**Name**

**Discussion Questions: Russell Freedman’s *Children of the Great Depression***

Directions: In your small groups, discuss the following questions from chapters 2, 3, and 4. Answer the questions on this page in the space provided.

**Chapter 2 “Ill-Housed, Ill-Clad, Ill-Nourished” (p.13-27)**

1. President Franklin D. Roosevelt is quoted saying, “In this nation, I see millions of citizens—a substantial part of the population—who at this very moment are denied the greater part of…the necessities of life. I see one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished’ (Freedman 13). Read page 14, then list 10 cultural problems in America Roosevelt faced when he entered office.
2. What is the definition of “ill-housed” as shown on page 15? What percentages faced the struggles of being “ill-housed”?
3. According to pages17-18, what was life like for African Americans during the Great Depression?

1. Describe the “Hoovervilles” explained on page 20. Why were they called “Hoovervilles”?
2. Page 24 lists several things that middle-class families had to do without during the depression. List five of the items they sacrificed.

1. “Many middle-class families managed to get through the Depression by **stretching every available dollar**.” What form of figurative language is bolded in this quotation?

1. Underline the quotation you think best shows the theme of chapter 2.  
     
   “The Depression widened the gap between America’s haves and havenots” (14).  
   “As unemployment spread and businesses failed, many people had to give up with home” (19).  
   “Many middle-class families managed to get through the Depression by stretching every available dollar” (23).  
   “’Dozens of such colonies had sprung up in the city…but not nearly enough to accommodate the swelling army of the jobless and the dispossessed” (23).

**Chapter 3 “In and Out of School” (29-39)**

1. According to page 31, what were the young people of America forced to do? Why? How many were affected?
2. Describe how schools of America (both Caucasian and African-American) adapted as a result of the Depression as illustrated on page 32.
3. Look at the pictures on pages 36 and 37. Pick one of these, and then describe what is going on in the photograph.
4. Why did some students choose not to go to school during the Depression according to pages 37 and 39? Write a quote from the text that supports this.
5. Choose one of the short stories from this chapter and write a two sentence summary of it.

**Chapter 4 “Kids at Work” (41-51)**

1. Describe the Federal child labor laws in place during the Depression according to page 42.
2. Look at pages 41-44. Why did young people enter the workforce? Exactly how old were they, and what tasks did they perform?

1. Pages 44 and 47 show some of the extreme ways some young people chose to make money. List the two examples discussed and explain how they generated money for the participants.

1. What group of Americans does page 49 describe as “the last hired and the first fired”? What was the Depression like for this group of people’s employment opportunities? Who took their jobs?

1. Look at pages 49 and 50. What was the CCC? Who started the NYA? Why? What did the NYA do for the nation’s young people?

6) What is the tone of the end of this chapter? Why? Write a quote which you feel shows this tone.