



# Doc Watson

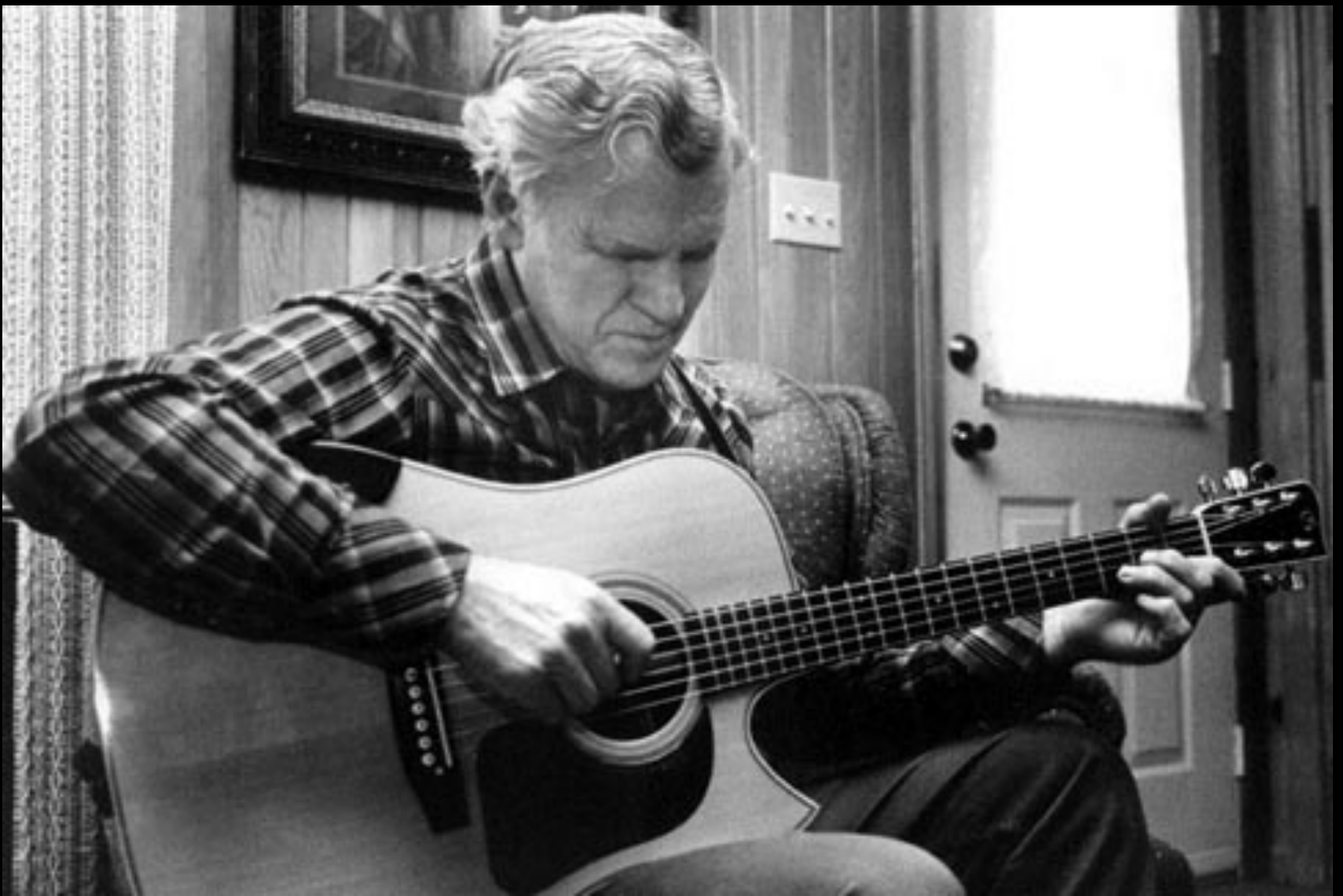
Power Point for 4<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Language Arts/Social Studies Unit

This PowerPoint goes with the school show

CAROLINA LIVE!  
OUR MUSICAL HISTORY

**PLEASE NOTE: Do not download or duplicate  
this PowerPoint or any photos herein.**

For more information, visit [www.carolinamusicways.org](http://www.carolinamusicways.org).



## Doc Watson (1923 – 2012)

Doc Watson was one of America's greatest guitarists.  
He was blind before his first birthday.



Doc Watson lived for 89 years in Deep Gap, North Carolina,  
in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Appalachia.





He grew up in a large, loving family. He lived with his parents and his brothers and sisters in a log cabin similar to this one.



Doc played with his brothers in the family's barn, that looked similar to this one. There were two corncribs in their barn, and the brothers played in between them. One corncrib stored the corn for their animals. The other stored the corn that was ground into cornmeal for cornbread.



Young Doc learned to play the harmonica, banjo, and guitar. His favorite was the guitar, and he practiced it often. He played traditional folk songs that his ancestors and other settlers from the British Isles brought with them to the North Carolina mountains in the 1700s.





From age six, Doc also learned popular songs of the 1920s from his family's record player. The Watsons owned many records and enjoyed a variety of music styles, including country, blues, gospel, and jazz.

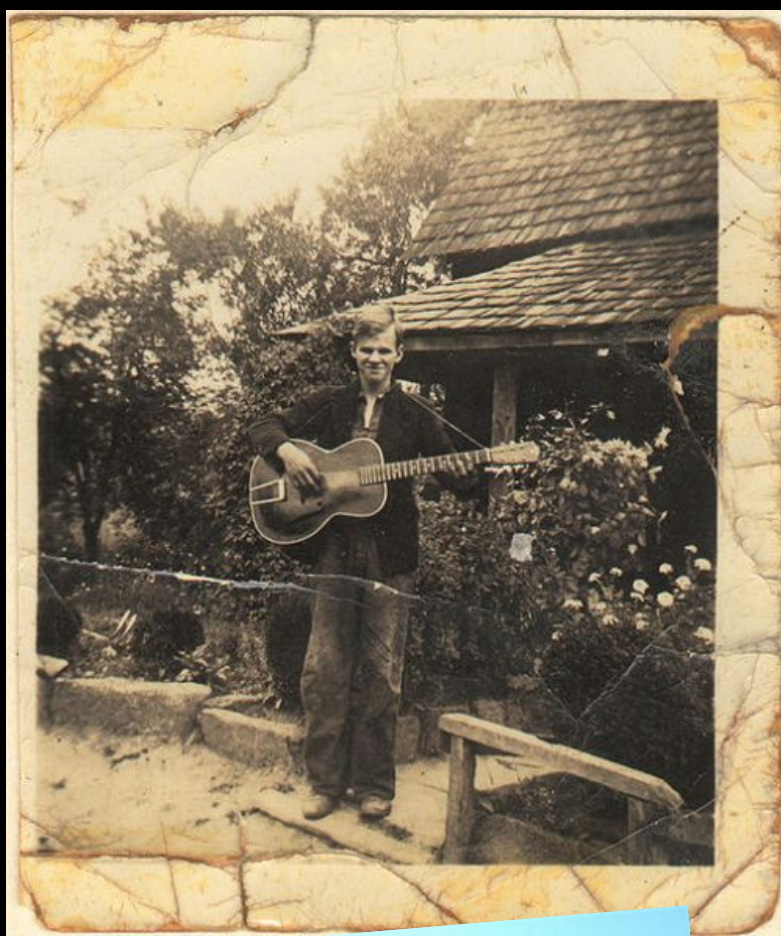


In 1933, when Doc was ten years old, he left his family and travelled by bus to the Raleigh School for the Blind. It was far from Deep Gap. He did not have enough money to come home often. Doc felt homesick and lonely.





When Doc was thirteen years old, he left the blind school and returned to live in Deep Gap with his family. His father taught him to use a crosscut saw, like the one in this photo. This helped Doc gain confidence.

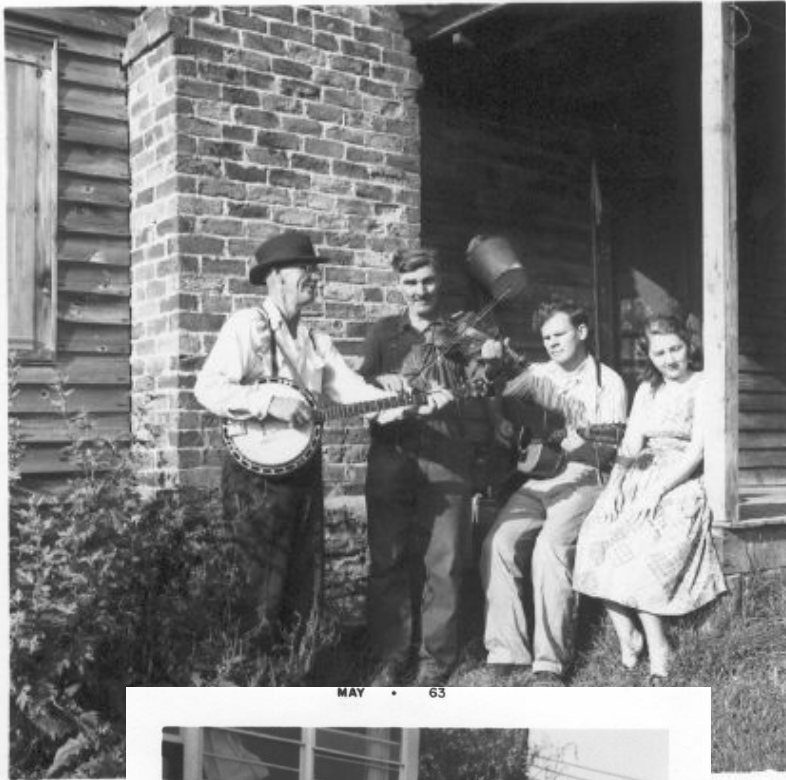


As a teenager and young man, Doc's confidence grew. He practiced his guitar for hours every day. He learned new songs from his family's first radio. He also enjoyed playing music with his family.



By age sixteen, Doc was so good at guitar playing that he was performing for money on the streets of Boone, North Carolina. Here he is playing there with his friend Clarence “Frog” Green.





In 1947, when he was twenty-four, Watson married his sweetheart, Rosa Lee Carlton. In the top photo, they are with her father, who is playing the fiddle, and musician Clarence Ashley.



Doc and Rosa Lee lived in their own house, which Doc wired himself for electricity. He was very handy, which was remarkable considering he was blind.

Rosa Lee sang and played the guitar.



In his 20s and 30s, Doc Watson performed music around the North Carolina mountains. He played in bands that performed at dances and at festivals.



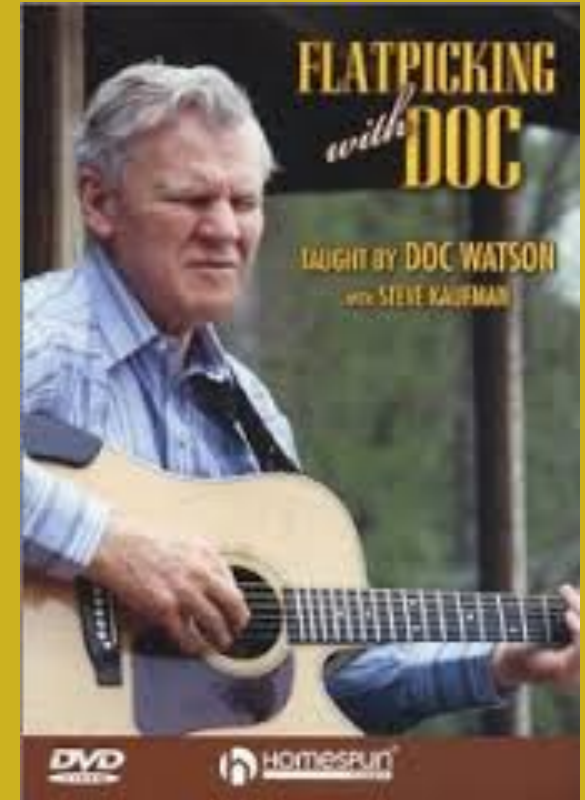
In 1960, a musician and collector of old folk songs named Ralph Rinzler from New York was visiting North Carolina. By chance, he met Doc. Rinzler fell in love with Watson's outstanding guitar technique, rich voice, and down-to-earth personality.





Before long, Rinzler was booking music jobs for Watson all over the country. Watson performed at festivals, music clubs, and college campuses and became a star of the 1960s Folk Music Revival.





Watson became especially know for his flat pick guitar playing.  
He is often called the “father of the flat pick guitar.”  
When he played in this style, he used a flat pick  
to play the strings instead of using his fingers.



As a professional, touring musician, Doc spent many hours on the road, but he always returned to his home in Deep Gap to be with his family. In the above photo, he is traveling by bus to one of his performances. The photo at left shows him back home in Deep Gap with his wife and his daughter Nancy.





In 1965, Watson's son Merle joined him on his musical tours. Merle was Doc's best friend, musical partner, and guide. For over fifteen years, Doc and Merle performed around the country and world.

# MerleFest

Tragically, Merle died in a tractor accident in 1985. Doc started a festival in his memory and called it MerleFest.

It has become one of the biggest Bluegrass/Americana festivals in the country, attracting about 80,000 people each year to Wilkesboro, North Carolina.







Photo courtesy [houckmedford.com](http://houckmedford.com)

Doc continued to perform for many years. Here he is in 2011 in Greensboro with long-time accompanist David Holt at one of Doc's last performances.





During his lifetime, Doc Watson achieved many great things, despite his handicap. People admired him not only as an outstanding musician, but also as a kind and decent person.





Millions of people from around the world mourned Doc Watson when he died. Watson wanted to be remembered as “just one of the people,” the words inscribed on his statue in Boone.



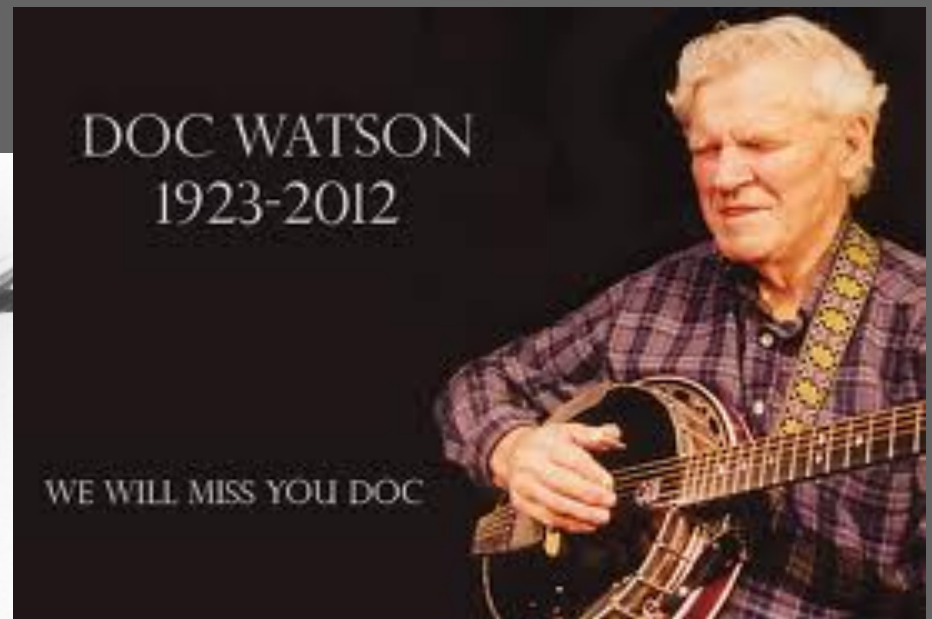


Photo by John Cohen

Watson's gifts of humility and of timeless music will live on in the hearts of North Carolinians and of many other people from around the country and the world.





Doc's daughter Nancy released this 4 - CD boxed set in April 2013 celebrating her father's life and music.

# Image Credits

Doc Watson, slide 2

[www.davidholt.com/photos/doc\\_watson.html](http://www.davidholt.com/photos/doc_watson.html)

Blue Ridge Mountains, slide 3

<http://chapelboro.com/Remembering-Favorite-Son-Doc-Watson--Part-2/10391214?pid=246167>

Log cabin, slide 4

[www.panoramio.com/photo/7558989](http://www.panoramio.com/photo/7558989)

barn, slide 5

[www.horizonview.net/~ihs/Barns/Barns-Types.html](http://www.horizonview.net/~ihs/Barns/Barns-Types.html)

Musical instruments, slide 6

[www.sodahead.com/living/what-is-your-oldest-possession/question-3247687/?link=ibaf&q=harmonicaold+fashioned](http://www.sodahead.com/living/what-is-your-oldest-possession/question-3247687/?link=ibaf&q=harmonicaold+fashioned)

[www.wcu.edu/library/DigitalCollections/CraftRevival/crafts/banjo.html](http://www.wcu.edu/library/DigitalCollections/CraftRevival/crafts/banjo.html)

[www.vintagestellaguitars.com/sale/](http://www.vintagestellaguitars.com/sale/)

Record player/records, slide 7

[www.collectorsworldwest.com/lookup.php?id=83](http://www.collectorsworldwest.com/lookup.php?id=83)

[www.old78s.com](http://www.old78s.com)

<http://colormyworldbyjen.blogspot.com/2012/02/complete->

# Image Credits

continued

blind school, slide 8

[https://trianglewiki.org/North Carolina School for the Blind and Deaf  
Dormitory](https://trianglewiki.org/North_Carolina_School_for_the_Blind_and_Deaf_Dormitory)

crosscut saw, slide 9

[www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/p](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/p)

Teenage Doc/family photos, slide 10

[www.newraleigh.com/articles/archive/doc-watson-to-perform-at-nema](http://www.newraleigh.com/articles/archive/doc-watson-to-perform-at-nema)

[www.last.fm/music/The+Doc+Watson+FamilyDeep gap](http://www.last.fm/music/The+Doc+Watson+FamilyDeep+gap)

<http://colormyworldbyjen.blogspot.com/2012/02/complete->

Doc and Green on Boone streets, slide 11

[www.docsguitar.com/guitar.html](http://www.docsguitar.com/guitar.html)

w/ Rosa Lee, etc, slide 12

[www.clarenceashley.com/images/gallery/images/24.jpg](http://www.clarenceashley.com/images/gallery/images/24.jpg)

w/ musicians, slide 13

[www.clarenceashley.com/images/gallery/images/group.jpg](http://www.clarenceashley.com/images/gallery/images/group.jpg)



# Image Credits

continued

Ralph Rinzler, slide 14

[www.folklife.si.edu/center/news.asp](http://www.folklife.si.edu/center/news.asp)

Folk Revival, slide 15

[www.scbs.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/watson-family-newport-folk-fest-1963.jpg](http://www.scbs.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/watson-family-newport-folk-fest-1963.jpg)

[www.lib.unc.edu/blogs/sfc/index.php/tag/doc-watson/](http://www.lib.unc.edu/blogs/sfc/index.php/tag/doc-watson/)

[www.magnumphotos.com](http://www.magnumphotos.com)

Flatpick photos, slide 16

<http://elderly.com/accessories/items/PK0351-SHL-XH.htm>

[www.ehow.com/how\\_7635224\\_do-scales-flatpicking.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_7635224_do-scales-flatpicking.html)

[www.amazon.com/Doc-Watson-Flatpicking/dp/B00015G8KA](http://www.amazon.com/Doc-Watson-Flatpicking/dp/B00015G8KA)

Doc travelling and at home, slide 17

[www.cmt.com/artists/doc-watson/](http://www.cmt.com/artists/doc-watson/)

[www.library.illinois.edu/sshel/specialcollections/folklore/cfc.html](http://www.library.illinois.edu/sshel/specialcollections/folklore/cfc.html)

[www.journalnow.com/news/state\\_region/article\\_22292390-35dd-11e2-ad13-0019bb30f31a.html](http://www.journalnow.com/news/state_region/article_22292390-35dd-11e2-ad13-0019bb30f31a.html)

# Image Credits

continued

**Merle and Doc, slide 18**

[www.last.fm/music/Doc+&+Merle+Watson](http://www.last.fm/music/Doc+&+Merle+Watson)

[www.docsguitar.com/guitar.html](http://www.docsguitar.com/guitar.html)

[www.christies.com/features/the-legacy-of-doc-watson-2911-1.aspx](http://www.christies.com/features/the-legacy-of-doc-watson-2911-1.aspx)

**Merlefest, slide 19**

<http://www.pastemagazine.com/blogs/1000words/2010/05/merlefest-2010-photos-ft-avett-brothers-doc-watson.html?p=2>

**Doc and David Holt, slide 20**

[www.houckmedford.com](http://www.houckmedford.com)

**awards/statue/sign, slide 21**

[www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/doc-watson-bluegrass-and-folk-legend-dies-at-89/2012/05/29/gJQA10v1zU\\_gallery.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/doc-watson-bluegrass-and-folk-legend-dies-at-89/2012/05/29/gJQA10v1zU_gallery.html)

[www.highcountrypress.com/weekly/2011/06-30-11/doc-watson-comes-full.htm](http://www.highcountrypress.com/weekly/2011/06-30-11/doc-watson-comes-full.htm)

<http://chapelboro.com/Remembering-Favorite-Son-Doc-Watson--Part-2/10391214?pid=246167>

# Image Credits

continued

**Statue with flowers, slide 22**

<http://coilhouse.net/2012/05/>

**Photo medley, slide 23**

[www.brasschecktv.com/videos/good-guys-1/folk-music-hero-doc-watson-dies-at-age-89.html](http://www.brasschecktv.com/videos/good-guys-1/folk-music-hero-doc-watson-dies-at-age-89.html)

[www.library.uncw.edu/.../artsinaction.html](http://www.library.uncw.edu/.../artsinaction.html)

**Milestones, slide 24**

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/ksr/projects/432716/photo-main.jpg?1358907124>

####



# CREDIT REQUEST

If you are a student, teacher, scholar, or other wishing to use this PDF power point for noncommercial purposes, please credit us by acknowledging the following:

Organization: Carolina Music Ways

Title: “Doc Watson Power Point for the *Old Timey Radio Show*:  
*A North Carolina Musical Revue*”

Web Address: As shown

Elizabeth A. Carlson, Ed.M., founder and Curriculum Director for Carolina Music Ways, created this PowerPoint. It accompanies the Doc Watson Language Arts/Social Studies unit that goes with the school show *Carolina Live!—Our Musical History*.

Carlson is an elementary school educator who has taught at multiple grade levels. She wrote the assembly show script, as well as the related curriculum materials. She is also the author of *North Carolina String Music Masters: Old-Time and Bluegrass Legends*. Carlson holds a an Ed.M. in Language and Literacy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a BA in English and American studies from Princeton University.

Carolina Music Ways is a nonprofit 501 (c) 3 organization run by a Board of Trustees. It is based in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. CMW offers its standards-aligned curricula to educators free of charge online. These unique arts-in-education materials educate students and increase their appreciation of North Carolina's musical treasures.