

Name:

Date:

Franklin D. Roosevelt: Leading America

Franklin D. Roosevelt, often called FDR, was the 32nd president of the United States. He was born in New York in 1882 and grew up in a wealthy family. As a young man, Roosevelt studied at Harvard University and later became involved in politics. In 1921, when he was thirty-nine years old, he became very ill with polio. The disease left his legs paralyzed, but Roosevelt worked hard to remain active and continue his public career.

Roosevelt was elected president in 1932 during the Great Depression. At that time, millions of Americans had lost jobs, banks were closing, and many families struggled to afford food and housing. Roosevelt promised a “New Deal” for the American people. His administration created programs to provide jobs, support farmers, strengthen banks, and help older Americans. One lasting program was Social Security, which was created to provide financial support for retired workers and others in need.

Roosevelt also became known for his “fireside chats,” radio talks in which he spoke directly to Americans about national problems. His calm style helped many people feel more hopeful during difficult times.

His wife, Eleanor Roosevelt, also be-



came an important public figure. She traveled widely, spoke about human rights, and encouraged her husband to learn about the needs of ordinary Americans across the country.

During Roosevelt's presidency, World War II began in Europe. After Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the United States entered the war. Roosevelt worked with Allied leaders, including Winston Churchill, to plan the fight against the Axis powers.

Roosevelt was elected president four times, more than any other U.S. president. He died in April 1945, shortly before World War II ended. His leadership during the Great Depression and World War II made him one of the most influential presidents in American history.

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Multiple Choice

1. When was Franklin D. Roosevelt first elected president?
 - A. 1882
 - B. 1921
 - C. 1932
 - D. 1945
2. What major problem was the United States facing when Roosevelt became president?
 - A. The Great Depression
 - B. The Civil War
 - C. The Space Race
 - D. The California Gold Rush
3. What was one purpose of Roosevelt's New Deal programs?
 - A. To close all banks
 - B. To provide jobs and support Americans
 - C. To end public schools
 - D. To move people to Europe
4. What were Roosevelt's "fireside chats"?
 - A. Speeches given only to Congress
 - B. Newspaper articles about farming
 - C. Radio talks to the American people
 - D. Meetings with soldiers around a fire
5. What event caused the United States to enter World War II?
 - A. The attack on Pearl Harbor
 - B. Roosevelt's election
 - C. The creation of Social Security
 - D. The end of the Great Depression

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Comprehension Questions

6. How did polio affect Roosevelt, and how did he respond to the challenge?

7. Name two ways the New Deal tried to help Americans during the Great Depression.

8. Why do you think Roosevelt's fireside chats helped people feel more hopeful?

9. What role did Eleanor Roosevelt play during her husband's presidency?

10. What are two reasons Franklin D. Roosevelt is remembered as an influential president?

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Comprehension Questions

6. How did polio affect Roosevelt, and how did he respond to the challenge?

Polio left Roosevelt's legs paralyzed. He worked hard to remain active and continued his career in public service and politics.

7. Name two ways the New Deal tried to help Americans during the Great Depression.

Answers may include providing jobs, supporting farmers, strengthening banks, and helping older Americans through programs such as Social Security.

8. Why do you think Roosevelt's fireside chats helped people feel more hopeful?

Answers may vary. Roosevelt spoke directly to Americans in a calm, reassuring way and explained national problems, which helped people feel informed and hopeful.

9. What role did Eleanor Roosevelt play during her husband's presidency?

Eleanor Roosevelt traveled widely, spoke about human rights, and helped her husband understand the needs of ordinary Americans.

10. What are two reasons Franklin D. Roosevelt is remembered as an influential president?

Answers may include that Roosevelt led the country during the Great Depression, created New Deal programs such as Social Security, guided the nation through most of World War II, and was elected president four times.