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EDTC 813  
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## UDL Assignment

### Overview – What are ballads?

According to the Academy of American Poets (2015), the composition of ballads began as a European folk tradition, usually accompanied by musical instruments. Preserved for generations, ballads were not transcribed, but passed along through poetic recitation. Their subject matter dealt with religious themes, love, tragedy, domestic crimes, and sometimes even political propaganda. Ballads made their way into print in 15<sup>th</sup> century England during the Renaissance. Even though, making and selling ballads, became a popular practice – they rarely earned the respect of artists because the authors of those ballads were referred to as “pot poets” because they came from the lower classes.

### Why teach ballads and what students gain?

The aim of teaching this topic is to allow students to explore the ballad form, differentiate it from other poetic forms and provide them the opportunity to create their own ballad. Once initial definitions have been offered and some important oral work has been carried out, one can move on to the writing/word-processing phase and then transferring to social media which learners really enjoy.

### Describe what you’re doing:

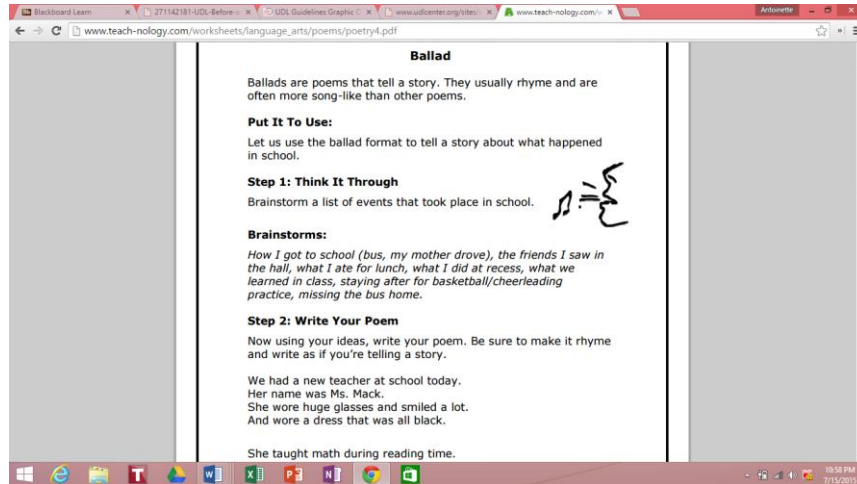
Poems that tell a story are called ballads. Students will develop their own ballad. Writing poetry does not have to be an assignment only from English teachers. Teachers across content area can give students the option of writing poetry to express their understanding of concepts. Imagine a Shakespearean sonnet about some historical figure in music. Here is where language arts and music collide, so much so, that students get to see the connection between subjects. For this activity, students write a poem in a voice not their own. The objective is that they may choose to write in the voice of a historical figure, in the voice of someone they know, or in the voice of a character from a story or movie and it can be about an event associated with school. This event can either be related to going to school, eating lunch, playing a sport or about some interaction with a teacher at school.

It is part of this **curriculum standard**:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9.7: Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person’s life event or story in both print and multimedia).

### Before:

A traditional way to cover the activity is found in the worksheet below. This worksheet is from technology and is a typical assignment for middle school (seventh grade) students. It can be found at the following URL: [http://www.teach-nology.com/worksheets/language\\_arts/poems/poetry4.pdf](http://www.teach-nology.com/worksheets/language_arts/poems/poetry4.pdf)



## Explanation

I will now “UDLify” the teaching of poetry writing in the form of ballads.

The goal is to take an activity that is in print form and turn it into a technology product. So, I could ask students to create a Facebook page to outline their understanding of the topic of poetry (ballads). I could have students include status updates, pictures, likes, and so on. Many students are tech savvy that they will create a very realistic Facebook page. They can create the page as themselves or based on a historical music character. This activity can be really exciting for the students especially if the musical character selected is a role-model or someone the student is inspired by. Students will be provided a template or guide for use, if needed.

## Assessment

The assessment would be evaluated using a rubric. The teacher will observe how the students are transformed and learn the mechanics of poetry writing during the activity and if they will remain themselves while doing so.

## UDL guidelines

- 1 *Options for perception* – Students provide the same information through different modalities  
– Instead of producing ballad in print—it will be published as a Facebook page.
- 3 *Options for comprehension* – Students integrate new knowledge from previous experiences. They can incorporate ideas that they get in school with ideas about a character and design an original product.
- 5 *Options for expression* - Students get to express the power of language without reading or traditional writing. Students tell their story or activate their voice through social media.
- 9 *Options for self-regulation* – Students get to develop reflection skills.