

Grades: 9-12

The Roosevelts: An Intimate History,
“Part 5: The Rising Road”

The lives of the three great Roosevelts -- Teddy, Franklin and Eleanor -- are captured in this series. Ken Burns and producer, Paul Barnes describe the lives and times of these three American icons who influenced 20th century American history more than perhaps any other family. Through wars, revolutions, depressions, movements, the three led the country through what was called America's century. At times they had little in common but for one thing they always had in common . . . their ability, desire and conviction to lead.

FDR brings the same optimism and energy to the White House that his cousin Theodore displayed. Aimed at ending the Depression, his sweeping New Deal restores the people's self-confidence and transforms the relationship between them and their government. Eleanor rejects the traditional role of first lady, becomes her husband's liberal conscience and a sometimes controversial political force in her own right. As the decade ends, FDR faces two grave questions: whether to run for an unprecedented third term and how to deal with the rise of Hitler.

After watching this episode, choose from the following questions and/or tasks to extend your learning

Question Box 1

- How does FDR bring the same optimism and energy to the White House that his cousin Theodore displayed?
- What plan did Franklin have to end the Great Depression?
- What was “The New Deal”?
- How did the “New Deal” restore America’s self-confidence and transform the relationship between the American people and its government?
- What actions taken by Eleanor showed that she rejected the traditional role of the First Lady?
- How did Eleanor become her husband's liberal conscience and a sometimes controversial political force in her own right?
- As the decade ends, FDR faces two grave questions: whether to run for an unprecedented third term and how to deal with the rise of Hitler. How did FDR address each of these questions?

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Question Box 2

- Who was the most interesting person the program talked about and why?
- What part of the story gave you pause to think?
- How did you feel about the fact that FDR did nothing to end anti-lynching legislation?
- How have the contributions made by the Roosevelts changes America?

Box 3 (Tasks)

- In the 1936 election, Roosevelt won 60.8% of the popular vote and 46 of the 48 states. Use mathematics in your justification of the change from the 1932 election.
- Under FDR, The National Park and Forest systems grew. In 1930, there were three million visitors to the parks and forests. In 1939 there were 15.5 million. Create a graph that shows a linear growth over time. Create a non-linear graph that shows growth over time. Describe important features of both graphs.
- The Civilian Conservation Corps enrolled 3.4 million young men and built 13,000 miles of trails, planted two billion trees, and upgraded 125,000 miles of dirt roads. Depict this information in an infographic and describe the impact that the Civilian Conservation Corps had using mathematics in your description.
- Create a timeline of FDR's new deal programs.

Box 4 (Enrichment)

- FDR's New Deal programs were far reaching in an attempt to help all classes of Americans. struggling in the depression. From farmers, to industrial workers, to artists and poets. Pick a New Deal program that interests you. Explain the impact of that program for the community it served. Are the effects felt today? How so or why not? Why is this a program that you care about?
- FDR had his critics on the right and on the left of him, some saying he's doing too little and those saying he's doing too much. Pick two critics from opposite points of view (a republican and democrat, or someone who's saying he's doing too much and someone who's saying he's not doing enough) Analyze their arguments. What do you think about them? How did FDR try to silence them? Could he? What about the critics in your own life? How do you try to silence them? How do your attempts and your success compare to FDR's?
- Huey Long was a wildly popular politician who presented a legitimate threat to FDR's presidency. We still don't know who assassinated him. Look into Huey Long and his presidential bid. Look into those who opposed him. Who do you think assassinated him and why?

Box 5 (Extend/Real-Life)

- Compare and contrast the details of The New Deal and the CARES Act.

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- The New Deal: <https://www.history.com/topics/great-depression/new-deal>
- The CARES Act: <https://www.npr.org/2020/03/26/821457551/whats-inside-the-senate-s-2-trillion-coronavirus-aid-package>
- What are the similarities?
- What are the differences?
- How did the New Deal impact society in the short and long term?
- How did the CARES Act impact society in the short term? Predict how it will impact society in the long term.
- Which do you feel was better for society as a whole? Explain your answer.
- FDR had strong social-awareness which was a skill that helped him to be a successful leader during the most difficult times. Being a good role model is another way to build social awareness. What are some ways you can be a good role model for others? List those ways and then chose one to practice.