

TEACHER'S GUIDE
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MISSION 5: "Up from the Dust"

Pea Pickers, Imperial Valley, California

Photographer Dorothea Lange, hired by the U.S. government's Farm Security Agency, travelled around the country documenting the working and living conditions of Americans during the Depression. She took this photograph of field laborers in the Imperial Valley region of California. Lange often wrote detailed notes to accompany each photograph, relating bits of information and giving context that might otherwise be lost with visuals alone. This photo of laborers picking peas is followed with a description of their low wages: "one cent per pound. Hamper holds about twenty eight pounds."



Source: Dorothea Lange, "Pea pickers. Wages (1939): one cent per pound. Hamper holds about twenty eight pounds. Near Niland, Imperial County, California." February, 1939. Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Photograph Collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa2000004589/PP/>
