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Life during the Great Depression The year 1929 was one of the worst times in the history of America. It virtually brought the nation down to itsknees and cast a terrible blow to the psyche of the Americans. The period between 1929 and 1941 was like a never-ending nightmare that robbed the Americans of their life, family and identity (Uys), but it also laid down some of the fundamental ideologies that make the nation what it is today.
The Depression was caused due to the stock market crash, eventually leading to a host of financial complications like fall of the stock prices, disparity in demand and supply and huge amount of money lost. With the beginning of this acute financial crisis, banks failed, companies shut down and the result was unemployment, loss of personal assets like land, house and other valuables. People who were well-off before the Depression lost everything and lived off from begging (Uys). The great depression completely disoriented the lives of the Americans forcing children and teenagers to give up studies and either take to begging or perform menial labour. Lack of fund resources, scarcity of food and water, and homeless existence affected social life resulting in broken homes, battered relationships and wavering convictions.
Some characteristics of the Great Depression
Unemployment was at its peak with a record of 13 million people going jobless and living fringe life. A lot of people started moving down to the West which was not as badly affected. People could not pay fares and travelled illegally which came to be known as hobo. Hoboing and train hopping were common phenomena as more and more people travelled up and down in search of better life.
Homelessness was another significant phenomenon of the time and was termed as Hoovervilles to condemn President Hoover. People could not provide to stay in proper houses and lived in shacks made of cardboard boxes, metal sheets, leftover wood, piano boxes, and rusted car bodies (Uys).
The Great Depression taught people valuable lessons like self-reliance, compassion, frugality and love for freedom and one’s country (Uys). These values acted as the bedrocks on which developed a stronger and more resilient America.
Work Cited
Uys, Errol L. “ What Life Was Like During the Great Depression” n. p., n. d. Web. 11 June 2012.