Europeana Learning Scenario

Title

Say it with a Ballad!

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Abstract

This Learning Scenario aims at introducing teenage ESL learners to the Ballad as literary genre. Students will learn about its main features and themes, analysing not only some of the most famous medieval ballads but also some works selected among resources available in Europeana. They will compare and contrast versions of the same ballad and search the web for modern and contemporary examples, especially those conveying social or political messages. To sum up their learning path, they will become creators and write a ballad, using the knowledge previously acquired (main features of the genre, language devices, sound devices, etc.) and playing with the language. The LS can be implemented totally in class or in a hybrid learning mode.

Keywords

ballad – literature – storytelling – activism – creative writing

Table of summary

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Subject	English as a Foreign Language – English Literature - Citizenship
Topic	The Ballad as a Literary Genre
Age of students	16-17
Preparation time	2 h
Teaching time	5 h 30'
Online teaching material	IdeaBoardz Quizizz (lesson) Quizizz (Formative Assessment) Genially Wakelet

	Rhymer
	Google Forms
Offline teaching material	-
Europeana resources used	*Willie, we have missed you*
	English & Scottish Ballads
	Irish Ballads

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Integration into the curriculum

The ballad is one of the poetic genres students are expected to learn within the curriculum of English literature in the third year of some Italian high schools (*liceo*). Moreover, since the ballad is a narrative poem, thus involving storytelling, this LS could also be implemented as part of the national EFL curriculum as it allows students to play with the language, thus consolidating linguistic structures and vocabulary.

Aim of the lesson

This learning experience will allow students to understand and apply the main features of this poetic genre, playing with the English language to produce their original and creative text.

Outcome of the lesson

At the end of their learning experience, students will have produced a collection of original ballads to tell a story or convey a message, which could later be curated in an e-book.

Trends

Collaborative learning, BYOD, Flipped learning, Game-based learning, Peer learning

21st century skills

Creativity and Innovation: think creatively and work creatively with others.

Critical thinking and problem solving: use various types of reasoning (inductive, deductive, etc.) as appropriate to the situation; synthesize and make connections between information and arguments; Interpret information and draw conclusions based on the best analysis; reflect critically on learning experiences and processes.

Communication and Collaboration: articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written, and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts; collaborate with others; demonstrate ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams.

Information and Media Literacy: access information efficiently (time) and effectively (sources); evaluate information critically and competently; understand and utilize the most appropriate media creation tools, characteristics, and conventions.

Life and career skills: monitor, define, prioritize, and complete tasks without direct oversight; reflect critically on past experiences in order to inform future progress.

Activities

Name of activity	Procedure	Time
Introductory groupwork brainstorming	Students are divided in groups of 4 and presented a ballad, "Willie, we have missed you", chosen among the Europeana resources. They are required to read it and find any evidence of language and sound devices previously learnt. They are also asked to list any other features they notice. All their findings are shared in a common IdeaBoardz students access from their smartphones / devices.	15 min.
Class Discussion	Groups report their findings in a short class discussion.	10 min.
Presentation of the genre	The teacher introduces the origins and the main themes and features of the ballad as a literary genre with an interactive Quizizz lesson. Students participate by answering polls and questions on their smartphones / personal devices.	20 min.
Storytelling and analysis of a poetic text	Working again in groups, students are required to choose a ballad from two public collections (Irish Ballads, English and Scottish Ballads) compiled by the teacher using Europeana. After reading and analysing it, they will tell their peers about the story (true or imagined) behind it and say how many features of the genre they have found.	45 min.
Virtual tour of the ballad	With the help of a Genially minisite, students explore various types of ballads, their influence over time and cultures and connection to modern songs. They compare and contrast medieval ballads such as Lord Randall, Geordie and Elfin Knight with their national versions and versions sung by famous singers. This task can be set as homework (flipped learning assignment).	30 min.
Formative Assessment	Students play an online quiz to check and consolidate what they have learnt so far.	15 min.
Ballads for change	Students listen to "The Ballad of Sacco and Vanzetti" and "No Bravery" and briefly discuss in class about protest songs drawing on folk traditions or replicating ballad features.	30 min.

Research and Present	Students work in groups to find and share further information about ballads which have been used as a form of protest or to denounce civil issues. They are required to present their findings using a tool of their choice (*MS Powerpoint* – *Google Slides* – *Genially* – *Canva*).	45 min.
Becoming ballad mongers (production)	Homework: students work in pairs to write a ballad. They can use a shared Google Document for collaborative writing and produce also a recording (mp3 file) of them reciting their ballad. The teacher can suggest the use of webtools such as Rhymer so that they can play with the language while writing, experimenting with rhyme, alliteration and other language and sound devices. All ballads will be posted by the students on a common Wakelet.	60 min.
Feedback session	Students read their peers' work on the Wakelet board and leave a short positive comment on at least three of them. Each pair of students is randomly assigned another pair's ballad to provide feedback on through a Form whose structure is modelled on the Project Zero Ladder of Feedback. Filled forms are subsequently shared so that each pair can read how their peers have assessed their work and discuss the result with the whole class.	60 min.

Assessment

Each student will be assessed by means of a rubric (attached in Annex) shared with the whole class at the beginning of the learning pathway.

**************************** **AFTER IMPLEMENTATION** ****************************

Student feedback

Students will provide feedback on their peers' works through an online form based on the Ladder of Feedback structure, as part of the learning process.

They will also provide feedback on the Learning Scenario through a different form.

Teacher's remarks

About the Europeana DSI-4 project

Europeana is Europe's digital platform for cultural heritage, providing free online access to over 53 million digitised items drawn from Europe's museums, archives, libraries and galleries. The Europeana DSI-4 project continues the work of the previous three Europeana Digital Service Infrastructures (DSIs). It is the fourth iteration with a proven record of accomplishment in creating access, interoperability, visibility and use of European cultural heritage in the five target markets outlined: European Citizens, Education, Research, Creative Industries and Cultural Heritage Institutions.

European Schoolnet (EUN) is the network of 34 European Ministries of Education, based in Brussels. As a not-for-profit organisation, EUN aims to bring innovation in teaching and learning to its key stakeholders: Ministries of Education, schools, teachers, researchers, and industry partners. European Schoolnet's task in the Europeana DSI-4 project is to continue and expand the Europeana Education Community.

Say it with a ballad!

Student Name: _____   Date: _____

Items	Needs improvement (1 Point)	Satisfactory (2 Points)	Good (3 Points)	Excellent (4 Points)
Presence of ballad features organised in a creative way Score = points x 2.0	Ballad features are absent or minimal.	The work contains some ballad features.	The work contains a wide range of ballad features and is well organized.	The work contains a wide range of ballad features, is well organized and creative, showing the student's personal touch.
Use of language and sound devices	The ballad features few or no language or sound devices.	The ballad features rhyme and alliteration.	The ballad features rhyme, alliteration and at least another language or sound device.	The ballad features various language and sound devices, such as rhyme, alliteration, consonance or assonance, simile or metaphor, anaphora, etc.
Language Accuracy Score = points x 2.0	The ballad presents many grammar mistakes, vocabulary is not used properly.	The ballad uses simple language structures with some mistakes.	The ballad uses grammar structures and vocabulary correctly, with only a few mistakes.	The ballad uses a wide variety of structures and vocabulary without major mistakes.
Pronunciation and intonation	Frequent problems with pronunciation and intonation. The speaker shows hesitations or interruptions which interfere with communication.	Pronunciation and intonation errors sometimes make it difficult to understand the student. The speaker shows hesitation or sounds unnatural in a way that sometimes interferes with communication.	Pronunciation and intonation are usually clear/accurate with a few problem areas. The speaker shows some hesitation or sounds unnatural.	Pronunciation and intonation are accurate. The speaker speaks smoothly, without hesitation.
Audio quality	Audio is recorded in a noisy environment with constant background noise and distractions. Volume changes are highly distracting. The voice of the speaker(s) is often unintelligible.	Audio is recorded in a semi-quiet environment with some background noise and distractions. Volume is sometimes inconsistent. The voice of the speaker(s) is sometimes unintelligible.	Audio is recorded in a quiet environment with minimal background noise and distractions. Volume is acceptable. The voice of the speaker(s) is mostly clear.	Audio is recorded in a quiet environment without background noise and distractions. Volume of voice enhances the performance.

Final Task Assessment Rubric - pdf file