

Lesson Plan – Ballad Writing

Objective: Students will study the form of a ballad and write their own

Introduction: A ballad is a song that tells a story, often in praise of a hero. In the book *Dunces Rock*, Wilmot and his friends write a ballad to flatter Principal Hale.

Download the lyrics from “The Ballad of Principal Hale” from the sidebar on the “Dunces” page of Kate Jaimet’s website (www.katejaimet.com).

In the same sidebar, click on the link to the video. Read along as you watch Kate Jaimet and Connor McGuire perform “The Ballad of Principal Hale”

Analyse the ballad:

Notice that there are two distinct parts to the ballad: the verses and the chorus.

- The verses tell the story of Principal Hale’s heroic acts
- The verses have the rhyme scheme ABCB

- The chorus is repetitive. Its main purpose is to praise Principal Hale.
- The chorus has the rhyme scheme DDEED (there is also internal rhyme but you don’t have to worry about that).

Now it’s your turn:

Working in groups or alone, write a ballad about someone you know. It could be a friend, a parent, a teacher, or a celebrity or sports hero. Your ballad can be funny like “The Ballad of Principal Hale” or serious.

Your ballad should include at least one verse and one chorus. (If you write more than one verse, you may repeat the same chorus after each verse.) Remember, the verse should tell a story about a heroic deed, while the chorus should praise the person who is the subject of the ballad.

Taking it one step further:

If you or someone in your group is musically talented, play and sing your ballad. You could even record it on audio or video!

Have fun!