

Checklist for Ballads

A ballad is a form of verse to be sung or recited and characterized by its presentation of a dramatic or exciting episode in simple narrative form.

Here are some typical characteristics:

Plot:

- a single episode of highly dramatic nature is presented
- the supernatural is likely to play an important part
- the incidents are usually such as happen to common people (as opposed to nobility) and often have to do with domestic episodes
- physical courage and love are frequent themes

Structure:

- incremental repetition is common
- transitions are abrupt
- often the ballad is brought to a close with some sort of summary stanza

Narration:

- slight attention is paid to characterization or description in a detached narration

Dialogue:

- action is largely developed through dialogue with little clue as to who is speaking

Language:

- tragic situations and sudden disasters are presented with the utmost simplicity using plain, simple language