

THE DEPRESSION IN EUROPE

The economic crisis in the USA soon spread across the world. By 1932, world exports of raw materials had fallen by over 70%, ruining the economies of many countries which depended on the export of food and raw materials for their income.

Severe economic problems also occurred in Europe, which had already suffered devastating losses of property and finances during World War I. By 1933 three million British people were unemployed. The government paid a weekly amount of money, called 'dole', to the unemployed people, but poverty and despair was common. Unemployment was a lasting problem. In 1938 there were still about 1.8 million people without work.



In October 1935, a group of 200 men marched 300 miles in protest from Jarrow in Northern England to London. They wanted to draw attention to unemployment in their home town. Their protest march was known as the Jarrow Crusade.

John Steinbeck (1902-68) was one of the leading American novelists of the 20th century. He set many of his stories among the poor migrant farm workers at the time of the Great Depression. *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), his most famous novel, tells the story of a poor family who have to leave their home during the Depression. They set out for California along with thousands of others in search of land, jobs and dignity. Unfortunately, on arrival, they find little hope of realizing their dream. A film version of *The Grapes of Wrath* was made in 1940.



Vocabulary

4 Read these pages. Find words that mean:

- 1 a period when there is little economic activity and many people are poor and jobless
- 2 a place where shares are bought and sold
- 3 people without a job
- 4 money paid by the state to unemployed people in Britain
- 5 the money that a country earns from work or investments

Speaking

5 Class discussion. Discuss the following.

- What caused the economic crisis in 2008?
- What effects did it have across the world?
- How was your country affected?

Writing

6 Write a paragraph about the recent world economic crisis. Start like this:

In 2008 the world entered a period of ...