

From Rebel to Redneck and Everyone in Between- How the Rise of the New South Affects Southern Characterization in Literature

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Synopsis

“From Rebel to Redneck and Everyone in Between – How the Rise of the New South Affects Southern Characterization in Literature” is a unit for the middle school child that encompasses multiple goals in the academic fields of English/Language Arts, History, Social Studies, and the Humanities.

The unit is intended to enrich students’ academic knowledge through a two week interdisciplinary unit focused on the time period referred to as the New South. In this unit the New South refers to the time period of the late 19th early 20th century. It is intended to teach students how to analyze character traits, not only through a character’s words, thoughts, and actions, but through the history of their southern heritage.

The unit begins with the premise that exposing students to the lives of people of this time period, and equipping them with the necessary background knowledge and history of past events, will enable them to better comprehend what drives people to react and behave as they do today. The unit aims to establish an understanding of the complexities of the relationships between blacks and whites following the Civil War, and it concludes with a novel study of *Roll of Thunder Hear my Cry*.