

# TEACHING POETRY TO YOUNG LEARNERS

from *Enjoy Literature!*

Silvia Fusi, Carola Rainero and Amanda Murphy

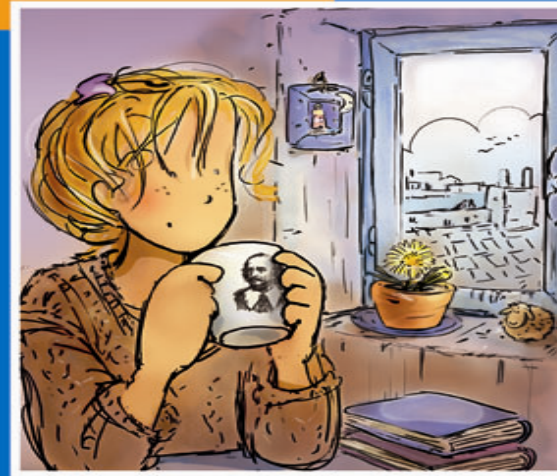


READYTOTEACH.IT  
Aosta, April 2nd 2012

# POETRY

## ENJOY LITERATURE!

An Introduction to English & American Literature



SILVIA FUSI  
CAROLA RAINERO  
AMANDA MURPHY



# POETRY

THE BALLAD

THE COUPLET

THE EPITAPH

FREE VERSE

THE HAIKU

THE QUATRAIN

THE SONNET

THE SPIRITUAL

POEMS  
AND VARIATIONS

POETRY COLLECTION

# 1<sup>st</sup> step: motivating

Why is poetry such a special form of writing? Poetry is special for its sounds as well as its words: it can speak to the heart as to the mind.

That's why you may need time to explore a poem and understand it. Poems are alive; they please the ear and can echo in our memories forever.

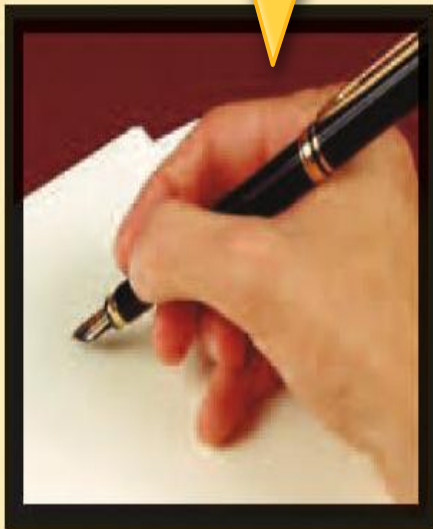




**2nd step:  
connecting the text  
with the student's  
experience**

**warming up**

## **POETRY AND YOU**



Do you like poems? Why? What types of poetry do you know? Who is your favourite poet?

Have you ever noticed how a poem can sound different according to its reader? To understand poems first you have to 'listen' to them!

Have you ever written a poem? In the following section you'll find out how to write your own poems. Have you ever learnt a poem by heart?

# POEMS AND REASONS

---

## *THE BALLAD*

*Molly Malone*  
*or*  
*Cockles and Mussels*

# POEMS AND REASONS

3 rd step:  
introducing  
the topic

## THE BALLAD

The **ballad** is a form of narrative verse, that 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.



*what is a  
ballad?*

A2

- The ballad is a form of narrative verse popular during the Middle Ages
- ballads are simple stories told in verses
- the last line tells the moral of the story
- ballads are often also songs typical of country music



# **Molly Malone or Cockles and Mussels**

**This ballad is the symbol of Dublin and everyone sings it at sports events**



**Molly Malone statue**



**Trinity College**



**Grafton Street**



*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 wheel barrow 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

**4th step:  
approaching  
the text**

**stanza**

a group of  
lines forming  
the basic unit  
of a poem

## UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

## VOCABULARY

**to set your eyes on** to look at/to notice someone

**to wheel** to push

**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



# Working on words

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  
set  
mussels  
fair

mother  
wheelbarrow  
sure  
pretty

narrow  
cockles  
died  
was

end  
streets  
ghost  
alive

fever  
wheeled  
through  
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!"

## EXPLORING THE TEXT

Find the rhymes!

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

## GRAMMAR FOCUS

### 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.
8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	



**CREATING**



# SPEAKING



A



B



C



D



E



F



G



H



I



J



K



L



M



N



## SPEAKING

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

## **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?



**EXPLORING**

## **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?



## 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 your 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.

**WRITING  
POETRY**





## DISCOVERING POETRY

Help students to understand why poetry is so special referring to its forms and sounds (see the *Glossary for Terms used in Poetry*, *The Forms of Poetry* and *Figures of Speech* at the end of this Book).

## READING POETRY

Encourage students to listen to the recordings of the poems many times, read aloud to themselves and in front of the class. Choose some poems from the *Poetry section* and suggest that they:

- say the title of the poem and the author's name clearly
- practise reading them slowly, following the punctuation (if there is any)
- read the poems again, thinking about their meaning and listening to how they sound
- learn the poems by heart (or part of them)
- record their performances and listen to them

## WRITING POETRY

### • PREWRITING

First students need to think about a favourite subject, and brainstorm it to collect their thoughts.

### • WRITING A FIRST DRAFT

Now they have to organise their ideas and write some sentences, moving and changing words or phrases.

### • REVISING

At this stage they can think about their writing, improving their choice of words, sounds and the poem's shape.

### • EDITING

Finally they have to check if their poem is complete, looking at the specific details, the spelling, the punctuation and the line breaks. They may use a dictionary or ask you for help. They must write out a final copy of the poem.

### • PUBLISHING

To conclude, they can present the poem to the class interviewing each other (see the section *Speaking about a Poem* p.70) drawing a picture (or finding one on the Internet) to illustrate their poems. They can arrange a display on the classroom walls or in the school corridors.

### FURTHER ACTIVITY

- Prepare a Power Point presentation and show it on special occasions at school. Encourage students to recite their poems along with their pictures.

EXPANDING



# POEMS AND REASONS

---

## THE HAIKU

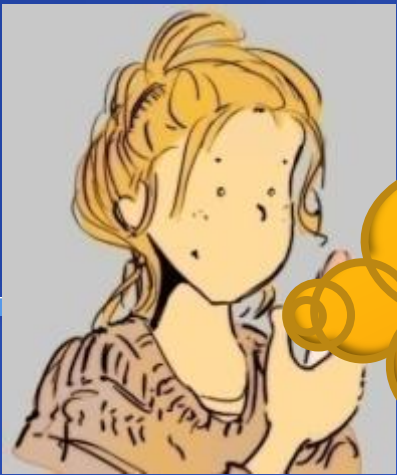
**introducing  
the topic**

## THE HAIKU

A2

The **haiku** is a Japanese form of poetry invented in the 16th century. It was called haiku by the Japanese writer Masaoka Shiki. The traditional subjects of haikus are nature and the seasons; haikus are used to paint short word-pictures and they rarely tell stories. The traditional haiku is a single thought expressed in three non-rhyming lines. The most popular form has this pattern: the first line has five syllables, the second line has seven syllables, and the third line has five syllables (all together, the poem is only seventeen syllables or beats long). It's not easy to keep a 5-7-5 pattern when you translate the poems from Japanese into English! Modern poets have expanded the subjects of haikus and they write about anything they like.





How many syllables are  
there in each line?

In the first line there are five syllables, in the  
second line there are seven syllables, in the third  
line there are five syllables

5  
7  
5

10

How cool it feels  
To take a noonday nap  
With my feet against a wall!

**Basho**

11

A crimson berry  
Splattering softly down on  
The frost white garden

**Masaoka Shiki**

12

Snowman in a field  
listening to the raindrops  
wishing him farewell

**Roger McGough**

13

Slender, silver trout  
Wiggling in the shallow stream  
Spots a worm – my worm

**Anon**

14

Alone I cling to  
The freezing mountain and see  
White cloud - below me

**Ian Serraillier**

15

On a frozen pond  
A small dog is nervously  
Attempting to skate...

**James Carter**



### syllable

a part of a word, like a part of music. It is a sound that can be said without a vowel. It normally includes a vowel. Example: cod is one syllable. Fare- is two.

**approaching  
the text**



**crimson berries**



**to cling to the  
mountain**

**noonday** twelve o'clock

**nap** a short sleep

**slender** thin

**wiggling** moving from side to side

**shallow** not deep

**crimson** red



## UNDERSTANDING

### IT'S YOUR TURN!

#### **A** UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

**Answer the questions:**

1. Who invented the haiku?
2. What are the traditional subjects of haiku?
3. How many lines do most popular haiku have?
4. How many syllables are there in each line?
5. What is your favorite haiku in this section?



#### WRITING POETRY

## WRITING POETRY

- And now write your own haiku.

1. Choose a subject, an image or a topic that you like very much. Write some sentences about it. All your sentences should be about the same idea.

2. Write the sentences again, following this pattern:

line one: 5 syllables;  
line two: 7 syllables;  
line three: 5 syllables.

3. Copy your haiku into your copybook and illustrate it or find a picture on the Internet.


# Our haikus

ISTITUTO SACRO CUORE  
MILAN



*This is my haiku  
It goes five seven and five  
And this is the end*

*by Sergio Mocchiatti*



*Winds blow on my face  
In the hush I sail my boat  
On the dark vast sea*

*by Andrea Andreoli*



# SKATE



*I jump and I fly  
Too much unbearable heat  
I am loving it*

*by Thomas Rappalettera*

# A SNOW KALEIDOSCOPE



*Crystalline chips  
little diamonds that swirl quick  
on smiling children*

by **Claudio Campi**



# White snow



Wonderful white snow  
Rafting fast on the cold ice  
so exciting game

*by*  
**Matteo Di Benedetto**

# Hiking

*Climbing with effort  
but in my heart the surprise  
of the scenery*

*by Valentina Vismara*



# the football match

*I'm playing football  
a friend's phosphorescent shoes  
it's the victory*

*by Alberto Bigoni*



# SPEAKING

## SUMMING UP

### SPEAKING ABOUT A POEM

**Write a poem and then share it with your teacher and your friends. Interview each other about your poems.**

1. What is the title of your poem?
2. Why did you choose this topic?
3. When did you write it?
4. How long did it take you to write your poem?
5. What form of poetry have you chosen? Why?
6. Are there any rhymes in your poem?
7. If so, can you list them?
8. Did you enjoy writing your poem? Why?
9. Can you compare your poem with others you have read?
10. Have you used any similes or metaphors in your poem?
11. Have you drawn a picture of your poem or have you found one to illustrate it?
12. If so, show it to the others and tell them about it.

*The  
end*

*Thank you!*