

Understanding Industry and Change Using Textiles in Charlotte

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Synopsis

How does a city change over time? What are the factors that cause a city to develop in a certain way? In this unit, fourth grade students will explore their city of Charlotte, North Carolina as one that began as a small farming hamlet and grew to become one of the New South cities. This region of great natural resources lay waiting for human ingenuity and capital investment in great transportation and technology to blossom into more than a cotton trading town. The discovery of gold and the banks that followed were the beginning of one of our nation's leading banking cities. Students collaborate to discover the sequence of events that took this area from agriculture to manufacturing to diversified industries.

The concept of industry is illustrated by the development of this New South city. As Charlotte becomes a trading center for raw cotton, new businesses develop to support this effort. Students begin to see the connection between new businesses that thrive when woven by a common thread or industry. Soon they realize the economic success of a region is more than just the cotton fabric it produces but a whole host of other industries that spring forth from human innovation, capital, and technology.