

Mount Airy Museum of Regional History
Pre-Visit Activities

Middle School

- Have students review the geographic regions of North Carolina with special emphasis on the Mountain and Piedmont regions.
 - Questions to ask:
 - § Why were the mountains of North Carolina difficult for people to settle?
 - § Label the major geographic regions on a map of North Carolina.
- Review with the students tribes of Native Americans found in North Carolina (Cherokee, Catawba, Saura, Tuscarora, etc) and their everyday life. Have students review the importance of Native Americans to the settlement of North Carolina. Key terms: wigwam, teepee
 - Questions to ask
 - § How did the native peoples help the settlers?
 - § What happened to Native Americans once more settlers moved into their land?
 - § How do you think Native American children participated in assisting the settlers?
Would you have liked to live as a Native American child?
- Have students review the settlement of the mountain region of North Carolina. Key terms and people to review: Great Wagon Road, the Scots-Irish, the Germans, the Moravians.
 - Questions to ask:
 - § Why was trade important to early settlers?
 - § What year did settlers begin to move from the Coastal Plain to the Mountains?
- Review with the students why many settled along rivers in the state and the importance of water to the settlers for grist milling. Ask students to review the building of communities in the mountains.
 - Questions to ask:
 - § What was daily life like on the North Carolina frontier?
 - § Why do you think settlers began to move from other areas to North Carolina mountains?
- Before the 1830s North Carolina was referred to as the Rip Van Winkle state, ask students to review the importance of railroads to the development of the state in the 17th century. Key terms: Rip Van Winkle state, plank road, railroad.
 - Questions to ask:
 - § What type of transportation did most settlers use to travel long distances before railroads?
 - § How did railroads improve trade throughout the state?
 - § How did railroads help the expansion of the backcountry?
- After the Civil War, the railroads in North Carolina helped the state's industries boom. Start a discussion with students about how North Carolinians transitioned from small communities to large towns and cities of industry after Reconstruction and into the early 1900s. Key terms: bright leaf tobacco, Tobacco Road, cotton mills, railroad towns, furniture industry
 - Questions to ask:
 - § How did railroads help the expansion of towns in the state?
 - § What was the effect of the development of new towns?

High School

- Ask students to review the importance of Native Americans during the settlement of the nation. What role did Native Americans play during the settlement of North Carolina?
- Ask students to review the development of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Why did some colonies object to the Constitution without the addition of the first ten amendments? What was North Carolina's position?
- Have students review the importance of the development of railroads in the nation. Why were the railroads important to the development of better trade throughout North Carolina and the country?
- Review the importance of slavery to the Southern economy. Which parts of North Carolina relied heavily on slave labor? Why?
- Ask students to look up important battles of the Civil War fought in North Carolina. Why was the state reluctant to join the Confederacy?
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