



Pennsylvania Federation of Music Clubs

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FOLK MUSIC

Dear Fellow Music Lovers,

Folk Music is an extremely important part of our culture, a fact sometimes ignored or overlooked by serious musicians. In my elementary music teaching experience, I found it not only fun to do, but an excellent source of reinforcing history, geography, and general culture. It also is a style of music that is so easy that even less confidential musicians can participate.

I recently received some guidelines from the National Folk Music chair, Carole Flatau, regarding the use of Folk Music in our programs. First, the goal is "to increase an awareness of the importance of folk music as a unifying entity in America, connecting the nation's cultures, occupations, philosophies, and emphases from colonial days to the multi-cultural present." The guidelines also include various methods of accomplishing his goal. I will be glad to forward this to anyone who is interested in suggestions. Suggestions include singing a folk song at every meeting.

One thing I want to clarify is that there are three ways of dealing with folk music, and each should be clearly stated in reports. The first and most obvious is to plan a program totally around Folk Music. This can be done by having a theme such as using one song from each of many styles, choosing one type of folk song such as work songs, ballads, spirituals, etc. Another idea would be to select a geographical area and do songs from just that area. Second, any time you use a folk song within a program, it can be used in your report. The third method is to use a classical song which makes use of a folk song in the larger work.

Because the deadline for sending in reports has already passed for this year, this is the time to start making plans for using folk music in next year's program. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Please contact me through mail, e-mail, or phone, all listed below.

I look forward to working with you in the coming year.