

New Bedford Public Schools  
Division of Adult & Continuing Education

## **New Bedford High School Evening Extension**

2019 – 2020 School Year  
Trimester III

Learning Packet #2  
for  
**English 12 / IV**

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regarding this packet at the email address listed above.

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## Medieval Ballads

### Vocabulary terms:

1. Alderman (Noun) Chief officers in a shire, or district
2. Enquiry (Noun) Question; investigation
3. Succor (noun) Help; aid; relief
4. Certify (verb) Declare a thing true or accurate; verify; attest
5. Remnant (noun) What is left over; remainder; residue
6. Ransacked (verb) Searched through for plunder; pillaged; robbed
7. Asunder (adjective) Into parts or pieces
8. Assault (noun) Violent attack

### What are Ballads?

- Ballads were poems made for the masses; everyone could enjoy them. They utilized simpler vocabulary, as well as colloquial language.
- They were short narrative poems (they tell a story, have characters, and use dialogue).
- Ballads rhyme.
- Topics: Love, loss, humor based on love.
- Themes: Life is harsh and sometimes short; love is fleeting; Humor can be found in everyday events.
- Often, there were no references to religion and afterlife (Heaven or Hell)
- Call and response: a technique used in ballads. It involves the use of dialogue (two or more characters speaking to each other), with one character asking questions, and another answering them.
- Nonsense words: used to maintain the musical nature of the poem (filler)

- Little know facts like ravens' ability to speak:

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

**Ballads are the foundation of all popular music in the US.**

- Ballads would eventually evolve into folk music, which came to the US.
- Here, Folk music would inspire spirituals and country music.
- Spirituals would inspire the blues.
- Blues and country would converge to create rock n roll.
- Blues would also serve as the basis for jazz, Dixieland, Motown, rap, and pop music in general.
- The rhymes, topics (love and loss; everyday situations), themes, and techniques (call and response, nonsense words, etc.) are used in popular music today.

## Lord Randall

"O where hae ye been, Lord Randall, my son?  
O where hae ye been, my handsome young man?"  
"I hae been to the wild wood; mother, make my bed soon,  
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."

"Where gat ye your dinner, Lord Randall, my son? 5  
Where gat ye your dinner, my handsome young man?"  
"I dined wi' my true-love; mother, make my bed soon,  
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."

"What gat ye to your dinner, Lord Randall, my son?  
What gat ye to your dinner, my handsome young man?" 10  
"I gat eels boil'd in broo; mother, make my bed soon,  
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."

"What became of your bloodhounds, Lord Randall, my son?  
What became of your bloodhounds, my handsome young man?"  
"O they swell'd and they died; mother, make my bed soon, 15  
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."

"O I fear ye are poison'd, Lord Randall, my son!  
O I fear ye are poison'd, my handsome young man!"  
"O yes! I am poison'd; mother, make my bed soon,  
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wald lie down." 20

### Summary:

Lord Randall returns home to his mother from hunting and is unusually tired. His mother asks him several questions such as who he dined with and what happened to his dogs. He explains that he ate dinner with his true love and that his dogs swelled and died. She fears he has been poisoned, which he verifies as true.



O up then started our goodman,  
An angry man was he:  
"Will ye kiss my wife before my een,  
And scad me wi pudding bree?"

40

Then up and started our goodwife,  
Gied three skips on the floor:  
"Goodman, you've spoken the foremost word;  
Get up and bar the door."

**Summary:**

It is a holiday and the wife has been cooking sausages all day. The husband tells her to close the door, but she says she is busy. They make a deal that the first to speak will have to close the door.

Two men, who have been celebrating all day, enter the house of this husband and wife at midnight. They ask questions of the couple, but do not get answers because of the agreement between the husband and wife. The men then eat all of the food the wife has spent the day cooking. She is angry, but does not say anything. Then they decide to cut off the husband's beard with a knife after they pour boiling water on him, and kiss the wife.

The husband finally speaks when he yells at the two men in anger. The wife then does a dance on the floor and tells the husband that he has to close the door because he was the first one to talk.

## The Twa Corbies

As I was walking all alane,  
I heard twa corbies making a mane;  
The tane unto the tither did say,  
“Whar sall we gang and dine the day?”

“In behint yon auld fail dyke, 5  
I wot there lies a new-slain knight;  
And naebody kens that he lies there,  
But his hawk, his hound, and lady fair.

“His hound is to the hunting gane, 10  
His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl hame,  
His lady’s ta’en anither mate,  
So we may mak our dinner sweet.

“Ye’ll sit on his white hause-bane,  
And I’ll pike out his bonny blue e’en;  
Wi’ ae lock o’ his gowden hair 15  
We’ll theek our nest when it grows bare.

“Mony a one for him maks mane,  
But nane sall ken whar he is gane;  
O’er his white banes, when they are bare,  
The wind sall blaw for evermair.” 20

### Summary:

Two ravens are speaking to each other wondering what they will have for dinner. One of them suggests eating a knight that was just killed in battle. They talk about eating his pretty blue eyes while sitting on his collar bone and reinforcing their nest with his golden hair. At the end they explain that nobody will ever know who he was because nature will cause his flesh to disintegrate, thereby erasing his identity.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### Ballads

#### “Lord Randall”

1. Who is the speaker in the first two lines of each stanza?
2. Who is the speaker in the last two lines of each stanza?
3. With who had Lord Randall dined that day?
4. What has happened to his hounds?
5. What has happened to Lord Randall?

#### “Get up and Bar the Door”

1. What is the goodwife cooking at the beginning of the poem?
2. What does she ask her husband to do?
3. In the agreement that the husband and wife make, what will decide which of them bars the door?
4. Who enters the house?
5. What do they threaten to do?
6. Who must bar the door?

#### “The Twa Corbies”

1. How many ravens are there?
2. What were they discussing?
3. What did they decide to eat?
4. Where are his hounds and his hawk?
5. What has happened to his lady?
6. What does this poem say about the general outlook on life held by people of the middle ages?