

TODAY *in* GEORGIA HISTORY

December 17, 1903: Erskine Caldwell Born
Daily Activity

Introduction:

The daily activities created for each of the *Today in Georgia History* segments are designed to meet the Georgia Performance Standards for Reading Across the Curriculum, and Grade Eight: Georgia Studies. For each date, educators can choose from three optional activities differentiated for various levels of student ability. Each activity focuses on engaging the student in context specific vocabulary and improving the student's ability to communicate about historical topics.

One suggestion is to use the *Today in Georgia History* video segments and daily activities as a "bell ringer" at the beginning of each class period. Using the same activity daily provides consistency and structure for the students and may help teachers utilize the first 15-20 minutes of class more effectively.

Optional Activities:

Level 1: Provide the students with the vocabulary list and have them use their textbook, a dictionary, or other teacher provided materials to define each term. After watching the video, have the students write a complete sentence for each of the vocabulary terms. Student created sentences should reflect the meaning of the word based on the context of the video segment. Have students share a sampling of sentences as a way to check for understanding.

Level 2: Provide the students with the vocabulary list for that day's segment before watching the video and have them guess the meaning of each word based on their previous knowledge. The teacher may choose to let the students work alone or in groups. After watching the video, have the students revise their definitions to better reflect the meaning of the words based on the context of the video. As a final step, have the students compare and contrast their definitions to their textbook, dictionary or other teacher provided materials definitions.

Level 3: Provide the students with the vocabulary list and have them use their textbook, a dictionary, or other teacher provided materials to define each term. After watching the video, have the students write a five sentence paragraph based on the provided writing prompts.

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Vocabulary/Writing Prompts:

Vocabulary Terms

Desperation
Seared
Grinding
Poverty
Plight
Controversial
Bleak
Unromanticized
Indictment
Gentility
Perpetuating
Stereotypes

Writing Prompts

1. Have you ever seen a commercial asking for donations, and showing hungry children living in an impoverished country? Did these images help you understand the plight of poor children? In a five-sentence paragraph explain how Erskine Caldwell's books are similar to modern day commercials that expose poverty.
2. In a five-sentence paragraph explain the difference between a work of fiction like *Gone With the Wind*, and a work of fiction like *Tobacco Road*. What genre does each novel fall belong to?
3. In a five-sentence paragraph explain how Erskine Caldwell's experience growing up in Georgia during a hard economic period influence him as a writer.

Related Georgia Performance Standards:

Reading Across the Curriculum (Grades 6-12)

SSRC1 Students will enhance reading in all curriculum areas by:

- c. Building vocabulary knowledge
 - Demonstrate an understanding of contextual vocabulary in various subjects.
 - Use content vocabulary in writing and speaking.
 - Explore understanding of new words found in subject area texts.
- d. Establishing context
 - Explore life experiences related to subject area content.
 - Discuss in both writing and speaking how certain words are subject area related.

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- Determine strategies for finding content and contextual meaning for unknown words.

Grade 8 Georgia Studies

SS8H8 The student will analyze the important events that occurred after World War I and their impact on Georgia.

- Describe the impact of the boll weevil and drought on Georgia.
- Explain economic factors that resulted in the Great Depression.
- Discuss the impact of the political career of Eugene Talmadge.
- Discuss the effect of the New Deal in terms of the impact of the Civilian Conservation Corps, Agricultural Adjustment Act, rural electrification, and Social Security.

Grade Eight Reading and Literature

ELA8R4 The student acquires knowledge of Georgia authors and significant text created by them. The student

- Identifies a variety of Georgia authors both male and female.
- Identifies authors' connections to Georgia through a variety of materials including electronic media.
- Identifies award winning Georgia authors.
- Examines texts from different genres (e.g. picture books, poetry, short stories, novels, essays, informational writing, and dramatic literature) created by Georgia authors.
- Relates literary works created by Georgia authors to historical settings and or events.
- Explains how Georgia is reflected in a literary work through setting, characterization, historical context, or current events.
- Evaluates recurring or similar themes across a variety of selections written by Georgia authors, distinguishing theme from topic.