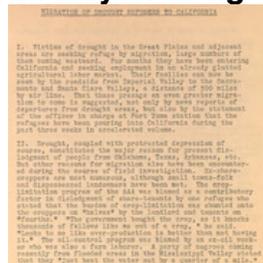


Teaching with Primary Sources Lesson Outline

Grade Level: High School (9-10)

Standard(s) or Objectives: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.8: Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.

Library of Congress or Morris Special Collections Resources:



Paul S. Taylor, "Migration of Drought Refugees to California." 1935

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/images/vc007143.jpg>

Specific pages used:

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/images/vc007143.jpg>

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/images/vc007144.jpg>

Topic Background:

In 1931, a severe drought hit the Southern and Midwestern plains. As crops died and winds picked up, dust storms began. Crops literally blew away in "black blizzards" as years of poor farming practices and over-cultivation combined with the lack of rain. By 1934, 75% of the United States was severely affected by this terrible drought. The one-two punch of economic depression and bad weather put many farmers out of business. In the early 1930s, thousands of Dust Bowl refugees — mainly from Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, Kansas, and New Mexico — packed up their families and migrated west, hoping to find work. Entire families migrated together in search of a better life. About 200,000 of the migrants headed for California.

Excerpted from: http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu/themed_collections/subtopic4a.html

Source(s) Used:

The source used in this assessment includes excerpts from a report by economist Paul S. Taylor, who advocated for improved living conditions of migrant laborers. Taylor, along with photographers such as Dorothea Lange, helped to produce a photographic survey of migrant labor conditions for the Farm Security Administration (FSA). In this source, Taylor comments upon the reasons for the migration, where migrants came from, and projected that many more migrants would be coming to California in the future.

Citation: <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/tr11c.html#obj40>

Answer Key:

Question 1: B

Question 2: A

Paul S. Taylor, “Migration of Drought Refugees to California.” 1935 [Excerpt]

Victims of drought in the Great Plains and adjacent areas are seeking refuge by migration, large numbers of them coming westward. For months they have been entering California and seeking employment in an already glutted agricultural labor market. Their families can now be seen by the roadside from Imperial Valley to the Sacramento and Santa Clara Valleys, a distance of 500 miles by air line. That these presage an even greater migration to come is suggested, not only by news reports of departures from drought areas, but also by the statement of the officer in charge at Fort Yuma station that the refugees have been pouring into California during the past three weeks in accelerated volume.

Drought, coupled with protracted depression of course, constitutes the major reason for present dislodgment of people from Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, etc. But other reasons for migration also have been encountered during the course of field investigation. Ex-sharecroppers are most numerous, although small towns-folk and dispossessed landowners have been met.

...The refugees travel in old automobiles and light trucks, frequently with trailers behind. All their worldly possessions are piled on the car and covered with old canvas—ragged bedding, bedsprings sometimes, a small iron camp stove, a lantern, a washtub. Children, aunts, grandmothers, and a dog or two are jammed into the car, stretching its capacity incredibly. Families sleep by the roadside, or wherever they can find a place. Generally their camps are without sanitary or bathing facilities, and they get water from nearby service stations or an irrigation ditch. Their food supply is extremely limited, their clothing is in tatters, and their shoes are worn. Many are in a state of complete **destitution**. State motor vehicle officials at the border commonly allow them to pass without proper licenses, for they lack funds to purchase them. Said a mother with six children and \$3.40, when for the \$3.00 license fee, “That’s food for my babies.” She was allowed to proceed without a license.

Questions:

- 1) Which of the following examples from the text best explains the use of the term “destitution” within the excerpt? (CCSS-RH9-10.4)
 - a. “State motor vehicle officials at the border commonly allow them to pass without proper licenses.”
 - b. “Their food supply is extremely limited, their clothing is in tatters, and their shoes are worn.”
 - c. “The refugees travel in old automobiles and light trucks, frequently with trailers behind.”
 - d. “Families sleep by the roadside, or wherever they can find a place.”

- 2) Read the following sentence from the second paragraph: “Drought, coupled with protracted depression of course, constitutes the major reason for present dislodgment of people from Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, etc.” Which claim from the article is best supported by this sentence? (CCSS-RH9-10.8)
 - a. “That these presage an even greater migration to come is suggested, not only by news reports of departures from drought areas, but also...that the refugees have been pouring into California during the past three weeks in accelerated volume.”
 - b. “Ex-sharecroppers are most numerous, although small towns-folk and dispossessed landowners have been met.”
 - c. “All their worldly possessions are piled on the car and covered with old canvas—ragged bedding, bedsprings sometimes, a small iron camp stove, a lantern, a washtub.”
 - d. “Their food supply is extremely limited, their clothing is in tatters, and their shoes are worn. Many are in a state of complete destitution.”