

# BUILDING BLOCK INQUIRY C3 TEACHERS

## Great Depression

### What Stories Do Photographs Tell?

#### C3 Framework Standard

D2.His.12.6-8. Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.

*Photography serves as a poignant story of the past, offering visual narratives that transcend time and space. Through the lens of historical photographs, we gain intimate glimpses into bygone eras, witnessing pivotal moments, societal shifts, and individual experiences frozen in time. These images capture an essence of historical events, from wars and revolutions to everyday life, allowing students to empathetically connect with the people and their stories.*

#### Featured Sources

Source: [Great Depression Migrants Photograph Set](#), Library of Congress

#### Formative Performance Task

**COLLABORATE:** Annotate a series of photographs using a [guided observation exercise](#).

**DELIBERATE:** Identify aspects of the image that support themes that “tell the story” of migrants’ experiences during the Great Depression.

**PRODUCE:** Suggest new titles for each photograph that reflect an interpretive “telling” of the Great Depression.

#### Instructional Snapshot

Class begins with a brief discussion of the Great Depression, which caused many problems for small farmers living in the Great Plains. Dust Bowls made farming difficult, and few jobs were available to meet a family’s needs. To find better opportunities, many people migrated west to California, hoping to find land to farm and raise livestock. But the journey wasn’t without hardship. As they explore the photographs, students are divided into expert jigsaw pairs to annotate the images in the Great Depression Migrants Photograph Set using a guided observation exercise. Students analyze and annotate the images by including details they see and connections they make about what the image tells them about the migrants’ experiences. To develop themes around the images, regroup students into study groups to identify themes within the photographs that “tell the story” of migrants’ experiences (e.g., perseverance, hopelessness, uncertainty). Students can generate their own themes, or the teacher may provide or suggest themes for added scaffolding. Students share the details they included by themes. Finally, the teacher may task students with suggesting a new title for each photograph that exemplifies an overall theme.