

Susan Pepper

Appalachian Folk Music

Susan Pepper's artist residencies emphasize different genres and aspects of traditional Appalachian folk music such as mountain dulcimer (provided by artist), ballads and folk songs, fretless mountain banjo, and dance (square dance/flatfooting). Her residencies develop music skills, especially singing and dulcimer playing, and also integrate the history of music in the region, especially multiethnic origins of different instruments and musical genres. In addition, ballads can be examined as narrative (e.g. identifying protagonists, setting, mood, motivations, etc.).

The goal of all residencies is not only to facilitate a dynamic, group experience with traditional music, but also to impart knowledge, awareness and greater appreciation of the rich musical heritage of our mountain communities. Students will come away with an ability to play at least 2 songs on dulcimer as well as to sing several folk songs. Students will learn to recognize and differentiate between different folk instruments.

This residency can be adapted for any grade level and integrated into a variety of curricular goals, especially social studies and language arts.

Susan recently completed her Master of Arts in Appalachian Studies with a concentration in traditional music. She wrote a thesis entitled "A Whistling Girl and a Crowing Hen Always Come to Some Bad End" The Singing Traditions of Three Western North Carolina Women: Hazel Rhymer, Pearl Hicks, and Zora Walker" (2008) based on her primary research and fieldwork over a period of three years. In 1999, she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Comparative Literature. For the past several years, she has taught dulcimer, guitar, and singing at a variety of workshops and educational programs. She has also performed in the region in a duo *BeechMountain Echoes* with Rick Ward of Watauga County. The group performs traditional folk music from the Beech Mountain region of western North Carolina.



- ◆ Susan Pepper
Appalachian Folk Music
- ◆ Grades: K-12
- ◆ Materials/ Cost: None
- ◆ Available for Residency less than 5 days
- ◆ Available for workshops & Community Performance