

Railroads and the Mills
Charles Vester/Southern Nash Middle School

Overview

Students will learn about how the railroad system affected the Rocky Mount Mills area. Included in the lesson, are Postcards, Maps Photographs and Oral Histories. Students will also have the opportunity to analyze oral histories as a primary source through the use of a primary source analysis tool. The lesson is tailored to cover standard **8.H.3.2**: how changes brought about by technology and other innovations affected individuals and groups.

Course & Grade

8th Grade Social Studies (US/NC History)

Materials

- Pencil/pen and paper
- Railroad, Rocky Mount, NC [images](#)
- Loraine Smith on the Railroad: [video](#)
- [Primary Analysis Tool for Oral Histories](#)
- Primary Analysis Tool for Oral Histories [Teacher's Guide](#)

Duration

30

Procedure

1. As a warm up, project and instruct students to examine the attached Railroad, Rocky Mount, NC [images](#) and respond by answering the following questions on a separate sheet of paper: **1) What do you think is happening? 2) Where do you think this picture is taking place? 3) What do you feel and think when you see this picture. 4) What are three main details that stand out to you?** Teachers should provide 3-5 minutes for students to consider and respond to the prompt. After sufficient time has passed, ask for student volunteers to share their thoughts out loud...
2. The teacher should play Loraine Smith on the Railroad [video](#) and discuss with students the impact railroads on the United States during Industrial Revolution.
3. The interview will give students some insight into how railroads impacted the area. As students listen to the oral history, they should complete the [Primary Analysis Tool for Oral Histories](#). The teacher will have a copy of the [teacher guide](#) with question prompts in the event that students need extra help.
 - a. There is an online option for the tool for students to type responses on their devices. Primary Source Analysis [tool](#)
4. The students should be given a total of 20 minutes to listen to the oral history and fill out the Primary Source Analysis tool.

Student Handouts

[Primary Analysis Tool for Oral Histories](#)

This activity was completed as part of the 2018 workshop "History Unfiltered: Exploring the Local Textile Industry in Rocky Mount," hosted by [Carolina K-12](#) in partnership with [Community Histories Workshop](#), and funded by the National Archives.