

## Globe Skills Lesson 8

### Dust Bowl Travelers - Grade 6+

**Skills used**

- Latitude & Longitude
- Using scale to measure distance
- Using directions
- Critical thinking
- Using Map legends
- Tracing routes on maps
- Drawing conclusions

**Materials Needed**

Globe in Horizon Ring Mounting

### Lesson

For this activity, place an "X" on your globe in the southwestern corner of Oklahoma (OK). The location is  $35^{\circ}\text{N}/100^{\circ}\text{W}$ . Now find the state of California (CA) at  $35^{\circ}\text{N}/120^{\circ}\text{W}$  and note the low lying stretch of land that runs north and south in the middle of the state. What is the elevation of this area?

(1.) \_\_\_\_\_ What do you call such an area of low land that is surrounded by mountains? (2.) \_\_\_\_\_

This area is called the Central Valley of California and the southern half of the valley is called the San Joaquin Valley. The San Joaquin is a fertile valley that is one of the richest farming areas in the world.

Now draw a line from your "X" in southwestern Oklahoma to the southern tip of the San Joaquin Valley. Name the states through which this line passes. (3.) \_\_\_\_\_

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In the 1930s thousands of families lost their farms to drought and dust storms that ravaged the southern Great Plains. The area where the greatest devastation occurred was called the dust bowl. The line that you drew on your globe traces a route along which many of these farmers and their families traveled to California in search of a better life. Because of poor roads, harsh climate and terrain conditions, and lack of services along the way, it took several weeks for most of the families to make the trip. Most had to camp along the roads or sleep in their cars during their journey. What is the approximate distance of this route? (4.) \_\_\_\_\_

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Imagine your entire family having to leave your home and being able to take with you only what you could put in or on your car. Discuss with your classmates what a journey along this route might have been like back in the 1930s before the time of modern highways and dependable and comfortable automobiles. Use your globe for information about the types of landforms that you

might have seen.

Note the section of the route between the Colorado River and the southern end of the San Joaquin Valley. Most of this area is the dry and sparsely settled Mojave Desert. After crossing this desert, many families cried when they topped a final mountain pass and first gazed down on the rich green farmlands of the San Joaquin Valley. Do some research to find out what life was like for many of the dust bowlers after finally reaching California.