

TRACY BEAKER PLANNING SHEET - BALLAD WRITING

In the olden days when people didn't have electrical devices like TV and video, they used to entertain each other by telling stories of adventure, murder, mystery and suspense.

Sometimes the tales were very long, and they used to forget what came next - so they put rhymes in to help them remember the words!

All sorts of people made up ballads, from all walks of life, and well-known ballads would often change many times and alter from village to village. They were also set to music. Many of today's traditional songs are written in ballad form.

Could you make one up ? Here are some hints to get you started ...

- 1 decide on a simple story you'd like to tell
- 2 plan one event or action to take place in each stanza
- 3 'storyboard' the whole poem
- 4 write the fourth line of each stanza first
- 5 remember that Lines 2 and 4 have to rhyme... so if you have 'jelly' on line 2... it could rhyme with 'smelly' on line 4
- 6 if you get stuck, jot down all the possible rhymes you could use and choose a word from these
- 7 complete lines one and three
- 8 read through your poem and make sure that it's got a strong rhythm
- a regular beat !