



# WS3 COLLEGE Lesson Plan

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***Title: Appalachian Poetry; Environment***

***Subject: Music, English, Science, History***

***Length of Lesson: Three Class Periods (may vary depending on class times)***

***Grade Level: College***

This episode of WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour is dedicated to Jean Ritchie. Within this episode, various artists celebrate Jean Ritchie, often referred to as the Appalachian princess. Jean Ritchie introduced the mountain dulcimer (sometimes called the lap dulcimer). It fascinated people in Greenwich Village. She also wrote beautiful Appalachian songs such as, “Cool of the Day” and “Black Waters.” The goal of this lesson is for students to focus on how precious our world is and the importance of taking care of it. The lesson will hopefully inspire students to portray this message through music and arts, as demonstrated by the artists in the show. In addition, this lesson will encourage students to network with others not only in their class, but also on campus, to promote the poetry they write. The beautiful words of Jean Ritchie will hopefully inspire the students. The activity in this lesson will have students write their own Appalachian poetry which focuses on taking care of the environment and a love for their world and home. Students will then organize a performance piece in which they recite their poetry to the class and organizations on campus. Students are encouraged to think about how their care for the environment also reflects their love for their home and community. Students will also explore the various instruments used throughout the show. Once students watch the episode, ask them to reflect upon the words of “Black Waters”. What does this song mean to you? How does it inspire you? This will ignite the love and passion for creating and writing their own poem. Also, have students gather information about campus organizations that may wish to learn more about their project. For instance, is there an environmental group on campus or Appalachian Studies organization? Have students brainstorm which organizations would best help promote their artistry and message.

## ***Goals and Objectives:***

- **Students will understand Appalachian history; culture and music and how they are connected**
- **Creativity encouraged through the development of poetry and performance/event organization**
- **Knowledge of musical instruments introduced and played in WoodSongs episode**
- **Organizational skills through the development of performance/recital of poetry**
- **Networking and critical thinking skills through the organization of campus event**
- **Builds Communication Skills**
- **Encourages working collaboratively in an effort to creatively plan presentations and event**
- **Encourages descriptive writing**
- **Builds knowledge of performance to various audiences and for various purposes**
- **Encourages a knowledge of how music and art may portray important messages**

***Vocabulary within lesson: Genre, Appalachia, Story-Telling, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking***

***Genre:*** a category of artistic composition, as in music or literature, characterized by similarities in form, style, or subject matter.

***Story-Telling-*** Responses may vary and encourage students to think reflect upon what they feel story-telling was like in the history of Appalachian times.

***Appalachia:*** What does Appalachia mean to you? This could be a personal reflection as well as discussing the geographical term.

***Critical Thinking:*** Responses may vary, which is encouraged. Each student should be encouraged to really explore what they think it means to think critically and focus on fair-minded critical thinking, which is thinking and exploring all opinions and thinking thoroughly, while also being fair in the process. Discussion could expand into developing intellectual character as well.

***Creative Thinking:*** Responses may vary

***Description of Lesson/Activities & Procedure:***

***Introduction:*** The lesson will extend into a week of classes (may vary). The lesson will be introduced with a fundamental question that allows students to begin thinking about music and the history of music. This will help the students being to think about music and how it relates to their lives and also begin to explore what they know about Appalachian music and access prior knowledge, before watching the episode of WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour. Questions to begin an opening discussion may include: What are some ways that you take care of your environment daily? What are some of your favorite genres of music? What do you think of when you think of Appalachian music? When learning something new, it is important that it attach to something you already know. We have to engage in it in order to really learn. Reading or lecture will not ensure it is part of our working memory. Through watching and listening to WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour, students will be engaged in their learning and, in turn, inspired to create and plan an event which encourages a sense of community and also promotes networking skills. This will allow the students to learn Appalachian history, music and inspire creativity by creating their own poetry and presentation, and also encourage networking on campus. This will encourage students to improve their communication skills and also organization and planning for the event.

Students will listen to the song about the environment titled “Black Waters”. This will allow students to also think about mountain top removal and the devastation it causes, and how that also creates devastation in our cultures and communities. Also, listen to the poem recited by Pete Seeger called, “I Celebrate Life”. Ask the students how this inspires them as they begin to write their poem? Encourage the students to explore the descriptive language and symbolism. Students will list elements of the poem and song that stand out to them particularly

and will also be able to explain this to their audience and reasons why and how this contributes to their poem.

Students will write an environmental poem to spread awareness throughout their campus. Students are encouraged to reflect upon a love for their home and community. Have students also reflect upon Michael's quote in which he says if you play a guitar, or any instrument, take your three chords and the truth and in the spirit of Jean Ritchie, move people; that's what art and music are for and use the music. This quote is very encouraging and inspirational as students begin to write their poem about a love for the environment and home. Students are encouraged to do the same when writing their own Appalachian poem.

This will encourage a sense of community as students recite their poetry. The overall goal is for student's to realize how music and art strongly inspire and allow one to truly speak and reach others, as demonstrated by the artists in the episode of WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour. In addition, students may also wish to contact local newspapers to demonstrate their poetry as well and deliver their message to love and take care of the environment and, in turn, home and community. Students are encouraged to plan the event to recite their poetry in a way that encourages community and relays their message to take care of the environment and love and value our world, community and home. Students are encouraged to network with campus organizations and/or other professors to organize their event.

Also as part of this project, students will self-assess their own work. In fact, students will design their own rubric to assess their own work. Students may simply create a chart or create a list of guidelines as their rubric. This will encourage self-reflection and the importance of evaluating progress in order to best complete the project (and future projects as well).

***Media/Materials Needed:***

- **Access to computer/lpad to research Appalachian history (Valuable resources include Encyclopedia of Appalachia: <http://encyclopediaofappalachia.com/>**
- **<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/>**
- **Materials will vary depending on presentations**