

## Lesson plans

Paul and Mary met at a special school where they learned to build log homes. There are many schools offering special classes where someone can learn how to do most anything. Below is a list of museums and schools that offer classes and programs in Scandinavian and American folk arts and beyond. In addition to crafts there are also music and dance workshops at many of these schools too.

**Lesson #1:** Teachers, have your students visit one of the following web sites and look at the folk-art classes offered. Have them decide on which course they would like to take if they could go to the museum or school and explain why they would like to take that course.

**North House Folk School** in Grand Marais, Minnesota offers a wide variety of courses in a beautiful setting on Lake Superior. Classes last from a few hours to a whole week.

<https://northhouse.org/>

**Vesterheim Norwegian Museum** in Decorah, Iowa has long offered courses in wood carving and rosemaling. They have expanded their courses over the past few years. Many of the artisans you see at Norsk Høstfest every year teach classes here every year.

<https://vesterheim.org/>

**American Swedish Institute** is a beautiful museum right in the middle of Minneapolis in Minnesota. This cultural center has greatly expanded their course offerings over the past ten years and regularly bring in guest artists from Scandinavia to teach, especially in conjunction with exhibits. They also specialize in craft classes for youth and there are some free courses available on their web site. They have been leaders in finding a way to continue to teach courses during the pandemic.

<https://www.asimn.org/programs-education/youth-and-family-programs>

**John C. Campbell Folk School** was one of the first folk schools (if not the first) in America inspired by the tradition of folk schools started in Denmark. They offer classes year-round and people travel here from all over the country to study with master crafts people.

<https://www.folkschool.org/>

**Malung Folk High School** in Dalarna region in Sweden. This is just one example of hundreds of special schools all over Scandinavia where students can learn a wide variety of skills in a more informal atmosphere.

<https://www.regiondalarna.se/malungsfolkhogskola/kurser/folkmusikkurser/dans/>

Here is a link to an article where you can find many more folk schools in Scandinavia.

<https://scandinavianseminar.org/folk-schools/folk-school-directories-and-samples/>

**Lesson #2:** There are free short workshops and lessons available through some of these web sites—perhaps some students could actually take one of these online workshops and bring their artwork to school. Here are links to two lessons from the American Swedish Institute’s web site:

Paper beads: [https://www.asimn.org/sites/default/files/carved\\_pencils.pdf](https://www.asimn.org/sites/default/files/carved_pencils.pdf)

Carved pencils: [https://www.asimn.org/sites/default/files/carved\\_pencils.pdf](https://www.asimn.org/sites/default/files/carved_pencils.pdf)

**Lesson #3:** Students in Minot and all over the world realize that they don’t have to go away from home to a school, camp or workshop to learn how to do things--there are people and resources in your own communities who know how to do stuff. At Scandinavian Youth Camp every year some of the teachers are from Minot and they are very good at teaching their skills to the students. Everyone involved looks forward to the baked goods that Brenda Lokken has made with the students in her workshop and that they share with us at the final program that we have on Sunday afternoon—lefse and krumkake, what a way to end the camp!

Have your students identify a relative, friend or someone in the community that can teach them how to do something. Have students make a plan for how they will carry out learning the skill from this person and then follow through on the plan, documenting the process and what they learn.

To get some ideas check out this project that started in Appalachia called Foxfire.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foxfire\\_\(magazine\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foxfire_(magazine))

In 1966, Eliot Wigginton and his students in an English class at the Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School in Georgia initiated a project to engage students in writing. They created a magazine that covers topics of the lifestyle, culture, crafts, and skills of people in southern Appalachia. The content is written as a mixture of how-to information, first-person narratives, oral history, and folklore. The project was very successful and continues to this day. It has inspired schools and students all over the country to do similar project. Surely Minot and whatever community you live in has people who would help with this project and be very pleased to even be asked.

In North Dakota there is a State Folklorist named Troyd Geist who could be helpful in finding resources for this project. (701) 328-7590 <http://tgeist@nd.gov> Many other states have state folklorists as well.

There are even some grants available to help with expenses if you are over 18.

<https://www.arts.nd.gov/grants/individual-artists/folk-and-traditional-arts-appenticeship-program>

Speaking of grants, the American Scandinavian Foundation in New York City now has funds available for Scandinavian Folk Arts projects in North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Upper Michigan. There are grants for individuals and grants for organizations.

<http://www.amscan.org/app/uploads/2017/05/Folk-Arts-Grant-3.pdf>