

91003R



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

Level 1 History, 2012

91003 Interpret sources of an historical event of significance to New Zealanders

2.00 pm Thursday 15 November 2012

Credits: Four

RESOURCE BOOKLET

Refer to this booklet to answer the questions for History 91003.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–10 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

YOU MAY KEEP THIS BOOKLET AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

UNEMPLOYMENT DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION

INTRODUCTION

The Great Depression of the 1930s had a significant impact on the whole of New Zealand society, bringing mass unemployment, which was followed by major social and economic changes.

New Zealand's economy had struggled throughout the 1920s as agricultural prices fell at the end of the First World War, but new levels of hardship hit when the New York (Wall Street) stock market crashed in 1929. The economic and social effects of this stock market collapse spread rapidly around the Western world, quickly impacting Britain, which was New Zealand's major trading partner.

New Zealand suffered because it depended almost entirely on the British market. Earnings from exports plummeted and farmers reacted to this by cutting their spending. This had a ripple effect through the rest of the New Zealand economy as the demand for goods and services fell. Farmers also faced a debt crisis because many were unable to meet mortgage payments, which resulted in some of them "walking off the land".

In the days before the Welfare State*, work relief schemes were the only government support, even when reported unemployment hit 15 %. These schemes were controlled by an Unemployment Board to make sure there was "no pay without work". The available work was rationed, and was sometimes meaningless and often in isolated, rugged areas that separated married men from their families.

A few New Zealanders remained wealthy, some even benefitting from reduced prices, and they were able to still buy luxury goods and live the "high life". Some of the "better-off" New Zealanders, however, worked to help the poor through charitable committees. They collected and distributed money, food, and clothes and organised fundraising events.

With little government assistance available, the numbers of people in need were greater than what community-self-help and charitable organisations were able to assist. This led to riots in Dunedin, Auckland, and Wellington in 1932. The government's response to this was to pass tougher 'public safety' laws, send unemployed men to remote labour camps, and tighten the relief rules even further. In 1935, the majority of New Zealanders – Māori and Pakeha, urban and rural – voted for the Michael Joseph Savage-led Labour Party, electing a government that offered new solutions to the economic and social problems that they were experiencing.

* a country where the government assumes responsibility for the welfare of the people in areas such as health care, education, and employment.

SOURCE A**The Great Depression of the thirties**

For New Zealand, as for most of the Western world, the Great Depression of the early 1930s was the most shattering economic experience ever recorded. Exports fell by 45% in two years, national income by 40% in three ...

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.... and the planting of exotic trees in the centre of the North Island, which was to lead to a thriving development of forest products 20 years later.

Source (adapted): 'The Depression of the Thirties', *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, edited by A. H. McLintock, originally published in 1966, Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated 22 April 2009, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/1966/history-economic/7>

SOURCE B

Estimated unemployment in 1933			
Ethnicity and gender	Number unemployed	Labour force	Rate of unemployment
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Source of table (adapted): K Rankin (Economics Department, University of Auckland), *Unemployment in New Zealand at the Peak of the Great Depression*, paper for the 1994 Conference of Economic History Association of Australia and New Zealand, viewed 14 March 2012, <http://keithrankin.co.nz/NZunem1933/>

SOURCE C

Māori and welfare
<p>During the Depression, 40% of the male Māori workforce was unemployed whereas the Pākehā unemployment rate was only 12%. ...</p>
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<p>... For Māori, the assumption that they shared was tacit*. In order to receive a European level of benefit, Māori had to live like Europeans.</p> <p>* understood or implied without being stated.</p> <p>Source: L Mitchell, May 2009, <i>Māori and Welfare: Te Oranga o te Iwi Māori: A Study of Māori Economic and Social Progress</i>, Working Paper 5, New Zealand Business Roundtable, pp 11–12, viewed 30 March 2012, < http://www.nzbr.org.nz/site/nzbr/files/publications/maori%20and%20welfare%20by%20lm%20final.pdf></p>

SOURCE D**Household economies**

We all remembered our mothers' economical housekeeping ...

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...with a metal clip round to hold the sock in place." Socks were made of pure wool which wore out at the toes and heels, so holes occurred very often.

Sugar and flour bags highly valued

If the budget allowed, families bought sugar in large quantities – a 32 kg bag made of jute. Joan recalls how much these bags were valued and remembers ...

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... stitched together for sheets or used to line children's trousers to prevent chafing by the coarse worsted fabric of the sugar bag.

Source of extracts (adapted): *Growing up in New Zealand 1925–1950: Part 1 - Household Economies And Food*, April 2000, NZine, viewed 21 March 2003, <http://www.nzine.co.nz/features/guinz25-50_part1.html>

SOURCE E

A gathering at a Wellington soup kitchen, c. 1932 (Alexander Turnbull Library).

For copyright reasons, this resource cannot be reproduced here.

Source: The Evening Post, *Soup Kitchen*, c. 1932, photograph, Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand, Wellington, <http://mp.natlib.govt.nz/detail/?id=37622&l=en>

SOURCE F

Unemployed men and boys from the Penrose relief camp in Auckland, constructing a fence during the Great Depression.

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Source: The Evening Post, *Unemployment relief work during the Depression*, 1930s, photograph, Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand, Wellington, <http://mp.natlib.govt.nz/detail/?id=19412&l=en>

SOURCE G

Workers pulling a chain harrow to even the land for fine, level seed-beds in Petone, 1932. This sort of work was usually done by horses.

For copyright reasons, this resource cannot be reproduced here.

Source: J V Garvitch, *Relief workers pulling a chain harrow at Petone, 1932*, 1932, photograph, Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand, Wellington, <http://mp.natlib.govt.nz/detail/?id=7211&l=en>

SOURCE H**Impact of the Great Depression**

The Depression deprived many children of any education beyond the school leaving age. They were ...

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... people lost their jobs, and men had to work for a pittance on schemes for the unemployed.

Relief work for married men

Married men were usually given relief work near to their homes, but as the Depression ...

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... of packing cases were used for unemployed men with artistic skills to decorate with coats of arms to form the magnificent friezes.

Relief work for single men

Single unemployed men were sent to camps in isolated areas and usually lived in primitive conditions. Their huts ...

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... severe winters in this area must have made working and living in the conditions provided for the relief workers almost intolerable.

SOURCE H continued**The situation for married women**

Few married women could help by going out to work ...

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... and organise inexpensive fun for the children.

No relief for unemployed women

For single women or mothers with no husband to support them, there was no dole. Their situation was ...

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... along the railway line to pick up coal.”

Source of extracts: *Growing up in New Zealand 1925–1950: Part 11 – Impact and Memories of the 1930s Depression*, February 2001, NZine, viewed 22 March 2003, <http://www.nzine.co.nz/features/guinz25-50_part11.html>

SOURCE I**Memories of the Great Depression**

We were living in Bell Hill during the Depression. My husband had a job ...

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... on the pier to fish and they couldn't afford that.

Source: Tony Simpson, *The Sugar-bag years* (Martinborough, New Zealand: Alister Taylor Publishing, 1976), p 34.

SOURCE J**Memories of the Great Depression**

Every day we said prayers at school for the unemployed, a term now synonymous with poor ...

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... for the then-Prime Minister of the failing Coalition Government.

*swaggies unemployed temporary workers who travelled by foot looking for work, carrying their possessions rolled up into a swag.

Source: Ruth Park, *A Fence Around the Cuckoo* (Australia: Penguin Books Australia, 1992), pp 69–70.

