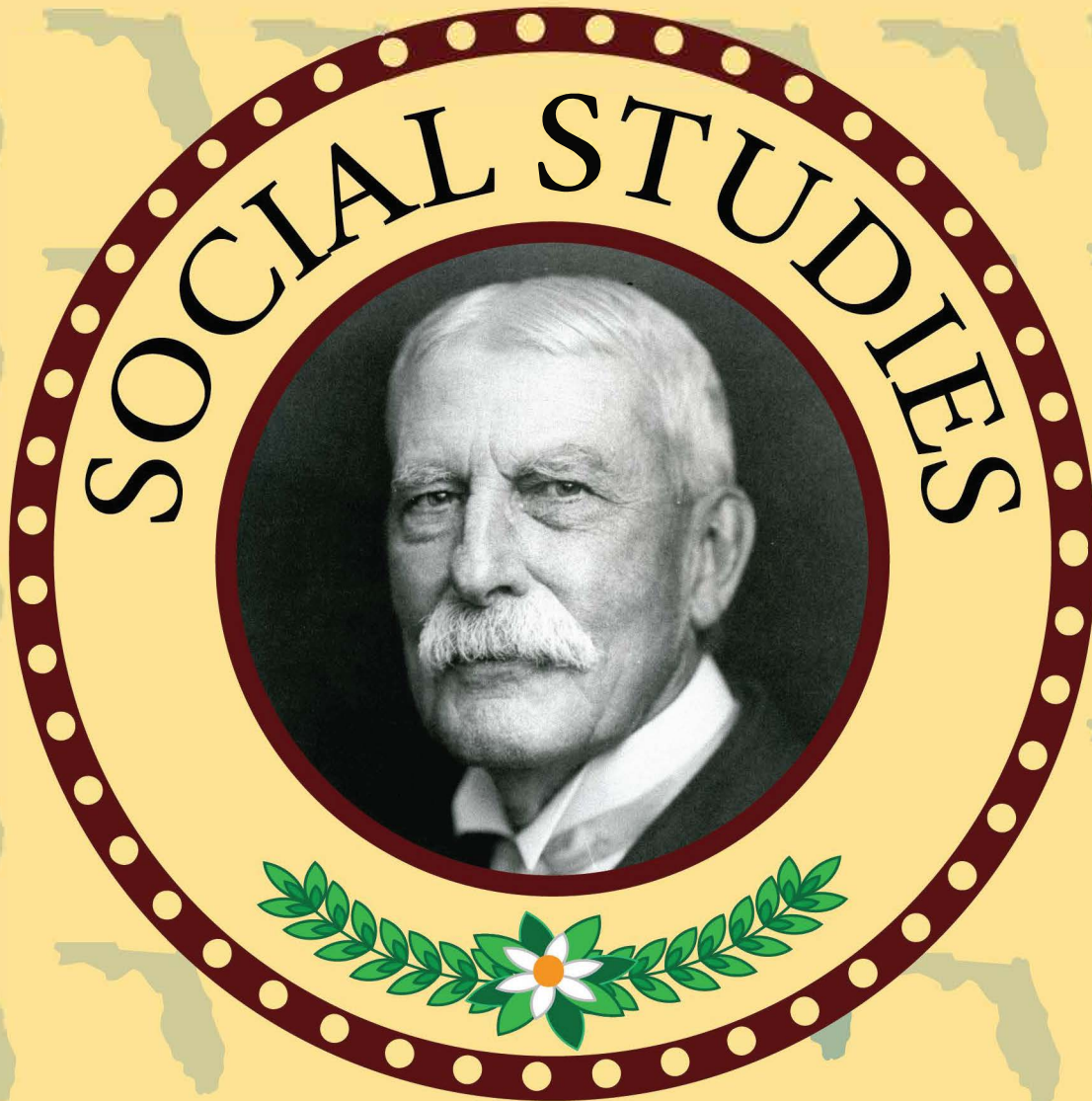


FOURTH GRADE

# THE HISTORY OF FLORIDA LESSON PLANS



## THE FLAGLER ERA BOOM TO BUST

The Historical Society of Palm Beach County and  
Richard and Pat Johnson Palm Beach County History Museum  
300 N. Dixie Highway, West Palm Beach, FL 33401  
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# THE FLAGLER ERA BOOM TO BUST

## LESSON PLANS-TEACHER COPY

**GRADE LEVEL:** 4th grade and can be adapted for other grades

### **INTRODUCTION:**

This section covers Henry Flagler's arrival in Florida and Palm Beach County. It details why he came and what he accomplished. Following Flagler, the Land Boom and Bust are covered and why they happened.

### **PURPOSE:**

To give the students an understanding of Henry Flagler's impact in Florida and what caused the Land Boom and Bust. Students will understand the impact of the 1928 hurricane that devastated Palm Beach County.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Students will be able to list the places where Flagler established his railroads and hotels.
- Students will understand why the Land Boom happened and what caused it to fail.
- Students will gain knowledge of Henry Plant, an early developer of the west coast of Florida.

### **SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS:**

**SS.4.A.1.1:** Analyze primary and secondary resources to identify significant individuals and events throughout Florida history.

**SS.4.A.1.In.a:** Use primary and secondary resources to obtain information about important people and events from Florida history.

**SS.4.A.1.Su.a:** Use a primary and secondary resource to obtain information about a famous person or event from Florida history.

**SS.4.A.1.Pa.a:** Recognize an artifact, picture, or video about Florida.

**SS.4.A.6.3:** Describe the contributions of significant individuals to Florida.

**SS.4.A.6.Su.c:** Recognize the contributions of a significant individual to Florida, such as Henry Flagler, Thomas Alva Edison, or Mary McLeod Bethune.

**SS.4.A.6.Pa.c:** Recognize that many people made contributions to Florida.

# THE FLAGLER ERA BOOM TO BUST

## LESSON PLANS-TEACHER COPY

**SS.4.A.7.1:** Describe the causes and effects of the 1920's Florida land boom and bust.

**SS.4.A.7.In.a:** Identify the basic causes and effects of the 1920s Florida land boom and bust.

**SS.4.A.7.Su.a:** Recognize the cause of the 1920s Florida land bust.

**SS.4.A.7.Pa.a:** Recognize an effect of the Florida land bust.

**SS.4.A.9.1:** Utilize timelines to sequence key events in Florida history.

**SS.4.A.9.In.a:** Complete a timeline to sequence important events in Florida history.

**SS.4.E.1.1:** Identify entrepreneurs from various social and ethnic backgrounds who have influenced Florida and local economy.

**SS.4.E.1.In.a:** Recognize contributions of entrepreneurs who influenced Florida, such as Walt Disney (theme parks) and Henry Flagler (railroads).

### LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS:

**LAFS.4.RI.1.1:** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

**LAFS.4.RI.1.AP.1a:** Refer to details and examples in a text that are relevant to explaining what the text says explicitly.

**LAFS.4.RI.1.AP.1b:** Refer to details and examples in a text that are relevant to drawing basic inferences from an informational text.

**LAFS.4.RI.1.2:** Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

**LAFS.4.RI.1.AP.2a:** Determine the main idea of an informational text.

**LAFS.4.RI.1.AP.2b:** Identify supporting details of an informational text.

**LAFS.4.RI.1.AP.2c:** Identify how ideas are organized to summarize the text.

**LAFS.4.RI.1.3:** Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

**LAFS.4.RI.1.AP.3a:** Identify events, procedures, ideas or concepts in a historical, scientific or technical text.

**LAFS.4.RI.1.AP.3b:** Identify specific causes and effects that relate to events, procedures, ideas or concepts in historical, scientific or technical text.

# THE FLAGLER ERA BOOM TO BUST

## WORKSHEET 1

### **MATERIALS:**

- HSPBC's *The History of Florida* pages 9-12 (included)
- Answer Key (pages 5-6)
- Worksheet 1 (page 4)
- Quiz (page 7)
- Quiz Answer Key (page 8)
- Computer

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Students are given "The Flagler Era Boom to Bust" Student Copy PDF.
2. Students read and complete the activities in "The Flagler Era Boom to Bust" (included). Answer Key is on pages 5-6.
3. Students take the Quiz (page 6) and submit to the teacher. Answer Key is on page 7.
4. Students complete Worksheet 1 (page 4) and submit to the teacher.

## THE FLAGLER ERA BOOM TO BUST

### LESSON PLANS-TEACHER COPY

**Instructions:** Read "The Flagler Era Boom to Bust" and answer the questions below in a separate document. When you are finished, submit the answers to your teacher.

Name:

1. Who was Henry Flagler? Why was he so important?
2. By the 1920s, Florida had a population of 968,470. Just five years later, it reached 1,263,540. What caused this?
3. In your own words, describe why the Florida Land Boom turned into a Land Bust.

## **THE FLAGLER ERA BOOM TO BUST** **ANSWER KEY FOR ACTIVITIES ON PAGE 2 OF** *THE HISTORY OF FLORIDA*

### **READING CHECK:**

1. What benefits did the Florida East Coast Railroad provide?

**Answer:** The railroad was important for bringing more people to south Florida. The railroad brought wealthy visitors and new residents to Palm Beach County. It also shipped farming products more quickly to the northern cities. This helped the area around Lake Worth make money.

### **THINK ABOUT IT:**

1. Why do you think Flagler named his first hotel the Ponce de Leon Hotel?

**Answer:** Flagler probably named his first hotel the Ponce de Leon Hotel to honor the explorer. Juan Ponce de León was probably the first European explorer to set foot in what is today the United States, and he named Florida.

### **READING CHECK:**

1. What are some events that led to the 1920s Florida Land Bust?

**Answer:** Housing costs went up in Florida. The railway system could not transport all the building materials needed to build homes and businesses in Florida. Land prices stopped going up, because many of the speculators could not sell their property. Suddenly, there were thousands of acres of overpriced land without any buyers. Many landowners lost everything.

## THE FLAGLER ERA BOOM TO BUST

### ANSWER KEY FOR ACTIVITIES ON PAGE 3 OF *THE HISTORY OF FLORIDA*

#### READING CHECK:

1. Who was Henry Plant and what did he accomplish?

**Answer:** Henry Bradley Plant was a developer on the west coast of Florida. He built hotels and brought a train system to connect the northern United States to the west coast of Florida. He also began a steamship trading business with the islands of the Caribbean.

Refer to the “Alligator Joe” section of the text to answer the following questions.

2. What is the least important reason to learn about Alligator Joe?

- a) to discuss an early tourist attraction
- b) to let readers know about Alligator Joe
- c) to share Joe’s contribution to local history
- d) **to address early wildlife preservation**

3. Which of the following is an activity mentioned in the text on page 2?

- a) going to Disney World
- b) **taking in the sights at Munyon Island**
- c) driving to Sea World
- d) all of the above

4. What is Alligator Joe’s real name?

**Answer:** Warren Frazee

5. What did a 1903 newspaper account say about Alligator Joe?

**Answer:** The newspaper claimed that Alligator Joe had hundreds of alligators and crocodiles and that his farm was about a mile from the Royal Poinciana Hotel on the cycle path.

6. According to the article, who was Old Jumbo?

**Answer:** He was one of Alligator Joe’s alligators. He was supposedly 2,000 years old and weighed 2,000 lbs.



# THE FLAGLER ERA BOOM TO BUST QUIZ

**Instructions:** Read "The Flagler Era Boom to Bust" and answer the questions below in a separate document. When you are finished, submit the answers to your teacher.

Name:

1. The Flagler Era is associated with the Boom to Bust era. Which of the following best describes Boom to Bust?

- A) crash to break
- B) success to failure
- C) debt to loss
- D) building to ground

2. The Roaring '20s (1920s) was a time of plenty. People had money and came to Florida to buy land and sell land. This was called the *Boom*. From this statement, we can conclude that during the twenties, real estate:

- A) was a successful business
- B) did not bring money to Florida
- C) was in a bust
- D) involved hurricanes

3. The Great Depression came after the:

- A) Land Boom
- B) Land Bust
- C) land sales
- D) land fires

4. In 1928 what devastating event caused floods, damage, and deaths throughout Palm Beach County?

- A) a hurricane
- B) a tornado
- C) a tsunami
- D) a sinkhole



## THE FLAGLER ERA BOOM TO BUST QUIZ ANSWER KEY

The Flagler Era is associated with the Boom to Bust era. Which of the following best describes Boom to Bust?

- A) crash to break
- B) **success to failure**
- C) debt to loss
- D) building to ground

2. The Roaring '20s (1920s) was a time of plenty. People had money and came to Florida to buy land and sell land. This was called the *Boom*. From this statement, we can conclude that during the twenties, real estate:

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- B) **Land Bust**
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- D) land fires

4. In 1928 what devastating event caused floods, damage, and deaths throughout Palm Beach County?

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- C) a tsunami
- D) a sinkhole

# THE FLAGLER ERA AND BOOM TO BUST

## RAILROADS AND HOTELS

Henry Morrison Flagler first came to Florida from New York in 1878. His wife’s doctor suggested that her health might improve if she spent the winters in milder weather. The couple spent only one winter in Florida before Mary died in 1881.

Two years later Flagler married his second wife, Ida, and took her to visit St. Augustine. Flagler quickly realized that there were neither enough hotels in the city, nor a reliable transportation system to get there. Flagler decided to return to St. Augustine in 1885 and build the grand Ponce de León Hotel. He knew that

improved transportation would bring more visitors to his new hotel, so he bought the Jacksonville, St. Augustine and Halifax Railroad, the beginning of his railroad empire. Flagler continued to buy and build railroad lines, which eventually connected the entire east coast of Florida and became known as the *Florida East Coast Railway*.

In the early 1890s, Flagler visited south Florida and became enchanted by its beauty. After his visit, he decided to buy land in Palm Beach and construct a winter resort for wealthy tourists on the



Henry Flagler

Courtesy of HSPBC

island. In 1894 he opened the Hotel Royal Poinciana overlooking Lake Worth, and two years later, the Palm Beach Inn (later renamed The Breakers) on the ocean beach.

Flagler designed a city across Lake Worth to be the commercial and residential area to support the resort. This west side community incorporated as West Palm Beach in 1894. By then Flagler’s railroad reached the new town, bringing wealthy visitors



The Royal Poinciana Hotel

Courtesy of HSPBC

## STANDARDS:

**SS.4.A.1.1:** Analyze primary and secondary resources to identify significant individuals and events throughout Florida history.

**SS.4.A.6.3:** Describe the contributions of significant individuals to Florida.

**SS.4.A.7.1:** Describe the causes and effects of the 1920s Florida land boom and bust.

**SS.4.A.9.1:** Utilize timelines to sequence key events in Florida history.

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**LAFS.4.RI.1.3:** Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

## Historical Timeline

1887

Eatonville is incorporated. It is the country’s oldest African American town.

1890

Population of Florida is 391,422



## ACTIVITIES!

### READING CHECK:

1. What benefits did the Florida East Coast Railway provide to Palm Beach County?

### THINK ABOUT IT:

1. Why do you think Flagler named his first hotel the Ponce de León Hotel?

### READING CHECK:

1. What are some events that led to the 1920s *Florida Land Bust*?

## DID YOU KNOW?

Henry Flagler's Royal Poinciana Hotel, once the largest wooden structure in the world, employed 1,200 people to take care of the hotel guests.

and new residents to the area. It also shipped vegetables and fruits more quickly to northern cities, which helped the local economy. By 1896 Flagler extended the Florida East Coast Railway south to Miami, and in 1912 it reached Key West. The railroad was important for bringing more people and goods to Florida's east coast.

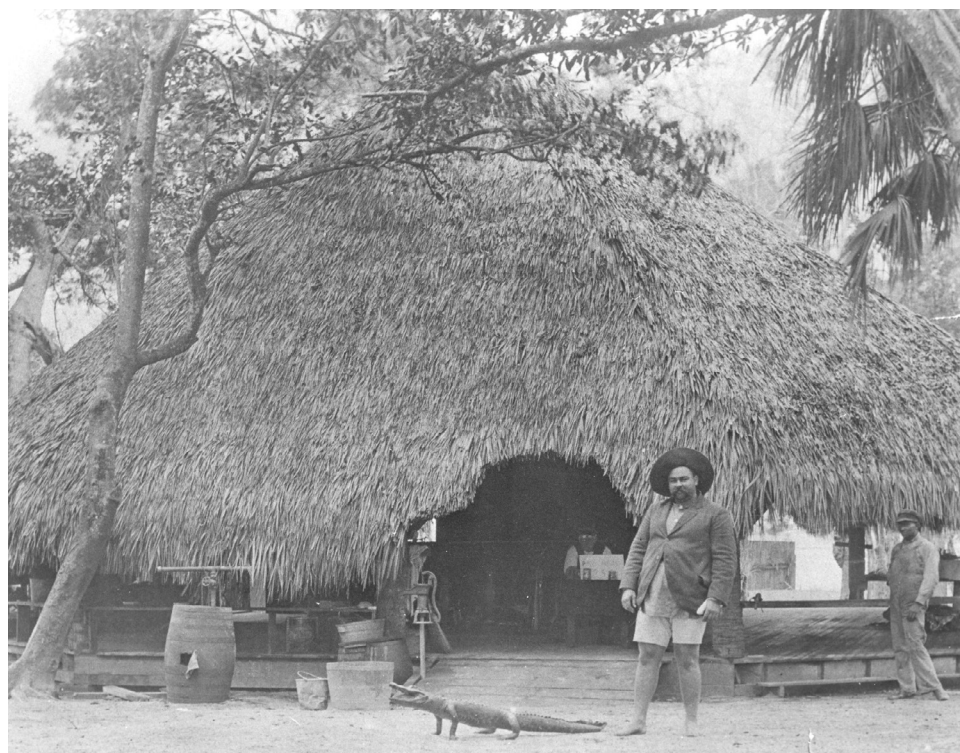
### HENRY PLANT

Henry Bradley Plant is often compared to Henry Flagler. While Flagler developed the east coast of Florida, Plant developed the west coast of Florida. Plant bought a string of railroads to connect Florida with the northern United States. He also began a steamship business to trade with the islands of the Caribbean. Just as Flagler had built fancy hotels, so did Plant. Most famous was his Tampa Bay Hotel, built in 1891, which became a National Historic Landmark and the home of the Henry B. Plant Museum.

### ALLIGATOR JOE

Early visitors to Palm Beach had many activities to choose from while enjoying Florida's mild winters. The local newspaper reported available activities daily. Visitors could golf, go fishing, and bathe in the pool or surf. They could go sailing to take in the sights of Munyon Island and the inlet. People could also visit a number of commercial tourist attractions. Among the most popular of these attractions was Alligator Joe's alligator farm. At the farm, Alligator Joe entertained the crowds with his alligator wrestling.

According to a 1903 newspaper account, Alligator Joe had "hundreds of alligators and



Alligator Joe poses with an alligator.

Courtesy of HSPBC

crocodiles," and the farm was only "about a mile from Royal Poinciana grounds on [the] cycle path." Anyone desiring to walk or take a wheelchair ride could break up their trip with a stop at Joe's to visit the reptiles and the occasional manatee.

Alligator Joe, born Warren Frazee on March 1, 1873, was a native Floridian. He came to this area from Jacksonville around 1898. Pictures of him show a large man with a long, flowing mustache. One newspaper account put Joe's weight at 340 pounds. The same article also claimed that "Old Jumbo," one of Joe's alligators, was 2,000 years old and weighed 2,000 pounds. Most pictures show Joe in a wide-brim hat, with a pistol on his belt or a rifle in his hand, and alligators nearby. Close examinations of the pictures, however, reveal that some of those alligators were stuffed or newly dead.

Alligator Joe was known throughout the country. He had

alligator farms or exhibitions in Chicago, Kansas City, and Denver. *The Daily Tropical Sun* reported that he employed Florida natives to manage his long-distance businesses. Joe also trapped manatees. In 1903 he sent a pair of manatees to the New York Zoological Society for display in their aquarium. By 1915 trapping manatees violated Florida law, but with the blessing of federal and local government officials, Joe captured one more manatee for display at the Panama Exposition in San Francisco.

In March or April of 1915, Alligator Joe filled a number of train cars with "live alligators, manatees, and game fish of the sea" for the Panama Exposition and headed for San Francisco. Unfortunately, his alligator wrestling did not prove to be a good way to keep in shape. On May 30, 1915, Warren Frazee died of illnesses related to his obesity.

1928 HURRICANE

Hurricanes are important to understanding Florida’s history. On September 16, 1928, a great storm struck Palm Beach County, equal to a Category 4 hurricane. The deadly storm reached the shore with winds of 130 to 150 miles per hour, dropping more than eighteen inches of rain in less than twenty-four hours. This hurricane damaged almost everything in its path. The strong winds and heavy rainfall caused Lake Okeechobee to overflow and flood Belle Glade, Pahokee, South Bay, and Canal Point. The flooding and high winds killed more than 3,000 people in Palm Beach County. Yet the survivors overcame



The courthouse after the 1928 hurricane

Courtesy of HSPBC

the disaster and rebuilt their cities and towns.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Between the 1890s and 1920s, there were strict rules for women. One rule was that women could not show bare legs on the beach. They had to wear hose under their bathing suits. There was even a male beach patrol to make sure the rules were followed.

LAND BOOM AND BUST

By the 1920s, Florida had a population of 968,470 people. Just five years later, it reached 1,263,540. What caused such a rise in the population? The 1920s were called

the *Roaring ’20s*. It was a time when a person’s wealth and success were measured by what he or she owned, and the economy was prospering. Many people had good jobs and could buy what they needed, so businesses were making money. Buying things on credit became popular. When you buy something on credit, you buy

it now but pay for it later. People from all over the United States poured into Florida to buy land for cheap prices and then sell it for higher prices. These land speculators bought land to make a profit quickly. So much land was being bought in the 1920s that this period was called the *Florida Land Boom*.

During the boom, some people bought and sold land in Florida without ever coming to the state. They hired young, hard-working men and women to show their land to prospective buyers. Buyers would put a *binder* on the contract to buy the land. A binder was a non-refundable down payment for the land. The rest of the money was to be paid in thirty days. Non-refundable means that the buyers could not get their money back

ACTIVITIES!

READING CHECK:

- 1. Who was Henry Plant and what did he accomplish?  
Refer to the “Alligator Joe” article to answer the following questions.
- 2. What is the least likely reason the author wrote the article?
  - a. To discuss an early tourist attraction.
  - b. To let readers know about Alligator Joe.
  - c. To share Joe’s contribution to local history.
  - d. To address early wildlife preservation.
- 3. Which of the following is an activity mentioned in the article?
  - a. Going to Disney World.
  - b. Taking in the sights at Munyon Island.
  - c. Driving to Sea World.
  - d. All of the above.
- 4. What is Alligator Joe’s real name?
- 5. What did a 1903 newspaper account say about Alligator Joe?
- 6. According to the article, who was Old Jumbo?



Clematis Street in 1920

Courtesy of HSPBC

Historical Timeline

1909

Palm Beach County is created.

1914

First U.S. airplane passenger service begins, from Tampa to St. Petersburg.

1920

Population of Florida is 968,470.



DID YOU KNOW?

In 1929 the Mediterranean fruit fly invaded Florida. A quarantine was put on the state that restricted farmers from selling their citrus to anyone outside of the Florida. Citrus production was cut by about sixty percent.

even if there was a problem with the sale. With land prices rising quickly, many buyers planned to sell again at a profit before the end of the thirty days.

Sometimes the buyers did not have enough money to pay for the land, only just enough to pay the binder. If they resold their land for profit before the end of the thirty days, they had no problem. But if they didn't sell the land, they didn't have enough money to keep it. They lost the land as well as the binder money they had paid.

As land was bought and sold at higher prices, serious problems developed. Housing costs went up in Florida. The railway system could not transport all the building materials needed to build homes and businesses in south Florida. The land prices stopped going up, so many of the speculators could not sell their property. Suddenly, there were thousands of acres of overpriced land without any buyers. Many

landowners lost everything because they could not make the final payment for the land they had bought on a binder.

The *Land Boom* stopped almost as suddenly as it had started, turning the *Land Boom* into a *Land Bust*. To make matters worse, newspapers told readers to stay away from Florida because of unethical and illegal land deals.

In addition to these problems, several natural disasters hurt Florida's economy, and the state went into a depression. During an economic depression, people lose their jobs and can't afford to buy what they need. In turn, businesses cannot make enough money. In October 1929, the United States went into the Great Depression when the stock market crashed.



Men, women and children in a relief line during the Great Depression

Courtesy of Margaret Bourke-White

Historical Timeline

1928

A hurricane breaks a mud dike at Lake Okeechobee, killing about 3,000 people and devastating Palm Beach County.

1929

The stock market crashes. This contributes to the Great Depression.

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