

Worksheet 2

Get Away!

The Beauty of Ballads

The author of **Get Away!**, Henry Lawson, was a famous Australian writer who composed many well known stories and poems. One of his most preferred types of poetry structures is the 'ballad'. Ballads tell a descriptive story and are considered to be a form of narrative poetry. They are usually structured according to a set metre and rhyme pattern, called iambic heptameter: seven stanzas with around seven syllables per line, with every second line rhyming. When read aloud, they often have a 'musical' sound.

Read the first stanza of Henry Lawson's poem *The Ballad of the Drover*. Notice that the words in italics follow a rhyming pattern, called 'abcb'. This is continued throughout the rest of the poem (the two b's represent the lines that rhyme on the last word).

The Ballad of the Drover by Henry Lawson

Across the stony ridges,
Across the rolling *plain*,
Young Harry Dale, the drover,
Comes riding home *again*.
And well his stock-horse bears him,
And light of heart is *he*,
And stoutly his old pack-horse
Is trotting by his *knee*.

Task: Locate a ballad written by Henry Lawson or another famous Australian author (for example Banjo Paterson's *The Man From Snowy River* or *Mulga Bill's Bicycle*). Present your chosen ballad to an appropriate audience verbally including actions and props if you wish.

Extension Activities:

- Write an informative text about a famous Australian poet and discuss how their poetry reflects the Australian way of life at the time the poem was written.
- Compose your own ballad using iambic heptameter.