



# ***Signature in the Schools: Here's the Deal***

## **Exercise: *Perspectives on a Crisis***

**Subject(s):** History, Theater

**Goals:** Students will be able to:

Use examples from their knowledge and experience to support the main ideas of their oral presentation.

Distinguish one's own ideas from information created or discovered by others.

Assess the impact of presentations, including the effectiveness of verbal and nonverbal techniques.

Demonstrate nonverbal communication techniques including, but not limited to, eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and stance.

Evaluate the evolving and changing role of government.

**Show Connection:**

In *Here's the Deal*, the students explore just how wide a range of people the New Deal affected. To better understand just how varied the people of the United States and their needs were, your students will explore Franklin Delano Roosevelt's attempts at outreach.

**Supplies:**

[On the Bank Crisis – FDR Fireside Chat Text](#)

[March 12, 1933 – FDR Fireside Chat Audio](#)

**Additional Resources to Explore:**

[History of Fireside Chats](#)

**Set-Up:**

Divide the students into four groups of equal sizes in breakout rooms for an exercise later in the lesson. (We recommend doing this ahead of time for the sake of saving time, focusing on the exercise, and having fun with the students.)

**Description:****Part 1: Listening as a Class**

Share FDR's first fireside chat text with students.

Share the audio with students and play the original audio recording of his fireside chat (If time is short, you can begin a shorter cut by listening from the 10:15 mark.) Encourage students to just listen to the recording for now.

**Part 2: Listening and Responding as a Citizen**

Divide the students into the four equally sized groups. Each group will represent a different type of citizen that is currently listening to this radio address:

Factory - Out of work factory worker from an urban center.

Youth - A young child or the student's current age.

Farm - A farmer who has been unable to sell their product.

Wealthy - A member of the upper class / business owner.

Once they are in breakout groups, send them the audio file and ask them to listen to it one more time. As they listen, they should imagine themselves as their assigned citizen type and take notes as to how they would feel if they were that person listening to this speech.

Would you be happy, frustrated, feel validated, be concerned, etc.? If FDR was directly in front of you saying these things how would you respond? What would you say to him and how would you say it?

Once they have listened to it and taken notes, they should discuss with each other. How did you feel as you listened to FDR's radio speech with your assigned perspective? Is there a consensus for your group on how you feel about the message FDR put out?

Each group should then create a rehearsed scene that shows their assigned citizen group responding to the piece. Maybe it's a group complaining about it, celebrating it, listening in stunned silence, etc. They should use their own words (or none at all!) to express how they would feel hearing those words as those people. The scene should be at least one minute long and should have an appearance by each member.

Bring the groups back together to present their pieces.

**Discussion:**

What techniques and methods of communication does FDR use in his speech to the American people? What do you think he hopes to achieve by delivering this speech to people over the radio during a time of such economic uncertainty?