

Enrichment: Debate

The New Deal

President Roosevelt changed the role of the federal government by placing more responsibility for economic recovery on the federal government. One New Deal program, the Civilian Conservation Corps, gave millions of unemployed Americans jobs repairing the nation's soil, conserving water, and preserving natural resources.

Today, with pollution problems and unemployment still concerns, what if the government reinstated the CCC?

Your assignment: Research the benefits and problems associated with the Civilian Conservation Corps. Use the information you gather to plan and present a debate on the following topic: Should the federal government today reinstate this New Deal program?

Suggested materials: Dry-erase board and markers (to detail key points in the debate) or poster board; note cards (to remember key points while debating), map of the United States (showing conservation areas), graphs or charts illustrating unemployment levels

Suggested procedures:

1. As a group, decide who will take each side of the issue and who will judge the debate. Will the teacher, a panel of judges, or the audience judge?
2. Determine the rules for the debate—speaking order, time limits, and so on.
3. Research what conservation meant in the United States in the 1930s. Then, determine how the CCC was designed to help unemployed Americans, and research the program's benefits and problems. How would the new CCC achieve the same benefits and avoid the same problems?
4. Research unemployment problems today as well as conservation issues. Why would some people oppose the new CCC? Why would others support it? Read the questions on the following page for research ideas.
5. Support your arguments. Begin by identifying evidence that will support your side of the issue. Identify evidence that you can use to disprove arguments that you think your opponents will be most likely to use.
6. Organize your thoughts in an outline. Arrange the arguments and the evidence you will need to prove or disprove your position.
7. Anticipate your opponent's arguments, and prepare rebuttals for his or her key positions.
8. Prepare for your presentation by putting your arguments, evidence, and rebuttals on note cards. Read your note cards over several times to become familiar with them.
9. After your debate, use the chart on the next page to recall the debate's important points before making your final decision on the new CCC.

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

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Directions: Consider the following questions as you research your side of the debate.

1. What areas of the country would benefit from the new CCC?
2. Who would be eligible to work for the new CCC? How long would someone be able to work for the CCC?
3. Who would oversee the new CCC?
4. What other programs already exist that are similar to the new CCC? Would the new CCC be part of those programs or take their place?
5. What would the application process include for people who want to work for the new CCC?
6. Where would workers in the new CCC live while working on sites away from their homes?
7. Would education be offered to the recruits of the new CCC? If so, for how long? Who will give the training? In what areas? What if someone were to not do well or not want the education?
8. How would the government pay for the new CCC?

You should base your answers to these questions on factual information. However, you should also use your creativity to eliminate problems and address concerns.

Directions: Use the following chart to record important points made during the debate. When the debate is over, use the information you recorded to make your final decision.

New CCC Benefits	New CCC Benefits Rebuttals	New CCC Problems	New CCC Problems Rebuttals