

The Highwayman Y5 Narrative Poetry:
Knowledge Organiser and Key
Outcomes (4 weeks)

Poetry Content

The Highwayman is a poem that tells a story, so it is called a **narrative poem**. It is written like a ballad, which means it has a strong rhythm and rhymes that make it sound like galloping hooves. The poem is about love, loyalty, and adventure, but it also has danger and a sad ending. It mixes history with imagination to make the story exciting and dramatic.

Themes



Core Writing Outcomes

- Write a narrative poem.
- Write a diary from Bess or Tim's point of view.

Key words

- **Highwayman** – A robber who stole from travellers on roads, often on horseback.
- **Landlord** – A person who owns or runs an inn or tavern.
- **Tavern** – A small inn or pub where people eat, drink, and rest.
- **Rapier** – A thin, sharp sword used in the past.
- **Claret** – A dark red colour, like red wine.
- **Plaiting** – Braiding or weaving hair together.
- **Casement** – A window that opens on hinges.
- **Galleon** – A large sailing ship used in the past.
- **Moor** – Open, wild land often covered with grass and heather.
- **Ribbon** – A long, narrow strip of fabric used for decoration.
- **Musket** – An old-fashioned gun used before rifles.
- **Priming** – Preparing a gun to fire by adding powder.
- **Sniggering** – Laughing in a sly or mean way.
- **Spurred** – Urged a horse to go faster by using spurs on boots.
- **Torrent** – A fast, strong flow of water or wind

Core Oracy Outcomes

- Poetry performances – focus on clarity, expression and engagement.
- Freeze frame moments to glean Bess's perspective prior to writing her diary.

SPaG focus

Identify nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs in the poem and how they form a structural pattern in each verse. Use the structure as a model for own writing.

Background Information

The Highwayman

The Highwayman was written by Alfred Noyes in 1906. It is set in the 18th century, a time when highwaymen (robbers on horseback) were common on lonely roads in Britain. These men were often seen as romantic outlaws, and stories about them were very popular. Noyes wrote the poem during a time when people loved dramatic tales of love and adventure. The poem mixes history with imagination, telling a tragic love story between a highwayman and Bess, the landlord's daughter. It shows themes of loyalty, sacrifice, and danger, and uses vivid descriptions to make the story exciting and emotional.



Core Reading Objectives

- Explore and analyse meaning in a poem using summary, impact of vocabulary and exploration of figurative language.
- Know a range of poetry by heart. (This is a homework task, but performances will be assessed in lessons using oracy criteria)

Y5 Myths, Legend sand Fables (4 weeks)

Unit Summary

In this four-week English unit, Year 5 pupils will read and explore a range of myths, legends and fables from different cultures. They will identify key features such as heroes, magical elements, traditional settings and clear morals, and compare the differences between each type of text.

Through reading and discussion, pupils will develop comprehension skills, including inference and summarising, while exploring how language creates atmosphere and meaning. They will investigate themes, characters and story structure, as well as vocabulary typical of traditional tales.

Pupils will then plan and write their own myths or fables, applying the features studied. They will focus on creating structured plots, effective characters, descriptive language and a clear moral. Drafting, editing and improving work will support accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling.

The unit concludes with a polished narrative piece that demonstrates pupils' understanding of myths, legends and fables.

Core Writing Outcomes

- A rewritten fable
- A creation story that explains how the world was made or a myth.

Core Writing Objectives

- Identify audience and purpose; select the right form with increasing independence. Use similar texts as models; collect ideas from reading/research.
- Plan narratives considering setting, character and structure. Note and develop initial ideas.
- Begin to describe settings, characters and atmosphere effectively.
- Begin to integrate dialogue to convey character and advance action.
- Proofread for spelling and punctuation; correct errors.
- Evaluate effectiveness of own and others' writing.
- Maintain correct tense and subject-verb agreement.

Core Oracy Outcomes

- Freeze-Frame and Talk**
- Purpose:** Explaining ideas, interpreting characters
 - In small groups, pupils create freeze-frames of key moments from a fable.
 - One pupil acts as a "thought-tracker" who taps characters to hear their thoughts aloud.
 - Pupils explain character choices and link them to the story's moral.
 - Oracy focus:**
 - Articulating thoughts and emotions
 - Using role-play to explore meaning
 - Speaking in full sentences with appropriate vocabulary

Background Information

Myths, legends and fables are traditional stories passed down over time to explain ideas, teach lessons, or entertain. **Myths** often explain natural events or beliefs and feature gods, heroes or supernatural forces. **Legends** are usually based on real people or places but are exaggerated over time, blending fact with fiction. **Fables** are short, imaginary stories—often using animals as characters—that teach a clear moral lesson about how people should behave.

Core Reading Objectives

- Increase familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from their literary heritage and books from other cultures and traditions.
- Identify, compare and discuss themes within and across two or more texts.
- Identify, compare and discuss the conventions of different types of texts.
- Contribute to group discussions about a text by expressing views and giving reasons.
- Show understanding of what has been read through presentations and debates.
- Make comparisons within and across texts.
- Ask a variety of questions to improve understanding as the text develops.

