

Grade 7 Playlist: Rhymes and Repeated Sounds

Aligns with CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4:

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

Welcome

Rhymes and other repeating sounds occur most often in poems, but plays also use these techniques sometimes. When reading or watching a play, listen for any words, phrases, or sounds that characters repeat. What do they reveal about the characters? Why might the playwright include these sounds or rhymes?

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn and practice how to:

- explain how rhymes and repeated sounds impact a play.

Review**Key Terms**

- **Rhyme:** two or more words with the same ending sound
- **Interjection:** a short word used to express emotion such as “oh!” “wow!” and “darn!”
- **Rhythm:** when lines of a poem, play, or song follow a certain pattern of beats

Pygmalion is about a language professor named Henry Higgins who tries to teach a lower-class flower girl named Eliza Doolittle to be a proper lady. To do this, he trains her to speak with a proper English accent.

In many ways, *Pygmalion* is a play about language and sounds. Higgins and his friend Pickering study people’s accents, and Eliza’s accent makes her stand out as lower class. Much of the play’s humor comes from how Eliza speaks and the sounds she makes. Throughout the play, George Bernard Shaw has Eliza repeat the same **interjection**, although she expresses different emotions each time she does it. Interjections and other expressive sounds help create the mood, or feeling of the play.

Major Characters in *Pygmalion*

- | | |
|--|---|
| ~ Eliza Doolittle: A flower girl from a lower economic class who does not speak what is considered proper English. | ~ Mrs. Higgins: Henry Higgins’ mother |
| ~ Henry Higgins: A professor who studies languages and accents of people in different parts of the world. He teaches people how to speak proper English. | ~ Freddy Eynsford Hill: Falls in love with Eliza, writes letters to her, and becomes a marriage option for her by the end of the play |
| ~ Colonel Pickering: A language scholar who wants to learn more about Higgins’s work and persuades him to teach Eliza. | |



Watch!

Eliza's accent is called a Cockney accent. Watch this video to hear what a Cockney accent sounds like:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnjGNJ5JL8w>

Read!

Read this article to learn more about the history of the Cockney accent:

<http://public.oed.com/aspects-of-english/english-in-use/cockney/>

Exploring the Standard**A Closer Look: Rhyme and Rhythm**

Words **rhyme** when they repeat the same ending sound. **Rhythm** occurs when multiple lines follow a certain pattern of sounds or beats. Rhyme and rhythm are often used to emphasize something, create a mood, or to simply sound pleasant.

Listen!

In 1956, *Pygmalion* was adapted into a musical called *My Fair Lady*. Listen to a song Eliza sings called "Wouldn't It Be Lovely?" Notice how each line follows a certain rhythm and ends with a rhyme. This makes the song sound pleasant and playful.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=beuKWY-6FPc>

Example 1

Read this excerpt from Act II of *Pygmalion*. Pay attention to the rhyme and rhythm of the poem Higgins and Pickering recite. What impact does this poem have on this part of the play?

HIGGINS. What's your name?

THE FLOWER GIRL. Liza Doolittle.

HIGGINS [declaiming gravely] Eliza, Elizabeth, Betsy and Bess, They went to the woods to get a birds nes':

PICKERING. They found a nest with four eggs in it:

HIGGINS. They took one apiece, and left three in it.

They laugh heartily at their own wit.

LIZA. Oh, don't be silly.

MRS. PEARCE. You mustn't speak to the gentleman like that.

LIZA. Well, why won't he speak sensible to me?

