A visitor is returning. We haven’t seen this one in ages. In 2061, Halley’s Comet will streak past Earth. It is named for Edmund Halley. He deduced that comets seen in 1531, 1607, and 1682 were all one in the same. He predicted its appearance in 1758. But he did not live to see it. The most ancient record of Halley’s Comet comes from 1057 BCE. A Chinese book mentions it. Astronomers have noted each appearance since 239 BCE.

A comet begins as a small, icy mass far beyond Pluto in a region called the Oort Cloud. There, billions of chunks of ice water, ice ammonia, ice methane, and dust circle the solar system. Pluto’s or Neptune’s gravity causes the comet to start falling toward the sun. A trail of solar particles creates a visible tail of glowing gases. The tail can stretch for thirty-five million miles! The comet goes around the sun. Then it slingshots away and races once more toward the outer solar system.

Most comets never return to the solar system. However, a few are short-period comets. They return at regular intervals. Halley’s Comet appears every seventy-six years. Comet Encke goes by every 3.3 years.

Check Your Understanding

1. From the context of the passage, what is the meaning of a short-period comet?
   a. It returns at regular intervals.
   b. It is never seen but once.
   c. It is made of solar particles.
   d. It lasts less than a year.

2. Where do comets form?
   a. near the sun
   b. near Jupiter
   c. in the Oort Cloud region
   d. near Earth

3. Which of the following is a topic sentence?
   a. Then it slingshots away and races once more toward the outer solar system.
   b. A comet begins as a small, icy mass far beyond Pluto in a region called the Oort Cloud.
   c. The most ancient record of Halley’s Comet comes from 1057 BCE.
   d. Comet Encke goes by every 3.3 years.

4. Which event occurred after Halley’s death and was seen as proof that the comet returned every seventy-six years?
   b. The appearance in 2061.
   c. The appearance in 1057 BCE.
   d. The return of the comet in 1758.
Notes – Economics Terms

- Economy: The system by which goods and services are produced, sold, and bought.
- Supply: what is available to consumers
- Consumer Demand: the need for the goods and services
- Consumer Goods: products that get used by consumers
- Debt: owing more than you have
- Stock Market: A place where shares of public companies are traded for profit

4 min.
Guided Practice – The Great Depression

**Question: What caused the Great Depression?**

**PART A**

The following documents will help you answer the document-based question. Read each document carefully. Answer the question or questions that follow each document.

**Document 1**

A stock exchange is the market where stocks in companies are bought and sold. Just as at an auction, the price of each company’s stock is determined by demand — by how much people want the stock. If people think that the company is a good one and that the value of the stock will go up, they will purchase shares. This will move the price of shares higher. On the other hand, if people think that the value of the company and its stock will fall, owners of the stock will probably want to sell. This will move share prices lower. It’s this ongoing buying and selling of millions of shares of stock that moves the prices of stocks up and down each day.

During the 1920s, the prices of stock bought and sold on the New York Stock Exchange skyrocketed. In the year 1924, the average price was $104. (These average prices are from the Dow Jones Industrial Average.) People were confident that the U.S. economy was growing and that stock prices were going to rise. Believing this, buyers bid up the prices of stock. By 1929, the average price had risen to $290. On September 3, 1929, the average stock price reached $381.17. But then, in just a matter of days, stock prices began to plummet. In the following eight weeks, General Electric Company’s stock prices fell from almost $400 to only $168 per share. A share of stock in Montgomery Ward fell from $137 to $49. During just those two months, investors lost $40 billion in stock value. Worse, stock prices continued to tumble. By 1933, four years later, stocks had lost 75 percent of their value. Montgomery Ward stock had fallen to $4 per share. Millions of Americans were wiped out, losing all that they owned.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average shows the average price of a number of stocks traded on the New York Stock Exchange. The chart below shows the value of the stocks tracked by the Dow Jones Industrial Average between 1920 and 1950.
After Reading Questions:

Question 1: Many Americans lost their life savings when the stock market crashed. How do you suppose (think) this affected their spending habits?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Thoughts:</th>
<th>Class Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This affected their spending habits by causing them to spend less.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 2: How did this affect the total amount of consumer demand?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Thoughts:</th>
<th>Class Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This affected the total consumer demand by decreasing it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Document 2

Today, less than 2 percent of the U.S. workforce works in agriculture. But in the 1920s, over 20 percent—one person in every five workers—worked on farms. A great number of people depended on agriculture for their livelihood. So the prices of farm goods and the earnings of farms had huge impacts on the entire economy.

During World War I (1914–1918), U.S. farm income was high. U.S. farmers were selling millions of dollars worth of corn, wheat, beef, and other farm products to Europe. Between 1914 and 1918, U.S. annual farm income increased from $4 billion to $10 billion. During these good times, U.S. farmers borrowed money to purchase machinery and expand production. But with peace and the end of the war, Europe’s demand for American farm goods fell. Agricultural prices dropped. So, too, did the incomes of U.S. farmers. Many farmers now found themselves with high debts and little income. This chart shows how farm prices (and therefore farmers’ incomes) changed from the wartime prices of 1918 through the 1920s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S. Farm Prices, 1918–1928</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corn $/bushel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 min.
After Reading Questions:

**Question 1:** What happened to American farm prices after the war ended?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Thoughts:</th>
<th>Class Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>farm prices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mostly dropped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(went down).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 2:** What impact did this have on the ability of farm families to purchase consumer goods during the 1920s?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Thoughts:</th>
<th>Class Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They did not have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the ability to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>purchase as many goods because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>they had less money.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Document 3

The 1920s saw major growth in industrial production of consumer products. Factory assembly lines turned out automobiles, refrigerators, electric stoves, and radios as fast as consumers could buy them. To keep consumer demand high, business developed a new financial practice. Businesses sold their goods on credit. They allowed consumers to purchase products with small payments over a long period of time. Families sometimes didn’t have enough money to pay for something they wanted right then. They could still get it by buying it on credit. But there were dangers in having large numbers of families deeply in debt. Here’s how one historian described the problem.

* A new idea! Allowed people to create more demand, while consumers "owned" less.
Ms. Underwood's Reading Class – Introducing Bud, Not Buddy Day 1

... the purchasing power of workers and farmers was not great enough to sustain prosperity. For a time this was partly [solved] by the fact that consumers bought goods on installment at a rate faster than their income was expanding, but it was inevitable that a time would come when they would have to reduce purchases, and the cutback in buying would sap the whole economy.


After Reading Questions:

**Question 1:** Buying on credit allowed families, for a time, to spend more money than they had. But the time came when families were so deeply in debt that they had to stop spending. How did this affect the economy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Thoughts:</th>
<th>Class Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This affected the economy by more goods being made than were sold or bought.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Document 4

During the 1920s, the rich got richer, and the poor got poorer. By 1929, the richest 30,000 families had more wealth than the poorest 10 million families. These 10 million families made up the poorest 40 percent of the entire U.S. population at that time. The richest 30,000 families made up only about one tenth of one percent of the population. The few rich were very wealthy, while many Americans were barely getting by.

This unequal distribution of wealth made it difficult for society to purchase all of the goods that were being produced. If more wealth had been in the hands of more people, it would have resulted in greater spending and purchasing of consumer goods. But the rich families saved much of their wealth instead of spending it. Much of these savings were either invested into businesses or speculated on the stock exchange.

300+ times as much as 30,000 vs. 10 million.
After Reading Questions:

**Question 1**: How did the unequal distribution of wealth during the 1920s contribute to the fundamental cause of the Great Depression?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Thoughts:</th>
<th>Class Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The rich got richer and hung onto their money, so they were not putting it back into the economy for the working class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 2**: So, what is the Great Depression?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Thoughts:</th>
<th>Class Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Great Depression is a period of time when there was low business activity and circulating of money.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**WWI & the Great Depression**

**Trench Warfare and the Battle of the Somme**

**A New Way of War**

Before World War I, countries fought wars by focusing on offense. One side would plan an attack against the other side and carry it out. In World War I, everything changed. The war was a war of defense. On the Western Front, between France and Germany, each side dug in. The soldiers dug trenches, meaning ditches in the ground. The trenches were about seven feet deep and six feet wide. The network of trenches made it possible for soldiers to move around. They never had to rise above ground level. They could shoot oncoming armies without being seen or shot. The new trench warfare made an offensive strategy deadly.

**No Man’s Land**

The area between the lines of enemy soldiers was covered in barbed wire and grenades. There were outlines of buildings that used to be houses. There were burnt stumps—trees that had been exploded to bits. This made it even more difficult for the armies to attack each other without losing many, many lives. The constant fire from artillery turned the area between the fronts into a mud pit of dirt, disease, and death. The area was nicknamed “no man’s land.”

**The Great Push**

The Battle of the Somme would prove one of the deadliest fights in history. On July 1, 1916, the Allied forces planned a big offensive strike, known as the Great Push. They planned this attack despite the risks of no man’s land and the German trenches beyond. Thousands of men crawled from their trenches towards the German line. It was broad daylight. As they approached the Germans, more and more men were killed. The old way of warfare, attacking in a line, just did not work anymore.

In one day, 57,470 men in the British army were killed or wounded. But the Allies kept fighting for over four months.

**The Cost**

Finally, in November 1916, the Battle ended. What had been won? The Allied troops had advanced only 10 kilometers, or about six miles. The approximate number of casualties was: British 420,000, French 200,000, German 450,000.

Before long, Germany would launch its last big offensive battle and lose the war. But the Battle of the Somme demonstrates the ways in which both sides really lost.

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1. *trenches* – long, narrow ditches
2. *artillery* – the cannons, tanks, and big guns of an army that fire large explosives
3. *offensive* – making an attack
4. *casualties* – the total number of dead, wounded, or missing soldiers
1. According to the passage, World War I was mostly
   a. offensive.
   b. defensive.
   c. fought with planes.
   d. fought with boats.

2. Why does the author describe what happened at the Battle of the Somme?
   a. to provide an example of how the British used trenches to their advantage
   b. to tell the story of how World War I came to an end
   c. to explain how troops in World War I got the idea to start digging trenches
   d. to show how trench warfare made the old style of war more dangerous

3. During the Great Push, why was it easier for the Germans to kill the Allies than it was for the Allies to kill the Germans?
   a. The Germans had new weapons that could go underground where the Allies were hiding.
   b. The Germans were below ground in trenches while the Allies were above ground and could be easily seen.
   c. The Allies did not have good enough weapons to fight with compared to the superior German weapons.
   d. The Allies were all trapped in a trench while the German army could run and find them.

4. Read the following sentences: “They never had to rise above ground level. They could shoot oncoming armies without being seen or shot.”

   The word oncoming means
   a. moving closer
   b. defensive
   c. disappearing
   d. friendly

5. This passage is mostly about
   a. how the Somme was built out of trenches.
   b. why the Somme is a “no man’s land.”
   c. a war between England and France.
   d. trench warfare during World War I.