

Active Reading

WRITE What are two things the mother is afraid may harm her child?

1. _____

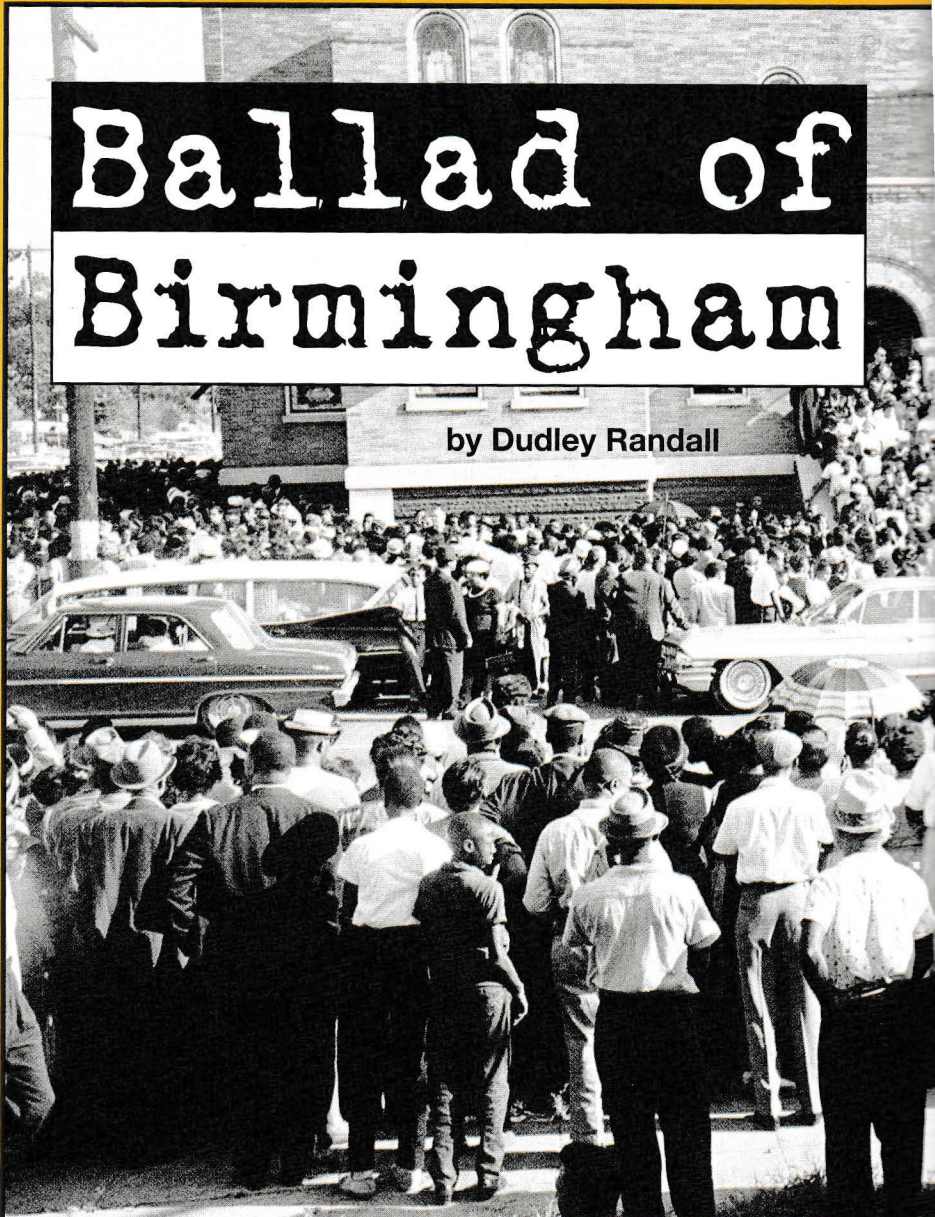
2. _____

CRITICAL READING
Evaluate

WRITE This poem uses a dialogue between two characters to give an account of a historic event. How effective is the poem at bringing the event to life?

React and Write

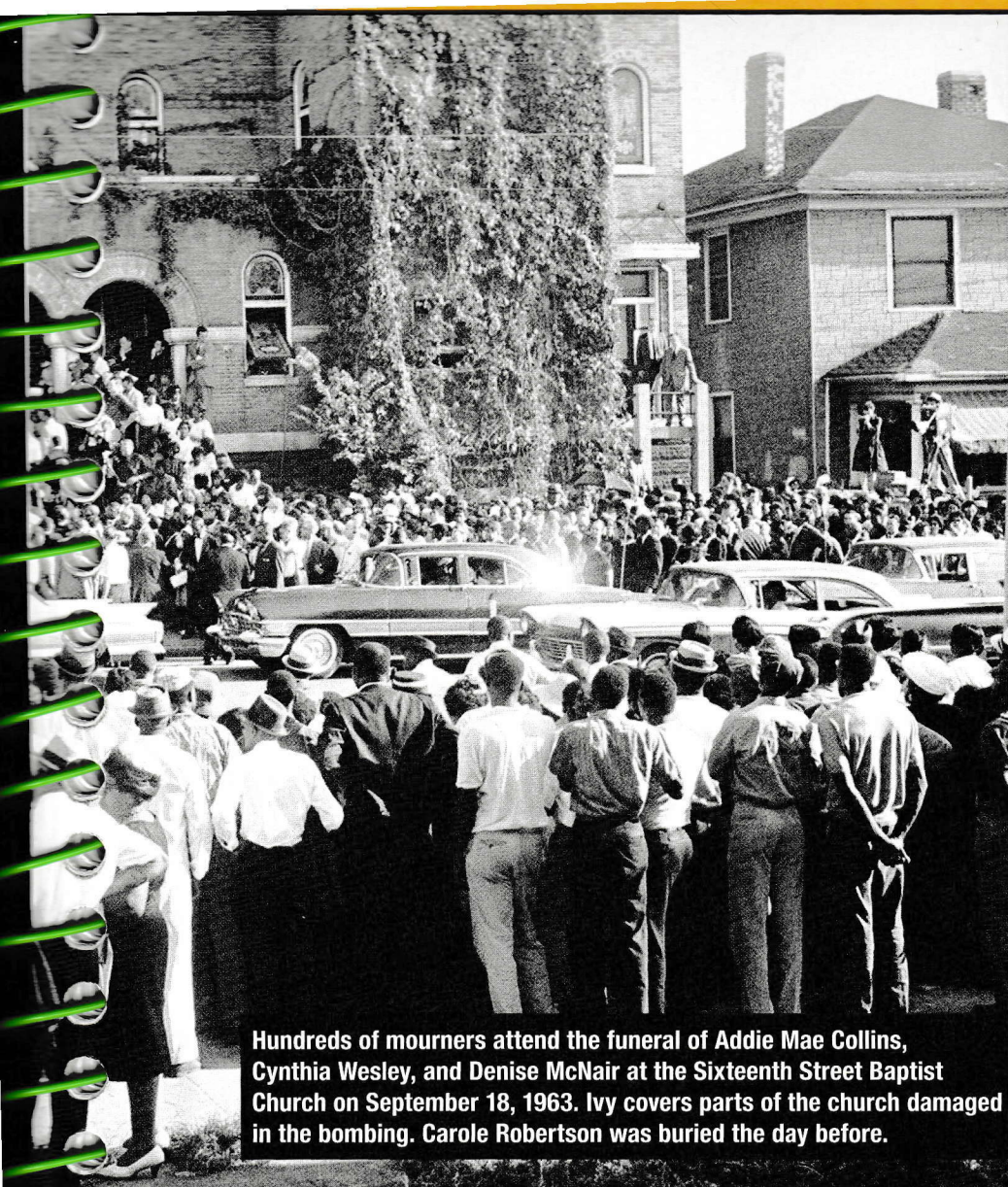
WRITE How does the young girl in this poem feel about the Freedom Marches? Would you feel the same way?



“Mother dear, may I go downtown
Instead of out to play,
And march the streets of Birmingham
In a Freedom March today?”

“No, baby, no, you may not go,
For the dogs are fierce and wild,
And clubs and hoses, guns and jails
Aren’t good for a little child.”

Words to Know! **ballad** a song or poem that tells a story



Hundreds of mourners attend the funeral of Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley, and Denise McNair at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church on September 18, 1963. Ivy covers parts of the church damaged in the bombing. Carole Robertson was buried the day before.

“But, mother, I won’t be alone.
Other children will go with me,
And march the streets of Birmingham
To make our country free.”

“No, baby, no, you may not go,
For I fear those guns will fire.
But you may go to church instead
And sing in the children’s choir.” ➤



Craft and Structure

Two or more words **rhyme** when their ending syllables have the same or similar sound.

CIRCLE Find the words that rhyme in “Ballad of Birmingham.”



Craft and Structure

Point of view is the perspective from which a story or poem is told. This poem is written from more than one point of view.

1. ➤ WRITE Who is speaking in the first and third stanzas?

2. ➤ WRITE Who is speaking in the second and fourth stanzas?

Active Reading

WRITE Where does the daughter go?

React and Write

WRITE If you were a teen during the civil rights movement, which demonstrations would you have joined? Why?

Make Inferences

WRITE Why does the mother find only her daughter's shoe?

She has combed and brushed her night-dark hair,
 And bathed rose petal sweet,
 And drawn white gloves on her small brown hands,
 And white shoes on her feet.

The mother smiled to know that her child
 Was in the sacred place,
 But that smile was the last smile
 To appear upon her face.



Denise McNair
 Nov. 17, 1951–Sept. 15, 1963



Carole Robertson
 April 24, 1949–Sept. 15, 1963



Craft and Structure

Irony is the contrast between what is expected and what actually happens.

1. **WRITE** Where did the mother think her daughter would be safest: at the church or at the protest?

2. **WRITE** What is ironic about this?



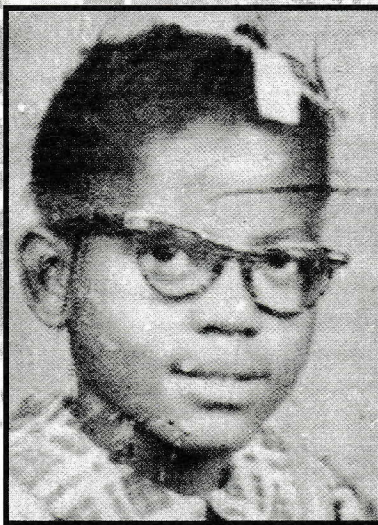
Cross-Text Analysis

WRITE Which person in this Workshop do you most admire? Explain why.

For when she heard the explosion,
Her eyes grew wet and wild.
She raced through the streets of Birmingham
Calling for her child.

She clawed through bits of glass and brick,
Then lifted out a shoe.

“O, here’s the shoe my baby wore,
But, baby, where are you?” **END**



Addie Mae Collins

April 18, 1949–Sept. 15, 1963



Cynthia Wesley

April 30, 1949–Sept. 15, 1963