North Carolina as the “Rip Van Winkle State”

Overview
Students will explore the various nicknames that North Carolina has been given throughout history, focusing on the nickname given to it during the early 1800s: the Rip Van Winkle state. Students will listen to the legend of Rip Van Winkle then discuss the story. Finally, students will learn about the lack of progress in North Carolina during the early 1800s, exploring the relationship between the legend and the perception of North Carolina as "The Rip Van Winkle State". This lesson will culminate with students creating their own picture book based on what they have learned about the “sleep of indifference” in 1800s North Carolina.

Grade
8

North Carolina Essential Standards

- 8.H.2.1 - Explain the impact of economic, political, social, and military conflicts (e.g. war, slavery, states’ rights and citizenship and immigration policies) on the development of North Carolina and the United States.
- 8.H.3.2 - Explain how changes brought about by technology and other innovations affected individuals and groups in North Carolina and the United States (e.g. advancements in transportation, communication networks and business practices).
- 8.H.3.3 - Explain how individuals and groups have influenced economic, political and social change in North Carolina and the United States.
- 8.G.1.1 - Explain how location and place have presented opportunities and challenges for the movement of people, goods, and ideas in North Carolina and the United States.
- 8.E.1.1 - Explain how conflict, cooperation, and competition influenced periods of economic growth and decline (e.g. economic depressions and recessions).
- 8.C&G.1.2 - Evaluate the degree to which democratic ideals are evident in historical documents from North Carolina and the United States (e.g. the Mecklenburg Resolves, the Halifax Resolves, the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, the Bill of Rights and the principles outlined in the US Constitution and North Carolina Constitutions of 1776, 1868 and 1971).
- 8.C&G.1.4 - Analyze access to democratic rights and freedoms among various groups in North Carolina and the United States (e.g. enslaved people, women, wage earners, landless farmers, American Indians, African Americans and other ethnic groups).

Essential Questions

- What are the various nicknames that have been given to North Carolina throughout history?
- What is the relationship between the legend of Rip Van Winkle and the state of North Carolina?
- In what ways did North Carolina fail to progress during the early 1800s?

Materials and Resources

- Edited version of the story Rip Van Winkle, attached
- Rip Van Winkle Summary Worksheet and KEY, attached
- The Rip Van Winkle State: NC in the 1800s, worksheet and KEY attached
Brainstorming Nicknames

1. As a warm up, ask students if any of them have a “nickname”. Allow them to share their nicknames and how they feel about them. Next, ask students if they can name any of North Carolina’s nicknames. Discuss the following nicknames with students, ending with a focus on the “Rip Van Winkle State,” allowing students to discuss what they already know about this particular nickname:

   - **The Tarheel State**: In North Carolina’s early years, tar was one of the state’s major products. Tar is a dark brown or black sticky liquid created by the decay of organic material such as wood, coal or peat. There are two contradictory stories about the origin of this nickname. Both stories concern Civil War battles in which North Carolina troops were involved. One version involves a battle involving Mississippian and North Carolina soldiers. The story goes that, during a battle, a brigade of North Carolinians failed to hold their position. The Mississippian taunted the North Carolinians with failure to tar their heels that morning. They meant by this that, if the North Carolinians had tarred their heels, they would have been able to "stick" to or hold their position. In the other version, North Carolina soldiers come out a little more heroic. Again, in the Civil War, North Carolinians had to fight it out alone after their supporting column failed to hold their position. The North Carolinian’s later said to those who failed to hold their position that Jefferson Davis was going to put tar on their heels to make them “stick better in the next fight.”

   - **The Old North State**: In 1710, Carolina was divided into northern and southern sections. The southern section became South Carolina and the northern section was called North Carolina. "The Old North State" is a reference to the northern section.

   - **The Turpentine State**: The principal products of North Carolina in its early history were tar, pitch and turpentine. It is from the latter that this nickname is derived. Large quantities of turpentine were produced from North Carolina pine forests. (Source for nickname information: http://www.netstate.com/states/intro/nc_intro.htm)

   - **The Rip Van Winkle State**: (Pose these questions as a means of seeing what students already know, and as a means of peaking curiosity. Do not give them the answers yet.)
     
     o Does anyone know who Rip Van Winkle is? (Project the attached sketch of Rip Van Winkle and ask students to respond to what they see in the picture.)
     
     o Why do you think North Carolina was nicknamed the Rip Van Winkle state?

The Legend of Rip Van Winkle

2. Tell students that Rip Van Winkle is a legend set in the years before and after the American Revolutionary War. Tell them you are going to read the legend to them to help them figure out why North Carolina was given this nickname. Teachers may choose to give students an overview of the Rip Van Winkle legend before starting the story, such as:

   - The story of Rip Van Winkle is set in the years before and after the American Revolutionary War. Rip Van Winkle, a villager of Dutch descent, lives in a nice village at the foot of New York’s Catskill Mountains. An amiable man whose home and farm suffer from his lazy neglect, he is loved by all but his wife. One day he escapes his nagging wife by wandering up the mountains. After encountering strange beings who are playing nine-pins, and drinking some of their liquor, he settles down under a shady tree and falls asleep. He wakes up twenty years later and returns to his village. He finds out that
his wife is dead and his close friends have died in a war or gone somewhere else. He immediately gets into trouble when he hails himself a loyal subject of King George III, not knowing that in the meantime the American Revolution has taken place. An old local recognizes him, however, and Rip’s now grown daughter eventually puts him up. As Rip resumes his habit of idleness in the village, and his tale is solemnly believed by the old Dutch settlers, certain hen-pecked husbands especially wish they shared Rip’s luck. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rip_van_Winkle)

3. See the attached edited version of Rip Van Winkle for reading aloud to students. The story will take approximately 15-20 minutes to read out loud. Teachers are encouraged to read in dramatic fashion to bring life to the story. Teachers may want to give one or more of the following tasks for students to complete while listening:
   • List adjectives that describe Rip Van Winkle as you listen.
   • Sketch pictures of the various events that occur in the story.
   • As you listen to the story, write down:
     o moments that you find surprising, funny, confusing, etc.
     o questions you have as you listen to the story.
     o historical references that you hear.

4. After reading the story, hand out the attached Summary Worksheet and discuss the story:
   • How would you characterize Rip Van Winkle? (answers may include henpecked, easy-going, lazy, irresponsible, likable, etc.)
   • How would you characterize his wife? (answers may include a 'shrew', hot-tempered, bossy, frustrated, etc.)
   • Summarize what happens to Rip. What occurs while he sleeps?
   • Compare and contrast his village at the beginning and at the end of the story.
   • What references to history did you hear in the story?
     o Rip Van Winkle’s ancestor supposedly fought with Peter Stuyvesant at the siege of Fort Christina in Delaware.
     o Rip and other men are said to gather around a portrait of George III.
     o The name George Washington appears in letters beneath a picture of the General at the old inn.
     o The Battle of Bunker Hill and the Battle of Stony Point are mentioned.
     o Henry Hudson is said to have known the Hudson River was inhabited by strange beings.

   North Carolina as the Rip Van Winkle State

5. Finally, return to the original question you posed, again asking students if they have any ideas why North Carolina may have been nicknamed the “Rip Van Winkle state” in the 1800s. Students may need to be guided to focus on the concept of progress and change happening in the story while Rip slept. Eventually, ensure students understand that many felt the same was true of North Carolina. Where as in most parts of the United States, the War of 1812 spurred business and brought new ideas, this was not the case in North Carolina, who had done very little to promote education, science, and the arts. Since it seemed North Carolina was “asleep” and letting progress and change pass it by, it became known as the “Rip Van Winkle state”.

6. Tell students they are going to be learning about the conditions in North Carolina during the early 1800s when the state received this negative nickname, and then they will be creating their own stories based on what they learn. Either individually or in partners, assign a text book reading on North Carolina in the early 1800s, or a reading from LEARN NC’s “The Rip Van Winkle State,” available at http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-newnation/4.0 (source link not working, however, this is an alternative http://northcarolinahistory.org/encyclopedia/rip-van-winkle/), and have students fill out the attached worksheet. Remind students to be a concise as possible when working, since they will need
accurate information for creating their very own story books tomorrow! Allow students to finish their reading and worksheet for homework if needed.

Day 2

**Visualizing Rip Van Winkle**

7. As a warm-up and review of the legend of Rip Van Winkle, project or handout copies of the attached Rip Van Winkle images for students to examine. Ask students to comment on what they see in the image, noting figures, symbols, historical clues, etc. Ask students to try and identify which part of the story each image is representing, encouraging them to offer evidence to back up their thoughts.

**Discussing North Carolina’s “Sleep of Indifference” in the Early 1800s**

8. Ask students to review why North Carolina was nicknamed the Rip Van Winkle state in the early 1800s. Review the various areas of NC that lacked progress in the 1800s by going over student homework as a class. As you go through the information, discuss:
   - Compare and contrast the educational system in North Carolina today to that of the 1800s.
   - Imagine NC had never worked to improve education. How might our state differ today?
   - Given all of these areas that lacked success and improvement, what do you imagine it would have been like living in NC in the early 1800s if you were not a wealthy landowner?
   - Of all the areas that lacked progress in NC, which do you think was most detrimental to the state (i.e. education, government, economy, etc.) and why?
   - Do you think NC deserved the nickname of the Rip Van Winkle state? Why or why not?

**Creating a Picture Book based on 1800s North Carolina Picture**

9. Tell students that based on their understanding of North Carolina’s “sleep of indifference” in the early 1800s and its lack of progress in the areas of education, government, economy, etc., they will be creating a picture book based on their interpretation of these facts. Hand out the attached North Carolina Picture Book Rubric and go over it. Explain to students that their books can be imaginative and creative, symbolizing or alluding to aspects of 1800s North Carolina (similar to the legend of Rip Van Winkle) or can be more realistic and factual, perhaps set in North Carolina and telling the story of a NC resident experiencing this lack of progress personally. Ensure students understand that what is most important is that they show their understanding of 1800s NC.

10. Set the timeline/due dates for the book, and allow students to begin brainstorming. Instruct them to continue working on their idea for homework.

11. On the book’s due date, allow students to share their final books in small groups. Instruct students to participate in a feedback session after each book is shared, in which they comment on what they liked about the story and pictures, and what they learned about 1800s NC.

12. As an optional culminating homework assignment or class activity, have students read the article *Rip Van Winkle State is Returning* at http://www.carolinajournal.com/exclusives/display_exclusive.html?id=433 (source link not working) and also attached. Discuss:
   - Why does Hood say that the Rip Van Winkle state is returning? What evidence does he give?
   - Do you agree or disagree that North Carolina is again becoming the Rip Van Winkle state? Why or why not?
Rip Van Winkle (edited)

One fine autumn day, a man by the name of Rip Van Winkle had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Catskill Mountains. He was after his favorite sport of squirrel shooting. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll covered with mountain flowers. From an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson River, far, far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen, wild, lonely, and shagged, scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene; evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long before he could reach the village, and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from a distance, hallooing, “Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!” He looked around, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air: “Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!” Rip now felt a vague apprehension stealing over him; he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place, but supposing it to be some one of the neighborhood in need of assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach, he was still more surprised at the stranger’s appearance. He was a short, square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion—a cloth jerkin strapped around the waist—several pair of breeches decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulders a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied and assisted the stranger up the mountain. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long rolling peals, like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft between lofty rocks, toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for an instant, but supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheater, surrounded by so many trees that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening cloud.

On entering the amphitheater, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the center was a company of odd-looking personages playing at ninepins. They were dressed in a quaint, outlandish fashion: some wore short doublets, others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most had enormous breeches, of similar style with that of the guide’s. One had a large head, broad face, and small, piggish eyes; the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat set off with a little red cock’s tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colors. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them.

As Rip and his companion approached them, his awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage which he had helped carry, which he quite enjoyed. He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another, and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often, that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.
On awaking, he found himself on the green knoll from whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes—it was a bright sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft and breasting the pure mountain breeze. “Surely,” thought Rip, “I have not slept here all night.” He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with a keg of liquor—the mountain ravine—the party—“Oh, what excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle?”

He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean, well-oiled gun, he found an old weapon lying by him, the barrel incrusted with rust, the lock falling off, and the wooden stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the people of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening’s festivities, and if he met with any of the party, demand his gun. As he rose to walk, he found himself stiff in the joints. “These mountain beds do not agree with me,” thought Rip. With some difficulty he got down into the glen; he found the gully up which he and his companion had ascended the preceding evening; but to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheater; but no traces of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high, impenetrable wall, over which the waterfall came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad, deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. What was to be done? the morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his gun; he dreaded to meet his wife; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty firelock, and, with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village, he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with everyone in the area. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast their eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long!

He had now entered the outskirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too, none of which he recognized for his old acquaintances, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered: it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors—strange faces at the windows—everything was strange. His mind now began to misgive him; he doubted whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but the day before. There stood the Catskill Mountains—there ran the silver Hudson at a distance—there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been—Rip was sorely perplexed—“That drink last night,” thought he, “has addled my poor head sadly!”

It was with some difficulty he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay—the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges.

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. He called loudly for his wife and children—the lonely chambers rung for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the little village inn—but it too was gone. A large rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken, and mended with old
hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted, “The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle.” Instead of the great tree which used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn, there now was reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red nightcap, and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes—all this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognized on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe, but even this was different. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was stuck in the hand instead of a scepter, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, GENERAL WASHINGTON.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none whom Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling, tone about it, instead of the accustomed drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for a friend he might know. Instead, all he saw was a group of fellows arguing vehemently about rights of citizens—election—members of Congress—liberty—Bunker’s Hill—heroes of ’76—and other words, that were perfectly confusing to Rip.

The appearance of Rip, with his long grizzled beard, his rusty gun, his strange dress, and the army of women and children that had gathered at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern politicians. They crowded around him, eying him from head to foot, with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and drawing him partly aside, inquired “on which side he voted?” Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and raising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear, “whether he was Federal or Democrat.” Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, he demanded to know “what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village?” “Alas! gentlemen,” cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, “I am a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the king, God bless him!”

Here a general shout burst from the bystanders—“A Tory! a Tory! a spy! a refugee! hustle him! away with him!” It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and again he demanded of Rip what he came there for, and whom he was seeking. Rip humbly assured him that he meant no harm; but merely came there in search of some of his neighbors, who used to keep about the tavern.

“Well—who are they?—name them.” Rip bethought himself a moment, and then inquired of several of his friends.

After the first name he mentioned, Nicholas Vedder, there was silence for a little while, when an old man replied in a thin, piping voice, “Nicholas Vedder? why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the churchyard that used to tell all about him, but that’s rotted and gone, too.”

Rip asked of another friend. “Where’s Brom Dutcher?”

“Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war; some say he was killed at the battle of Stony Point—others say he was drowned in a squall. I don’t know—he never came back again.”

Rip’s heart died away at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him, too, since such enormous lapses of time seemed involved, and there were so many matters which he could not understand: war—Congress—Stony Point!—he had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair, “Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?”

“Oh, Rip Van Winkle!” exclaimed two or three, “Oh, to be sure! that’s Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree.”
Rip looked, and beheld a precise counterpart of himself, as he went up the mountain: apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name?

“God knows,” exclaimed Rip, at his wit’s end; “I’m not myself—I’m somebody else—that’s me yonder—no—that’s somebody else, got into my shoes—I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they’ve changed my gun, and everything’s changed, and I’m changed, and I can’t tell what’s my name, or who I am!”

The bystanders began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun, and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief; at the very suggestion of which, the self-important man in the cocked hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh, likely woman pressed through the throng to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. “Hush, Rip,” cried she, “hush, you little fool, the old man won’t hurt you.” The name of the child, the air of the mother, the tone of her voice, all awakened a train of recollections in his mind. “What is your name, my good woman?” asked he.

“Judith Gardenier.”

“And your father’s name?”

“Ah, poor man, his name was Rip Van Winkle; it’s twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since—his dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl.”

Rip had but one question more to ask; but he put it with a faltering voice: “Where’s your mother?”

“Oh, she too had died but a short time since; she broke a blood vessel in a fit of passion at a New England peddler.”

There was a drop of comfort, at least, in this news. The honest man could contain himself no longer.—He caught his daughter and her child in his arms.—“I am your father!” cried he—“Young Rip Van Winkle once—old Rip Van Winkle now!—Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle!”

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed, “Sure enough! it is Rip Van Winkle—it is himself. Welcome home again, old neighbor.—Why, where have you been these twenty long years?”

Rip’s story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him but as one night. The neighbors stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other; and the self-important man in the cocked hat screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head—upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of that name, and the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighborhood. He recollected Rip at once, and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Catskill Mountains had always been haunted by strange beings. That it was affirmed that the great Hendrick Hudson, the first discoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years, with his crew of the Half-Moon, being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river, and the great city called by his name. That his
father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at ninepins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls, like long peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up, and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip’s daughter took him home to live with her; she had a snug, well-furnished house, and a stout cheery farmer for a husband. As to Rip’s son, who was the ditto of himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm; but held an hereditary disposition to attend to anything else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits; he soon found many of his former cronies, though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favor.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can do nothing with age, he took his place once more on the bench, at the inn door, and was respected as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a teller of the old times “before the war.” It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his absence. There had been a revolutionary war—the country had rebelled against old England—and instead of being a subject of his Majesty, George III., Rip was now a free citizen of the United States. But Rip was happy; he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and out whenever he pleased, without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was mentioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and cast up his eyes; which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate, or joy at his deliverance.

*Edited from http://www.islandmm.com/vbs/ripv/* (source link not working)
Rip Van Winkle Summary

Setting...
Time
Period
Location

Characters...
Main character
Secondary characters

Events...
Main Event
Main Event
Secondary Event

Visualization...
Sketch a picture from the story on the back of this handout.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm Conditions/Migration</td>
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<td>Geography/Isolation</td>
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<td>Government</td>
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Rip Van Winkle Summary-KEY

Setting: the Revolutionary era; the Catskill Mountains of New York
Main character: Rip Van Winkle
Secondary characters: Dame Van Winkle
Main Event: Rip climbs to the top of a mountain where he meets a stranger who leads him into an amphitheater. There Rip meets a larger group of strangers who he drinks with. He falls asleep for 20 years.
Secondary event: Rip wakes and returns home. He is surprised to see how much has changed and that he recognizes no one.
Ending: He is finally recognized by the eldest member of the village. He is reunited with his daughter and goes to live with her. He reclaims his old habits at the inn and around town.

North Carolina in the 1800s KEY

Education
- Education was not a priority in the state
- Many families felt it was more important for their children to stay home and work than to attend school.
- Landowners did not want to pay taxes for the school system
- The NC State Constitution of 1776 said schools should “be established by the Legislature for the convenient Instruction of Youth, with such Salaries to the Masters paid by the Public” the state legislature did not enforce such rules
- NC had no saws establishing public education like other states; rather it had academies (schools that depended on local financing and interests)
- Most NC academics that were established did not allow girls to attend

Economy
- North Carolina was a one-crop agricultural state, focused on growing cotton and using Whitney’s cotton gin to clean it; the state neglected food crops, which had to be brought in from other states at great cost
- North Carolina had little industry, limited commerce, and inadequate banking
- Many wealthy NC landowners invested their money in the cruelty of slave labor rather than industry or agricultural improvements

Farm Conditions/Migration
- NC farm conditions were very poor, with farmers rarely improving their land or its fertility
- Between 1815-1833, NC assessed land value dropped dramatically
- NC lacked adequate transportation and communication; rivers were barely navigable, roads poorly maintained, bridges rare, and floods common
- Lack of transportation meant farmers could not easily get to market
- Poor farming conditions lead to 1/3 of NC population migrating to other states between 1815-1850 (migration)

Geography/Isolation
- People in NC lived far apart and scattered across farms
- Few towns and little trade
- NC lacked good transportation (poor roads, rivers, bridges, etc.) and communication
- Due to the NC geography, as since of individualism was prevalent (people were only concerned with their own individual needs and freedoms, and did not welcome state officials interfering in their lives regarding taxes or laws)

Government
- Representation in NC’s legislature was unequal; with representation determined by county, and the east having a greater number of counties, the east governed NC predominantly even though it had a small percentage of the state’s voting population; thus the east dominated elections
- From 1777-1836, of the 24 men that served as governor, only 6 were from western counties!
- Similar to what occurred during the Regulator movement, when the west would attempt to establish additional counties, easterners would divide a county to keep the west from gaining any momentum
• With state officials elected by the legislature, and the legislature was controlled by wealthy landowners from the east, property—not the voting people—determined governmental representation.
• The majority of people had little voice in the conditions of the state.

Images from the Story of Rip Van Winkle (Source link not working anymore): http://www.islandmm.com/vbs/ripv/
Name: ________________________________

North Carolina Picture Book Rubric

Assignment:
Based on your understanding of North Carolina’s “sleep of indifference” in the early 1800s and its lack of progress in the areas of education, government, economy, etc., you will create a picture book telling a story based on your interpretation of these facts.

Your story must have:
- Title
- Beginning, Middle, and End
- Setting that is specific to North Carolina
- Characters (at least 2)
- Plot must involve, allude to, or be symbolic of events taking place in North Carolina in the early 1800s; events must illustrate your understanding of NC’s lack of progress
- Proper mechanics: spelling, sentence structure (no fragments or run-ons), tense consistency
- At least five paragraphs of text spread out across the various pages of your book.
- At least 8 pages, each containing at least one illustration depicting the story.
- Creativity and neatness

Time Line

Date                   Action
________               Brainstorm story ideas (remember, your story must be symbolic of, set during, or allude to North Carolina in the early 1800s)
________               Bring a first draft of your text to class for revising with a writing partner
____ - _____          Work on your second draft; begin to sketch picture ideas for illustrating your story;
________               Bring your second draft and rough artwork to class; we will work on putting your story into book form and finalizing your art work on the various pages
________               Final draft of your story book is due; you will read your stories to one another in small groups
"Rip Van Winkle State" is Returning  
By John Hood  
May 09, 2003

RALEIGH – North Carolina history buffs will remember that one of our state’s first nicknames was the “Rip van Winkle State.”

The charm of Washington Irving’s tale of a drowsy farmer notwithstanding, this sobriquet for North Carolina was not a term of affection. It referred to the state’s lack of growth during the early 19th century, and more specifically — and less fairly — to the alleged indifference of state leaders about this languidness.

It may be time to bring back the name.

For decades, self-promoting and self-congratulatory North Carolinians have viewed our state as a progressive leader of New South dynamism. No more. Over the past two years – hampered by factors as diverse as tax increases, crumbling infrastructure, and military deployments – our economy has turned in the worst performance in the South and one of the worst in the United States.

From March 2001 to March of this year, for example, North Carolina lost 119,000 jobs – or more than one-third of all the net losses of the Southern states. Even this miserable record is worse than it appears, because North Carolina actually saw more growth in government employment – about 31,000 positions, or 5 percent – than any other of our neighbors, where the average growth rate was only 3.2 percent. So North Carolina’s private employers shed 150,000 jobs during the past two years, dwarfing the losses of any comparable state.

Other measures confirm the trend. Personal income in North Carolina grew by 4.1 percent from the first quarter of 2001 to the fourth quarter of 2002 (the most recent available). Again, this was the slowest rate in our region and lower than the national average. On industry income, North Carolina again led the region in government growth while trailing the region in private-sector growth.

These data pose a serious challenge to the credibility and the political viability of North Carolina’s elected officials, starting at the top with Gov. Mike Easley. In both 2001 and 2002, the governor proposed, lobbied for, and subsequently signed increases in income, sales, and business tax rates that have collectively boosted the tax burden on North Carolina families and businesses by well over $1 billion a year.

Actually, that was the predicted fiscal impact. The tax increases imposed on North Carolina’s already teetering economy by Easley and the General Assembly were typically discussed in terms of how many hundreds of millions of dollars they were projected to cost taxpayers. But these discussions largely ignored the reality that households and businesses respond rationally to government policy.

Easley’s tax policy sent a message sent to entrepreneurs, investors, and high-income professionals that North Carolina would now impose one of the highest income-tax rates in the United States (8.25 percent). It sent shoppers the message that North Carolina would now have an average sales tax higher than the regional average, with shoppers close to Virginia and South Carolina essentially encouraged to buy high-priced merchandise such as furniture and jewelry north or south of the border if possible. And in part because of withheld tax reimbursements, local governments across the state hiked property taxes and thus sent similarly discouraging messages to prospective employers and homeowners.

I’m not going to pretend that state and local tax policies alone can determine the fate of the economy. But they have undeniably played a significant role in hampering North Carolina’s economic recovery. Evidence for this insight can be found in neighboring states, such as South Carolina and Georgia, which have faced many of the same macro-problems that North Carolina has – such as intensified foreign competition – without taking nearly as large an economic hit.
As a result, Easley and the legislature did not collect as much revenue from their exceptionally large tax increases as their static models projected. Over the past two months, for example, state tax revenues have fallen so short of projections that budget officials now expect a nearly $300 million fiscal deficit through June 30, rather than the $114 million surplus that the Easley administration forecast as recently as March.

For next year, this means that the deficit legislative budget plans had tried to fill, once again largely by boosting the tax burden, could be $400 million bigger. At this writing, the most likely response from House and Senate conferees is, believe it or not, to raise taxes even more.

Thanks in part to our politicians’ handiwork, North Carolina must now yearn to achieve the economic growth rates of Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana – the very Deep South states that North Carolinians used to pity, not envy. That loud, annoying sound emanating from Raleigh is a snore. Rip van Winkle has returned.