

- Haiku, more than song lyrics, follow a regular principle of arrangement. A haiku, which is a Japanese lyric form that represents the poet's impression of a natural scene or object, is made up of 17 syllables in three lines, with 5 syllables in the first and third lines, and 7 in the second. With its highly predictable syllable pattern, as well as its brevity, a haiku can be conveniently used for both awareness-raising and production purposes.

2.3.1 Using song lyrics

Suggested Activities

Level: S2-S3

- Materials:**
- A PowerPoint slide that displays Verse 1 of the lyrics to the song *Butterfly* (PowerPoint file 2)
 - Activity Sheets (pp.52-54), which include the lyrics to the song *Butterfly*
 - An audio clip of the studio version of the song *Butterfly*, which is available on YouTube.

- Objectives:**
- Language-arts-related
- Understanding how the lyrics to a song fits in with the melody
 - Using knowledge of syllables to fill in the missing words in some parts of the lyrics to a song
- Phonics-related
- Understanding what syllables are
 - Understanding how a multi-syllabic word can be broken up into syllables
 - Using knowledge of syllables to count the number of syllables in words and in a single line of the lyrics to a song

Summary of the activities: Students read and listen to Verse 1 of the lyrics to the song *Butterfly*, work out the number of syllables in each line and draw conclusion about the syllable distribution pattern of the first verse. They then read Verse 2 and the rest of the lyrics, provide the missing words, taking into account the number of syllables required for the line concerned, and check answers by listening to the relevant verses of the song. Under teacher guidance, they identify the differences in the number of syllables in Verse 1 and Verse 2, and discuss the effects such variations may achieve.

Sharing learning intentions

Step 1 Introduce the objectives of the activities.

Presenting the lyrics

Step 2 Display Verse 1 (i.e. Lines 1-15) of the lyrics to the song *Butterfly* (PowerPoint file 2). Ask Ss questions to familiarise them with the content and mood of this verse, e.g.

- Where is the singer?
- What has she found?
- How does she feel about what she has found?
- Who is “she” in Line 7?
- Who is “you” in Line 10?
- What are the singer’s feelings towards “you”?

Focusing on phonics

Step 3 Play the first verse of the song. Draw Ss’ attention to the number of syllables in each of the 15 lines of this verse. Remind Ss what syllables are, if necessary, with examples available, e.g. “house” contains one syllable, “mother’s” and “always” contain two syllables. Indicate syllable boundaries by using a syllable marker, e.g. “mo/ther’s”, “al/ways”. Give out the Activity Sheets on pp.52-54. Refer Ss to Part I and have them count the number of syllables in each line of the verse. Tell Ss to insert syllable markers, where appropriate.

Step 4 Display the results of the syllable count on the blackboard and invite Ss to draw conclusion about the syllable distribution pattern of the first verse. Draw Ss’ attention to Lines 1-4 and Lines 5-8, where the melody is identical. *(All lines in the first verse contain 5 syllables. The melody of Lines 1-4 is identical to that of Lines 5-8 and that could explain why there is a repetition of the syllable distribution pattern.)*

If appropriate, discuss the effects achieved by having the same number of syllables in each line. *(To enhance the catchiness of the song, to make it easier to remember and hum)*

Reading the lyrics

Step 5 Refer Ss to Part II of the Activity Sheets. Help Ss further their comprehension of the content of the song by asking questions, e.g.

- In the first chorus, what are the singer’s feelings towards her mother? Are these feelings consistent with the feelings she expresses in Verse 1?
- In Verse 2, what is her mother’s house compared to? Why does she make such a comparison? How would you describe the singer’s relationship with her mother? How would you describe how the singer’s mother brought her up?



| Applying phonics and understanding of the lyrics | |
|---|--|
| Step 6 | Focus Ss' attention on Verse 2. Tell Ss that Lines 24-27 and Lines 28-31 have an almost identical melody as Lines 1-4 and Lines 5-8 in Verse 1. Ask Ss to fill in the missing words in the lyrics, based on their prediction about the number of syllables required. If necessary, provide clues in terms of the part of speech of the word required. |
| Step 7 | Invite Ss to share and justify their suggestions. |
| Step 8 | <p>Play Verse 2 of the song and ask Ss to do a syllable count and check if their suggestions are correct or not. Point out that the slight variation in the melody has resulted in a change in the number of syllables that are accommodated. <i>(There are 5 syllables in Line 24, 5 in Line 25, 6 in Line 26 and 5 in Line 27. There are 5 syllables in Line 28, 5 in Line 29, 6 in Line 30 and 6 in Line 31.)</i></p> <p>Play Verses 1 & 2 again and ask Ss to identify where a variation in the melody occurs again. <i>(Lines 34-35 have a different melody from Line 11.)</i> Ask Ss to compare the number of syllables in Lines 34-35 and in Line 11. If appropriate, discuss why such slight variations are necessary. <i>(To make the song more interesting and slightly unpredictable)</i></p> |
| Extending understanding of the lyrics | |
| Step 9 | <p>Ask Ss to rewrite the lyrics so that the song becomes a tribute to fathers for all their love. Remind Ss to bear in mind the melody of the song. Encourage them to provide the lyrics with a good title.</p> <p>To make the task more manageable, Ss can be asked to replace selected words with words of their choice so that the lyrics become better suited for the new purpose.</p> |
| Reviewing progress | |
| Step 10 | Guide Ss to reflect on what they have learnt, with reference to the objectives of the activities. |



Activity Sheets

Part I

Butterfly is a tune performed by the British singer-songwriter Corinne Bailey Rae, taken from her eponymous debut record in 2006. The song was, according to her, written with a member of her family in mind.

Read Verse 1 of the lyrics and do the following:

- (i) Indicate in the second column how many syllables there are in each line. The number of syllables in Line 1 is provided as an example. (Please note that words that are made up of more than one syllable are underlined.)
- (ii) Insert syllable markers where appropriate. Syllable markers are inserted in Lines 1-2 as an example.

| Lyrics to <i>Butterfly</i> (by Corinne Bailey Rae) | | No. of syllables |
|--|---|------------------|
| | <p>Verse 1 In my <u>mo/ther's</u> house There's a <u>pho/to/graph</u> Of a day gone past <u>Always</u> makes me laugh</p> | 5 |
| 5 | <p>There's a <u>little</u> girl <u>Wary</u> of the world She's got much to learn Get her <u>fingers</u> burnt</p> | |
| 10 | <p>An <u>affinity</u> <u>Between</u> you and me Was a <u>family</u></p> | |
| 15 | <p>Said that I'd be fine Gave me all your time And I left your side Like a <u>butterfly</u></p> | |

Listen to the first verse of the song and check the answers.

Part II

- (i) Read Verse 2 of the lyrics. Assuming that Verse 2 has an almost identical melody as Verse 1, fill in each blank with a word that suits the context of the song and that will make up the missing number of syllables in the line. Be prepared to explain your suggestions.

| | | |
|----|----------------|--|
| 20 | Chorus | Shower me with your love Colour every day You make the milk-gold sun Shine on me again Lift me up so high Watch me fly away And you give me life Like a butterfly |
| 25 | Verse 2 | In my mother's house There was _____ I wrapped myself in it Was my chrysalis |
| 30 | | As my life _____ See a pattern through Of you _____ me And I _____ you |
| 35 | | What was that you'd say Make your own _____ And when you're grown Make sure that you remain the same |
| 40 | Chorus | Shower me with your love Colour every day You make the milk-gold sun Shine on me again Lift me up so high Watch me fly away And you give me life Like a butterfly |
| 45 | | |

| | | |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Chorus | Shower me with your love |
| | | Colour every day |
| 50 | | You make the milk-gold sun |
| | | Shine on me again |
| | | Lift me up so high |
| | | Watch me fly away |
| | | And you give me life |
| 55 | | Like a butterfly |

- (ii) Listen to Verse 2 of the song and compare your suggestions with what you have heard in the recording. Then listen to it again. What have you noticed about the number of syllables in Lines 26 and 30?
- (iii) Listen to Verse 1 again. How many syllables are there in Line 11? Then listen to Verse 2 again. How many syllables are there in Lines 34-35 in total? Are there the same number of syllables in Line 11 and in Lines 34-35? Does Line 11 have the same melody as Lines 34-35?
- (iv) What would be the effects on the song of such variations in the melody and the number of syllables?

Suggested Answers

Part I

Words with at least one syllable marker are underlined.

| Lyrics to <i>Butterfly</i> (by Corinne Bailey Rae) | | No. of syllables |
|--|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Verse 1 | In my <u>mo/ther's</u> house | 5 |
| | There's a <u>pho/to/graph</u> | 5 |
| | Of a day gone past | 5 |
| | <u>Al/ways</u> makes me laugh | 5 |
| 5 | There's a <u>lit/tle</u> girl | 5 |
| | <u>Wa/ry</u> of the world | 5 |
| | She's got much to learn | 5 |
| | Get her <u>fin/gers</u> burnt | 5 |
| 10 | An <u>af/fi/ni/ty</u> | 5 |
| | <u>Be/tween</u> you and me | 5 |
| | Was a <u>fa/mi/ly</u> | 5 |
| 15 | Said that I'd be fine | 5 |
| | Gave me all your time | 5 |
| | And I left your side | 5 |
| | Like a <u>but/ter/fly</u> | 5 |

Part II

- (ii) *The number of syllables in Lines 26 and 30 is six.*
- (iii) *In Line 11, there are altogether five syllables across a single line. In Lines 34-35, the syllables are spread across two lines, with four syllables in Line 34 and eight syllables in Line 35, making it a total of twelve syllables. Line 11 has a slightly different melody from Lines 34-35.*
- (iv) *Such variations in both the melody and the number of syllables make the song less predictable and more interesting.*

The Complete Version of the Lyrics to *Butterfly*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Verse 1</p> <p>5</p> <p>10</p> <p>15</p> <p>Chorus</p> <p>20</p> <p>25</p> <p>30</p> <p>35</p> | <p>In my mother's house There's a photograph Of a day gone past Always makes me laugh</p> <p>There's a little girl Wary of the world She's got much to learn Get her fingers burnt</p> <p>An affinity Between you and me Was a family</p> <p>Said that I'd be fine Gave me all your time And I left your side Like a butterfly</p> <p>Shower me with your love Colour every day You make the milk-gold sun Shine on me again Lift me up so high Watch me fly away And you give me life Like a butterfly</p> <p>Verse 2</p> <p>In my mother's house There was happiness I wrapped myself in it Was my chrysalis</p> <p>As my life unfolds See a pattern through Of you protecting me And I protecting you</p> <p>What was that you'd say Make your own mistakes And when you're grown Make sure that you remain the same</p> <p>Now I realise What was on your mind When I left your side Like a butterfly</p> | <p>40</p> <p>45</p> <p>50</p> <p>55</p> <p>Chorus</p> <p>Chorus</p> | <p>Shower me with your love Colour every day You make the milk-gold sun Shine on me again Lift me up so high Watch me fly away And you give me life Like a butterfly</p> <p>Shower me with your love Colour every day You make the milk-gold sun Shine on me again Lift me up so high Watch me fly away And you give me life Like a butterfly</p> |
|---|---|---|---|



Song Title: Butterfly
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