

He became America's shining light
by keeping us in the dark.



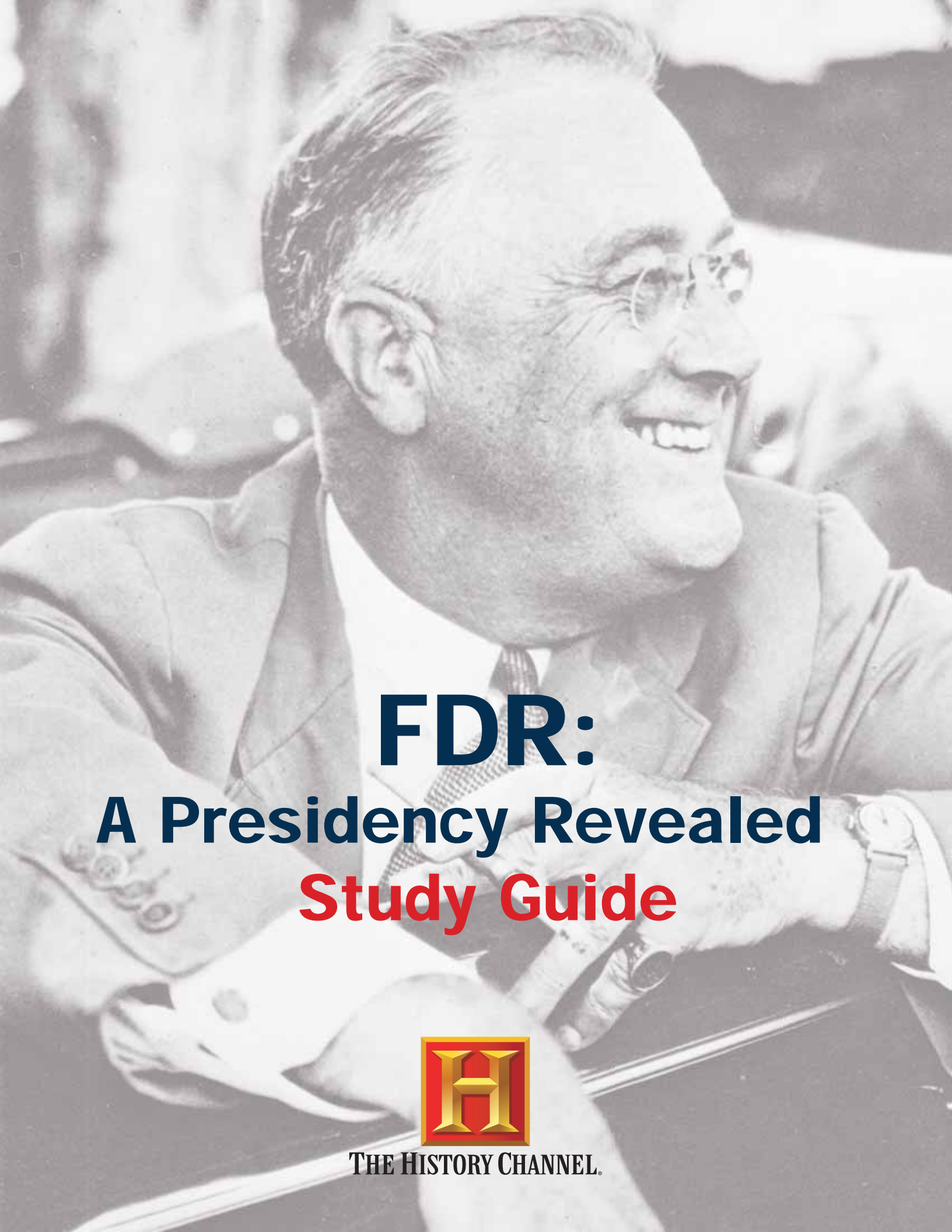
FDR – A Presidency Revealed
Study Guide



Sunday, April 17th 9pm/8c



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FDR: A Presidency Revealed Study Guide



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FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT inherited a broken nation when he was inaugurated as president for the first time on May 4, 1933. The stock market crash of 1929 had weathered expectations of prosperity, pushing millions of Americans onto unemployment lines and into a gripping despair that showed no signs of relief. FDR arrived on the national stage and promised recovery. He declared boldly on that fresh spring day that “this great nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper.” Few knew at that moment that he would become the nation’s longest-serving president and that he would prove himself to be a brilliantly capable statesman who would guide Americans out of economic peril and through the unforeseen challenges of war.



The key contribution of the Roosevelt administration centers on a simple premise – that the power of the federal government can be marshaled to fix the nation’s economic and social problems. *FDR: A Presidency Revealed* is a special two-part documentary that highlights

the critical steps Roosevelt took in order to rebuild the social fabric and economy of the nation, including the creation of Social Security and dozens of new government programs spurred by the National Industrial Recovery Act. Politically, critics of Roosevelt charged that his decision-making style bordered on dictatorship as his plans to reorganize the economy continued to expand. Yet the controversy behind Roosevelt’s political power became muted as the United States entered World War II in 1941.

FDR: A Presidency Revealed covers the major policy decisions and world events that transpired during Roosevelt’s twelve years as president. This candid program also offers a personal portrait of FDR, revealing the interconnections between the president’s private life and his public persona. Soothed by his reassuring voice and calm demeanor, the American people developed a warm fondness for FDR through his speeches and “fireside chats.” Stunningly, few Americans knew that the stability and confidence Roosevelt exuded masked an intense and escalating physical pain. Today, FDR’s polio diagnosis and reliance on a

wheelchair are well-known. Throughout his presidency, though, this fact was kept from the American people in the interest of instilling faith that the well-being and health of the nation was reflected in the strength of their leader.

Educators and their students will find that this program offers a provocative and thoughtful window into these critical years in American history. What is remarkable about FDR’s presidency is the breadth of themes and events his administration spans. From the New Deal through World War II, *FDR: A Presidency Revealed* uses archival footage to capture the most significant events of the 20th century. In addition, this program presents the opportunity to involve students in discussions and activities related to core historical concepts and themes including: the role of the federal government, the balance of power between government branches, the obligations and responsibilities of governments during war time, the uses of media in politics, the causes and consequences of war, and the role of personality in the development of leadership styles. This program provides an excellent framework for understanding contemporary debates about the social responsibilities of government, the regulation of the economy, and the relationship between the executive and judicial branches of government. ★



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☆☆☆ Viewing Guide ☆☆☆

CURRICULUM LINKS:

FDR: A Presidency Revealed would be useful for History, American Culture, American Studies, Civics, and Government courses. It is appropriate for high school students. **Due to sensitive content in the program related to FDR's personal life, we recommend it for mature high school students and suggest that teachers view the program before screening it to students.** Teachers may want to use clips from the historical events covered in the documentary to supplement course units and lesson plans on the New Deal and World War II. This documentary fulfills several National Standards guidelines as outlined by the National Council for History Education including: Values, Beliefs, Political Ideas and Institutions, Conflict and Cooperation, Patterns of Social and Political Interaction and Comparative History of Major Developments.

VOCABULARY:

- ★ cloistered ★ epithet ★ lend-lease ★ prodigious
- ★ conceal ★ infinitely ★ liberal ★ recovery
- ★ dispossessed ★ laissez-faire ★ patrician

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Do you think FDR was destined for greatness and leadership? Do you believe in the concept of destiny?
2. What advantages did FDR have in becoming a political leader? What challenges?
3. At the time of Roosevelt's first election, what needs did he fill for the American people? Why were so many Americans relieved by his election?
4. What were some of the key pieces of legislation passed during the "100 Days" period of Roosevelt's presidency?
5. How do you think Roosevelt's diagnosis with polio affected his political career? Why do you think the administration went to such great lengths to keep the secret that Roosevelt relied upon a wheelchair?
6. Who were some of the foremost critics of Roosevelt's presidency and leadership style? What about his decisions did they oppose?
7. What was the role of Eleanor Roosevelt in her husband's administration? Do you think the realities of their marriage encouraged or discouraged her from participating in political life?
8. This program introduces the idea that the New Deal was a "planned economy." What does this idea mean?
9. Why do you think Roosevelt decided to intern Japanese Americans during World War II? Do you see this decision as consistent with his other policies?
10. What did Roosevelt achieve by hosting "fireside chats" on the radio? How does the President communicate with Americans today?
11. Why do you think this documentary discusses Roosevelt's personal life? Do you think his personal life is relevant to understanding his presidency?
12. After Roosevelt's presidency, term limits were set restricting the presidency to two terms. Do you agree with term limits? Explain your answer.
13. What are some of the lasting effects of the New Deal? Why was it important?

★ FDR: EARLY YEARS

- Born: January 30, 1882 in Hyde Park, NY; 32nd President of the US (1933-1945)
- ★ FDR was born into a well-to-do family; he attended Groton preparatory school and Harvard University
 - ★ The fifth cousin of President Theodore Roosevelt, FDR married TR's niece Eleanor in 1905
 - ★ FDR was diagnosed with polio in 1921 at the age of 39
 - ★ After building his political career in a variety of posts, FDR was elected Governor of NY in 1928

★ QUESTIONS

1. Do you think FDR was destined to become president? What were some of the advantages he had?
2. How did Roosevelt's polio diagnosis threaten his political career?
3. Roosevelt was a member of which political party? What did this party represent?
4. What events in the 1920's affected the state of the nation at the time of FDR's first election?

★ FDR: THE NEW DEAL

- ★ 1929: Stock market crash thrusts US into the Great Depression
 - ★ At FDR's first inauguration on May 4, 1933 he announced "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself"
 - ★ With a group of advisors known as the "Brain Trust," FDR developed plans for the New Deal
 - ★ Key New Deal legislation: AAA (Agricultural Adjustment Act) and NIRA (National Industrial Recovery Act)
 - ★ A second round of legislation, sometimes called the "Second New Deal," was passed in 1935 including the Social Security Act and the Works Progress Administration
- Bonus:** What was the Federal Writer's Project? Research this interesting aspect of the New Deal.

★ QUESTIONS

1. What was "new" about the New Deal? What ideas about the federal government did it represent?
2. The New Deal lasted from ____ to ____.
3. FDR's famous radio addresses were called _____.
4. Some people describe Social Security as a "safety net." What does this term mean? What exactly was Social Security set up to provide?

★ FDR: THE WORLD WAR II YEARS

- ★ FDR was re-elected in 1936 and 1940
- ★ December 7, 1941: Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japanese forces; the next day Congress declared war
- ★ 1942: With Executive Order 9066, Roosevelt ordered Japanese Americans to internment camps throughout the country
- ★ The US committed hundreds of thousands of troops to the war effort; massive D-Day invasion launched on June 6, 1944
- ★ 1945: Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin met at the Yalta Conference to lay out post-war plan
- ★ FDR dies on April 12, 1945; Harry Truman led the US through the conclusion of WWII

★ QUESTIONS

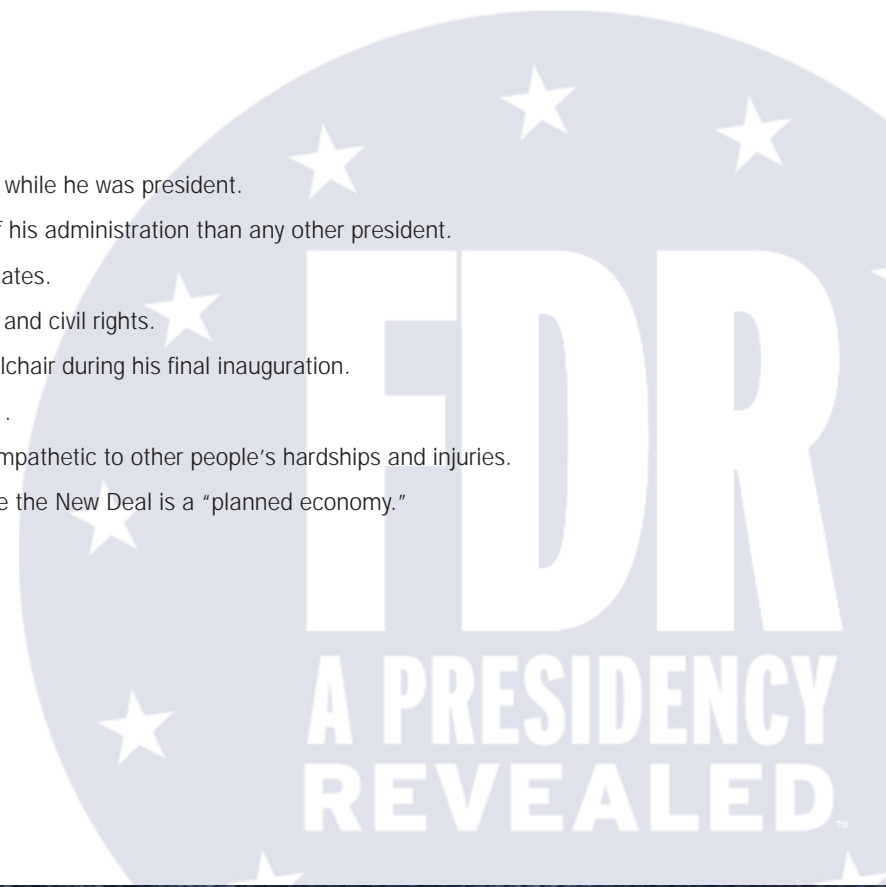
1. What were the "four freedoms" FDR outlined in his famous address to Congress?
2. Roosevelt and Churchill composed the _____ Charter, outlining their plan to actively oppose the Nazi regime.
3. Why did Roosevelt commit Japanese Americans to internment camps? (**Bonus research:** The US issued a formal apology for the internment policy. When?)
4. Which phrase, quote, or statement do you think most embodies Roosevelt's philosophy?
5. Name three of the main contributions of the Roosevelt administration.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS:

1. What was the name of the group of advisors Roosevelt assembled to help him organize the New Deal?
 - a) The New Dealers
 - b) The Brain Trust
 - c) The Cabinet
 - d) The Great Society
2. Which of the following describes the core concept of the New Deal?
 - a) The federal government should provide basic "safety nets" and work to ensure a healthy economy
 - b) Economic recovery can only be achieved through free market economics
 - c) Poverty is primarily the responsibility of individual states, not the federal government
 - d) International exports will help solve the nation's economic problems
3. Which of the following efforts by Roosevelt was seen as an enormous political defeat?
 - a) The Second New Deal
 - b) The Agricultural Adjustment Act
 - c) The Depression
 - d) The plan to pack the Supreme Court
4. Which famous international document did Eleanor Roosevelt help create?
 - a) The National Recovery Act
 - b) The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
 - c) The Atlantic Charter
 - d) The March of Dimes statement of philosophy

TRUE OR FALSE:

1. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was diagnosed with polio while he was president.
2. FDR passed more legislation in the first 100 days of his administration than any other president.
3. The New Deal was focused solely on the northern states.
4. Eleanor Roosevelt was an advocate of social justice and civil rights.
5. Most Americans discovered that FDR was in a wheelchair during his final inauguration.
6. FDR delivered his "Four Freedoms" address in 1941.
7. FDR's personal health problems made him more sympathetic to other people's hardships and injuries.
8. Another phrase used in the documentary to describe the New Deal is a "planned economy."



Match each word in Group 1 with its corresponding description in Group 2.

Group 1

- a) National Industry Recovery Act
- b) Executive Order 9066
- c) "fireside chats"
- d) Wendell Wilkie
- e) "welfare state"
- f) laissez-faire

Group 2

- a) FDR's challenger in the 1940 election
- b) the idea that the government should protect and care for its citizens
- c) the official government authorization to intern Japanese Americans
- d) the idea that unimpeded economic activity is the key to social and economic stability and prosperity
- e) radio addresses through which FDR spoke to the American people
- f) an economic plan to stimulate the economy and provide social support for Americans during the Depression

Extended Activities: Working with Primary Sources

The presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt is a gold mine for educators and students as the years of his presidency (1933-1945) cover so many important events, issues and debates. Fortunately, many of these events were recorded in written and oral form and are readily available on the Internet and in print. The following extended activities provide a guide for teaching the Roosevelt Administration through primary sources and will introduce students and educators to the variety of materials available to give students a firsthand view of FDR's administration.

1. INTRODUCTION TO WORKING WITH ORAL SOURCES:

The History Channel® is pleased to be able to offer a historical speech archive as a classroom resource. This archive is a collection of speeches delivered by historical figures. These speeches provide educators with the opportunity to encourage their students to think critically about the different kinds of primary sources and what they reveal about a historical time period. The speech archive, available online at www.historychannel.com/speeches/, includes several of Franklin Roosevelt's addresses, including his first inaugural speech.

ACTIVITY SUGGESTION: Have your students listen to FDR's first inaugural address available online in The History Channel speech archive. Ask your students to close their eyes as they are listening and think about what it would be like to hear Roosevelt's speech as it was being delivered. Lead the class or group in a discussion of Roosevelt's address and what they experience in listening to these words as opposed to reading them. You may want to provide students with a written excerpt of the speech and ask them to compare the written and oral versions. This exercise will help students gain additional insights into the role FDR's communication skills played in his popularity. **Bonus activity:** Ask students to construct their own topic for a "fireside chat." What topic would they like to discuss with the American people if they had the opportunity?

2. INTRODUCTION TO WORKING WITH PRINT SOURCES:

The following is an excerpt from FDR's famous "Four Freedoms" Speech. The entire transcript is available at www.ourdocuments.gov. This website is the home page for the Our Documents initiative, a cooperative effort among National History Day, the National Archives and Records Administration, and USA Freedom Corps., and includes links and suggested resources for using primary sources. This document and others are available in easily printable form.

Transcript of President Franklin Roosevelt's Annual Message
(Four Freedoms) to Congress (1941):

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Seventy-seventh Congress:

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is freedom of speech and expression – everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way – everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want – which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants – everywhere in the world

The fourth is freedom from fear – which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor – anywhere in the world.

That is no vision of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time and generation. That kind of world is the very antithesis of the so-called new order of tyranny which the dictators seek to create with the crash of a bomb.

To that new order we oppose the greater conception – the moral order. A good society is able to face schemes of world domination and foreign revolutions alike without fear.

Transcription courtesy of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum.

ACTIVITY SUGGESTION: After they have read this excerpt, ask students to choose which of these four freedoms they think is most important. Ask students to write a short essay of 2-3 pages describing why they think this freedom is central to American democracy. In the larger class or group, have students share their choice and make a tally of the highest number among the four chosen by the students. Lead the class or group in a discussion of the "Four Freedoms" and the historical context in which this address was delivered.

3. INTRODUCTION TO WORKING WITH VISUAL SOURCES:

Photography is a historical medium of powerful importance – visual images often capture historical moments in a way that no other sources can. The Library of Congress American Memory Collection is a wonderful resource for viewing and analyzing historical photographs, many of which are part of the public domain. The website <http://memory.loc.gov> features dozens of photographs of FDR, offering students the chance to see how his image was captured and represented in photographs.

ACTIVITY SUGGESTION: Ask students to log on to the American Memory website and search for the famous photograph of Roosevelt with Stalin and Churchill at the Yalta Conference in 1945. This will give students experience in searching for historical sources on the Internet. After they have located the image, lead students in a discussion of what Roosevelt's image reveals or conceals about his health. As *FDR: A Presidency Revealed* emphasizes, the media went to great lengths to protect the world public from the knowledge that Roosevelt was bound to a wheelchair. Ask students to discuss the merits and drawbacks of this decision and to analyze its effects.

BOOKS

Cohen, Robert. *Dear Mrs. Roosevelt: Letters From Children of the Great Depression* (University of North Carolina Press, 2002).
 Fleming, Thomas. *The New Dealers' War: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the War Within World War II* (Basic Books, 2001).
 Leuchtenburg, William. *The FDR Years: On Roosevelt and His Legacy* (Columbia University Press, 1995).
 Wakatsuki, Jeanne. *Farewell to Manzanar: A True Story of Japanese American Experience During and After World War II Internment* (Houghton Mifflin, 1973).

HISTORY.COM SPEECHES

- ★ FDR delivers his first inaugural address
www.historychannel.com/speeches/archive/speech_254.html
- ★ FDR delivers his second inaugural address
www.historychannel.com/speeches/archive/speech_255.html
- ★ FDR gives a fireside chat on the Dust Bowl
www.historychannel.com/speeches/archive/speech_392.html

ADDITIONAL WEBSITES

Funk & Wagnalls® New Encyclopedia – Read this in-depth FDR biography.
http://www.historychannel.com/perl/print_book.pl?ID=220926

Funk & Wagnalls® New Encyclopedia – The New Deal: Learn more about this domestic program pioneered by FDR to counteract the effects of The Great Depression.
http://www.historychannel.com/perl/print_book.pl?ID=217576

Franklin & Eleanor Roosevelt Institute: Site dedicated to maintaining the legacy of the 32nd President and his wife.
www.feri.org/

The White House: Find out how to learn more about FDR by visiting the White House.
www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/fr32.html

Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial: Sculpture in tribute to FDR at the National Park Service site.
www.nps.gov/fdrm/

Franklin D. Roosevelt American Heritage Center Museum: Online exhibit of unique images and documents related to FDR.
www.fdrheritage.org/fdr_museum_preview.htm

American Presidents.org: Engaging biography on FDR from the University of Virginia.
www.americanpresident.org/history/franklindelleanoroosevelt/

Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum: Extensive compilation of images, documents and interactive exhibits.
www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/index.html