**Folksongs from Virginia**

**The research process**

I used a number of sources in researching the music of Virginia.

For anyone, in another state, who is interested in a similar project to identify the music and musicians from that state, you could follow the same process.

You can search by state, or by region, using the online resource, The American Folksong Collection at Holy Names University ([www.kodaly.hnu.edu](http://www.kodaly.hnu.edu)). Some of the songs on this site also have singing games that may be used with the song. Having a game to play greatly increases the students’ interest in learning the song.

If you have access to a music textbook series (my school division has the Spotlight on Music series by Macmillan McGraw Hill. Most of the folksongs in this series identify the state or region of origin of that particular variant of the song.

Folksong collections, such as Folksongs North America Sings, Heritage Songster, Sail Away, 150 American Folksongs, My Singing Bird, etc, can also give information about the origins of a song.

Once you have identified the titles of songs and dances, do a search on West Music’s website, using a key word from the title. This will give you an idea of which books might have an Orff arrangement of the song. If you’re like me, often I already own the book!

You can also do a search on Amazon or Barnes and Noble, using the title of a song, to see if there might be a picture book by the same title. This is a wonderful way to introduce a song, by “singing” the book to your students.

You can do Google searches, or searches on Amazon or Barnes and Noble, using phrases such as “traditional music of (name of state)”; “folksongs of (name of state)”; “folk music of (name of state);” etc. This can turn up collections or books with music from a specific state or region.

Sometimes, in order for my students to be able to play a song on their recorders, I had to transpose the melody to a different key.

Eight United States Presidents were born in Virginia. I have emailed the museums for each of these Presidents, asking if that President had a favorite song or dance. Once you have this information, you can search for a source for that music.