

# The Ballad of Tom Dooley



By Wendy Kimbrell, Brandy Huffman, and Penny Jenkins

## Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Research cultural legends from their individual backgrounds and share with the class differing styles of music, dance, and/or stories from their family's origins
- Research native North Carolinian Tom "Dooley" Dula and create a song or poem based on their research
- Develop an appreciation for global and local cultural diversity
- Analyze a primary and secondary document

## Teacher Planning

Time Required for Lesson

2-3 days

## Materials Needed

- laptops/ipad

copies of materials:

- January 1994 Our State magazine article (Courtesy of the NC Department of Cultural Resources digital collection - <http://digital.ncdcr.gov/cdm/home/>) Specific link: <http://digital.ncdcr.gov/cdm/pageflip/collection/p16062coll18/id/66512/type/compoundobject/show/66464/cpdtype/document/pftype/image#page/1/mode/2up>
- Court papers from the Tom Dooley trial (<https://trello.com/b/z7sqdjS7/mountain-music-in-the-classroom-teacher-workshop>; "Other Tom Dooley Materials")
- at least 2 different versions of the traditional folk song (<https://trello.com/b/z7sqdjS7/mountain-music-in-the-classroom-teacher-workshop>; "Tom Dooley" Digital Materials from ASU Special Collections)
- NC Visitors Center version of the story (<https://trello.com/b/z7sqdjS7/mountain-music-in-the-classroom-teacher-workshop>; "Other Tom Dooley Materials")

## Technology Resources Needed

- High-speed internet access and computers/iPad with a music making app (Some great examples of useful music apps - Sing! Karaoke by Smule, Magic Piano by Smule, AutoRap by Smule, Guitar by Smule, Songify, GarageBand)
- Stereo headphones for each student
- Speakers, or some kind of small sound system (for presenting student songs)

## Background Information / Pre-Activities

- Introduce the term "culture" and have a brief class discussion about what culture means to each student.
- For homework, students will find something, artifact or information, unique to their background, to briefly share with the class.
- Introduce the term "ballad" and share examples (The Ballad of Omie Wise, The Ballad of Frankie Silver). Discuss with the class how the formation of a ballad can be influenced by the culture from which the story comes.
- To familiarize yourselves with the ballad and the story surrounding it, watch this UNC-TV production on the ballad and the lore and copyright issues surrounding it.

## Activities

1. Students will share with the class items or stories that reflect their cultural background.
2. Working in groups of three, students will read the three articles provided (Our State Magazine "Lift Up Your Head," North Carolina Visitor's Center article on Tom Dooley, and the Tom Dula Court papers) and create a list of facts, a list of similarities and differences between the three articles.
3. Students will create a song or poem about the events surrounding the account of the Tom Dula story. The song/poem must include at least 10 facts.
4. After class presentations of song/poem, teacher will play and discuss various versions of The Ballad of Tom Dula (The Kingston Trio, Frank Proffitt, Grateful Dead, Grayson and Whitter 1929 version, etc).

## Assessment

Student groups share their song/poem with the class pointing out the 10 facts from their included readings.

## Critical Vocabulary

**Ballad**-A song that tells a story.

**Child Ballads**-British Ballads named after Harvard professor Francis J. Child who collected them.

**Native American Ballads**-Refers to ballads written by citizens born in America, and should not be confused with Native Americans such as the Cherokee. These ballads were typically adapted from melodies and lyrics of older songs.

**Guilt**-The fact of having committed a specified or implied offense or crime.

**Proving**-To prove in a court of law means to establish the genuineness and validity of (a will).

**Syphilis**-A chronic bacterial disease that is contracted chiefly by infection during sexual intercourse, but also congenitally by infection of a developing fetus.

**Folk Process**-learning by passing stories, songs, or skills across communities and down generations orally from person to person.

**Murder Ballad**-a category of ballads which explains the events and consequences surrounding a murder. The speaker of the ballad tells about her crime, her regret, and her fears of punishment before pleading with listeners not to follow in her footsteps.

## **North Carolina Essential Standards**

### **SOCIAL STUDIES**

#### **Grade 8**

- 8.H.1.1 Construct charts, graphs, and historical narratives to explain particular events or issues
- 8.H.1.2 Summarize the literal meaning of historical documents in order to establish context
- 8.H.1.3 Use primary and secondary sources to interpret various historical perspectives
- 8.H.1.4 Use historical inquiry to evaluate the validity of sources used to construct historical narratives
- 8.C.1.1 Explain how influences from Africa, Europe, and the Americas impacted North Carolina and the United States
- 8.C.1.2 Summarize the origin of beliefs, practices, and traditions that represent various groups within North Carolina and the United States
- 8.TT.1 Use technology and other resources for assigned tasks