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**Level: Grades 3-5**

**Subjects:** Visual and Performing Arts

**Skills:** Collaborating, cooperating, collecting data, following directions, explaining, describing, making a plan, following a plan, writing

### **Lesson 3: European Trappers and Traders**

#### **Activity: Finger Crochet a Trapper's Belt**

*Mary Dickinson Bird, PhD, author - Created through the MAITC Ag Literacy Grant made possible by the Ag License Plate*



Trappers in our region had a clever way of turning a single long piece of string or yarn into a sturdy belt. Just by using their fingers, without any other tools, they could quickly and easily form a long chain of loops that was nearly as strong as rope.

For this activity you will need:

a piece of yarn about 5 feet long (Use your handspun or any other yarn you like. A thick yarn is easiest to use when you are learning.)

What to do:

1. Tie one end of the yarn to form a loose loop. Hold the loop in the fingers of one hand.
2. Put the index finger of your other hand through the loop and hook the strand of yarn – the bit closest to the loop.
3. Draw this bit of yarn back through the loop just far enough to form a loop of its own.
4. Now put your index finger through the new loop to hook the next little bit of the yarn.
5. Draw the new bit of yarn back through the second loop just far enough to form a third loop.
6. Keep going this way, making new loops, reaching through to pull yarn and so on, until you have created a long chain of loops. Tie knots in each end to lock the chain and keep it from unraveling.

If you look at the chain you have crocheted with your fingers, you will notice that the single long strand of yarn has become much thicker. It is also much stronger – strong enough to work as a belt to hold up your pants

Some people use a tool called a “crochet hook” to make reaching through the loops and pulling up the tails easier, especially for very fine, thin yarns.

