Guide to Reading

Main Idea

Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s character and experiences prepared him for the presidency of a nation in crisis.

Key Terms and Names

• New Deal
• polio
• gold standard
• bank holiday
Roosevelt’s Rise to Power

• The Republicans nominated Herbert Hoover to run for a second term as president.

• The Democrats selected New York Governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

• Roosevelt became the first to deliver an acceptance speech to a nominating campaign.
Roosevelt’s Rise to Power (cont.)

- Roosevelt’s policies to end the depression became known as the **New Deal.**

- Roosevelt won the election in a landslide.

- Roosevelt came from a wealthy New York family and was educated at Harvard and Columbia Law School.

- He was a distant cousin of President Theodore Roosevelt.

- Franklin married Theodore’s niece, Eleanor.
Roosevelt’s political career began in 1910, with a seat in the New York State Senate where he supported progressive reform and opposed party bosses.

He was appointed assistant secretary of the navy by Woodrow Wilson.

In 1920 he caught polio, a paralyzing disease with no cure.

Roosevelt did not give in to the crippling disease.

He relied on his wife, Eleanor, to keep his name prominent in politics.
Roosevelt’s Rise to Power (cont.)

• Roosevelt narrowly won the race for New York governor. ↓

• During his term as governor, Roosevelt used government power to help people deal with the economic challenges of the time. ↓

• His struggle with polio made people feel he could somehow understand their hardships. ↓

• His popularity in New York paved the way for his run for president.
What did Americans see in Roosevelt?

Americans saw Roosevelt as a sign of hope in their challenging economic times. His energy and optimism and his own struggle with polio gave him a better understanding of what Americans were going through.
Roosevelt Is Inaugurated

- Franklin Roosevelt won the November 1932 presidential election, but his inauguration would not occur until March 1933. ↓

- During this time, unemployment continued to rise, bank runs increased, and people began converting their money into gold.
Roosevelt Is Inaugurated (cont.)

• Some bank runs occurred out of fear that Roosevelt would end the gold standard, which would reduce the value of the dollar. ↓

• At that time, an ounce of gold equaled a set number of dollars. ↓

• To reduce the value of the dollar, the United States would have to stop exchanging dollars for gold.
People began taking gold and currency out of banks, resulting in over 4,000 banks collapsing by March 1933. Many governors declared bank holidays, which closed the remaining banks before bank runs could put them out of business.
Why did bank runs occur before Roosevelt’s inauguration?

Many Americans feared Roosevelt would abandon the gold standard and reduce the value of the dollar in order to fight the depression. To reduce the value of the dollar, the United States would have to stop exchanging dollars for gold. Many Americans and foreign investors with deposits in American banks took their money out of the banks and converted it into gold before it lost its value.
Checking for Understanding

Define  Insert the key term that best completes the following sentence.

A monetary standard in which one ounce of gold equaled a set number of dollars was called the **gold standard**.