940
Job							
	Explain card		Explain card		Explain card		Explain card
	# of tokens						
	Food		Food		Food		Food
	Home		Home		Home		Home
	Transportation		Transportation		Transportation		Transportation
	Clothes		Clothes		Clothes		Clothes
	Other		Other		Other		Other
	Tokens (add correctly)						
							Ending sentence



Game Cards

Round 1 Cards. Cut along dotted lines.

- Person 1 - Iowa Farmer Corn and beans All crops sell 8 units	-Person 5- Banker Successful bank 10 units	-Person 9- Welder Steady work 8 units
- Person 2 - Iowa Farmer Corn and hogs Everything sells 8 units	-Person 6- Banker Successful bank 10 units	-Person 10- Carpenter Steady work 8 units
-Person 3- Oklahoma Farmer Cotton and corn All crops sell 8 units	-Person 7- Factory Owner Successful car factory 15 units	-Person 11- Factory Worker Steady work 7 units
-Person 4- Oklahoma Farmer Cotton and corn All crops sell 8 units	-Person 8- Factory Owner Successful clothing factory 15 units	-Person 12- Factory Worker Steady work 7 units



Round 2 Cards. Cut along dotted lines.

- Person 1 -
Iowa Farmer
Grow too much
Can't sell all crops
4 units

-Person 5-
Banker
Stock Market Crash
Bank struggling
5 units

-Person 9-
Welder
Less work
5 units

- Person 2 -
Iowa Farmer
Can't sell hogs
Can't pay bills Have
penny auction
3 units

-Person 6-
Banker
Stock Market Crash
Bank struggling
lose savings
5 units

-Person 10-
Carpenter
Less work
5 units

-Person 3-
Oklahoma Farmer
Dust Bowl
Lose Farm
2 units

-Person 7-
Factory Owner
Can't sell as many
cars
Lay off workers
10 units

-Person 11-
Factory Worker
Work part-time
4 units

-Person 4-
Oklahoma Farmer
Dust Bowl
Lose farm

-Person 8-
Factory Owner
Can't sell as many
clothes
Lay off workers
10 units

-Person 12-
Factory Worker
work slows
3 units



Round 3 Cards. Cut along dotted lines.

- Person 1 -
Iowa Farmer
Grows too much
Can't sell all crops
Help from New Deal
- AAA
3 units

-Person 5-
Banker
Bank nearing
closure
Bank Holiday FDR
3 units

-Person 9-
Welder
Few jobs
Joins union
2 units

- Person 2 -
Iowa Farmer
Corn and beans
Can't sell all crops
Help from New Deal
- AAA
5 units

-Person 6-
Banker
Bank closes
2 units

-Person 10-
Carpenter
Few jobs
Join union
2 units

-Person 3-
California migrant
worker
little work available
2 units

-Person 7-
Factory Owner
Factory struggling
lose savings
8 units

-Person 11-
CCC Worker
Works for CCC
2 units

-Person 4- Unskilled
Worker
Live in a Hooverville
Little work available
2 units

-Person 8-
Factory Owner
Factory closes
lose savings
2 units

-Person 12-
Hobo
no work
1 unit



Round 4 Cards. Cut along dotted lines.

- Person 1 - Iowa Farmer All crops sell 7 units	-Person 5- Banker Your bank is O.K. 6 units	-Person 9- Welder Steady work 6 units
- Person 2 - Iowa Farmer All crops sell 7 units	-Person 6- Worker Finds work 5 units	-Person 10- Carpenter Steady work 6 units
-Person 3- California migrant worker more work available 3 units	-Person 7- Factory Owner Begins producing military equipment 12 units	-Person 11- Factory Worker Steady work 6 units
-Person 4- Unskilled Worker Find full-time work 5 units	-Person 8- Worker Finds new job 5 units	-Person 12- Worker Hired hand on farm 3 units



Wild Cards. Cut along dotted lines.

Get sick Require medicine Spend 1 unit on medicine	Receive inheritance Get 1 unit
Sell family heirloom Get 1 unit	Temporarily laid off from job Lose 1 unit

**Great Depression Game
Person 1**

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Food				
Eat Out (2 units)				
Treats (1 unit)				
Groceries (1 unit)				
Soup Kitchen (0 units)				
Housing				
Own and Maintain Home (2 units)				
Rent home (1 unit)				
Homeless (0 units)				
Transportation				
Own and Maintain Car (2 units)				
Take a Bus (1 unit)				
Walk (0 units)				
Clothing				
Everyday (1 unit)				
Dress Up (2 units)				
Patched (0 units)				
Other				
Medical				
Entertainment				
Farmer's Equipment (2 units)				

Job:

Round 1:

Round 2:

Round 3:

Round 4:

Savings:

Round 1: _____

Round 2:
from R1
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 3:
from R2
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 4:
from R3
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

**Great Depression Game
Person 2**

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Food				
Eat Out (2 units)				
Treats (1 unit)				
Groceries (1 unit)				
Soup Kitchen (0 units)				
Housing				
Own and Maintain Home (2 units)				
Rent home (1 unit)				
Homeless (0 units)				
Transportation				
Own and Maintain Car (2 units)				
Take a Bus (1 unit)				
Walk (0 units)				
Clothing				
Everyday (1 unit)				
Dress Up (2 units)				
Patched (0 units)				
Other				
Medical				
Entertainment				
Farmer's Equipment (2 units)				

Job:

Round 1:

Round 2:

Round 3:

Round 4:

Savings:

Round 1: _____

Round 2:
from R1
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 3:
from R2
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 4:
from R3
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

**Great Depression Game
Person 3**

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Food				
Eat Out (2 units)				
Treats (1 unit)				
Groceries (1 unit)				
Soup Kitchen (0 units)				
Housing				
Own and Maintain Home (2 units)				
Rent home (1 unit)				
Homeless (0 units)				
Transportation				
Own and Maintain Car (2 units)				
Take a Bus (1 unit)				
Walk (0 units)				
Clothing				
Everyday (1 unit)				
Dress Up (2 units)				
Patched (0 units)				
Other				
Medical				
Entertainment				
Farmer's Equipment (2 units)				

Job:

Round 1:

Round 2:

Round 3:

Round 4:

Savings:

Round 1: _____

Round 2:
from R1
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 3:
from R2
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 4:
from R3
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

**Great Depression Game
Person 4**

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Food				
Eat Out (2 units)				
Treats (1 unit)				
Groceries (1 unit)				
Soup Kitchen (0 units)				
Housing				
Own and Maintain Home (2 units)				
Rent home (1 unit)				
Homeless (0 units)				
Transportation				
Own and Maintain Car (2 units)				
Take a Bus (1 unit)				
Walk (0 units)				
Clothing				
Everyday (1 unit)				
Dress Up (2 units)				
Patched (0 units)				
Other				
Medical				
Entertainment				
Farmer's Equipment (2 units)				

Job:

Round 1:

Round 2:

Round 3:

Round 4:

Savings:

Round 1: _____

Round 2:
from R1
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 3:
from R2
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 4:
from R3
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

**Great Depression Game
Person 5**

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Food				
Eat Out (2 units)				
Treats (1 unit)				
Groceries (1 unit)				
Soup Kitchen (0 units)				
Housing				
Own and Maintain Home (2 units)				
Rent home (1 unit)				
Homeless (0 units)				
Transportation				
Own and Maintain Car (2 units)				
Take a Bus (1 unit)				
Walk (0 units)				
Clothing				
Everyday (1 unit)				
Dress Up (2 units)				
Patched (0 units)				
Other				
Medical				
Entertainment				
Farmer's Equipment (2 units)				

Job:

Round 1:

Round 2:

Round 3:

Round 4:

Savings:

Round 1: _____

Round 2:
from R1
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 3:
from R2
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 4:
from R3
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

**Great Depression Game
Person 6**

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Food				
Eat Out (2 units)				
Treats (1 unit)				
Groceries (1 unit)				
Soup Kitchen (0 units)				
Housing				
Own and Maintain Home (2 units)				
Rent home (1 unit)				
Homeless (0 units)				
Transportation				
Own and Maintain Car (2 units)				
Take a Bus (1 unit)				
Walk (0 units)				
Clothing				
Everyday (1 unit)				
Dress Up (2 units)				
Patched (0 units)				
Other				
Medical				
Entertainment				
Farmer's Equipment (2 units)				

Job:

Round 1:

Round 2:

Round 3:

Round 4:

Savings:

Round 1: _____

Round 2:
from R1
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 3:
from R2
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 4:
from R3
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

**Great Depression Game
Person 7**

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Food				
Eat Out (2 units)				
Treats (1 unit)				
Groceries (1 unit)				
Soup Kitchen (0 units)				
Housing				
Own and Maintain Home (2 units)				
Rent home (1 unit)				
Homeless (0 units)				
Transportation				
Own and Maintain Car (2 units)				
Take a Bus (1 unit)				
Walk (0 units)				
Clothing				
Everyday (1 unit)				
Dress Up (2 units)				
Patched (0 units)				
Other				
Medical				
Entertainment				
Farmer's Equipment (2 units)				

Job:

Round 1:

Round 2:

Round 3:

Round 4:

Savings:

Round 1: _____

Round 2:
from R1
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 3:
from R2
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 4:
from R3
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

**Great Depression Game
Person 8**

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Food				
Eat Out (2 units)				
Treats (1 unit)				
Groceries (1 unit)				
Soup Kitchen (0 units)				
Housing				
Own and Maintain Home (2 units)				
Rent home (1 unit)				
Homeless (0 units)				
Transportation				
Own and Maintain Car (2 units)				
Take a Bus (1 unit)				
Walk (0 units)				
Clothing				
Everyday (1 unit)				
Dress Up (2 units)				
Patched (0 units)				
Other				
Medical				
Entertainment				
Farmer's Equipment (2 units)				

Job:

Round 1:

Round 2:

Round 3:

Round 4:

Savings:

Round 1: _____

Round 2:
from R1
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 3:
from R2
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 4:
from R3
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

**Great Depression Game
Person 9**

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Food				
Eat Out (2 units)				
Treats (1 unit)				
Groceries (1 unit)				
Soup Kitchen (0 units)				
Housing				
Own and Maintain Home (2 units)				
Rent home (1 unit)				
Homeless (0 units)				
Transportation				
Own and Maintain Car (2 units)				
Take a Bus (1 unit)				
Walk (0 units)				
Clothing				
Everyday (1 unit)				
Dress Up (2 units)				
Patched (0 units)				
Other				
Medical				
Entertainment				
Farmer's Equipment (2 units)				

Job:

Round 1:

Round 2:

Round 3:

Round 4:

Savings:

Round 1: _____

Round 2:
from R1
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 3:
from R2
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 4:
from R3
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

**Great Depression Game
Person 10**

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Food				
Eat Out (2 units)				
Treats (1 unit)				
Groceries (1 unit)				
Soup Kitchen (0 units)				
Housing				
Own and Maintain Home (2 units)				
Rent home (1 unit)				
Homeless (0 units)				
Transportation				
Own and Maintain Car (2 units)				
Take a Bus (1 unit)				
Walk (0 units)				
Clothing				
Everyday (1 unit)				
Dress Up (2 units)				
Patched (0 units)				
Other				
Medical				
Entertainment				
Farmer's Equipment (2 units)				

Job:

Round 1:

Round 2:

Round 3:

Round 4:

Savings:

Round 1: _____

Round 2:
from R1
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 3:
from R2
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 4:
from R3
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

**Great Depression Game
Person 11**

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Food				
Eat Out (2 units)				
Treats (1 unit)				
Groceries (1 unit)				
Soup Kitchen (0 units)				
Housing				
Own and Maintain Home (2 units)				
Rent home (1 unit)				
Homeless (0 units)				
Transportation				
Own and Maintain Car (2 units)				
Take a Bus (1 unit)				
Walk (0 units)				
Clothing				
Everyday (1 unit)				
Dress Up (2 units)				
Patched (0 units)				
Other				
Medical				
Entertainment				
Farmer's Equipment (2 units)				

Job:

Round 1:

Round 2:

Round 3:

Round 4:

Savings:

Round 1: _____

Round 2:
from R1
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 3:
from R2
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 4:
from R3
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

**Great Depression Game
Person 12**

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Food				
Eat Out (2 units)				
Treats (1 unit)				
Groceries (1 unit)				
Soup Kitchen (0 units)				
Housing				
Own and Maintain Home (2 units)				
Rent home (1 unit)				
Homeless (0 units)				
Transportation				
Own and Maintain Car (2 units)				
Take a Bus (1 unit)				
Walk (0 units)				
Clothing				
Everyday (1 unit)				
Dress Up (2 units)				
Patched (0 units)				
Other				
Medical				
Entertainment				
Farmer's Equipment (2 units)				

Job:

Round 1:

Round 2:

Round 3:

Round 4:

Savings:

Round 1: _____

Round 2:
from R1
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 3:
from R2
____ + ____ - ____ = ____

Round 4:
from R3
____ + ____ - ____ = ____