

Ballad: a relatively short narrative poem, written to be sung, with a simple and dramatic action. The ballads tell of love, death, the supernatural, or a combination of these. Two characteristics of the ballad are **incremental repetition** and the ballad stanza. Incremental repetition repeats one or more lines with small but significant variations that advance the action.

The ballad stanza is four lines; commonly, the first and third lines contain four feet or accents, the second and fourth lines contain three feet.

Ballads often open abruptly, present brief descriptions, and use concise dialogue.

The **folk ballad** is usually anonymous and the presentation impersonal.