



## “Wright-ing” Prompt: Writing Your Own Ballad

Songs have been used for many years and are actually poetry put to music. This combination can produce a very pleasant or meaningful experience. Most songs are made up of **stanzas**. A **stanza** is a group of lines with a pattern that is repeated throughout the song. Each stanza has the same rhyme pattern.

Songs often use a very simple rhyme pattern like couplets. A ballad is a song that uses a pattern called a **ballad stanza**. The stanza has four lines in which the second and fourth lines share the rhyme, but the first and the third lines do not share a rhyme with any line in that stanza. Each line also uses a specific amount of syllables. The first line and the third line use 8 syllables and the second and fourth lines use 6 syllables.

Line 1 - 8 syllables

*The engine makes the thrust to go.*

Line 2 - 6 syllables/last word rhymes with line 4

*Wings make lift, pulling high!*

Line 3 - 8 syllables

*My fuselage is sleek and strong.*

Line 4 - 6 syllables/last word rhymes with line 2

*Rise above weight - I fly!*

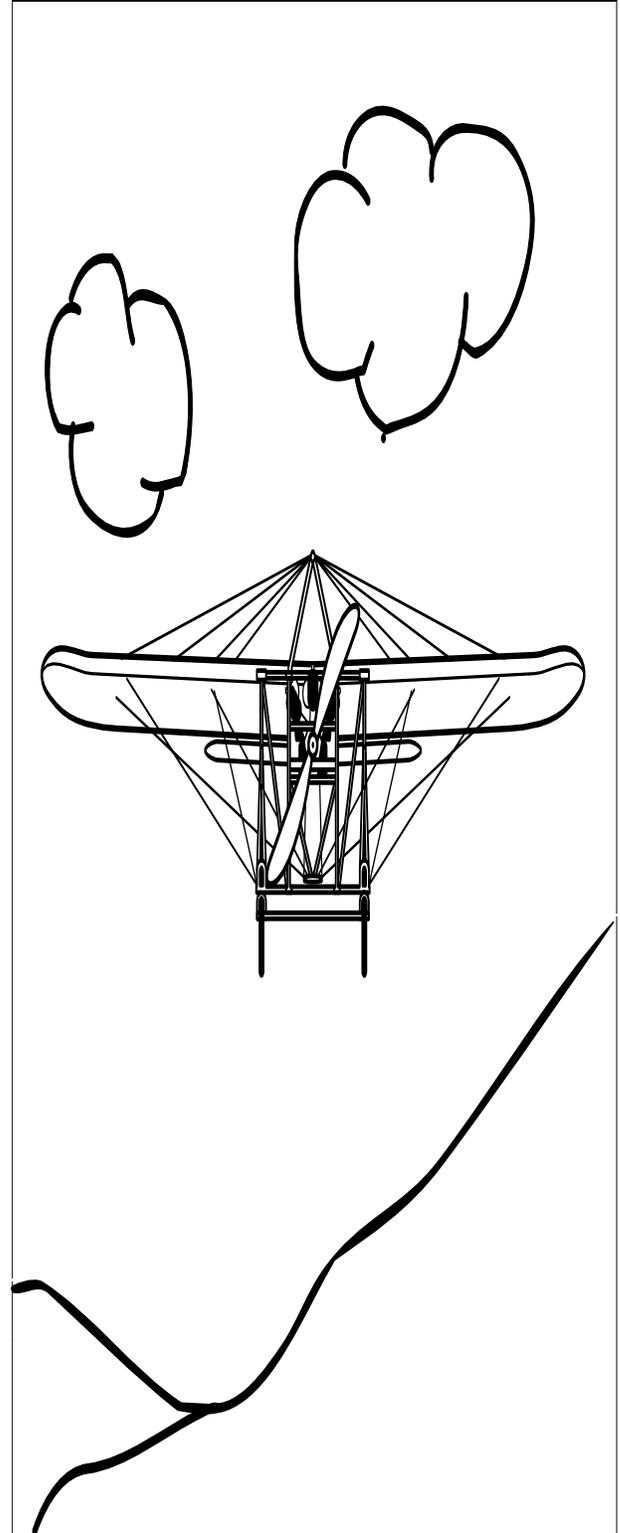
Read the ballad on the next page which uses ballad stanzas.



## “Wright-ing” Prompt: Bleriot’s Dream

BY SUSANNE ASHBY

For years he toiled on the ground  
over a crazy scheme.  
He yearned to make a machine fly;  
that was his absurd dream.  
He drew, he built, he flew, he crashed;  
'times he went round and round.  
No matter the bruises, breaks, sprains;  
his hope was still profound.  
Then came that morning in July  
when his craft was ready.  
To prove how good it really was  
must fly true and steady.  
Twenty miles wide, the Channel was  
a daring flight to make.  
From France to England by airplane  
there was a lot at stake.  
The motor coughed, the prop did roar,  
down the field it did speed.  
Quickly climbing into the sky  
Pegasus, winged steed!  
The French coast disappeared beneath  
as swirling mist embraced.  
The waves reached up as he flew by  
and clouds tried to give chase.  
Alone in the sky he flew on  
to make his vision true.  
White Cliffs of Dover flashed below;  
O'er England's coast he flew!  
Landing was rough — a broken prop —  
loud shouts came from the crowd!  
Thirty-seven hours in flight —  
the people were quite wowed!  
Louis went down in history  
as the first one to fly  
Across the Channel in a plane;  
his dream flight ne'er to die!





## “Wright-ing” Prompt: Writing a Ballad Guidesheet

**Directions:** Follow the steps below to guide you in creating your own three stanzas about Lindbergh’s flight.

### **Step 1: The beginning of the flight**

This stanza will set the scene and help the reader to visualize the initial part of his flight. You could describe any combination of these ideas:

- what his plane looked like
- the takeoff
- the weather conditions
- the flight path he took
- his feelings at the time

### **Step 2: The middle of the flight**

This stanza will describe the loneliest part of his journey, flying at night across the Atlantic Ocean. You could describe any combination of these ideas:

- leaving land behind
- watching the sun setting and being left in darkness with mist and stars
- crossing two oceans: night and water
- ice on wings
- storms
- cold
- endless fog
- his feeling of being completely alone in the world

### **Step 3: The last leg of the flight**

This stanza will describe the daylight hours as he crossed over England and the English Channel and then saw, in the evening hours, the lights of France. You could describe any combination of these ideas:

- no alternative, but death and failure
- sun rising and the colors of the sky changing
- he flies closer to the water and what he sees
- how he longs for a wave from someone
- seeing land and people
- the greeting from the crowd upon landing