Overview:
The students will listen to interviews from people of the Great Depression era. They will use the inquiry based model of asking, discussing, investigating, creating, and reflecting to complete the rest of the lesson. They will then research the Library of Congress website to find photographs and prints. After researching life during the Great Depression, the students will imagine they are a child from that time and develop interview questions to ask a child from the present day.

Goal:
The students will gain an understanding of what life was like for a child growing up during the Great Depression using an inquiry based model. They will be able to understand how children of the 1930’s grew up in an underprivileged environment. Hopefully, they will understand how fortunate they are to be living in the United States today and realize all of the advantages they have as opposed to a child of the Depression era.

Objectives:
The students will be able to research the Great Depression on the Library of Congress website and gain a better understanding of the struggles of life in the 1930s.

The students will be able to compare life changes from the Great Depression as opposed to today’s way of life.

The students will be able to imagine they are a child from the 1930s and ask questions about today’s way of life.

Investigative Question:
What is it like to be a poor family living in America during a depression?

Time Required: 1 hour

Recommended Grade Range: Grades 4-6

Subject:
The primary subject of this lesson is Social Studies. The lesson will also incorporate Language Arts when the students write their imaginary interview.

Standards:
Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening - Reading Critically in All Content Areas, 1.2.5.A
Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening - Quality of Writing, 1.5.5.A
History-Historical Analysis and Skills Development, 8.1.6.A

Credits:
Katie Pavelko

PREPARATION

Materials Used:
Computer, the Library of Congress website, pencils, paper

Resources Used:


PROCEDURE

Description of Procedure:

1. The students will begin the lesson by viewing a picture from Dorothea Lange showcasing a picture of a mother and her children living in a tent.
2. I will ask the question, “Are the people in this photograph poor, middle class, or rich?”
3. We will discuss what children had in the 1930s. They should be able to voice all of the necessities the children lack as compared to today.
4. I will also explain the situation of the family in the photograph.
5. The students will be told they are going to figure out how life would be as poor child growing up during an economic depression.
6. I will pose the question, “What is it like to be a poor family living in America during a depression?” If they are having trouble with this question I will make it more relatable by asking them about people who are poor in today’s society.
7. After our discussion, I will read interviews given by people who lived during the Great Depression. They will be able to hear firsthand experiences of economically struggling Americans in the 1930s. This will give them a greater understanding of what being underprivileged would be like.
8. Once the students have heard several interviews, they will search the Library of Congress website to find prints, photographs, and interviews. The information they find will help them investigate how Americans struggled during the 1930s.

9. They will use what they have found to create their own imaginary interview.

10. They will imagine that they are a child growing up in the Great Depression and devise a list of questions for a child today. Sample questions could possibly be, “What is Burger King?, What is a computer?”

11. When the students complete the list of questions, they will then switch interviews with another student. The students should be able to gain an understanding of how fortunate they are as opposed to the children of the 1930s.

12. The student will now be responsible for answering their peer’s “imaginary” child’s questions.

Extensions:

1. The students will present their interviews to the class.
2. He or she will pretend they are a child from the Great Depression and then ask their peers questions about the present day.
3. The students will be permitted to dress the role if he or she would like.
4. The students will reflect upon what they have read and saw about the Great Depression.
5. They will also discuss how fortunate they are to be living in the United States today!
# Great Depression Interview

**Teacher Name:** Ms. Pavelko

**Student Name:** __________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>Questions are complete, well-constructed and of varied structure.</td>
<td>All questions are complete and well-constructed (no fragments, no run-ons).</td>
<td>Most questions are complete and well-constructed.</td>
<td>Many questions are fragments or run-on sentences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers</td>
<td>Answers are complete, well-constructed and show an understanding of the Great Depression.</td>
<td>All answers are complete, well-constructed and show an understanding of the Great Depression.</td>
<td>Most answers are complete, well-constructed and show somewhat of an understanding of the Great Depression.</td>
<td>Many answers are fragments or run-on sentences and show no understanding of the Great Depression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>The answer is 3 or more sentences.</td>
<td>The answer is 2 sentences.</td>
<td>The answer is 1 sentence.</td>
<td>The answer is not a complete sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; spelling (conventions)</td>
<td>Writer makes no errors in grammar or spelling.</td>
<td>Writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar and/or spelling.</td>
<td>Writer makes 3-4 errors in grammar and/or spelling.</td>
<td>Writer makes more than 4 errors in grammar and/or spelling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalization and Punctuation</td>
<td>Writer makes no errors in capitalization and punctuation.</td>
<td>Writer makes 1-2 errors in capitalization and punctuation.</td>
<td>Writer makes 3-4 errors in capitalization and punctuation.</td>
<td>Writer makes more than 4 errors in capitalization and punctuation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of Results for my LOC Primary Source-based Inquiry Model Lesson Plan

Name: __Katie Pavelko______________________________

Subject: __Social Studies__________________________ Date: ______9/15/09_____

Activity: ____"Life during the Great Depression"_________________ Grade: ___5___

1. What worked best according to your plan?
   The students enjoyed looking through the Library of Congress website to find other prints, photographs, and interviews. They were actually very excited about the things they found on the website that they wanted to research other events in history.

2. Did any aspect of the lesson go worse than expected?
   I taught this lesson with a small group of students. If I happen to teach with more students next time, I would like to give better directions for navigating the website. It seemed like the students were constantly asking questions about how to find certain things. If I would have done this with a large group they would have not gotten as much attention. As such, I found it very important to make sure the students know how to navigate the website.

3. Was there any unexpected learning that occurred for your students?
   The students did not really have an understanding of what the Great Depression was; besides learning about the struggles Americans faced, I was also able to somewhat explain what caused the Great Depression.

4. What could be improved?
   The next time I teach this lesson I will definitely spend more time explaining how to navigate through the Library of Congress website. It can be very confusing for young learners.

5. Was there any professional development impact on you, as the teacher? Did this lesson alter your approach in teaching?
   I enjoyed using an inquiry-based model. I liked to see the students gain information that fascinated them, without me just spitting it out to them as I saw it. I will try to incorporate this type of teaching more often.

6. Quantifiable results:
   All of the students presented a satisfactory interview. They came up with some very unique questions I did not expect to hear.

7. Student comments:
   Once the students got a hang of the website, they thought it was really cool! For example, one student made the comment, "I never knew social studies could be fun."