Independent Ballad Deconstruction: The Wreck of Edmund Fitzgerald

Name:

Read through The Wreck of Edmund Fitzgerald and pay careful attention to the narrative, devices, poetic techniques etc. Then answer questions #1-11 on a separate piece of lined paper.

1) What poetry genre would you classify this ballad as and why?

2) Find and record an example of:

* A caesura
* An enjambment

3) Does this ballad have rhythm? Discuss how the rhythm is created by making reference to:

* Metre
* Repetition

4) What type of stanza has been used in this ballad?

5) Find and record an example of:

* internal rhyme
* end rhyme

6) What is the end rhyme scheme of this poem?

7) Find an example of dialogue in the ballad and record it. Why has the dialogue been included?

8) What is the mood of this ballad? Find and record two words that help establish the mood (diction).

9) Find and record examples of the following literary devices:

* personification (x3)
* metaphor
* alliteration
* imagery
* hyperbole

10) Find and record the 5 W’s of the narrative.

11) Using the same writing style as Gordon Lightfoot, write an additional stanza that would follow stanza 4, and provide additional information about the story.

“Wreck Of The Edmund Fitzgerald”

Gordon Lightfoot

The legend lives on from the Chippewa on down

of the big lake they called "Gitche Gumee."

The lake, it is said, never gives up her dead

when the skies of November turn gloomy.

With a load of iron ore twenty-six thousand tons more

than the Edmund Fitzgerald weighed empty,

that good ship and true was a bone to be chewed

when the Gales of November came early.

The ship was the pride of the American side

coming back from some mill in Wisconsin.

As the big freighters go it was bigger than most

with a crew and good captain well seasoned,

concluding some terms with a couple of steel firms

when they left fully loaded for Cleveland.

And later that night when the ship's bell rang,

could it be the north wind they'd been feelin'?

The wind in the wires made a tattle-tale sound

and a wave broke over the railing.

And every man knew, as the captain did too,

'twas the witch of November come stealin'.

The dawn came late and the breakfast had to wait

when the Gales of November came slashin'.

When afternoon came it was freezin' rain

in the face of a hurricane west wind.

When suppertime came the old cook came on deck sayin'.

"Fellas, it's too rough t'feed ya."

At seven P.M. a main hatchway caved in; he said,

"Fellas, it's been good t'know ya!"

The captain wired in he had water comin' in

and the good ship and crew was in peril,

and later that night when his lights went out of sight

came the wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald.

Does any one know where the love of God goes

when the waves turn the minutes to hours?

The searchers all say they'd have made Whitefish Bay

if they'd put fifteen more miles behind her.

They might have split up or they might have capsized,

or they may have broke deep and took water.

And all that remains are the faces and the names

of the wives and the sons and the daughters.

Lake Huron rolls, Superior sings

in the rooms of her ice-water mansion.

Old Michigan steams like a young man's dreams;

the islands and bays are for sportsmen.

And farther below Lake Ontario

takes in what Lake Erie can send her,

and the iron boats go as the mariners all know

with the Gales of November remembered.

In a musty old hall in Detroit they prayed,

in the Maritime Sailors' Cathedral.

The church bell chimed 'til it rang twenty-nine times

for each man on the Edmund Fitzgerald.

The legend lives on from the Chippewa on down

of the big lake they call "Gitche Gumee."

Superior, it is said, never gives up her dead

when the gales of November come early.