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POEMS AND REASONS

THE BALLAD

The **ballad** is a form of narrative verse, which was popular during the Middle Ages. It has been used by many English poets. Ballads are simple stories told in verses, and sometimes the last line tells the moral of the story, or gives a lesson of some kind. Ballads are often also songs, typical of country music. See the section on the quatrain (p.37).

MOLLY MALONE OR COCKLES AND MUSSELS

A2



Molly Malone is a ballad which is also known as *Cockles and Mussels*. If you've been to Ireland, you must have heard it. They call it Dublin's anthem, the symbol of the city, and everyone sings it at sports events. It's an Irish song, but, strangely, the first published version of it appeared in London in 1884, and it was attributed to James Yorkston of Scotland. The song speaks about a beautiful young woman who sold cockles and mussels on the streets of Dublin. She died from a fever while she was young, but her spirit still lives in the city of Dublin.

If you walk down Grafton Street, in the centre of Dublin, towards Trinity College (which is the oldest university in Ireland), you'll see a big bronze statue of Molly Malone.



by James Yorkston

In Dublin's fair city where the girls are so pretty,
I first set my eyes on sweet Molly Malone,
As she wheeled her wheelbarrow through the streets broad and narrow
Crying "Cockles and mussels, alive, alive-oh!"

Chorus
"A-live, alive o-Oh! Alive, alive o-Oh!"
Crying "Cockl-es and muss-els, alive, alive-oh!"

She was a fishmonger and sure 'twas no wonder
For so were her father and mother before
And they both wheeled their barrows through the streets broad and narrow
Crying "Cockles and mussels, alive, alive-oh!" Chorus

She died of a fever and no one could save her
And that was the end of sweet Molly Malone
But her ghost wheels her barrow through the streets broad and narrow
Crying "Cockles and mussels, alive, alive-oh!". Chorus

stanza
a group of lines forming the basic unit of a poem

fair (*archaic use*) beautiful
set your eyes on noticed
wheeled pushed
fishmonger a person who sells fish
'twas it was
wonder surprise
broad wide
narrow not very wide
alive living/not dead
fever when the body temperature is higher than usual
ghost spirit



cockles



mussels



wheelbarrow



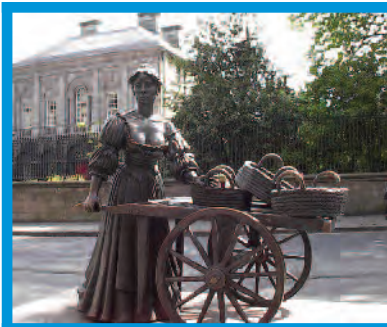
fishmonger

IT'S YOUR TURN!

A WORK ON WORDS

Match the words to the definitions or synonyms:

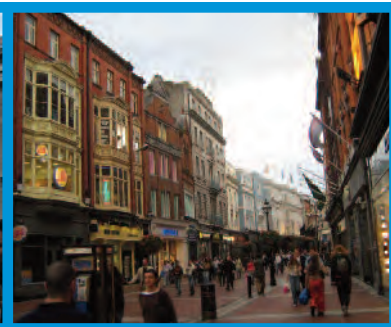
- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. cockles and mussels | a) surprise |
| 2. wheelbarrow | b) spirit |
| 3. fever | c) beautiful |
| 4. ghost | d) seafood |
| 5. fair | e) a person who sells fish |
| 6. fishmonger | f) a small cart |
| 7. wide | g) large |
| 8. narrow | h) not very wide |
| 9. wonder | i) when the body's temperature is too hot |



The statue
of Molly Malone



Trinity College



Grafton Street

B UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

Listen to the song many times, write the missing words from the box and then check the lyrics.

fishmonger	mother	narrow	end	fever
set	wheelbarrow	cockles	streets	wheeled
mussels	sure	died	ghost	through
fair	pretty	was	alive	broad

In Dublin's 1 _____ city where the girls are so 2 _____
 I first 3 _____ my eyes on sweet Molly Malone,
 As she wheeled her 4 _____ through the 5 _____ broad and narrow
 Crying "Cockles and 6 _____ alive, alive-oh!"

"Alive, alive o-Oh! Alive, alive o-Oh!"

Crying, "7 _____ and mussels, alive, alive-oh!"

She was a 8 _____ and 9 _____ 'twas no wonder
 For so were her father and 10 _____ before
 And they both 11 _____ their barrows through the streets broad and
 12 _____
 Crying "Cockles and mussels, alive, alive-oh!"

She 13 _____ of a 14 _____ and no one could save her
 And that 15 _____ the 16 _____ of sweet Molly Malone
 But her 17 _____ wheels her barrow 18 _____ the streets 19 _____
 and narrow
 Crying "Cockles and mussels, 20 _____, alive-oh!"

C EXPLORING THE TEXT

Find the rhymes!

1. city	a. pretty
2. wheelbarrow	b.
3. fishmonger	c.
4. fever	d.

D GRAMMAR FOCUS

Put the verbs in brackets into the past form and then listen to the song to check for the answers.

In Dublin's fair city where the girls are so pretty
 I first 1 _____ (set) my eyes on sweet Molly Malone,
 As she 2 _____ (wheel) her wheel barrow through the streets broad and narrow
 Crying "Cockles and mussels, alive, alive-oh!"

"Alive, alive o-Oh! Alive, alive o-Oh!"
 Crying, "Cockles and mussels, alive, alive-oh!"

She 3 _____ (be) a fishmonger and sure 'twas no wonder
 For so 4 _____ (be) her father and mother before
 And they both 5 _____ (wheel) their barrows through the streets broad and narrow
 Crying "Cockles and mussels, alive, alive-oh!"

She 6 _____ (die) of a fever and no one could save her
 And that 7 _____ (be) the end of sweet Molly Malone
 But her ghost wheels her barrow through the streets broad and narrow
 Crying "Cockles and mussels, alive, alive-oh!"

E CREATING

Listen to the song and put the pictures in the right order.

1. G	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.



F UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

Answer the questions:

1. What does the ballad *Cockles and Mussels* speak about?
2. Who is the author?
3. When was it published?
4. Who was Molly Malone?
5. Where did the author see her for the first time?
6. What was she saying?
7. How did she die?
8. Who wheels her barrow through Dublin at present?
9. In your opinion, what is the lesson we are told in the last line?

G EXPLORING THE TEXT

Answer the questions:

1. What is a ballad?
2. Why are ballads very popular nowadays?
3. When is the ballad *Molly Malone* sung?
4. Where can you find the bronze statue of Molly Malone?
5. What is Trinity College?
6. Have you ever read any other ballads? Give an example.
7. Which is your favourite one? Why?



SPEAKING

Look at the pictures from exercise E and tell the story of Molly Malone in your own words.



Howth, near Dublin, Lighthouse



Dublin Bay



WRITING POETRY

Now write your own ballad.

- Choose an event (from your own life, your personal experience, from the past, from history ...)

- Write down as many details as you can about the chosen event, answering these questions:

- What?
- When?
- Where?
- How?
-?

- Write down the first draft of your ballad using the information you have collected.

- Write your story.
- Use as many verses and stanzas as necessary.
- Finish your ballad with a meaningful line or the moral of the story.

- Copy it out and draw a picture (or find one on the Internet) to illustrate your ballad.



Galway Bay



**Cliffs of Moher,
Ireland's west coast**

Introduction
by C. S. Lewis



Clive Staples Lewis (1898-1963) was an Irish-born British novelist, academic, medievalist and literary critic. He is very famous for his fiction, especially *The Screwtape Letters*, *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *The Space Trilogy*. He was a close friend of J.R.R. Tolkien. With some other friends from the English faculty at Oxford University, he founded a literary group known as the 'Inklings'. He converted to Christianity at the age of 32 and his conversion had a profound effect on his work. He married the American writer Joy Gresham. He died on the same day that US President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. His works have been translated into more than 30 languages and have sold millions of copies over the years. His most famous stories have also been made into films.



To Lucy Barfield

My Dear Lucy,

I wrote this story for you, but when I began it I had not realized that girls grow quicker than books. As a result you are already too old for fairy tales, and by the time it is printed and bound you will be older still. But some day you will be old enough to start reading fairy tales again. You can then take it down from some upper shelf, dust it, and tell me what you think of it. I shall probably be too deaf to hear, and too old to understand, a word you say, but I shall still be your affectionate Godfather,

C. S. Lewis

The Chronicles of Narnia is a series of seven fantasy novels for children. Written between 1949 and 1954, the books contain Christian ideas intended to be easily accessible to young readers. In addition to Christian themes, Lewis borrows characters from Greek and Roman mythology, as well as from traditional British and Irish fairy tales.



"I've seen landscapes which, under a particular light, make me feel that at any moment a giant might raise his head over the next ridge."

C. S. Lewis *On Stories*

The Mountains of Mourne that inspired him to write *The Chronicles of Narnia*

bound past participle of *to bind/bound/bound*, when the pages of a book are put all together
to dust to take dust (*a dirty powder contained in the air*)
godfather a man who sponsors a person at baptism

From **THE LION, THE WITCH
AND THE WARDROBE**
by **C. S. Lewis**
Chapter II What Lucy Found There

B1

FOCUS ON
SETTING



8

The Faun's name was Mr. Tumnus. It turned out he was more afraid of Lucy than Lucy was of him. And Lucy couldn't resist his invitation for tea – she was dying to get out of the cold. On the way to his house, Lucy discovered that she was in a land called Narnia, where it had been winter for the last one hundred years.

"Winter's all right," Lucy said, trying to sound cheerful. "You can ice skate and have snowball fights. And Christmas!"

Mr. Tumnus shook his head. "Not here," he replied sadly. "We haven't had Christmas for a hundred years".

Tumnus's Place

Lucy thought she had never been in a nicer place. It was a little, dry, clean cave of reddish stone with a carpet on the floor and two little chairs ("One for me and one for a friend," said Mr. Tumnus) and a table and a dresser and a mantelpiece over the fire and above that a picture of an old faun with a grey beard. In one corner there was a door which Lucy thought must lead to Mr. Tumnus's bedroom, and on one wall was a shelf full of books. Lucy looked at these while he was setting out the tea things. They had titles like *The Life and Letters of Silenus* or *Nymphs and Their Ways* or *Men, Monks and Gamekeepers; A Study in Popular Legend* or *Is Man a Myth?*

"Now, Daughter of Eve!" said the Faun.

And really it was a wonderful tea. There was a nice brown egg, lightly boiled, for each of them, and then sardines on toast, and then buttered toast, and then toast with honey, and then a sugar-topped cake. And when Lucy was tired of eating, the Faun began to talk.

When Lucy decided to leave, Mr. Tumnus seemed scared. "If I let you go, she'll turn me to stone," he whispered. "The White Witch! She's the one who makes it always winter. She gave orders... if we ever find a Human in the woods, we're supposed to turn it over to her."

Mr. Tumnus broke the rules by helping her leave. Lucy just hoped he wouldn't get caught. And she stepped back through the wardrobe.



to lead (*led/led*) to go to, take you to
to set out (*set/set*) to put out, place
to turn to to transform
to turn over to to give in the hands of
stepped back past tense of *to step back*, to go back



sugar-topped
cake



mantelpiece



dresser

IT'S YOUR TURN!

A UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

Answer the following questions:

1. Why is Mr. Tumnus friendly to Lucy?
2. Why does Lucy accept his invitation?
3. What's the weather like in Narnia and why?
4. Who is Mr. Tumnus afraid of and why?
5. In your opinion, what is the White Witch afraid of?

B EXPLORING THE TEXT

Fill in the chart with the information you find in the text:

Tumnus's place	The tea table





PROJECT ON THE WEB

WORLD WAR II

As you have learnt from the previous pages, during World War II, German fighter planes conducted air-raids against Great Britain. They dropped hundreds of bombs on the cities - including England's capital city, London. Whenever possible, British parents sent their children to live with friends and relatives out in the country where it was much safer. That's why, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the four children find themselves at the Professor's house.

- To find out more about the time in which this story takes place, use the Internet, a dictionary, an encyclopedia, or a history book to answer the questions.

- Go to www.itacalibri.it, write *Enjoy Literature!* into the search engine, then find the website related to this project to find useful links.

1. When did World War II begin?

2. When did it end?

3. Which countries fought in the War?

4. Describe some of the causes of the War:

5. List some of the major battles or events:

6. Name some historical figures who played an important role in the War. Say what they did.

7. What was the outcome of the War?

"The artist is a receptacle for emotions that come from all over the place: from the sky, from the earth, from a scrap of paper, from a passing shape..."

Pablo Picasso

Picasso painted Guernica, a huge mural, in 1937 after German and Italian warplanes had bombed this small city in the Basque Country during the Spanish Civil War. The bombing took place on a market day; a lot of people were in the city centre and were unable to escape because the streets were soon filled with debris and the bridges destroyed. Moreover, men were away fighting in the war and the town was populated mostly by women and children.

Guernica shows the tragedy and the suffering brought on innocent people by war. Over the years, this mural has become the symbol of anti-war feeling.

IT'S YOUR TURN!

A READING A PAINTING

Look carefully at the mural and then complete the reading of the painting using the words from the box.



soldier - blades - entrapped - woman - horse - flower - raised - bull - flame - head - child - blankly - cell - window - eye - candle - hope

On the left you can see a _____ near a _____ who is crying over a dead _____ in her arms. The bull's tail takes the form of a _____.

In the centre a _____ in agony becomes the focus of the painting. Under the horse there is a dead _____. There is a _____ growing out from his sword. There is a light shaped like an evil _____ over the horse's _____. It resembles the bulb of an interrogation _____.

On the right there is a woman coming out of a _____. She is very frightened and carries a _____ in her right arm which symbolises _____.

There is another woman looking _____ at the bulb.

Some characters have _____ instead of tongues in their mouths.

On the right a figure with arms _____ in terror is _____ by fire.

(adapted from en.wikipedia.org)

by John Ronald Reuel Tolkien

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1892-1973) was born in South Africa of English parents. When he was four years old, his mother took him back to England and there he had a happy childhood in the country. His writings and his pictures clearly show his love for nature and landscapes. He liked imaginary worlds and began to write about them. In 1925 he became a Professor at Oxford University. He is known for his books of fiction, *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of The Rings*, and *The Silmarillion*. He also wrote many books for his children, among them *the Father Christmas Letters*. For over twenty years, every December Tolkien wrote letters to his children John, Michael, Christopher and Priscilla. The letters were signed Father Christmas and on the envelope there was a stamp from the North Pole. Here is the first letter that he wrote to his son John, the eldest, who was three years old. Tolkien died after a very brief illness at the age of 82.



17

Christmas House, North Pole
22nd December 1920

Dear John

I heard you ask daddy what I was like & where I lived.

I have drawn ME & My House for you.

Take care of the picture.

I am just off now for Oxford with my bundle of toys – some for you.

Hope I shall arrive in time: the snow is very thick at the NORTH POLE tonight.

Yr loving Fr. Chr.



drawn past participle of *to draw/drew/drawn*, to illustrate
bundle a number things held together

A UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

Answer the following questions:

1. Who is the letter from?
2. Where is the letter from?
3. Where is he going tonight?
4. Why is he going to Oxford?
5. Who are the toys for?
6. What is the snow like tonight at the North Pole?
7. And why does he use the short forms in his signature?



My dear children

Thank you for your nice letters. I have not forgotten you. I am very late this year and very worried – a very funny thing has happened. The Polar Bear has disappeared, and I don't know where he is. I have not seen him since the beginning of this month, and I am getting anxious. Tomorrow December, the Christmas month, begins, and I don't know what I shall do without him.

I am glad you are all well and your many pets. The Snowbabies* holidays begin tomorrow. I wish Polar Bear was here to look after them. Love to Michael, Christopher and Priscilla. Please send John my love when you write to him.

Father Christmas.

*A **snow baby** is a small figurine that represents some aspects of the Christmas holidays or of winter sports. The traditional snow baby is made of porcelain and shows a child dressed in a snowsuit. Santa Claus, elves and gnomes, animals such as penguins and polar bears are often associated with these snowy children.



forgotten past tense of *to forget/forgot/forgotten*, not remember

IT'S YOUR TURN!

A EXPLORING THE TEXT

Answer the following questions:

1. Why is Father Christmas so late and worried this year?
2. What month is it at present?
3. What does it begin tomorrow?
4. Why does Father Christmas need Polar Bear?
5. What kind of character is Polar Bear? Try to imagine and say why.

B READING PICTURES

Look at the picture:

1. What is a 'bundle'?
2. Describe Father Christmas to a friend using the picture.
3. Describe Father Christmas's house.



C WRITING

Imagine you are writing back to Father Christmas. Describe yourself and your house. Describe it very well, otherwise Father Christmas won't find your house and won't leave you any toys! Make a list of all the things you would like to get for Christmas.

D DRAWING

J.R.R. Tolkien is very good at drawing: look at the stamp he drew on p. 147 and make up your own post stamp from or to the North Pole!