K-2 EDITION · CLASSROOM

1936

Franklin D. Roosevelt vs Alf Landon

A 20-minute lesson on the 1936 U.S. presidential election. Includes lesson plan, student worksheet, answer key, and discussion prompts.

ERA New Deal Coalition	ELECTORAL VOTES 531 total
WINNER Franklin D. Roosevelt (Democratic) · 523 EV	RUNNER-UP Alf Landon (Republican) · 8 EV
KEY ISSUE New Deal defense; Supreme Court battles; economic recovery	TURNOUT 61.0%

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2. Story (with a picture)
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1936

When FDR became president March 4, 1933 the Great Depression had ruined the country. Unemployment 25%. Banks closed. Factories shut. Farms foreclosed. FDR's First 100 Days produced 15 major federal laws to fight the Depression. He called his program the New Deal.

New Deal helped millions. Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) gave young men jobs planting trees and building parks. Works Progress Administration (WPA) gave artists, writers, and workers federal jobs. Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) brought electricity to rural South. Social Security Act 1935 gave retired workers federal pensions. Federal Deposit Insurance protected bank deposits. Wagner Act 1935 protected union organizing.

By 1936 Depression was easing. Unemployment had fallen from 25% to 17%. Industrial production rising. Bank failures stopped. FDR was hugely popular.

Look at picture. That FDR - the man who won 1936 by biggest margin in U.S. history up to that point.

Republicans picked Alf Landon - governor of Kansas. Landon was honest and moderate. He had balanced Kansas budget during Depression. But Landon was no match for FDR. Many Americans loved FDR for saving them from Depression.



Franklin D. Roosevelt, 32nd U.S. president. He won the 1936 election by the biggest popular-vote margin since 1820.

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Let's talk about the story

1.

How many electoral votes did FDR win in 1936?

2.

Which two states did Republican Alf Landon win in 1936?

3.

What was the New Deal?

Warm-up (5 min)

In 1936 Franklin Roosevelt won re-election by biggest margin in U.S. history. Carried 46 states. Republican Alf Landon won only Maine and Vermont. Joke went: "As Maine goes, so goes Vermont."

Answer key

1.

523. FDR 523; Landon 8. FDR carried 46 states; Landon carried only Maine and Vermont. FDR's 515-EV margin was the largest in U.S. history at the time (until LBJ 1964, 486-52).

AP students should know the 523-8 FDR landslide.

2.

Maine and Vermont. These were the only two states Republican Alf Landon carried in 1936. Maine had 5 EV; Vermont had 3 EV; total 8 EV. The original New England saying "As Maine goes, so goes the nation" became the joke "As Maine goes, so goes Vermont" after the 1936 landslide.

AP students should know Maine + Vermont.

3.

The New Deal was FDR's 1933-39 federal response to the Great Depression. Major laws: (1) Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC, March 1933) - employed young men in conservation work. (2) Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA, May 1933) - federal hydropower and rural electrification for the Tennessee Valley. (3) Public Works Administration (PWA, June 1933) - federal infrastructure construction. (4) Works Progress Administration (WPA, May 1935) - federal employment of artists, writers, workers. (5) Social Security Act (August 1935) - federal old-age pensions and unemployment insurance. (6) Wagner Act (July 1935) - federal protection for union organizing. (7) Federal Deposit Insurance Corp (June 1933 Banking Act) - protected bank deposits. (8) Glass-Steagall Act (June 1933) - separated commercial from investment banking. (9) Securities and Exchange Commission (June 1934) - federal stock market regulation. The New Deal transformed the U.S. federal government from limited 1920s governance to active welfare-state governance.

AP students should be able to articulate multiple New Deal laws.