

# Some Basic Types of Folklife

## Verbal Arts

Old tales told long ago, newer legends, tall tales, toasts, and stories we tell about ourselves.



## Music, Dance, and Body Gestures

Lullabies sung at home, traditional music performed in public, dances we learn from each other.

Body Communication / Gestures include greetings or hand signs, and the ideas we have about them.



## Material Culture

The "stuff" of our lives: buildings, crafts, foods, handmade instruments, work tools, and even paper airplanes.



## Beliefs and Customs

Folk Beliefs include beliefs about the weather, home cures, and more!

Customs are what we do on holidays or family events like birthdays.



# Are you interested in exploring the world of Folk Arts?

HERE ARE SOME TOPICS YOU CAN EXPLORE:

**Verbal Arts:** Record stories about local people, or folk heroes; collect ghost stories, tall tales, jokes, or riddles; study proverbs (old sayings), and sermons.

**Music & Dance:** Research the various musical traditions present in your community; Interview a local musician; learn to play a traditional instrument, such as the *frottoir* or harmonica; attend a *fais do-do*, or another local dance function and learn some folk dances.

**Material Culture:** Make a photo journal of crafts or craftsmen in your area; visit the craft booths at a local festival and ask the craftsmen about their work; find out if there is a family member of yours who practices a craft, then ask them to teach it to you.

**Customs & Beliefs:** Think about the activities that your family participates in at church, then come up with ways you can share this information with others outside of your church community; visit a friend's church who is of a different religion, then write an essay about your experience; take notes of the various practices at your next holiday gathering, then share your observations with fellow classmates.

**Body Communications:** Consider ways you talk with your hands in everyday situations, and then try to imagine how you would communicate without body gestures. You may be surprised of how much you rely on body language!

