

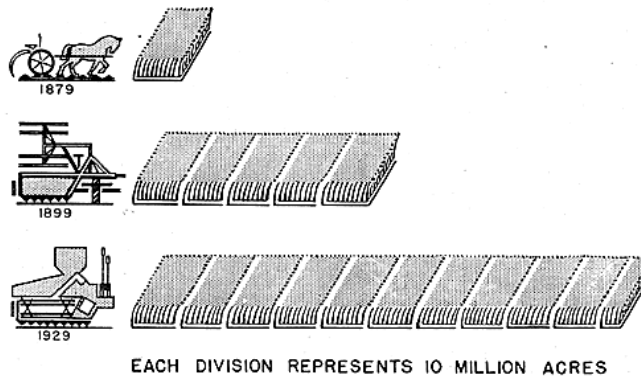
TEACHER'S GUIDE  
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MISSION 5: "Up from the Dust"

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**Acreege of Harvested Crops in the Great Plains, 1879-1929**

*In 1936, President Roosevelt formed a committee of scientists, agricultural engineers, and government officials to assess the causes of—and possible remedies to—the drought conditions that were plaguing the Great Plains region. In the following section of their report, the committee uses evidence to show how excessive plowing and overgrazing had removed the grasses which naturally anchored the soil in place, thereby contributing to the Dust Bowl conditions in the 1930s.*

**ACREAGE OF HARVESTED CROPS  
IN 8 GREAT PLAINS STATES**



One primary source of disaster has been the destruction of millions of acres of this natural cover, an act which in such a series of dry years as that through which we are now passing left the loose soil exposed to the winds. This destruction has been caused partly by over grazing, partly by excessive plowing. It has been an accompaniment of settlement, intensified in operation and effect since the World War. In eight states lying partly within the region the area in harvested crops has increased as follows:

1879	12,200,000 acres
1899	53,500,000 acres
1909	71,600,000 acres
1919	87,800,000 acres
1929	103,200,000 acres

Source: Morris Cooke et al, *Report of the Great Plains Drought Area Committee*, (Hopkins Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library) Box 13. <http://newdeal.feri.org/hopkins/hop27.htm>

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