

Long Black Veil

Level: Int & Up

Objective: 3rd conditional
I wish/If only for regrets
Extended speaking in monologue form

Song: Long Black Veil by Johnny Cash or Dave Matthews Band. Cash's version is easier to understand but Dave's version is sadder and gives the idea of a love story better.

Plan: Tell the students that they are going to listen to a story. Do auxiliary vocabulary. Ask students to guess the content of the story using the words. Play the song once. Ask the students to identify the mood. Then, ask the students to compare their original ideas about the content to the mood and what they understood from the song. Give the students the lyrics and let them read and follow along with the song.

Do the comprehension questions quick with the class to make sure everyone is on the same page. Afterwards, ask them what they think about the story.

Ask the students to think about how the man felt before his execution and the woman afterwards (try to elicit "regretful") Tell them to choose the man or the woman. If possible show them a clip of the famous scene from Hamlet <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lsrOXAY1arg&feature=fvst>. If not possible, explain the concept and demonstrate. Tell the students that they will need to write a monologue and perform it in small groups or for the class from the perspective of one of the lovers. Review I wish+past perfect or If only + past perfect if necessary.

Alternative:

Ask them to explain to their partner what they would have done if they had been in that person's position. Their partner then needs to relate their partner's opinion to the class.

Hand out the cut up of other famous lovers. Have the students prepare and perform a monologue for the class.

Long Black Veil

Ten years ago on a cold dark night,
someone was killed 'neath the town hall lights.
There were few at the scene, but they all agreed,
that the slayer who ran looked a lot like me.

Chorus ~ She walks these hills, in a long black veil.
She visits my grave, when the night winds wail.
Nobody knows, nobody sees, nobody knows, but me

The Judge said, "son, what is your alibi?
If you were somewhere else, then you won't have to die."
Well I said not a word, though it meant my life,
for I'd been in the arms of my best friend's wife.

Chorus*

Now the scaffold is high, and eternity is near.
She stood in the crowd, and shed not a tear.
Oh sometimes at night, when the cold wind moans
In a long black veil, she cries over my bones

Chorus ~ She walks these hills, in a long black veil.
When the cold winds blow, and the night winds wail.
Nobody knows, nobody sees.
Nobody knows, but me.

Comprehension Questions:

- 1) Where and when does the song take place?
- 2) Why is the singer on trial?
- 3) Was the singer actually the killer?
- 4) Why didn't he say he was innocent?
- 5) Who is the woman in the long black veil?

Auxiliary Vocabulary – a slayer, a scene, a grave, a scaffold, eternity, a veil, an alibi, to wail, to moan

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The Judge said son, what is your alibi,
if you were somewhere else, then you won't have to die.
I spoke not a word, though it meant my life,
for I'd been in the arms of my best friends wife.

Chorus*

Now the scaffold is high, and eternity's near.
She stood in the crowd, and shed not a tear.
But sometimes at night, when the cold wind moans
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Famous Lovers

Romeo and Juliet – Madly in love, but their families are feuding and hate each other, so they are forbidden to be together.

Antony and Cleopatra – Powerful rulers of countries. They are in love, but Rome is scandalized by Antony's marriage to Cleopatra. Rome does not trust Egypt and does not want them to be united.

Scarlett O'Hara & Rhett Butler – Scarlett realizes she loves Rhett, but it is too late. Rhett no longer loves her.

Lancelot & Guinevere – Guinevere is King Arthur's wife, but falls deeply in love with his best friend, Lancelot.

Bonnie & Clyde – Two bank robbers and murderers that were constantly running from the law.

Sheherazade & King Shahryar – King Shahryar married a woman and then killed her the morning after the wedding, but Sheherazade told the king a story every night, but would not finish it until the next night. The king always wanted to hear the end, so he let her live.

Samson & Delilah – Samson loved Delilah, but he was attacking her land. Her people wanted her to find the secret of his power, so they could kill him.