



THE
INSTITUTE
AT RENFREW

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Program Overview and Pre-trip Information
Cultural History School Programs — Grade 3 & up

RAISING CLOTHES: WOOL CULTURE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA GERMANS

As a study in living history, students explore, through hands-on participation, how Pennsylvania Germans of the early 1800s worked wool and made it into cloth, and how they used this cloth to help meet their textile needs.

Students wash and card the wool and weave the yarn into cloth. They see first-hand how much work is involved in raising and creating their own clothes. Instructors dressed in period clothing help students compare and contrast life in the 1800s with modern life today.

We will also supply a vocabulary list, and links to YouTube videos, which you may find helpful as you prepare for your trip.

Please bring 3 to 4 adult helpers in addition to the classroom teacher.

Funding for Wool Culture of the Pennsylvania Germans is provided in part through grants from Mary's Delight Farm, Leonora Rocca Bernheisel.





RAISING CLOTHES: WOOL CULTURE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA GERMANS

Vocabulary

Card - to untangle wool with a comb to prepare it for spinning

Cloth - a fabric made by knitting, crocheting, or weaving

Drop spindle - A hand held tool used for spinning wool, flax, hemp, cotton, and other fibers into thread

Dye - to change the color of the wool

Fiber - a long, narrow material that can be spun into yarn (e.g. wool)

Hand carder - brush or comb used to untangle wool to prepare it for spinning

Linsey-woolsey - a warm, durable cloth made from both linen and wool; used for winter clothing

Loom - a machine used for weaving thread into cloth

Niddy-Noddy - a tool used to remove and measure the spun yarn from the spinning wheel

Pennsylvania Germans - people with at least one family member who emigrated to this country from the Rhineland of Germany, France and Switzerland during the 1600s-1700s

Pennsylvania German Farmstead - everything involved in making up a farm, including people, livestock, buildings, and landscape

Processing wool: shear, wash, card, spin, dye, weave/knit

Shear - to cut the wool from the sheep

Sheep - a farm animal that provides wool which can be made into cloth

Spin - to twist the wool into thread

Spinning Wheel - a compound machine used to twist fiber into thread

Types of spinning wheels: Treadle spinning wheel and walking wheel



RAISING CLOTHES:
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Online Resources

Videos

WOOL: SHEARING AND WEAVING VIDEOS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WzzQS0pW9VY>

Shearing—"Sheep to Shawl" a Day at the Farm

A thorough look at a blend of modern and traditional shearing and spinning and some weaving

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAITPbwy68I>

Pennsylvania Farm Show: Sheep-to-shawl Competition

A modern look at this tradition. Children may be able to connect with this because they have been to the farm show.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FnbUF0wglfw>

Weaving —Weaving on Mount Vernon's 18th-century Loom

A good example of a period loom; short video with in-depth explanation. String hatchels.