

The Highwayman

A Poem by Alfred Noyes

"The Highwayman" is a narrative poem, a poem that tells a story. Written by Alfred Noyes, it was first published in Scotland in 1906.

The poem is set in the 1700s in England. It tells the story of a highwayman who is in love with an innkeeper's daughter. Betrayed by an ostler, or stableman, the highwayman escapes capture when Bess sacrifices her life to warn him. When he discovers she has been killed, he tries to get revenge but is shot down on the highway. The end of the poem tells how the ghosts of the lovers still meet on winter nights.


Discuss with someone beside you and be prepared to answer aloud:

1. What is a highwayman? (background knowledge)
2. What is a narrative poem? (on the lines)
3. When was it first published? (on the lines)
4. What is the setting of the poem: the time period and place? (on the lines)
5. What is an ostler? (on the lines)
6. Who is Bess? (between the lines; infer)
7. What happens to the two people in love? (on the lines)
8. Why do you think this poem is famous? (background knowledge)


Listen to "The Highwayman" as read by a man from England.

As you listen, notice...

- alliteration
- similes
- metaphors
- powerful words

 https://video.search.yahoo.com/video/play;_ylt=AwrTcdeSkNpU27YAeCwnnIIQ;_ylu=X3c

Now listen to it again as read and illustrated
by elementary school students in England:

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AZQWi4bGGr4>

And now listen to it again as a romantic
modern version:

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omg-sw-p7b8>

Finally, write a paragraph about one of these topics:

1. Can people be both good and bad?
What is your evidence?

2. What other stories do you know that are about 'forbidden' love?

3. What makes this poem so powerful that it is still popular over 100 years after it was written?

Criteria:

Form: a proper paragraph with a topic sentence, supporting details, and a summarizing sentence

Content: deep thinking with evidence

Conventions: formal and correct English

Layout: Name and Number, Title and Date

Due Date: before you have lunch