

Youth and Education in Durham, North Carolina during Industrialization, 1880-1910

This lesson plan is based on the research of Jason Koslofsky, Duke University, Class of 2002. Helen McLeod, eighth-grade social studies teacher at Durham School of the Arts, and Barbara Blue, retired teacher, principal, and Duke MALS graduate, offered suggestions for revisions. Revised and edited by Trudi Abel, Ph.D., director of the Digital Durham Project.

Grade Level: 8th

I. Description of Lesson

After discussing industrialization in the South following the Civil War, students will explore on-line census data and other primary sources in an effort to understand the experience of youth in Durham—their roles in society as workers and as students. Students will also develop a broader understanding of this city and its citizens in the post-Civil War decades. Students will analyze census data, digitized news clippings, together with the report of the Graded School in an effort to understand the kinds of educational opportunities Durham afforded its residents from 1880 to 1910. Students will investigate the effects of growing industrialization and capitalism on the creation and development of public schooling in Durham. They will analyze data to assess how differences in socio-economic status, racial backgrounds and gender affected different youngsters' opportunities for education or employment in 1880. Eighth-graders will use the on-line database to locate information on youth who attended school and those who did not have that opportunity. Students will then develop generalizations concerning the availability of formal education to youth living in late nineteenth-century Durham. They will compare and contrast educational opportunities from the past with those that they enjoy in present-day Durham.

Students will:

- a) search an on-line database and apply skills in data analysis to understand the history of North Carolina in the post Civil War years, while strengthening their math, writing, and information literacy skills as specified in the Standard Course of Study. This lesson will help students meet Goal 3 of the Computer Technology Skills. They will “use a variety of technologies to access, analyze, interpret, synthesize, apply, and communicate information.” Through this lesson, students will meet many objectives of Goal 5 in the social studies curriculum. They will use digitized primary sources to “evaluate the impact of political, economic, social, and technological changes on life in North Carolina from 1870 to 1930.”
- b) identify the effects that industrialization and business enterprise had on the creation and development of public schooling in Durham.

- c) recognize the impact of differences in social class, race, and gender with respect to opportunities for primary schooling
- d) develop generalizations about the availability of schooling to different segments of Durham's youth
- e) use the rules in the Graded School report, to compare and contrast the schooling experiences of nineteenth-century youngsters with those of present-day students

II. KEY TERMS:

Term	Definition
Broadside	A large sheet of paper printed on one side. Librarians use the term to describe an assortment of materials including leaflets, advertising, and posters etc.
Census	An official, usually periodic, counting of a population. The United States began counting its citizens in 1790 and has continued to enumerate them every ten years.
Colored	An adjective used frequently in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to describe members of an ethnic group not regarded as Caucasian, especially individuals of African descent.
Common School	Webster’s American Dictionary of the English Language (1870) defined the common school as one “maintained at the public expense and open to all.” (p. 258) Historian James Leloudis describes North Carolina’s common schools as intensely local and rudimentary. “After 1868, the benefits of schooling were extended to African American children, and a tax-supported, four-month term was made a legal requirement rather than a local option.” (p. 6) Separate schools provided black and white children with a rudimentary education in reading and arithmetic. Children brought “whatever books parents could obtain or afford.” (Leloudis, 13) Much of the instruction centered around memory drills and oral recitations. “Although the law called for an annual session of four months, few schools met that requirement or remained open for a full term without interruption.” (Leloudis, 12) The rhythms of agricultural work affected youngsters’ ability to attend school. When parents needed children for household work, children had to forego their schooling.

Graded School	Beginning in the late 1860s and into the 1870s, Graded schools emerged in North Carolina in the major cities of Wilmington, Greensboro, Fayetteville, Raleigh and Charlotte. The establishment of graded schools in Wilson and Goldsboro in 1881 helped spread their popularity. Graded schools were marked by eight-or-nine month term, professionalism and standardization in teacher training, student assessment, and school attendance. Students were organized by age and ability and they were “seated in neat rows of individual desks, all oriented toward a teacher who stood on a rostrum at the front of the room and parsed lessons from standardized texts.” (Leloudis, 25) School administrators kept detailed records on absences and tardiness and published the results in the local newspapers. Administrators brought organizational practices from business into the classroom. They measured students’ performance and made “promotions from one grade level to the next on the basis of an ability to perform according to uniform criteria.” (Leloudis, 23)
Mulatto	An individual who has “one white and one black parent” or one who is descended from both black and white ancestors. (Webster’s II)
Surname	An individual’s family name or last name.

III. INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Materials/Resources: One Computer Lab

One large Durham County map from 2001 and push pins
2001-2002 Durham phone book (white pages/ yellow pages)

Day 1.

Initiating Activity: Have the students consider these questions: Where do they get food? Where to they obtain clothing? Have the students explain how they get from their homes to grocery stores, shops, their school. How do they travel?—by car, by bus, by foot? Have students think about the landscape of Durham. Do they live within walking distance of stores or do they need to take a car or bus to these businesses? What does this tell them about their community? How is it structured?

Break students into pairs and have them identify where they live on the Durham County map. Have students use push pins to identify their homes.

Next have students find on the map where they shop for food, where they buy clothing and where they attend school. Have each student create a map detailing the location of his/her home and the location of those places where s/he obtain food and clothing.

Have the students measure in miles (roughly) the distance between their homes and the places from which their families obtain goods.

Day 2.

Initiating Activity: Have students name key streets or thoroughfares in Durham today. Have students look at *Gray's New Map of Durham, 1881* to determine the names of key streets in 1881. Compare the old map with one from today. What landmarks and streets from 1881 are still here today?

Students should develop a list of prominent property owners from *Gray's New Map of Durham, 1881*

Working in pairs, students should create a list of questions that could be asked about the data presented in the map. (Sample questions: What kinds of people owned property at the town center in 1880? What were the occupational backgrounds of the individuals who owned property? Who does not appear in the list of property holders?)

Students will conduct a simple search in the 1880 census database on each of 3 to 4 property owners on the map. Have students record the “color,” age, sex and occupation of property holders.

After students gather data, they should work as a group to develop 2 to 3 generalizations about the property owners. Have students illuminate the pattern evident in the data.

SAMPLE SEARCH

Type <http://digitaldurham.duke.edu> in the browser window. Click on “Public Records,” click on “1880 Federal Population Census.” Then click on the “Simple Search” button in the left portion of the computer screen. Type the last name of a property owner in the box marked “Last Name.” Type the first initial of the property owner in the box marked “First Name.” Hit return. The students’ results will fill the right section of the screen.

Have students use City Directory material from 1884. Use William T. Blackwell household as an example. How far would individuals from this household have to travel in order to get groceries from a “Grocer,” merchandise from a “General Store” or clothing from a retailer? Use data from the city directory with the 1881 map, to identify what services are available at the center of town. How would members of the Blackwell family obtain goods from retailers? What kinds of transportation would they need to go shopping?

Compare the landscape of Durham today with that in 1881. What similarities? What differences?

DAY 3

Search Activity: *Mining the Census—What does the age data reveal?*

Materials: Computer Lab and large chart mounted at the front of the classroom. Magic Marker.

Overview: Students will work together to cull data from census database and prepare data for use in a graph. Students will analyze data in the graph in an effort to make informed hypotheses about life expectancy, infant/child mortality and the affect of the Civil War on Durham’s residents.

Break students up into 5 groups. Have one group search census for all people aged 0-5, 6-10, and 11-15. Have another group search for all people aged 16-20, 21-25, 26-30 and so forth.

Have the students scroll to the end of the results page and write down the number of people that they find. Have the students refine the search by searching for the number of females in their age group. Have them search for males in their assigned age group. Have students record their findings on a chart posted at the front of the classroom. Students can also create an alternative data collection table where they record the number of residents by “color” for each age category.

DATA COLLECTION TABLE

Age of Residents	Number of Males	Number of Females
0-5		
6-10		
11-15		
16-20		
21-25		
26-30		
31-35		
36-40		
41-45		
46-50		
51-55		
56-60		
61-65		
66-70		
71-75		
76-80		
81-85		
86-90		
91-95		
96-100		

Have each student compile the data and create a graph showing the number of Durham residents by age group. Print the graph and distribute to students. Have students answer the following questions:

How should we interpret the high number of residents in the 0-5 category and the significantly lower number of children aged 10-15? What does the graph tell us re: infant/child mortality?

What does that graph tell us about life expectancy for men and women in the late nineteenth century? Do men appear to outlive women or vice versa? What does the graph tell us about life expectancy for residents identified as “white,” “black” or “mulatto?”

Have students speculate about the effects of the Civil War on Durham’s population. What evidence can students extract from the graph that the Civil War affected Durham residents?

Discuss these questions:

Finally, use the graph to encourage students to think about relations between generations. If married women in the late nineteenth century typically had their first child at age 23 or 24, what is the likelihood that a thirteen-year old child would know his grandmother?

DAY 4

Search Activity: *Educational Opportunity in late nineteenth-century Durham*

Have students work individually as they assess the availability of formal education to Durham’s youth.

- A. Complete a search of census information with Digital Durham as directed in the “Search Instructions” below in order to identify and tabulate:
 - 1) The number of children aged 6 – 18
 - 2) The total number who were “in school”
 - 3) The number who were “in school” and identified as “white”
 - 4) The number who were “in school” and identified as “mulatto”
 - 5) The number who were “in school” and identified as “black”
 - 6) The number identified as working
 - 7) The number of all other children for whom there is no indication as to whether they attended school or held a job.
 - 8) Occupations of parents of children listed as “in school”.
Are the occupations the same across racial lines?
- b. Using information acquired from the search of children in the census:
 - 1) Develop statements about differences in daily life among children in the census. Focus on numbers enrolled or not in school. Use the census to

identify other school-aged children who were not identified as attending school. Have the students hypothesize as to the daily experience of young people who do not appear to have attended school.

- 2) Compare and contrast information in the census about parents. Determine the relationship between occupations of parents and the fact that children were “in school” or not.

DAY 5

Search Activity:

c. Using information acquired through reading the list of Honor Roll pupils in the *Durham Recorder* story about the Graded School (November 28, 1882):

- 1) Use the simple search of the census to identify Honor Roll students. List the names and occupations of the father and mother, their “color,” enumeration district and family number. Write the number of individuals living in the household. Does the Honor Roll student have siblings? Do these siblings attend school?

d. Have students read the *Rules and Regulations of the Durham Graded School*. Go to <http://digitaldurham.duke.edu/schoolreport.pdf>. Examine the school report to identify some of the central features of this public school.

- 1) Gather data about the rules governing students and teachers
- 2) Assess the length of the school year, hours of instruction, institution of different grade levels, and rules about textbooks, attendance and discipline.
- 3) Use the simple search of the census to identify those students who attended the Graded School (see “Catalogue of Students” on 12-17). Note the names and occupations of the father and mother, their “color,” enumeration district and family number. Note the number of individuals living in the household. Do families with several school-aged children send some or all of their children? Are boys or girls more likely to attend the Graded School?

DAY 6

Search Activity:

e. Examine the “To the Friends of Education in Durham, N.C.” broadside. Use the “simple search” to gain insight into the Durham citizenry who supported the Graded School. With the understanding that the school started out as a free school supported by taxes but later lost a North Carolina Supreme Court case and was forced to seek subscriptions and donations:

- 1) cross-reference names on the broadside with the census and the *Rules*

and Regulations catalogue to identify the occupations/businesses of the men who supported the graded school.

2) determine whether any of these men had children who attended the school. (Hint: Reconstruct the households of these school promoters by searching on the enumeration district, household number and family number of a given individual).

f. Durham established its first graded school for black students in 1893. The building was named for James A. Whitted, the first principal, and was located at Ramsey and Proctor Streets. (Anderson, p. 232) Use the report on “Durham City Schools” from the *Durham Daily Sun* (April 1896) and information from *Branson’s City Directory, 1897* to answer these questions.

- 1) Identify the surnames of the children who attend the “colored” graded school.
- 2) Search the 1896 City Directory for adult men who have these surnames. What occupations do adult men in the Merrick, Moore, Amey, and Ray families hold?

III. Questions and Discussion:

1. What facts describe the black and white students in the graded schools ?
Consider: Economic status based on father’s occupation, race, and neighborhood (based on district number and family number). When examining neighborhoods consider whether close family numbers in the same enumeration district signals that families lived near each other.
2. Present and discuss assumptions regarding the families that sent children to school.
 - a) What was the relationship between socio-economic status (of father) and education of children ?
 - b) Which group of Durham’s citizens attended the graded schools?
 - c) Which families did not send their children to school? Why did these families not send their children to school?
 - d) What is a possible explanation for what other groups were doing for education?

IV. OPTIONAL CONCLUDING ACTIVITY:

Divide the class into groups and assign each group a family to investigate.

- The group will create a profile of the student (from that family) who *would attend* the graded school. The profile should include details of family size, father's occupation, mother's work or home life, and other details such as can be obtained from the census.
- Students will present project work, choosing one of the options below or developing one of their own.
- The project, in whatever option form chosen, must include reference to the following:
 - feelings of the student about what is studied in the graded school
 - relationships with other students
 - effects of economic status, family and home life on attendance, interest in school, etc.
 - any other relevant details that provide insight into typical instruction at the graded school.

Project options:

1. Journal: Create a journal that reflects what it was like to attend school in Durham.
2. Drama: Create a short play as in the Journal activity above.
3. Oral History: Present monologues in which are portrayed fictional interviews of students attending school in Durham in 1880.
4. Newspaper: Create a school newspaper for the graded school of that time.

V. ASSESSMENT:

- A. Informal assessment will be on-going in class discussions to determine breadth and depth of knowledge acquired by students.
- B. Project presentation will illustrate understandings held by students.
- C. Essay:

Compare schools at the turn of the century to schools today:

 1. Have students work in small groups to construct a chart that compares today's schooling with that from late nineteenth-century Durham. Have them assess what has changed and what has remained the same about:
 - school buildings
 - standards

- school attendance and other rules
- number of grades
- age of students.

2. Choose 2 or 3 of the following and explain how they relate to each other:

- compulsory school attendance laws
- mandatory age
- development of free public schools
- desegregation
- course selections
- opportunities for women

NOTES TO THE TEACHER:

CHILD LABOR IN NORTH CAROLINA

Today's adolescents may have a difficult time believing that youngsters their age had a prominent part as wage earners in the North Carolina economy during the late nineteenth century. As occupational and schooling data from the 1880 census suggests, the state of North Carolina did not regulate the age at which youngsters worked nor did it compel young people to attend school.

North Carolina Legislation:

As early as 1891, North Carolina legislation regulating the work of laborers made specific mention of children. Between 1895 and 1901, new legislation repeatedly included language specific to the hours of labor by children along with women and other employees in factories, workshops, mines and especially cotton mills. Mill owners voluntarily agreed to limit labor in the mills, in an effort to undercut a restrictive legislative initiative. They voluntarily agreed to limit labor in the mills as follows:

1. A work week was not to exceed sixty-six hours,
2. Children under ten years would not be permitted to work in the mills under any circumstances.
3. No child under twelve years old would be permitted to work in mills during the term of an available school. Those under twelve could work if their parents were widowed or disabled.

Beginning in 1903, legislative action included the following:

1903: Acts passed to regulate employment of children in manufacturing establishments and to prohibit labor of children under twelve years of age.

A bill to induce better attendance of children in the public schools was ordered printed along with a bill for regulation of child labor.

1905:

Legislation introduced to regulate child labor in manufacturing. Generally these were referred to Committee, withdrawn, tabled or postponed. The General Assembly did enact legislation stating that no child under twelve years should work in any factory or manufacturing business. A proviso set 1907 as the year in which no child between twelve and thirteen was to be employed in a factory except as an apprentice. 1907 also was set as the year in which no boy or girl

under fourteen could work in a factory – between the hours of eight p.m. and five a.m. The 1905 legislation also made it a misdemeanor for parents -- who hired out their children to factories – to misstate written certification as to the school attendance of the child. In 1908, amendments to this legislation required that the certification of school attendance demonstrate that the child had attended school four months in the preceding twelve months.

1907: North Carolina legislature passes an act regulating child labor in manufacturing and to regulate hours of labor. Additional bills are introduced in reference to manufacturing, child labor in messenger services and in factories are introduced with varying results between 1907 and 1919.

Early twentieth century progressive reformers sought to improve protections for young people. In 1907, Dr. A.J. McKelway reviewed child labor laws in southern states and found few restrictions. “In South Carolina and in Georgia and in Alabama it is yet possible for a ten-year-old child, by permission of the law, to work twelve hours a day. There are sixty-six mills in North Carolina where twelve-year-old children may work a twelve-hour night, by law. The bald statement of these facts is a damning indictment. We have almost no machinery for the enforcement of the laws that we have, and their violation is a matter of common knowledge. Except in Kentucky and Maryland, we have no compulsory education laws in the South...”(14)

Many states had “child labor committees” which sought passage of legislation that would protect young people from exploitation. Though North Carolina’s committee included former Governors C.B. Aycock and T.J. Jarvis, the committee failed “to secure the passage of a law raising the age limit from twelve by an act to prohibit night work by all children under fourteen.” (Cone, 163) The committee also sought to “prevent girls under fourteen from being employed in any manufacturing plant as well as to prohibit all illiterate children under sixteen from employment.” These initiatives failed. Charles Cone, secretary of the committee, voiced his frustration about the weakness of the existing legislation. “The essential defect of our present legislation is that there is no inspection. The law is violated a great deal, as there is no machinery to detect violations. This we propose to try to remedy.” (Cone, 164)

The lack of compulsory education laws coupled with high rates of child labor meant that North Carolina had an extremely high number of illiterate youngsters. The 1900 census identified 51,190 of North Carolina’s 235,325 youngsters aged 10 to 14 as illiterate. Thus, 21.7% of North Carolina’s 10 to 14 year olds were categorized as illiterate while only .67% of Massachusetts’ youth in this age group received the same classification. Roughly 1% of New York and Pennsylvania’s youth in this age bracket were deemed illiterate while 29% of South Carolina’s youth received this classification.

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APPENDIX
NORTH CAROLINA STANDARD COURSE OF STUDY

These skills are reproduced from the NC Learn web site.

Computer Technology Skills - Grade 8 (Beginning in school year 1998-1999)

Status: This curriculum is currently implemented and tested.

Goal 3:

The learner will use a variety of technologies to access, analyze, interpret, synthesize, apply, and communicate information.

Objective 3-1

Select and use technology tools to collect, analyze, and display data. (Societal Issues)

Objective 3-2

Use word processing/desktop publishing for assignments/projects. (Keyboard Utilization/Word Processing/Desk Top)

Objective 3-3

Research, create, publish, and present projects related to content areas using a variety of technological tools. (Keyboard Utilization/Word Processing/Desk Top/Database/Spreadsheet/MM/Telecommunications)

Objective 3-4

Create/modify and use databases relevant to classroom assignments. (Database)

Objective 3-5

Apply search and sort strategies used in a database. (Database)

Objective 3-6

Create/modify and use spreadsheets to solve problems related to content areas. (Spreadsheet)

Objective 3-7

Explain the rationale for choosing charts/tables or graphs to best represent data. (Spreadsheet)

Objective 3-8

Use spreadsheets to explore various formulas/functions and relationships. (Spreadsheet)

Objective 3-9

Conduct online research and evaluate the information found as to the validity, appropriateness, content, and usefulness. (Telecommunications)

Social Studies - Grade 8

(Beginning in school year 2003-2004)

Status: This curriculum is currently implemented by DPI but is not yet tested. Refer to an earlier version for the currently tested curriculum.

Goal 5:

The learner will evaluate the impact of political, economic, social, and technological changes on life in North Carolina from 1870 to 1930.

Objective 5-1

Identify the role played by the agriculture, textile, tobacco, and furniture industries in North Carolina, and analyze their importance in the economic development of the state.

Objective 5-2

Examine the changing role of educational, religious, and social institutions in the state and analyze their impact.

Objective 5-3

Describe the social, economic, and political impact of migration on North Carolina.

Objective 5-4

Identify technological advances, and evaluate their influence on the quality of life in North Carolina.

Objective 5-5

Assess the influence of the political, legal, and social movements on the political system and life in North Carolina.

Objective 5-6

Describe North Carolina's reaction to the increasing United States involvement in world affairs including participation in World War I, and evaluate the impact on the state's economy.