“The Wabash Cannonball” is about a train, a theme common in music of the late 1800s and early 1900s. The song’s earliest known version is from a piece of sheet music published in 1882, though it had a different title then; it became known as “The Wabash Cannonball” in 1904. It’s unclear whether the song is about a specific train by this name, but the tune celebrates the various places the train visits on its journey and the reaction of all the people who see or hear it as it passes by.

Out from the wide Pacific to the broad Atlantic shore
She climbs flowery mountains, over hills and by the shore
Although she’s tall and handsome and she’s known quite well by all
She’s a regular combination of the Wabash Cannonball
Oh, the eastern states are dandy, so the western people say
Chicago, Rock Island, St. Louis by the way
To the lakes of Minnesota, where the rippling waters fall
No changes to be taken on the Wabash Cannonball

[Chorus]
Oh, listen to the jingle, the rumble and the roar
As she glides along the woodlands, over hills and by the shore
She climbs the flowery mountains, hear the merrier hobo squall
She glides along the woodlands, the Wabash Cannonball
WRITE YOUR OWN VERSION!

Out from the wide ___________ to the broad ___________ shore
(ocean name) (ocean name)

She climbs ___________ ___________ , over ___________ and by the ___________
(adjective) (noun) (noun) (noun)

Although she’s ___________ and ___________ and she’s known quite well by all
(adjective) (adjective)

She’s a regular combination of the ______________________
(name your train!)

Oh, the eastern states are dandy, so the western people say

______________, ________________, ________________ by the way
(3 city or town names)

To the ___________ of _____________, where the _____________ _____________ fall
(noun) (state name) (adjective) (noun)

No changes to be taken on the ________________________
(your train’s name)

[Chorus]
Oh, listen to the _____________, the _____________ and the _____________
(sound noun) (sound noun) (sound noun)

As she glides along the _____________, over _____________ and by the _____________
(noun) (noun) (noun)

She climbs the _____________ _____________, hear the merrier hobo _____________
(adjective) (noun) (verb)

She glides along the _____________, the ______________________
(noun) (your train’s name)