

vermont
folklife

Teaching with
Folk Sources

Vermont
Folklife in the
Seasonal
Round

Sense of
Place through
Student
Discovery

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The **Seasonal Round lesson plan** included in this packet can accompany a larger unit on students gaining unique research and inquiry tools for discovering history and culture in one's region, using Vermont as the case study. Find our recommended course of study for the full unit here:

Gateways to Folklife and Oral History Sources

By Alexandra S. Antohin, with Teaching Tips by Kathleen Grady, White River School; Mary Rizos, Rivendell Academy; Don Taylor, Main Street Middle School; and Joe Rivers

Just like reading a textbook requires a certain literacy and skill set, so does engaging with community narratives that can come in multiple forms—from local lore to foodways, images, and artifacts.

What Is Good Listening? From Learning Through Listening, Unit 2, Lesson 1

by Lisa Rathje and Paddy Bowman, with Teaching Tips and Graphic Organizer by Joe Rivers

This lesson introduces and uses two tools of ethnographic documentation: listening and interviewing. Students will learn skills central to good listening to better understand and analyze primary sources that are primarily audio, like an oral history interview.

Written and Spoken Words From Learning Through Listening, Unit 2, Lesson 2

by Andy Kolovos and Alexandra S. Antohin

This lesson explores how spoken language and written language have different sets of expectations.

Exploring Counternarratives in Vermont's Agricultural Life From Challenging History, Unit 5, Lesson 4

by Alexandra S. Antohin and Mary Wesley with Teaching Tips from Mary Rizos

This lesson introduces the key terms of narratives and oral history documentation to deepen understanding about community life. Students will explore life experiences and personal perspectives that can offer counter narratives to dominant stories about Vermont's agricultural life.

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Local Learning Teaching with Primary Sources project team offers teaching tools and materials that engage the digitally available archival holdings of the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress alongside local and regional collections, bringing them into conversation with each other to create a fuller, more complex narrative of American communities, history, and people.

2024 Project Team



Find additional resources and information generated by this Teaching with Primary Sources project at <https://locallearningnetwork.org/professional-development/tps>.

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And there were five seasons: there was spring, summer, autumn, winter, and mud season.

You've probably heard about that, too. —Diana Heiskell

Introduction to the Seasonal Round: Vermont
by Andy Kolovos

There's an old saying: "Vermont has three months of winter and nine months of darn poor sledding." And while there certainly is some truth to this sentiment, Vermont Folklife and Local Learning hope to bring at least a little more nuance to representing the ways Vermonters have, over time, organized and understood the cycles of the year through this lesson plan and the associated primary source materials.

The quote that leads this introduction, taken from a 2001 interview with Diana Heiskell found in the Vermont Folklife Archive, brings at least a little more nuance than a saying only concerned with sledding. Heiskell does, after all, cite a total of five seasons instead of just two. Also, as a part of this fuller accounting, Heiskell includes one of northern New England's distinct seasons: "mud season" or "mud time"—a period in the transition from winter to spring where temperatures rise, snow melts, the ground thaws, and the mud takes over pretty much every unpaved patch of ground. In addition to these five seasons we can add yet a sixth: "stick season" (immortalized in song by Vermont musician [Noah Kahan](#))—that period after the all leaves have fallen from the trees, but before the first snows. Stick season serves as a harbinger of the coming cold, and of shorter days and long, long nights.

While all these things are interesting, what most interests us at Vermont Folklife and Local Learning about the cycles of the year has less to do with astronomical changes, shifts of the weather, and the words we use to refer to them, but rather what these changes mean to people and what we do in response to them.

The Lesson Plan draws on the Vermont Folklife Archive, an ethnographic folklife collection consisting of over 7,000 interviews documenting life in the Green Mountain State, and is complemented by resources from the Library of Congress that help illustrate more deeply the topics discussed in the archival interviews. We hope that students learn not only how to more deeply appreciate the ways seasons help define a sense of place, but that they are inspired to think about research they may do to contribute to a more nuanced and particular understanding of the cultures and community where they live.

Find this lesson online at

<https://locallearningnetwork.org/resource/vermont-folklife-in-the-seasonal-round>



Student Research and Discovery: Sense of Place through the Seasonal Round

Cause every fall all of the apples are picked... And nights after chores was done, we would pare apples and do them to dry.

—Perkins Flint

Introduction and Background for Educators

Asked to picture the year, you might think of a wall calendar. Envision instead the months of a year as a wheel, a seasonal round.

- What customs fall where?
- How do the weather and landscape change?
- What relationship do holidays have to the seasonal round?
- How do seasonal changes affect the daily life, culture, art, history, and economy of a community?

This unit asks: What can students learn about themselves, their families, their region, and the world by examining the seasonal round in their own lives and through primary sources?

Consider holidays. Many have ancient roots; others are quite contemporary; some are religious, others are secular; and some combine elements of the sacred and the secular. For example, Mardi Gras has an old, complex history and traditions sacred and secular that span continents. President Woodrow Wilson made Mother's Day official in 1914, and Maulana Karenga created Kwanzaa in 1966. Presidents' Day and Martin Luther King Day honor national heroes. Labor Day was founded in 1882 to heal rifts between labor unions and the federal government.

Some holidays, "movable feasts" on liturgical calendars, change annually according to lunar phases or because different religious groups follow different calendars. Examples include Easter, Passover, and Ramadan. Other holidays fall on the same date each year: December 25 or July 4. Still others fall on particular days, for example, Memorial Day is the last Monday in May. Personal holidays such as birthdays or anniversaries fall randomly on the seasonal round.

In addition to holidays and special events, seasonal changes affect our work, recreation, foodways, beliefs, customs, even our worldviews. Students see how seasons change the landscape, but they may not have considered how other aspects of their lives and the life of their community change according to the season. Working individually or in teams, students may investigate many aspects of seasonal change. Some students may be interested in science and geography, while others are curious about seasonal customs.

About the photo: Jess Hatcher drying apples, Ararat, Virginia. 1978. Photo by Patrick B Mullen and Terry Eiler.
https://www.loc.gov/item/afc1982009_te_021

As your class moves through the school year, you will also be moving through a seasonal round. Integrate this concept into your curriculum, noting the often-overlooked changes that affect our lives in many ways at work, at play, in everyday life, in celebrations and rituals—and in school. You might start the school year with this unit to get to know your students. Even for many adults, a new school year announces a sense of purpose, a chance to start anew. The smell of freshly sharpened pencils and the anticipation of seeing friends after summer break are deeply embedded in many adults’ memories.

This Local Learning Lesson is adapted with permission from Louisiana Voices
www.louisianavoices.org.

Sense of Place through the Seasonal Round Lesson Plan

Course
Can be leveled to diverse grades and abilities in multiple subjects.
Purpose of the Unit
The seasonal round provides a point of inquiry for students to examine in any subject area and can culminate in many projects, from developing weather graphs to interviewing community members. Students are introduced to the concept of the seasonal round, how traditions vary from season to season, and how the seasonal round contributes to the uniqueness of a place and a community.
Students first chart birthdays and dates of personal interest on seasonal round calendars and then identify important seasonal traditions in the life of their families or friend groups. Finally, students engage primary resources to listen and see how seasonal changes affect their own lives and the culture of their community. Going through the activities in this order provides scaffolding for assessing the ways stories and activities can be mapped across time and season.
Essential Questions
How do seasons provide a framework for discovering a sense of place?
What can primary sources tell us about shifts of a topic (climate, family gatherings, community culture) over time?
Time Required
Variable, at least 2-5 class periods, one per “E” in the 5E lesson plan below.

Materials

- Seasonal Round Worksheets (pg. 9), crayons, colored pencils, or markers.
- **Primary sources.** Use those included in this lesson or see our suggestions for how students might research the seasonal round of their own region through primary sources.

Vermont Folklife Audio Paired with Materials from the Library of Congress 10

Winter 10

Spring 10

Summer 11

Fall 12

Vermont Folklife Audio Transcripts 13

Winter 13

Spring 14

Summer 16

Fall 17

If your students will be doing interviews, they may need digital cameras, recorders, or notepads and pencils. Practice interviews in class and use the [Teaching with Folk Sources Unit 1 lessons](#) for a structure.

Learning Objectives

Identify important seasonal traditions in the life of students.

Engage primary resources to listen and see how seasonal changes affect their own lives and the culture of their community.

Differentiation and Other Modifications

Both audio and transcripts are available for student use.

Teacher Materials & Preparation:

- Familiarize yourself with the suggested primary sources and make sure all links work for students. (Primary Source Sets can be found at end of this lesson.)
- Download worksheets and share copies with students as directed in the activities.
- Print on heavier paper and then cut apart the hexagons found in the resource pages that follow this lesson if completing the extension section of the lesson.

You may want to review these links from the Library of Congress in preparation if you have not frequently used Primary Source Sets in your classroom.)

- [Analyzing primary sources](#)
- [Analyzing oral histories](#)
- [Analyzing photographs and prints](#)

5E Instructional Model	Teaching Tips
<p>Engagement: Birthday Traditions Print and copy a Seasonal Round Worksheet for each student and yourself.</p> <p>Inventory what you know about birthday traditions. Many children in the U.S. have similar parties, which vary more by age group than other factors, but students may have unique family customs that differ. Encourage students to share elements of their birthday celebrations, like special foods and songs or party activities.</p>	<p>If you are going to create a class chart of birthdays, print out and label an extra copy. You may enlarge it on a copier or design and decorate a large wheel to hang in the classroom.</p>
<p>Explore: Personal Seasonal Round Calendars Print and copy a Seasonal Round Worksheet for each student and yourself. Gather information to help students research important school and community dates. Think of dates important to your own seasonal round. How do you mark seasonal changes in large and subtle ways?</p>	
<p>Explain and Explore: Researching with Primary Sources Gather Primary Sources to help students research regional seasons and customs. As students review the oral histories, have them identify key phrases or ideas in their notes.</p> <p>Determine how thoroughly you want students to investigate.</p> <p>Decide whether students should work on all phases of research or divide into teams to identify important dates for the school, community, state, and nation.</p> <p>After looking at primary sources associated with this lesson, students may identify other Primary Sources at loc.gov and place into seasonal round worksheet.</p>	<p>For a lesson that takes less time, use the Primary Source Sets accompanying this lesson (which primarily centers New England and Vermont) or identify other sets that reflect your community for your students, rather than have them gather these themselves.</p> <p>Need help finding primary sources? Go to https://LOC.gov. Use the search function at the top and use search terms of your choice, i.e. “Illinois harvest.”</p>
<p>Extension: Using the mix of primary source hexagons and blank hexagons, have students organize them by discovering the connections that may exist between the sources. Have them write key words that have emerged in the “Explore” section of this lesson on the blank cards to aid in finding connections. In larger classrooms, have multiple sets made up and then invite students to present their hexagon maps—showing the multiple ways students can identify connections and key words from the same sets.</p>	<p>Read more about hexagonal thinking here: https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/hexagonal-thinking</p>

Ethnography:

Students may conduct interviews among workers in outdoor occupations, hunters and fishermen, cooks, craftspeople, celebration organizers, friends, and family members. They might compare what they learn about the seasons with historical primary sources, graphing changes in climate and weather that can be identified through these local sources. (For example, they used to cut ice on the lake but now the lake rarely gets fully frozen).

Evaluate:

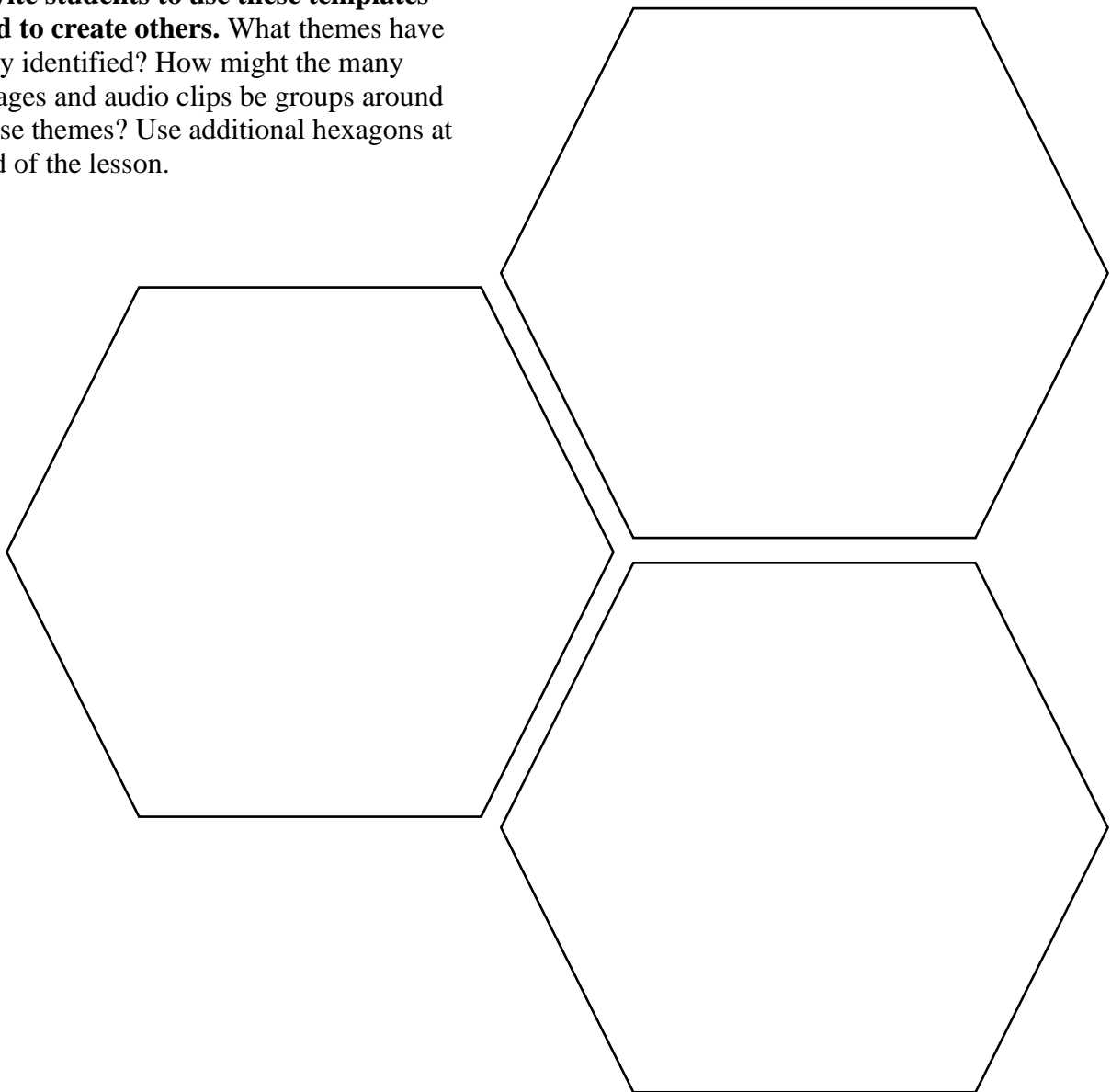
Formative Assessment(s): Completion of graphic organizers

Summative Assessment(s): Writing Assignment or presentation based upon student research.

Lesson Closure:

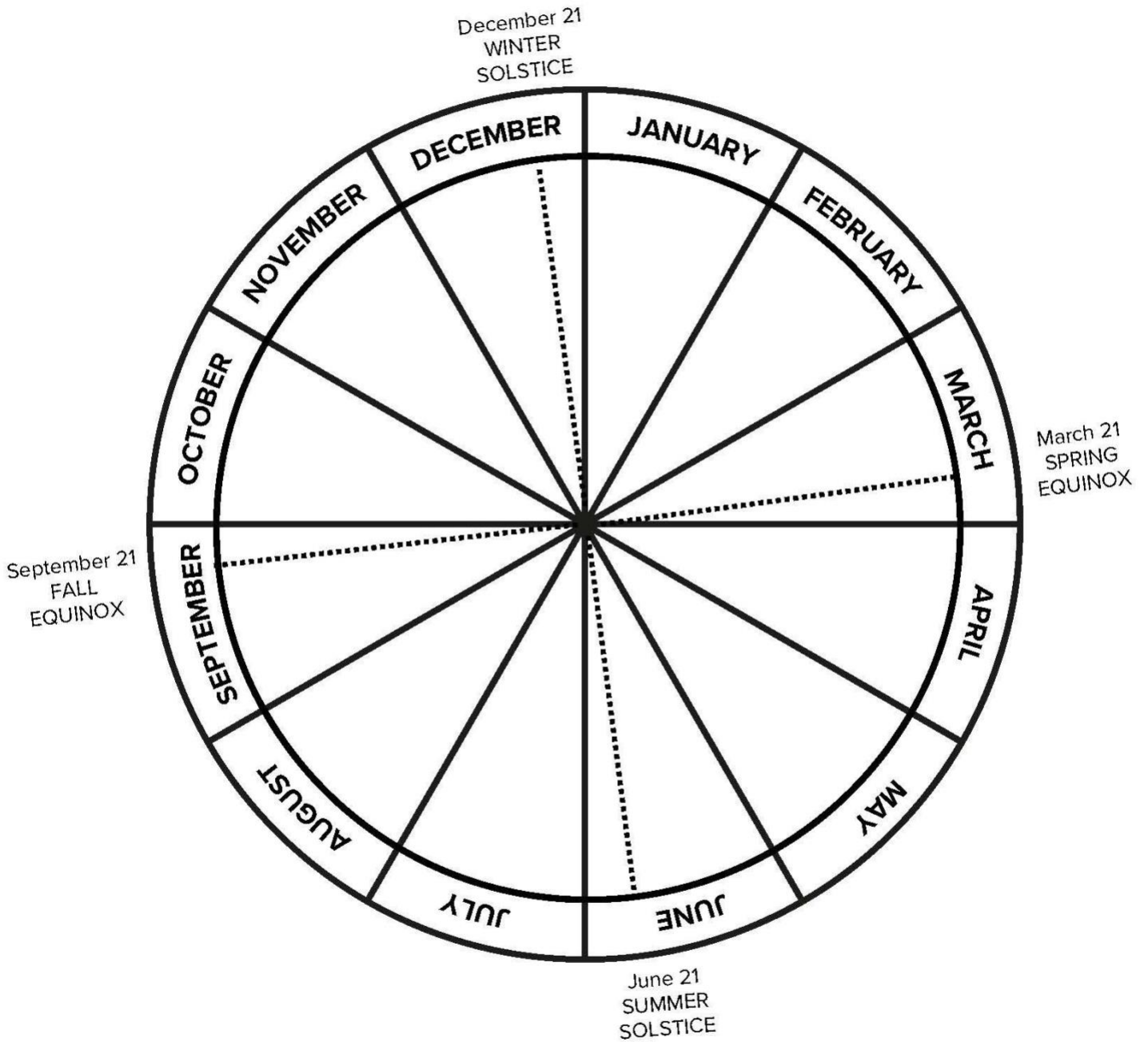
Students present their research in front of the class.

Invite students to use these templates and to create others. What themes have they identified? How might the many images and audio clips be groups around these themes? Use additional hexagons at end of the lesson.



Seasonal Round Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____



(Reproduced from p. 19 of All Around the Year (1994) by Jack Santino with permission of the University of Illinois Press.)

Primary Source Set: Vermont Folklife Audio Paired with Materials from the Library of Congress

Winter

- **Mali Keating - Northwoods (Duration: 2:48) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Mali describes her grandfather, who grew up in the Odanak Abenaki reservation in Quebec, and his travels in the “north woods” of Canada in winter.
- Livernois Photography Studio Photographer and Jules-Ernest Livernois. *Quebec and Lake Saint-John Railway, Canada: Hudson's Bay Company Post, Metabetchouan River*. Quebec, 1887. [Place of Publication Not Identified: Publisher Not Identified] Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2021670841>
- *Quebec and Lake Saint-John Railway: Batiscan Summit*. Canada Quebec, 1887. [Place of Publication Not Identified: Publisher Not Identified, to 1890] Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2021670791/>
- **John Messier - Skidding Logs (Duration: 0:48) [AUDIO](#)**
 - John describes engaging in winter logging activities in the Vermont woods with his father as a way to make ends meet in the winter months.
- Burns, Thomas A. *Donald Harrington and Bernard Harrington brothers, logging*, West Greenwich, Rhode Island. 1979. West Greenwich, Rhode Island. Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/afc1991022_tb_140/. Note from page: Attaching logs to the skidder and removing from the woods to the loading site.
- **Albert Morelli - Harvesting Ice on Lake Champlain (Duration: 0:54) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Albert describes cutting ice in the winter for his father, Frank Morelli, whose Rouses Point, NY ice business served towns in New York and Québec.
- Brasier, William, Robert Sayer And John Bennett, and Captain Jackson. *A survey of Lake Champlain, including Lake George, Crown Point, and St. John*. London, Printed for Robt. Sayer & Jno. Bennett, 1776. Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/gm72002093>
- United States Resettlement Administration, Rothstein, Arthur, photographer. *Coos County, New Hampshire. Cutting ice on the Ottaquetchee River. New Hampshire United States Coos County, 1936*. Feb. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017721770/>

Spring

- **Thelma Neill and Jane Beck - Maple Sugar Pie (Duration: 1:47) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Thelma and Jane read through a recipe card for “Maple Sugar Pie.” Thelma shares a story about multiple people bringing maple sugar pie to Town Meeting Day (which happens every year in early March).
- Wolcott, Marion Post, photographer. Woodstock, Vermont. March, 1940. *Town meeting photographs: Townspeople eating lunch during noon recess of town meeting. Woodstock, Vermont* <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017802524/>

- **Wallace Illsley - Sugaring with Horses (Duration: 0:47) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Wallace describes bringing horses in the woods for collecting maple sap during sugaring season.
- Wolcott, Marion Post, photographer. *Horse-drawn sled with vat of sap from maple sugar trees, which is boiled down to maple syrup.* Frank Shurtleff farm, North Bridgewater, Vermont. Vermont North Bridgewater Windsor County United States, 1940. Mar. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017802864/>.
- **Charles Bickford - The Enterprising Farmer (Duration: 0:31) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Charles tells a story about an enterprising farmer who comes up with a novel mud season money making scheme.
- **Marjorie Pierce - Driving to Rutland (Duration: 1:15) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Marjorie Pierce describes the complicated process of traveling the 10 miles from home to Rutland, VT during mud season.
- Wolcott, Marion Post, photographer. Woodstock, Vermont, April 1940. *Spring thaw in farmland near Woodstock, Vermont.*
 - *Spring thaw in farmland near Woodstock, Vermont, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Digital Collections (LC-USF33- 030898-M3 [P&P] LOT 1238)* <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017756289/>
 - *Spring thaw in farmland near Woodstock, Vermont, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Digital Collections (LC-USF33- 030899-M4 [P&P] LOT 1238)* <https://www.loc.gov/resource/fsa.8a42594/>
- **Daisy Turner - Maypole Dance (Duration: 1:34) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Daisy describes participating in the seasonal May pole dance in Grafton, VT
- Horydczak, Theodor, photographer. *Colored children in May pole dance, no 5.* Washington D.C. Washington D.C. District of Columbia United States. ca. 1920-ca. 1950. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2019681505>

Summer

- **Katharine DuClos - Skunk Bait (Duration 2:46) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Katharine DuClos tells the story of a time her husband's temper got the better of him.
- Roskam, Louise, photographer. *One-room schoolhouse closed for the summer. Bristol Notch, Vermont.* Addison County Vermont United States Bristol, 1940. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017764751>
- **Floyd Fuller - Corn Husking (Duration: 1:30) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Floyd describes "cornhusking bees" where neighbors would come together in late summer to help husk large harvests of corn to be dried in corn cribs.
- *Husking the corn in New England.* New England, 1858. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/96513046>

- **Katharine DuClos – Straw-Filled Mattress (Duration: 1:34) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Katherine describes gathering oat straw with her father in the summer to replace the filling in the mattresses her family slept on, which were placed on rope-strung bedsteads.
- Roskam, Louise, photographer. *Hay harvest near Lincoln, Vermont*. Addison County Vermont United States Lincoln, 1940. July. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017764723>
- **Angelo Ambrosini – Marselli’s Mandolin (Duration: 1:03) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Angelo describes music performed by fellow stone carver Orazio Marselli one summer evening on Harvey’s Pond in Vermont.
- Victor Marinetti (Guitar) and Art Baratono (Mandolin). *Early in the Morning*. AUDIO Sound recording. Lake Linden, Michigan, September 24, 1938. Recorded by Alan Lomax. Alan Lomax Collection of Michigan and Wisconsin Recordings (AFC 1939/007), American Folklife Center, Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/item/afc1939007_afs02370a/

Fall

- **Katharine DuClos - Paring Apples (Duration: 0:43) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Katherine describes group gatherings to pare apples in the fall.
- Ulmann, Doris, photographer. *Woman Paring Apple, No. 2.*, ca. 1930. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2005675777/>.
- **Katharine DuClos – Halloweening (Duration: 2:58) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Katharine describes Halloween during her childhood in the early 20th century.
- Rothstein, Arthur, photographer. Untitled photo, possibly related to: Children at Halloween party. Two new schools have been built in the project area. Osage Farms, Missouri. United States Osage Farms Missouri, 1939. Oct. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017779335/>
- **Daisy Turner – Halloween Fortune Telling Prank (Duration 1:31) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Daisy describes a fortune telling game played on Halloween night—with an added twist.
- Coffin, George Yost. *Hallow-eve 1896*. Illustration. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2016679883/>
- **Perkins Flint - Dried Apples (Duration: 1:23) [AUDIO](#)**
 - Perkins (Katherine DuClos’ father) described apple paring “bees,” and drying apples as a preservation method.
- Mullen, Patrick B, and Terry Eiler. *Jess Hatcher drying apples, Ararat, Virginia*. Patrick County United States Ararat Virginia, 1978. Ararat, Patrick County, Virginia. Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/afc1982009_te_021

Mali Keating - Northwoods

My family came from the village and the reservation of Odanak in Canada. My grandfather lived in that village and was born in the year of 1848. The only way that he could make a reasonable living was hunting and trapping for the Hudson's Bay Company. And that entailed his going up into the north woods quite a distance, to the hunting territory that was assigned to our family. And he went there, and he was there for the entire winter by himself. He took with him woolen underwear. He wore a woolen suit over that. He had a, what was called a tippet, which in my understanding, was a long woolen scarf about eight feet long. And how that was worn was it was started around your neck the way you would a scarf. But then the long ends were then wrapped around the chest area and finished up around the waist so that you had it wound around and it kept the body heat inside.

He had one woolen cap, he had two pairs of woolen socks, two pairs of moccasins. He carried one blanket, a knife, his hatchet, a large ax, his flintlock rifle and tea, sugar. Anything he ate besides that he caught. The last year that he went. He came back after having spent the entire winter up there by himself, and was unaware of anything that had happened to the family. And unbeknownst to him my grandmother and my oldest aunt and uncle and my next oldest uncle, came down with typhoid fever, which was very common in those days. And one of my uncles died. So when my grandfather arrived, he had found in the course of his winter, two naturally black minks that he had very carefully tanned, because he brought them back from my grandmother as a gift. So he had them over his arm as he came into the house, and the doctor was just leaving, and he saw those beautiful black minks, and he said, "Oh, that will just cover my fee." And he grabbed them off my grandfather's arms and took them away with him at his fee. And so my grandfather had nothing to give my grandmother as a gift. And he was really very perturbed about that.

John Messier - Skidding Logs

So then when it came winter, my dad didn't have anything and we needed to go to the woods to get a little money to survive that winter. So we started cutting logs with the pulp saws and one man saws. And we used to drive the team into the woods and, then when we'd get up there, we'd unhook one horse. We'd use one horse to skid the logs to the side of the road, where we could roll them on the sled. And when we got a bobsled load, which would be anywhere from 300 to 500 ft, depending on bare ground or snow. And, then we'd head down the mountain with a bobsled load of logs standing on top of them, driving the horses. And so it was, it was a great experience that my kids will never know.

Albert Morelli – Harvesting Ice on Lake Champlain

The first part of the ice season when he tried to cut, he had to cut a cake, pack it in a box with sawdust and send it to Albany to have it checked by the health department to see if the ice was clear, no bacteria, it was all right to put in people's homes. And once he got the okay on that, then he could start his cutting. And he usually tried to start his cutting before the Christmas and holidays for the simple reason that after Christmas, people threw their Christmas trees out. And he'd go around in the afternoon and pick them up alongside the road and bring them out on the lake and stick them in the snow all around where he cut. So, if anybody went out there ice skating or sail boating with sleds, they wouldn't go near there. Otherwise, that was too thin, somebody go through. He used to stake the lake all out like that when he cut.

Spring

Thelma Neill – Maple Sugar Pie

Jane Beck (JB): Maple sugar pie. Thelma Neil.

Thelma Neill (TN): Ha! Ha! Ha! Isn't hard to make either.

JB: One egg, oh maybe I could try this, I egg, two cups maple sugar, or two cups good syrup, which would you use.

TN: The fancy if I had it. We most always had it, because we made a lot of fancy.

JB: Two tablespoons flour, a piece of butter or oleo, the size of an egg, I like that.

TN: Ha! Ha! Ha!

JB: Ha! Ha! Ha! A large egg or a _____ egg.

TN: Either one. Ha! Ha! One time Albert's cousin was here and they, asked him how I made this and that, and said how long did you bake it, well I said till it's done. Ha! Ha!

JB: And two teaspoons vinegar. Stir all together.

TN: That's that syrup you see. That's sweet.

JB: Yeah. Yes. Bake in two crusts. Ah, ha. Until golden brown. At 400.

TN: It isn't hard to make, I took one up to town meeting, of course we all take something for town meeting, and put it together, and I made this large pie, and they come along and wanted to know what kind of pie I wanted, and I said, I want one piece of my own, and she said, what did you bring, and I said, maple sugar. You brought maple sugar pie, and I said, yeah, I did. And the fellow that sat across from us, he said you bring, sugar, maple sugar pie, Thelma and I said, yeah. He said, I want a piece. And Albert said I want a piece, and Raymond sat beside of us, and he want a piece and I took a piece so there wasn't much left. Ha! Ha! Ha!

JB: Ha! Ha! Ha!

TN: And one of the girls, she's in the nursing home now, lived up here, lived beside of her all her life, and she says, that's Thelma's maple sugar pie and I want a piece. And she took out a piece and put it in the refrigerator for herself. Ha! Ha! So it didn't last too long.

JB: I think maybe I'm gonna have to try it.

TN: It's good. It's awful good.

Wallace Isley - Sugaring with Horses

That's the most important place to put a horse is in the sugar woods. You just hang your lines up and while you're gathering sap and they'll go from tree to tree on demand and you just tend to your gathering and you don't lug the sap back to them or ahead to them you just stop them right where it's the most handiest spot to dump the sap. You don't have to have an extra man just to set there and drive a tractor and freeze to death. Yeah, you can be behind of them or ahead of them. You speak to them to get up and they'll come. And a well trained horse, the minute you holler "ho" they'll stop.

Marjorie Pierce - Driving to Rutland, a 10 mile trip

In the spring we're at a higher elevation than Rutland; in fact, our growing season is about two or three weeks later than Rutland's, and so my father, when he went after groceries in the springtime or mudtime, there would be snow on the ground here, but there would be mud part way into Rutland. And so he would take the sled and his team of horses and go part way and then there was a little side road and he would change to a wagon at the side road and go on to Rutland and get his produce, his groceries. And then he would have to come back, unhitch the horses, load his produce onto the sled or sleigh and come home. That would be in between seasons. And that was a whole day's trip.

Charles Bickford - The Enterprising Farmer

There's an old saying here that kinda used to impress me. Back when the old road was a dirt road there was quite a hollow beyond and there was a great mud hole in there. And her grandfather used to have to go down and pull somebody out of it 3 or 4 times a day on their way to Barre or Montpelier. He always claimed he made his living that way. The joke always has been that he used to draw water down there and dump it in the mud hole. I don't know how much truth there was to it... [laughter]

Daisy Turner - The Maypole Dance

Jane Beck: How did the Maypole dance go?

Daisy Turner: Oh, they'd choose the pretty white dress and ruffles and things. They believed in ruffles and things and hems and pleats then. You always had to know ahead of time and what your color or ribbon was going to be. Of course at that time Bill Wyman that run the store, used to get great big rolls of ribbon from Boston, Jordan & Marsh and we'd pick raspberries through the summer earning the money so as to pay for our ribbon, great rolls of ribbon. Then papu would cut the maypole on the hill and have it all peeled, natural. Everything was natural, not painted up and things. And then they would get the maypole set in the center. And the ones that had the flowers in the dance. And we always had a maypole verse to say. And then dance. And you'd go through this dance or march or walk which was very intricate and it had to go up through and over. And then when you got that, it would be all twisted in and out. But after you go back again, like a march, then you could straighten it out and each one would be clear again with their ribbon, running out like each ribbon. So that it wouldn't be a mixed up mess. At times it would look so tangled that it never could be unwound.

Katharine DuClos - Skunk Bait

Gregory Sharrow: You told me a story the other day about your husband and some skunk bait. Was that a story you'd be willing to tell now?

Katharine DuClos: My husband used to love to hunt skunks. In the summer he would go down to the river and catch some fish and bring them home, put them into a jar, cut them up into pieces and put the cover on and put them up on top of the roof of the milk house. And the sun would heat that up and decay it. And it would kind of turn to oil. Of course the bones didn't turn to oil, they were all in through it. We had an old red cow that was noted for getting out. You couldn't seem to fence her before she'd get out. Every time he'd come home from working on the road, maybe she'd be out, he'd have to go and get her in. Well one day she got clear up onto Uncle George's potato piece and tramped around a good deal. Uncle George stopped and told me about it and he wished we'd keep her home. So when Gene came I told him and of course he didn't have a great deal of time at noon. So he took a truck and he went up, and he went around her and got her headed for home. He made her trot right along. And he got down to the house where she came in the gate. He jumped out of the truck, and he made up his mind that he would give her one good last lesson, he'd throw something at her and give her one last lesson. Well the old hen, when that fish bait had got really ripe, he had set the jar onto a shelf in the milk house. And an old hen had got in there and scratched around and she got it down onto the floor and the cover popped off. But the stuff didn't run out of it. And he happened to see that on the ground, and he grabbed that, and he thought he would throw it at the cow. And as he did so, putting his hand up over back to give it a good throw, all of that old oil and fish stuff came right down on top of his head. He was all through being mad at the cow! I began to laugh of course, I couldn't help it. And it smelled terrible. And he'd say well help me! He tried to get his shirt off, and I'd go to try and help him and it smelled so that it would nauseate me and I had to get away. Then he began to beg me to help him again, and I try to help him and I'd be sick again and I'd have to get away. And we had quite a time, cleaning him up, that mess of fish bait.

Summer

Floyd Fuller - Corn Husking

Floyd: And you'd have corn huskings. Husk corn until 11:00, 12:00 at night. The neighborhood'd come in and husk corn and have a lunch and if you found the red ear, if there was any girls, you kissed some girl, whatever girl you want who's helping to husk. And so that's where you husk all the corn by hand. And the next morning we take that corn, pick the ears all up and carry them and put them into the corn crib, which was a slatted affair, so the wind could go through, and that cured it and dried it. And after it cured, well then you could shell it and then make it, grind it up for cornmeal.

Interviewer: And where did the huskings take place? And who came?

Floyd: Oh neighbors. Just neighbors.

Interviewer: Old? Young?

Floyd: Oh yes. All ages would come in and drew you to announce that they'd got a lot of corn to husk, if anybody wanted to come help husk it you'd be welcome. And they'd come and they'd have some corn to husk. And someone would have their corn ready before some of the others and the neighbors would come in, and it wouldn't have a big crowd, but you'd have eight or ten people maybe there and sitting around the barn floor and husking corn and chatted and having a good time and then you'd return the favor to help your neighbor husk his corn. So they'd help one another and enjoy themselves.

Katherine DuClos - Straw Filled Mattress

I slept on a rope bedstead when I was a kid. And every fall...every summer, dad raises straw...oats, and then he'd separate it. He had a big thrashing machine, they called him a separator. And when he got a whole lot of that nice fresh oat straw mother would take the mattress, which was like a big pillow, it opened up through the center and buttoned with buttons, and we'd take that down to the barn, dump the straw out, and she'd wash it.

And then we kids would take it down to the barn on the bridge, and we'd fill it full of that oat straw, and we'd tuck it and tuck it and tuck it 'till it was way high, way up like this. It looked like a great big roll. And we'd drag it back up the house and mom would make it up and it was fun to go to bed that night because we knew we'd got to climb up, you know, on that oat straw.

And one time my sister's bed broke, the rope, and I saw my dad string it up. And you had to have a special tool to tighten the rope with. And that's up on the hill, that up there. That's kind of interesting and I thought, well now, don't many people have slept on rope bedsteads with oat straw. But that was my bed for years and years.

Angelo Ambosini – Marselli's Mandolin

I remember one time I was over to Harvey's Pond -- this was right after I'd been married and we had a friend who had a camp over there -- and Marselli, one day he was a guest of a neighbor who had a camp over there. And I'd seen him and talked to him and everything, it was just a surprise to have seen him over there because I didn't know he would be there this one time. And late that evening he went out in the boat with somebody else rowing - it was just a rowboat - he went out in the lake and started singing and playing his mandolin. In the quiet of the evening you could hear it all over the lake and you could hear people clapping like from across the little bays...they enjoyed it so much. I wish I'd had a tape recorder.

Fall

Katharine DuClos - Paring Apples

But another thing that they used to do was graf. My mother dried apples. She had an oven like thing that sat on the stove, had trays in it, and we had one of those old fashioned apple paring machines that go onto a board, and you sit saddle on the board and you put a pan underneath, and the apple parings fall into it, and you turn it around and grind it around, and the apple will come off and you put it over in the pan, and somebody would core it and slice it and put it onto this tray. That's the way we dried ours.

Katharine DuClos -- Halloweening

Everybody made a jack 'o lantern. Each kid tried to make one better than the other fellow's. We decorated them with a carrot nose and cornsilk eyebrows and whiskers. We kids made our own candles. We had an old-fashioned candle mold. And beforehand we'd take some tallow and string up that, so we had homemade candles.

[13:39] Come the night that it came for Halloween, the parents would come and they would all bring lanterns or lamps to light the schoolhouse, of course there was no lights there. And we'd have the program. Then after the program they usually had refreshments of cider, donuts mostly. Sometimes after that we kids would go out Halloweening. One time, I never went but once, my dad found out about it and he never let me go again, we found where one old fellow picked up a

lot of apples the day before, let it go to the cider mill, and we dumped those all out. Then we went over through where Lester Flint lived. The next place is where Arbuckle lives. There was two brothers that lived, Lester and Waldo. We took Lester's wheelbarrow and wheeled it over and put it on Waldo's land. They didn't speak to each other. Lester wouldn't go and get it off of Waldo's land, we knew that. That was what we did to be bad. Besides that we took the stove out of the schoolhouse and took it down over the bank. So when they went the next morning didn't have any stove. So see dad didn't let me go again, he found out some of the things we did.

[15:10] Lester had to pay his nephew 50 cents to go get the wheelbarrow off from his brother's field! But they did, they cut up. They put wagons, take people's wagons to pieces and put it up on barn roofs. They did all those kinds of things. And then it was permissible to go around with a spool and scare people. You take a spool and cut notches all around it, thread, spool. You put a spike through it and a string on it and pull on, wind it up and pull it, it would make an awful noise on a window. And you'd find somebody sitting in there, and then you'd do that. They did awq a lot of damage in those days, more like that, practical jokes more like taking people's steps and things like that.

Daisy Turner – Halloween Fortune Telling Prank

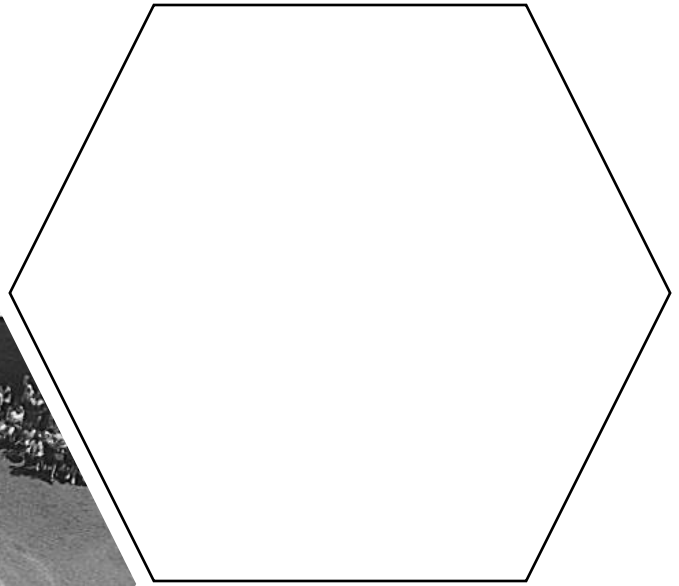
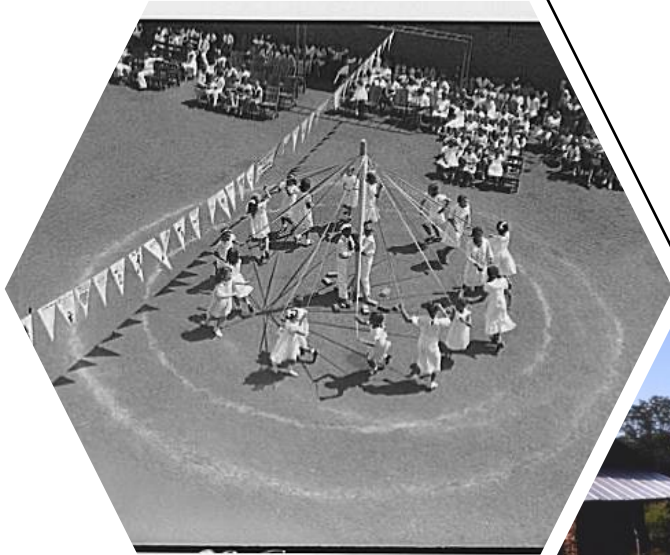
We had the idea that on Halloween that if you went down the cellar stairs backward, place a mirror down at the foot of the stairs and went down backward, when you get down there you will see, turn, you would see the face of the man you was going to marry. Those kind of odd things. And my brother William that we are trying to get the pension from now, he had, my mother had a big mirror, a very beautiful one, very beautiful. And unbeknown to her he'd taken the mirror from the parlor and had carried it downstairs at the cellar step. Because his twin sister, this Wilhemina, was wondering who she would be dating. And she was only about 14. And so he carried my mother's mirror, my mother would have had a fit if she had known it, down the cellar stairs. And then when Wilhemina got down the cellar stairs, he was down there, hid down behind there. He went down the bulkhead way while she went down the steps in the kitchen. And then he showed himself in the mirror, don't you see. And he had put on a different, you know, fancy _____ and stuff. Oh, he was awful bad, my brother William was. It was really funny. He was always up to something.

Perkins Flint - Dried Apples

Cause every fall all of the apples are picked. There wasn't many folks that had many graft apples. It was all common fruit. And they were all picked in the smaller apples and all made into cider and all that are big enough to pare it was kept out separate for dried apples.

And nights after chores was done, we would pare apples and do them to dry. Some are strung on strings and hung up on a frame that we had in back of the stove to dry. And we had a frame that had a screen on it that we would put others on and dry them on the screen. And then dried apples is what we had for pies and apple sauce after the apples got so they wouldn't keep. And they would sometimes put orange peel and other things into the dried apple to make the apple pies and things. And apricots went good with them. So I guess that's about all.

Hexagonal templates and Seasonal Round
Primary Sources from the Library of
Congress (Descriptions in lesson).



[Metabetchouan River.]

