

## WebQuest Activity Handout:

# KWEST TV Investigative Report: How Sharecropping Was Used to Keep Freed Slaves on the Farm

By Rick Vanderwall, Molly McGovern, and Heather King

Your Assignment: As a reporting team for KWEST TV specializing in stories that expose wrongdoing and injustice, you are assigned the following story. KWEST has learned that African-American farmers who did not own their own farms during the Jim Crow period were forced into renting land for farming under a system known as sharecropping. This system made it not only difficult for them to succeed at farming but also hard for them just to survive. In covering the story, you must create a three to five minute video news report that explains and exposes the system of sharecropping as it was practiced in the novel, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*.

Your team has the following TV news specialists and tasks:

1. **Field Reporter:** does interviews and reports from outside the studio.
2. **Studio Anchor:** reads the part of the story told in the studio during the actual news show.
3. **Field Producer:** arranges schedules for the team, as well as camera shots and interviews, and makes cue cards, if needed.
4. **Videographer:** handles all of the camera work for the story.
5. **Writer:** writes the script in the proper format with input of the whole team.

You can also combine and rearrange these jobs to fit the number of members in your group.

To help you create your story and evaluate other groups' presentations, go through the following sections of the WebQuest:

1. **Research the Story:** Use the links on this page for your research on sharecropping.
2. **Produce the News Report:** Learn how to produce a video by going to this link.
3. **Respond to your Peers:** Watch and react to the videos of other groups. Print a copy of the **Peer Response Form** for each group that makes a presentation. Focus your attention on how effectively each group tells the story of sharecropping in this activity. Remember, the most important thing is not the quality of the equipment the groups use or how they use it.

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