

# Example Text: Ballad Poetry (Ages 7 - 11)

A ballad poem traditionally tells a tragic, comedic or heroic **story**. These poems used to be passed down by word of mouth through the generations, sometimes with music. If your child is asked to write a ballad, they'll probably be given a story prompt to write about.

Each **stanza** in a ballad has **four lines**. One stanza is a group of lines. You can think of a stanza like a poetry paragraph. A ballad might have two or three stanzas or it might be much longer.

Ballads follow a **rhyming structure**. Usually, in a stanza, the first and third lines rhyme and the second and fourth lines rhyme. This rhyming structure can be written as **ABAB**. Sometimes, the first and third line don't rhyme, but the second and fourth lines do. This can be written as **ABCB**.

There are lots of types of ballads, but these are some basic rules for your child to follow when trying to write one. Take a look at the example and the features required.

1 Follow the line structure of a ballad poem by having four lines per stanza.

2 Group lines together into stanzas. Each stanza should have the same amount of lines. In this type of poetry, your child should write four lines per stanza, then separate stanzas with a space.

3 Follow the rhyming structure of a ballad poem, which is ABAB or ABCB. The second and fourth lines in a stanza must rhyme.

4 Follow the rhyming structure of a ballad poem, which is ABAB or ABCB. The first and third lines in a stanza can rhyme.

## The Jabberwocky

by Lewis Carroll

1 'Twas brillig, and the slithy **toves**

2 Did **gyre and gimble** in the **wabe**:

3 All mimsy were the **borogoves**,

4 And the mome raths **outgrabe**.

1 "Beware the Jabberwock, my **son**!

2 The jaws that bite, the claws that **catch**!

3 Beware the Jubjub bird, and **shun**

4 The frumious **Bandersnatch**!"

1 He took his vorpal sword in hand:

2 Long time the manxome foe he **sought** -

3 So rested he by the **Tumtum tree**,

4 And stood awhile in **thought**.

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Try to use figurative language techniques, such as **alliteration**, to paint a picture for the reader. Alliteration involves repeating the first sound in a string of words or words that are close together in a sentence.

- 1 And, as in uffish thought he **stood**,
- 2 The Jabberwock, with eyes of **flame**,
- 3 Came wiffing through the tulgey **wood**,
- 4 And burbled as it **came**!

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Try to use figurative language techniques, such as **personification**, to paint a picture for the reader. Personification gives non-human things (like animals, plants or objects) human traits or characteristics.

- 1 One, two! One, two! And through and through
- 2 The vorpal blade went **snicker-snack!**
- 3 He left it dead, and with its head
- 4 He went galumphing **back**.

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Try to use figurative language techniques, such as **similes**, to paint a picture for the reader. A simile is a technique that compares one thing to another, using the words 'like', 'as', 'than' and 'as if'.

- 1 "And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
- 2 Come to my arms, my **beamish boy!**
- 3 O frabjous day! **Callooh! Callay!**"
- 4 He chortled in his **joy**.

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Try to use figurative language techniques, such as **metaphors**, to paint a picture for the reader. A metaphor is a comparison between two things, using the words 'is' or 'was'.

- 1 'Twas brillig, and the slithy **toves**
- 2 Did **gyre and gimble** in the **wabe**:
- 3 All mimsy were the **borogoves**,
- 4 And the mome raths **outgrabe**.

This example also includes nonsense words, which is a feature of some poetry. Even though some of the words are made-up, encourage your child to figure out what happens in the story. What could the nonsense words mean?