

## Decision Tracker Reflection

After completing all parts of the mission, reflect on your journey in the game by answering the following questions.

### 1. What reasons were most important as you played?

Look at your **Decision Tracker**. Circle the reason that was **most important** to you as you played—maintain the family farm, help others, explore America, support the New Deal. Discuss why this was important to you.

### 2. Why are Ginny’s and Frank’s decisions (in the 1930s) different from yours (in 2023)?

Fill out the **Game Decisions** chart below. An example is provided.

- In Column A, write how you think **Ginny or Frank**, living in the Dust Bowl in the 1930s, would respond to the situation. (It can be the same decision you made during game play.)
- In Column B, write how you think **you** would respond today.
- In Column C, write how **Ginny and Frank’s world** and **your world** are different in ways that explain your different decisions.

Situation	Game Decisions		
In an economic depression, with your family earning no money, <b>do you:</b>	A. What did <b>Ginny or Frank</b> , in the 1930s, decide to do?	B. What would <b>you</b> (in 2023) decide to do?	C. What are <b>differences</b> between their world and your world, that explain these different decisions?
<b>Example:</b> Go without groceries you want or buy them on credit?	<i>Ginny got the groceries and worried about being in debt, OR Ginny avoided more debt but had to go without the cake she wanted.</i>	<i>I'd use an adult's credit or debit card to get the groceries I want.</i>	<i>Ginny would owe money to the storeowner, whom she sees regularly, whereas, today, credit is handled by banks, which are impersonal.</i>
1. Leave your home and family to find work or stay home?			
2. Ask neighbors for charity?			
3. Join protests demanding government aid?			

### 3. Discussion: How well can we understand Ginny and Frank?

Ginny and Frank were teenagers living and working on a farm in the 1930s, amid an economic depression and environmental disaster. Using the **Decision Chart** as a reference, discuss:

- What makes it **hard** to understand Ginny’s and Frank’s experiences—how they thought and felt, and why they made the decisions they did?
- What makes it **possible** for you to understand a 1930s farm teenager’s experiences, despite all the differences?

## Up from the Dust: Part 4, Part 5, & Epilogue **Teacher Guide**

**Time:** 25 minutes

### **Instructions**

In this activity, students reflect on their decisions as Ginny and Frank throughout the game and practice historical empathy.

1. Tell students to look at a copy of their **Decision Tracker** and decide which of the four reasons were most important to them as they played—maintain the family farm, help others, explore America, or support the New Deal.

Note: Since many students may have played with other motives in mind (e.g., trying the most extreme choices, trying to make other characters angry, trying to “break” the game, or just choosing randomly), you may want to ask what guided their choices. It’s good to acknowledge that games allow players freedom in how much they identify with characters.

2. Have students fill out the **Game Decisions** chart, following the directions. The chart lists three situations that Ginny and Frank faced in the game and asks students to compare how their own decisions today would be different from those the twins made in the 1930s, and why. To help students with this exercise in historical empathy, you may want to:
  - Remind students that Ginny and Frank had a range of choices, so a range of responses are possible. (In the example, Ginny has two choices.)
  - Help students fill out Column C by reminding them of the broad historical changes between the twins’ time and ours (e.g., changes in workplaces, schools, and living spaces; in families; in social norms and expectations; and in technologies).
  - Remind students that debates about government aid are very alive today, whether around pandemic relief; spending for infrastructure, like roads, bridges, and highways; or student debt relief.
3. Reasons students may say it’s *hard, but still possible* to understand the experience of teens in the 1930s, such as Ginny and Frank, include:
  - They had to grow up much faster than most American kids today; it’s hard to know what it was like to be in such a different world.
  - Today young people still face challenges due to climate change and economic hardships, but there are different options for addressing the issues. Help students draw out the similarities and differences between the 1930s and today.