# TEACHER'S OUTLINE

## LESSON 5: "Politics"/GRADES 4TH – 6TH

## Key Concept: Bacon and Beans and Limousines

In 1931, during the Great Depression, Rogers gave a radio broadcast entitled "Bacon, Beans, and Limousines," which is considered his most famous speech. "Bacon and Beans, and Limousines" proved to be one of the few times Will Rogers did not incorporate much humor into his performance due to the gravity of the topic and the economic downturn in America during this trying time in American history.

Will Rogers was encouraged and approached to run for political office. Though he never did choose to be a politician, he did play a pivotal role in the political arena throughout his adult life. His satirical wit and political commentary often scolded political leaders in a playful and humorous manner. It wasn't until the economic downturn of the Depression that Rogers stepped away from his role as entertainer and into the role of humanitarian. During this trying episode in American history, Rogers displayed characteristics of leadership and commitment that rivaled any political figure of his time.

## Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the topic of Will Rogers' famous speech, "Bacon and Beans and Limousines"
2. Increase understanding of the Great Depression in American society
3. Make connections between the role of radio and television as tools of communication in American history

## Video Clip:

Before completing the *Learning/Media Activity* or *Student Handouts* for this lesson, students should watch Chapter 5 of the documentary *Will Rogers & American Politics*. If time or resources do not allow, students should at a minimum, view the short video clip for Lesson 5. These clips can be viewed online by visiting www.insearchofwillrogers.org, and clicking the "Learn About Will" tab in the main menu.

## Learning Activity: "The Economy During the Depression"

Using the supplied material in this lesson plan, students will be asked to estimate the price of various products during the Depression in 1930. Then, students will estimate the cost of those same items in 2017. After the students have completed this portion of the activity worksheet, the instructor will provide the actual cost of the items using the answer key included in this lesson plan. As an instructor, you are encouraged to engage students in a conversation regarding their findings as well as what surprised them when comparing their estimates with the actual cost values. Students should discuss why they believe people couldn't afford much in the 1930s, even though the cost of items was so low. Students should also discuss the difference in household income between 1930 and 2017.

## Student Handouts:

Students will be challenged to demonstrate their comprehension of material covered in Lesson 5. Additionally, students will be given the opportunity to further explore and discuss various topics covered in the lesson material.

# THE ECONOMY DURING THE DEPRESSION

Estimate or provide your best guess of the cost of the listed items during the Depression and costs of those items today. The actual costs of these items will be given. Compare the difference in price. What is the percentage increase.

| | 1930 - Average Income : $114/month | | 2017 - Average Income : $3,473/month | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimated Cost | Actual Cost | Estimated Cost | Actual Cost |
| BACON | _____ /lb. | | _____ /lb. | |
| BEANS | _____ /lb. | | _____ /lb. | |
| HERSHEY'S BAR | _____ /each | | _____ /each | |
| CARTON OF EGGS | _____ /2 Dozen | | _____ /1 Dozen | |
| COCA-COLA | _____ /16 Oz. | | _____ /16 Oz. | |
| GASOLINE | _____ /gallon | | _____ /gallon | |

# THE ECONOMY DURING THE DEPRESSION

Estimate or provide your best guess of the cost of the listed items during the Depression and costs of those items today. The actual costs of these items will be given. Compare the difference in price. What is the percentage increase?

| | 1930 - Average Income : $114/month | | 2011 - Average Income : $3,473/month | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimated Cost | Actual Cost | Estimated Cost | Actual Cost |
| BACON | _____ /lb. | .11/lb. | _____ /lb. | $5.48/lb |
| BEANS | _____ /lb. | .08/lb. | _____ /lb. | $1.79/lb |
| HERSHEY'S BAR | _____ /each | .01/each | _____ /each | 1.59/each |
| CARTON OF EGGS | _____ /2 Dozen | .25/2 Dozen | _____ /1 Dozen | $1.68/1 dozen |
| COCA-COLA | _____ /16 Oz. | .12/16 Oz. | _____ /16 Oz. | $1.77/16 oz. |
| GASOLINE | _____ /gallon | .10/gallon | _____ /gallon | $2.34/gallon |

# STUDENT HANDOUT

LESSON 5: "POLITICS"
4TH-6TH GRADE

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

CLASS: _____

## CONTENT REVIEW

1. The Great _____ was a time in history when most of America's population was suffering from great poverty and economic hardship.

2. What was the name of Will Rogers' famous radio broadcast given in 1931 that encouraged Americans to reach out a helping hand to their neighbors who were in need?

3. When giving this famous broadcast, Will Rogers commented that NBC stood for _____ _____ about radio anymore.

4. Will Rogers' famous speech was given before President _____ spoke to the American public about unemployment relief.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the Great Depression and how did it impact Americans in the 1930s?

2. Why did Will Rogers agree to speak during the same radio broadcast as President Herbert Hoover?

3. Why do you think Will Rogers' famous radio broadcast was titled "Bacon, Beans, and Limousines"?

# STUDENT HANDOUT
LESSON 5: "POLITICS"
4TH-6TH GRADE

# ANSWER KEY

## CONTENT REVIEW

1. The Great _Depression_ was a time in history when most of America's population was suffering from great poverty and economic hardship.

2. What was the name of Will Rogers' famous radio broadcast given in 1931 that encouraged Americans to reach out a helping hand to their neighbors who were in need?

   Bacon, Beans, and Limousines

3. When giving this famous broadcast, Will Rogers commented that NBC stood for _nobody cares_ about radio anymore.

4. Will Rogers' famous speech was given before President _Hoover_ spoke to the American public about unemployment relief.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the Great Depression and how did it impact Americans in the 1930s?

   TEACHER'S DISCRETION

2. Why did Will Rogers agree to speak during the same radio broadcast as President Herbert Hoover?

   TEACHER'S DISCRETION

3. Why do you think Will Rogers' famous radio broadcast was titled "Bacon and Beans and Limousines"?

   TEACHER'S DISCRETION