

INFORMATION

Did you know that North Carolina used to be a worldwide leader in textile production? Yarn, cloth, clothing, and other goods made from cotton were produced in the mills that spread across North Carolina beginning in the early 1800s. When the Civil War began, every single mill in North Carolina began working to produce pants, coats, blankets, sacks, and cloth for the Confederate army and the war effort. Another big expansion happened during WWI, when North Carolina mills began producing goods for the military again. Although textile production was a big plus to North Carolina's economy, not everything was positive - workers in the mills were almost always severely underpaid, exposed to unsafe work environments, and subjected to extremely long workdays and weeks. It wasn't uncommon for entire families - including young children - to work in mills together. Often, they lived in mill villages where the houses they lived in and businesses they shopped at were also owned by the mill owner, giving the owner total control over their employee's lives.

INSTRUCTIONS

Weaving Activity:

You'll need:

- 1 cardboard loom (included)
- 1 plastic needle (included)
- Yarn (included)

To begin, thread your needle with the long piece of yarn. To secure your yarn you can either leave a long tail to tuck into your finished weaving at the end, or you can tie it to the first piece of pre-strung yarn on your loom. Using your needle, weave your yarn by going over and then under. When you finish a row, use your fingers to pull it to the bottom of the loom and keep everything tight.

Mill Village Math:

You'll need:

- 1 oral history interview (included)
- 1 worksheet (included)

Read the oral history interview with James and Nannie Pharis. Use the information they give in their interview to complete your mill village math! After you've finished your worksheet, give the writing prompt a try.