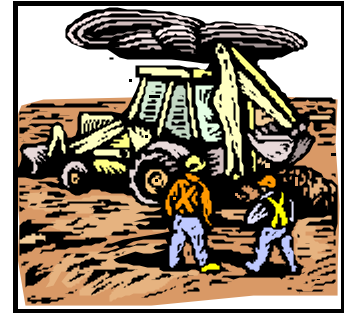


# Folk Music

Some tunes that are well known today are very old. Many Christmas carols, for example are based on tunes and words that have been sung for hundreds of years. Often we do not know who wrote these songs or where they came from. They have been sung and played and passed down from generation to generation, changing slightly.

**This is folk music.**



People from different countries and cultures have their own folk music. However, although it may sound very different, the things people sing about are very similar. In folk music all over the world there are working songs, songs about love, everyday life, the seasons, battles and wars, shepherds' songs and cradle songs.

Working songs include Shanties. These were sung at sea by sailors. The rhythm of the songs helped the sailors as they hauled on the ropes that hoisted the sails.

People working the land also sang songs. These songs helped them to forget their aches and pains as they worked hard in the fields. Shepherds sang about their sheep and lambs and the bitter weather. **All sang to keep their spirits high.**

Folk tunes were also used for dancing. People danced for entertainment, for celebration, during religious ceremonies and many other occasions. Dancing to folk music still happens. You may have seen Morris dancers or Maypole dances.

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Now try the questions on the other side



# Folk Music Questions

Copy and complete the following sentences into your jotter. Remember to title and date your work.

1. What is folk music?
2. How was folk music passed down from one generation to the next?
3. What do you think might have happened if it was only written down?
4. In what way is folk music similar to Christmas carols?
5. Would folk music from different countries be the same? Explain your answer in full,
6. What are folk songs about? Do you think this is different from today's pop songs?
7. What type of work songs would people sing? Give at least three examples.
8. Why did people sing while they worked?
9. Do people dance to folk tunes and if so when?
10. What famous types of folk dance exist in England? What types come from Scotland and/or Ireland?

## **Extension Task**

Write an article discussing folk music. Discuss all the points in the above questions. Try to give up to date examples of folk music. If you can write about pop stars who use folk music in their songs (For example, The Corrs).