

2nd Grade Lesson on the Savannah River with Focus on Augusta Canal and Chinese Immigrants

GA Social Studies Standards

SS2G1 Locate and compare major topographical features of Georgia and describe how these features define Georgia's surface.

b. Locate on a physical map the major rivers: Savannah, Flint, and Chattahoochee.

The Savannah River is a natural boundary between Georgia and South Carolina. It runs from the Blue Ridge Mountains and deposits into the Atlantic Ocean in Savannah, Georgia. The river is a rich resource as it serves as a source for water, transportation, and power.

The Augusta Canal is fed by the Savannah River and passes through suburban and urban Augusta before the water returns to Savannah River.

The Canal was originally constructed in 1845 to provide water to the city, power to textile mills, and transportation for goods. In 1996, it was designated as a National Heritage Area by the U.S. Congress

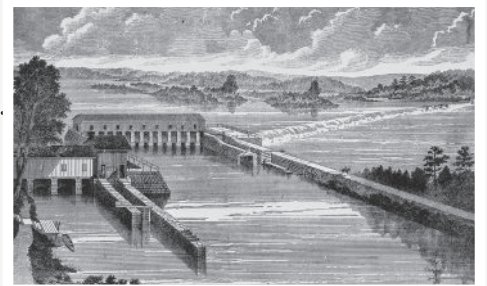
How is Asian American history connected to the Augusta Canal and the Savannah River?

During the Reconstruction more than 160 Chinese laborers were recruited to deepen and widen the canal in the 1870s.

When the canal project was completed, most Chinese left to work elsewhere. But some remained and opened grocery stores or hand laundries in Augusta.

The 1880 Census reported 10 Chinese living in Augusta (out of a total of 17 in Georgia) and 8 Chinese grocery stores. By 1900 Augusta's Chinese population was 41 people with 29 Chinese grocery stores and 8 laundries run by them.

Although small, the Chinese American community in Augusta slowly grew and was the largest Chinese population in Georgia until the 1960s.



On May 19, 2023, the Georgia Historical Society dedicated the state's first-ever Asian American historical marker to the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, the oldest Chinese organization in Georgia, to recognize the Augusta Chinese immigrants and their stories.



Use QR code for the complete article and teaching resources!

Do you want to include more stories of Asian America into your lessons? Check out this fabulous book, *Teaching Asian America in Elementary Classrooms* by Noreen Naseem Rodríguez, Sohyun An, & Ester June Kim.

**Complete Article
and Lesson Plan**



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**Written by Sohyun An
Design by Justine Chung**

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(Top to Bottom, Left to Right)

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