

Task 4: Baroque or plain?

This week you get to choose your task, depending on whether you feel more temperamentally suited to a baroque style, or a plain, oral style. So choose:

- (a) One of Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty's stranger productions was a plan for a universal language (see *Logopandecteision* on moodle). This is the weird and wonderful project that boasts 11 grammatical gender distinctions, including 'god, goddess, man, woman, beast, or anything inanimate.' The main qualities of this universal language are given in a set of 137 '[articles](#)'. So, to get into the mind set of this royalist visionary, **write 5 articles of your own, in a baroque style (long sentences, long words, preferably from Greek but you can use Latin if you are stuck) that characterise your own vision of a useful, universal language.**

OR

- (b) The oral genre of the folk ballad is characterised by a plain, matter of fact style deployed in the telling of fantastic tales. Ballads came to prominence in the 17th century and started being recorded in the 18th. Various 'formulas' have been suggested for the ballad, including that the following:
- It uses 'ballad' metre of a 4-beat line followed by a 3 or 4-beat line.
 - It uses a 4-line stanza, rhyming at least minimally on the 2nd and 4th lines, eg

*It was intill a pleasant time,
Upon a simmer's day;
The noble Earl of Mar's daughter
Went forth to sport and play.*

- The emphasis is on action and dialogue, not description.
- There are a lot of formulae and repetitions, e.g

*Then up and spoke an auld, auld knight
And an auld, auld knight was he...*

- It follows one of a finite number of 'plots', eg
 1. *Point of departure: Person A (who is poor) loves Person B.*
 2. *Test: Person A has to watch Person B marry Person C (who is rich).*
Person A has to perform a serving function at the wedding ceremony,
 3. *Reaction: Person A suffers but expresses this suffering alone in song.*
 4. *Recognition: Person C recognizes Person A as Person B's true love.*
Person C renounces the claim to Person B, enabling Person A to marry Person B.
 5. *Reward/Wedding: Person A suddenly comes into wealth, enabling a marriage to Person B.*

Using the ballad form, write at least 5 verses, based on this plot. You can tell all or only part of the story. Examples of English and Scottish ballads can be found [here](#)