

Nap Time

Springboard:

Students should read “The Legend of Rip Van Winkle” and answer the questions. *(Answers will vary but should be explained. The nickname came from the fact that Rip Van Winkle slept for 20 years while all kinds of activity and changes went on around him, leaving him clueless and uninformed when he awoke.)*

Objective: The student will be able to explain why North Carolina was called the “Rip Van Winkle State” in the first half of the 19th century.

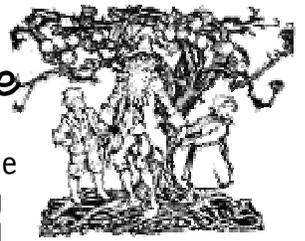
Materials: The Legend of Rip Van Winkle (Springboard handout)
Problems in North Carolina (cut - out cards)
Big Three (handout)

Terms to know: **migrate** - to move from place to place
reforms - improvements made to solve a problem

Procedure:

- After discussing the Springboard, explain that the United States experienced many positive changes after the American Revolution. The Louisiana Purchase doubled America’s territory, and manufacturing grew tremendously after the War of 1812. However, while the rest of the country prospered, North Carolina seemed to be asleep, leading to its nickname, the “Rip Van Winkle state.” Go on to explain that in this lesson the student(s) will investigate factors that led to the state’s decline from 1810 to 1835.
- Distribute a set of “Problems in North Carolina cards to each student, pair, or small group. The student(s) should study and group the cards in some logical way.
- Have them share / compare their categories and reasoning. *(Groupings may vary if logically explained and be based on: social, political, and economic problems; causes and effects; main problems and contributing factors; ranking in terms of severity; etc.)*
- Then distribute the “Big Three” problem-solving handout. Have student(s) work as before to combine all the information from the cards into, if possible, three “big-picture” problems or issues and brainstorm some solutions.
- Have the student(s) share and compare their ideas and discuss. *(Answers may vary somewhat, but generally North Carolina’s BIG problems could be categorized as: poor education; lack of economic progress; and undemocratic government.)* Explain that in the next lesson student(s) will learn about some reforms that were enacted to address these problems.

The Legend of Rip Van Winkle



Rip Van Winkle was a simple man who lived in a village at the foot of the Catskill Mountains of New York. He was easy-going and very popular among the villagers, especially children, since he spent much time telling stories and making toys for them. In fact the only person who didn't like Rip Van Winkle was his wife! As she saw it, he couldn't hold a job and spent more time helping others than taking care of his own affairs. As a result his farm was in shambles, and she nagged him constantly. To escape, Rip often went off to the woods to hunt with his faithful dog Wolf, frequently napping on a grassy knoll before heading home to his wife's wrath.

One fine autumn day he awoke from his nap to find an odd-looking man calling his name. As the fellow approached, Rip noticed the he was struggling to carry a keg of liquor up the mountain. Always willing to lend a hand, Rip stood up, took ahold of the keg, and carried his share of the weight. Before long, they reached a clearing where a group of oddly-dressed men were playing nine-pin. His new friend opened the keg and motioned for Rip to serve the players, who stared but said nothing and resumed their game. Thirsty from the trip up the mountain, Rip decided to drink from the keg himself. He drank many flagons and soon drifted off to sleep.

He awoke in the sunlight in his usual napping spot and knew his wife would be furious with him! Hastily, he reached for his gun but was surprised to find it rusty and eaten by worms! And Wolf was nowhere to be found. As Rip stroked his chin in confusion, he realized his beard was a foot long! He felt stiff and sore but slowly made his way back to his village.

But when he arrived he didn't recognize anyone! The village looked quite different! When he reached his house, he found it empty and nearly collapsed. He walked to the inn where he always sat and gossiped with the village men, but it too was gone. The "The Union Hotel" was in its place.

He angered the villagers when, confused by their talk of elections, he claimed to be a loyal subject of King George. The villagers scowled and pointed to a portrait of George Washington in a spot where the king's had hung. Upon further investigation, Rip was shocked to learn that most of his friends died in a Revolution, and his wife had passed as well. He found another man with his name who turned out to be his grown son.

Rip Van Winkle finally determined he had fallen asleep 20 years ago! Wolf had gone home and his family thought Rip had been carried off by Indians, never to be heard from again. When a village elder confirmed his identity, it was concluded that the ghosts of Henry Hudson's crew, whom they believed visited every 20 years to check on the river and play nine-pin in the mountains, had put Rip to sleep. With time the shock wore off, and Rip Van Winkle, happy to be free of his wife, spent his remaining days walking in the woods and sitting in front of the village Union Hotel. There he told his tale to all who listened.

North Carolina was nicknamed "The Rip Van Winkle State" in the early half of the 1800's. Based on the story, how do you think the state may have earned such a nickname?

Problems in North Carolina

For most families, educating their children was not a priority.	Most North Carolinians were small farmers and needed their children to help on the farm.	Although the 1776 Constitution called for public schools, the General Assembly did not enforce the law.
Rich planters did not want to pay higher taxes to build and run public schools.	North Carolina only had a few “academies,” schools paid for and run by local communities.	Most academies and other schools did not allow girls to attend.
Isolation in the state led to an attitude of rugged individualism; people didn’t want the government to interfere in their lives.	North Carolinians were isolated from each other, living on farms located far apart.	The invention of the cotton gin made production faster and more profitable, making NC a one-crop state.
Food had to be brought in from other states, making it very expensive.	Rich people used their money to buy slaves for their plantations instead of investing in businesses.	Most farmers didn’t rotate their crops and only grew enough food to feed their families.
North Carolina experienced much flooding from the many rivers and soil erosion.	Most rivers in North Carolina were not navigable.	The roads and bridges in the state were in poor condition; but the government didn’t spend money to repair them.
Because of poor transportation routes, it was very expensive for farmers to transport goods to market to sell.	North Carolina had few port cities and very few towns.	Nearly one-third of North Carolinians left the state and migrated elsewhere to find better conditions.
Representation in the Assembly was unfair; representatives were chosen by county, rather than based on population.	With so many more counties in eastern North Carolina, the rich, planters controlled the Assembly.	Even though the population in the West was higher, all officials were appointed by the Eastern-controlled Assembly.
Almost all governors appointed by the Assembly were Easterners.	Communication and transportation in the state were very poor.	Old tensions and rivalries between East and West continued to grow.

3 BIG THREE

DIRECTIONS: Now that you have studied some of North Carolina's problems, try to identify THREE broad categories into which the problems could be grouped. Then brainstorm a list of reforms / solutions that you think could have helped bring the state out of its "Rip Van Winkle period."

PROBLEM:	Possible Reforms / Solutions:
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