

Student Name _____ *Date Submitted* _____

ENGLISH LITERATURE 12 (v4)

Section 1.0 Send-In

Complete this send-in as part of your course enrollment. This will be your first mark entered for the course. When this assignment has been received by SCIDES, your course materials will be sent to you.

This send-in consists of:

- English Lit 12 Course Planner _____ / 5 marks
- Activity 1B (1) _____ /10 marks
- Activity 1B (2) _____ /10 marks

TOTAL: _____ /25 marks _____ %



Mail:

- 1) This **Cover Sheet**
- 2) **Return Address** (page 2 or Comment Sheet) – Fill out with your complete name and address.
- 3) **Send-In Assignments** – Completed Part A and Part B assignments.

*Be sure to put proper **postage** on the envelope (if necessary) and add your **return address**.*

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Is this a change of address?

Yes No

Please print in pencil

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY / TOWN, PROVINCE / COUNTRY, POSTAL CODE

Use this address box
if you are mailing
a **TEST**

Please print

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY / TOWN
PROVINCE / COUNTRY
POSTAL CODE

Is this a change of address?

Yes

No

Use this address box
if mailing a
SEND-IN ACTIVITY

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Name: _____

___ / 5 marks

English Literature 12 Course Planner

Complete all the following contact information that applies to you and check the one that is the best way to contact you during the day:

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

other way to contact you (explain) _____

When is the best time for your teacher or tutor/marker to contact you? ___:___ AM PM

Check your Grade: Grade 10 Grade 11 Grade 12 Graduated

Timetable Options/Course Plan

One of the keys to being successful in anything that you do is to take the time to plan carefully. The objective of this section is to help you create a timetable for managing your schoolwork and enable you to set goals for finishing all of your courses by your desired completion date. **Most full-time students complete 3 to 5 assignments each week.**

The flexibility of our distributed learning program offers you many choices but a plan for completion is essential to success. Most full-time students complete 8 courses in a school year (10 months). The most common timetables are "semestered" (4 courses at a time) or "linear" (8 courses at a time).

What is your planned schedule? Semester System (22 weeks) Linear System (44 weeks)

other: *(explain)* _____

What is your intended **start** date for this course? Now Other date: _____

What is your intended **completion** date for this course? _____ (month) _____ (year)

How many courses are you taking with us this year? _____ How many with other schools/programs? _____

English Lit 12 consists of 20 more send-in assignments and 4 module tests. How many assignments/tests per week must you do to complete this course as planned? _____



- *Mark target submission dates on a calendar.*
- *Add this same information from other courses to help you create a schedule for completion.*
- *Record the actual dates you submit work so you can track your progress.*



Delivery Method

English Lit 12 is offered as an online-supported print course. You will receive workbooks in print form and you have the option of also accessing the online support for the course. If you sign up for the English Lit 12 online classroom, you may still choose to do assignments on paper and send in by regular mail.

In the online classroom, you will find:

- assignments uploaded as templates in Word. You email in the completed assignments as attachments.
- tips & pointers for doing the course including comments from the marker/tutor and links out to websites that clarify the concepts
- access to other learners and your marker/tutor

Benefits to the online classroom:

- word-processing ability on assignments
- clarification of concepts and/or assignment instructions
- quicker turn-around time for marked assignments
- improved/corrected assignments (the uploaded assignments may differ from the print versions)
- participation is completely optional even once you have access



Would you like access to the online classroom for English Lit 12?

YES

NO THANKS

Provincial Exam

English Lit 12 is a provincially examinable course. Students on the 2004 and Adult Graduation Programs have the option of writing the provincial exam. Students who graduated on or are completing the 1995 Graduation Program must write the provincial exam to have it recognized as complete by the Ministry of Education. The exam may also be required by some post-secondary programs -- it is your responsibility to check.



Do you plan to write the provincial exam?

NO

NOT SURE

YES – *in which session do you intend to write? (Read the information sheets which will be included in the course materials we will send and/or check the Ministry of Education website at <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/>)*

Session date: _____

Anything else?

Is there anything else you would like us to know about you or your education plans that will help us provide you with better service?

Section 1

Lesson A

A CUE TO GOOD WRITING

You naturally want to be able to write well. Everyone who has ideas wants to share them—to communicate. Writing is simply written communication, and we all want to communicate. Perhaps you already write well, but you may be glad of a little additional help.

The mnemonic device given below shows graphically a threefold basis of good writing, and provides a picture for easy retention. It gives you the *cue*.

- C: Coherence**—relating ideas and showing clearly their relationship
- U: Unity**—keeping to the point
- E: Emphasis**—making ideas vivid, and memorably expressed

Let us examine this *cue* a little further.

Coherence

The ideas in a paragraph, an essay, or a book must be related and the relation clearly shown so that the reader or listener is not impelled to ask, “Where’s the connection?” or to remark, “I don’t see the relation.” Here are some suggestions that you will find helpful:

1. Order of Arrangement

Arrange details of your composition in some logical order. Then the relationship between ideas will be evident. Here are some order patterns to keep in mind: **time, place, importance, general to particular, particular to general, familiar to unfamiliar.** (As an example of the last pattern of order mentioned—familiar to unfamiliar—one might describe a cougar, which is unfamiliar, by comparing it with the family cat, which is familiar. With a pattern like this, it is easy to show the connection between thoughts.)

2. Grammatical Correctness

Be sure that your constructions are correct grammatically; for example, a singular noun requires a singular verb, and a singular noun is replaced by a singular pronoun. All the rules of grammar are important in coherence—the showing of clear relationships.

3. Transition

Make a smooth transition from thought to thought, so that the relationship becomes easily evident. Here are the three generally recognized ways of obtaining clear transition:

- (a) **Repetition**—Repeat a word, a thought, a grammatical construction.
- (b) **Explicit reference**—Refer clearly, usually by a pronoun, to some person, place, idea, etc., in the preceding material; for example, “This was the man who. . . .” In the same way, you may help the reader anticipate the material to follow.
- (c) **Transitional words or phrases**—Expressions like “in the meantime,” “on the other hand,” and “however” help provide a bridge from thought to thought.

Unity

Unity is probably the most important essential of all good writing—the most easily achieved, the most frequently neglected. We all wander from the point, but when we do we lose our reader or our listener. Remember that a sentence deals with **one thought**, a paragraph with **one topic**, and an essay with **one subject**. A key word in the topic sentence is often a great help. “Unity” means “oneness,” and the key word helps us focus on that essential oneness.

Emphasis

Emphasis is the quality in a composition that keeps it from being dull. You will eventually find for yourself many ways to keep your communications interesting. In the meantime, however, here are a few to go on with.

1. Vocabulary (varied, exact, vivid, specific)
2. Position (strength at beginning and end of sentence or paragraph)
3. Variety (in vocabulary, in sentence patterns, in sentence length, in openings and endings, etc.)
4. Brevity (in vocabulary, in sentence structure)
5. Climax
6. Repetition (of words, of phrases, of grammatical construction)

In each section you will be asked to write paragraphs or short essays. You will be expected to remember the **cues to good writing**. You should also remember Alexander Pope's dictum:

*True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.*



Now turn to pages 11-12 in *Adventures in English Literature* (henceforth referred to as *the textbook*), and see how many **cues to good writing** you can find in the editorial discussion of *Beowulf*. Consider all four paragraphs.

Use of the Dictionary

Part of the benefit of any course in English is the expansion of vocabulary. To get the most out of the course, and to increase your word power, use your dictionary. The following will show you some of the help that a dictionary will give you.

1. Meaning

Lesson A included the word "mnemonic." In your dictionary you found that this word means "designed to aid the memory."

2. Pronunciation

You also found in your dictionary that the initial "m" of "mnemonic" is silent, and the accent is on the second syllable.

3. Derivation

If you were using your dictionary correctly, you also found that the word “mnemonic” comes from the Greek adjective “mnemon,” meaning “mindful.” A study of the derivation and history of a word is called *etymology*.

4. Spelling

In the sentence containing “mnemonic,” the word “basis” was used. You may have asked yourself, “What is the plural of this word?” Your dictionary gives you this information. The plural is “bases.”



In addition to your dictionary, you can look up words specific to the discussion of literature in the “Literary Terms and Techniques” glossary in your textbook, which begins on page 1118. As you work through the course be sure to refer to this glossary when you come across new literary terms.

Example of Permanent Notes (Outline Format)

You may develop your own method of making notes. No matter what style you choose, remember that there are many advantages in a style that gives different levels of particularization. In reviewing, for example, you may look at all the main headings and try mentally to fill in the subheadings. If you are not able to do this, the subject needs more study or review.

Following is an example of permanent notes which use the outline format. They are for the textbook material and the Unit 1 material on the Anglo-Saxon period.

ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

I. Inhabitants

- A. Appearance—blue-eyed, blond
- B. Physique—hardy, athletic
- C. Character
 - 1. brave—would defy whale, dragon, sea monster, Celt, Roma
 - 2. competitive—enjoyed contests of physical strength
 - 3. loyal—considered necessary for the survival of all
 - 4. democratic—liked to hold meetings in which people could openly express what they thought and felt
 - 5. hardy—made so by lonely seas, gray skies, mist, and fog (Compare Beowulf's endurance in a swimming match to the endurance of the British in their retreat from Dunkirk.)

II. Religion

- A. Many gods—all connected with daily life and interests
 - 1. days of the week—four named after Anglo-Saxon gods
 - 2. Easter—named from Anglo-Saxon festival
- B. Natural and supernatural fused together—Beowulf connected with shadowy, mythical "Bee-wolf" (Bear)

III. Government

- A. Moots—meetings for discussion
 - 1. in war councils when on move
 - 2. in village meetings when settled in one place
- B. Leaders
 - 1. King
 - a. chosen by election
 - b. considered for ability, generosity, family connections
 - 2. War chief
 - a. chosen by election
 - b. considered for valor, experience, leadership, etc.

- C. Immediate followers—thanes and athelings (nobility)
(greatest virtue: loyalty, even to death)

IV. Social Life

A. Meeting-place—mead hall

1. Appearance
 - a. rectangular, pointed roof
 - b. two rows of pillars
 - c. trenches along centre for fire
 - d. long tables—diners faced fire
2. Purpose
 - a. relaxation centre
 - b. communal meal centre

B. Activities

1. Eating (fish, meat—from communal dishes with fingers and hunting knives)
2. Drinking—“Wassail” (mead—brew fermented with honey: Queen and ladies poured it into horns and flagons.)
3. Resting
4. Carousing
5. Sleeping
6. Boasting
7. Debating
8. Being entertained
 - a. the entertainment—news, jokes, riddles, poems
(preferably of sustained length and national in interest)
 - b. the entertainer—Anglo-Saxon scop or gleeman;
gave news, told jokes, posed riddles, sang to chords from crude harp

Section 1

Lesson B

INTRODUCTION TO THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

Try to visualize the England of just over fifteen hundred years ago. You know by comparing Canada of today with Canada of Confederation how much can happen in one hundred years. How much more, then, in fifteen hundred years! Picture if you can the England of 449. It takes a moment to accept the complete absence of much that we take for granted, such as radio, telephone, TV, movies, restaurants, libraries, and even newspapers. We realize that there was empty countryside (ranging often as far as the eye could see), scattered groups of dwellings, almost impenetrable forests, and the sea, an inescapable part of everyday life. We ask ourselves, "What were the people like? What did they do for entertainment, for relaxation? What was life like in England then?"

The Romans had left in and around the year 410—about forty years before the beginning of the period that is now called Anglo-Saxon. They had taken most of their culture with them. They had, however, left their good Roman roads, which were to prove a great asset in movement and communication. They had also left evidence of their highly organized military system. (People living in Folkestone today—and in other parts of England—still say "What will we do before tea? Let's walk to Caesar's camp.") There are Roman records of this life in Britain, which you may read in the original or in translation. There are, however, no first-hand records written by the native Celts (or Brythons) **because they had no written language.**

In 449 a British leader laid the foundation of national unity by asking help from the continental Jutes against his northern enemies. From this invited invasion, Britain began to get an identity of her own and became Anglia, or Angle-land; indeed, the east coast of England toward the north is still called East Anglia. More sense of national identity came under the legendary King Arthur, who (according to tradition) inspired the native inhabitants to unite in attempting to drive out invaders from the continent.

The Anglo-Saxon period lasted until William the Conqueror (in 1066) superimposed the culture of the Normans on the existing Anglo-Saxon culture. Along with much natural resentment on the part of the Anglo-Saxon inhabitants, there came the enrichment of another way of life and another language—French.

Now review your own permanent notes and those given to you in the introduction, and you will be ready to begin your study of English literature.

Cast your mind back to the Anglo-Saxon mead hall, and to the hearty, active, talkative, and often tired men who met there. Some had been fighting, some hunting, some out at sea. After resting and eating (and drinking) they were ready for entertainment. But they were active, talkative, outgoing people. The scop (poet) or gleeman (singer) had to be skilful to hold their attention, and he needed a good voice—there were no microphones to carry the sound, no song sheets to pass around. To aid him in commanding attention, he had his harp, probably used at first to get audience awareness and then to emphasize the beat of his poetry. (His verse had four beats to a line and, to make it more pleasing and more easily remembered, it had alliteration.)

Having struck off a few chords on his harp to gain attention, the scop relayed the news, told a few jokes, posed a few riddles (to get audience participation), and then began his song or poem. Often in this song or poem he told about the deeds of the great hero Beowulf.

Anglo-Saxon Versification



Before we begin the study of *Beowulf* let us consider a few lines from a typical Anglo-Saxon poem, *The Seafarer*, so that you will become familiar with Anglo-Saxon versification. Turn to page 35 in your textbook.

Read the poem slowly and see if you can imagine the poem as a conversation between two speakers. There are two distinct attitudes being expressed: the enthusiasm of the youth for new adventure and the weariness of the old sailor recounting his hardships. As you read note the powerful descriptions in the poem.

The descriptions are enhanced by the metrical charm of the poem and by the flowing alliteration.

*In Anglo-Saxon poetry, the number of stresses, not the number of syllables, is the basis of the poetic line. Normally, there are four stressed syllables in each line; of these, at least three are alliterated (alliteration: repetition of the same initial letter or sound). Each line is divided into two parts, with a slight pause (caesura) between. In each of these half-lines there are two beats; at least one of the beats in the first half alliterates with the first accented syllable in the second half. (The first beat in the second half of a line is called the **rime-giver**.) The number of unaccented syllables varies from line to line. Such lines as the following have the typical beat.*

Line
6 \cup / \cup / $\cup \cup$ / $\cup \cup \cup$ /
Of smashing surf // when I sw \bar{e} ated in the cold
("sweated" is the rime-giver)

41 / \cup / $\cup \cup$ / \cup /
Grown so brave //, or so graced by God
("graced" is the rime-giver)

Let us now look at line 9. The emphasis achieved by the beat here is supported by the parallelism of expression, and by the repetition of an idea in synonymous words or phrases:

9 In icy bands, bound with frost

For another example, look at line 15:

Line
15 Alone in a world blown clear of love



In lines 59-60, note the phrase "whales' home." This is a synonym for *sea*. Such synonyms are called **kennings**. Look up the definition for kenning in the "Literary Terms and Techniques" glossary in your textbook.

Kennings are metaphors of a particular type. They find expression in such phrases as "earl's raiment" for *armor* and "swan's road" or "whale's road" for *sea*. Make it a habit to watch for these kennings; you will find that they enrich the description.



Read also the notes in the textbook headed *Characteristics of Anglo-Saxon Poetry*, page 30.

When you have finished making your permanent notes for this lesson, do Self-Marking Activities 1 B (1) and 1 B (2).



Self-Marking Activity 1 B (1)

1. Your textbook puts the beginning of the Anglo-Saxon period as the year _____ and the end as the year _____ .
2. The two most important traditions of Anglo-Saxon poetry were the _____ tradition and the _____ tradition. (2 marks)
3. The earliest manuscript still in existence in English literature gives the story of _____ .
4. The syllable carrying the first beat in the second half of a line of Anglo-Saxon poetry is called the _____ .
5. The typical metaphoric synonyms of Anglo-Saxon poetry ("the whale's road," "the earl's raiment," etc.) are called _____ .
6. The slight pause found between the two parts of a line of Anglo-Saxon poetry is called the _____ .
7. The principal ornament of Anglo-Saxon poetry was its _____ .
8. The scop or gleeman had as his musical instrument a _____ .
9. In Anglo-Saxon poetry, the emphasis given by the beat is also supported by the _____ of an idea.

_____ marks out of a possible 10



Self-Marking Activity 1 B (2)

In the parentheses to the right, put the letter of the **best** choice.

1. "Of smashing surf when I sweated in the cold"

The rime-giver is the word:

- (a) "smashing."
- (b) "surf."
- (c) "sweated."
- (d) "cold." ()

2. In the line quoted for question 1, the caesura comes after the word:

- (a) "smashing."
- (b) "surf."
- (c) "when."
- (d) "sweated." ()

3. **Two** characteristics of Anglo-Saxon poetry are:

- (a) good rhyme and rhythm.
- (b) good rhythm and uneven line length.
- (c) alliteration and even line length.
- (d) good rhyme and alliteration. ()

4. "Alone in the world blown clear of love"

This line gives a typical example of emphasis through:

- (a) repetition by means of a synonym or synonymous phrase.
- (b) assonance in the repetition of the "o" sound.
- (c) onomatopoeia.
- (d) a special type of rhyme. ()

5. The caesura in the line quoted for question 4 comes after the word:
- (a) "the."
 - (b) "world."
 - (c) "blown."
 - (d) "of." ()
6. The number of unaccented or unstressed syllables in a line of Anglo-Saxon poetry is:
- (a) variable.
 - (b) invariable.
 - (c) equal in both halves of a line.
 - (d) greater in the concluding line of a section. ()
7. The number of beats (stressed or accented syllables) in a typical line of Anglo-Saxon poetry is:
- (a) one.
 - (b) two.
 - (c) three.
 - (d) four.
8. Beat is very important in Anglo-Saxon poetry because:
- (a) poems were often chanted.
 - (b) rhythm made the poetry easier to memorize.
 - (c) the Anglo-Saxons had a strong oral tradition.
 - (d) all of the above ()
9. A constant essential in Anglo-Saxon poetry is:
- (a) rhyme.
 - (b) metaphor.
 - (c) simile.
 - (d) alliteration. ()

10. The phrase "swan's road," used as a synonym for *sea*, is an example of a:

- (a) caesura.
- (b) kenning.
- (c) rime-giver.
- (d) simile.

()

_____ marks out of a possible 10

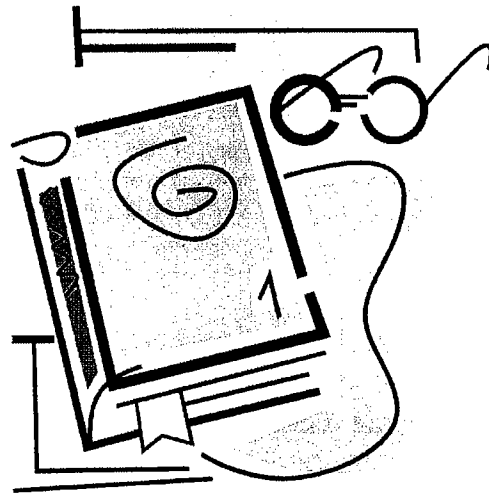
Total _____ marks out of a possible 20

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ENGLISH LITERATURE 12 (v4)

Section Assignment #1.0 *Resource Pages*

Attached are the pages from the English Literature 12 Resources that you need to complete this Section 1.0 Send-In Assignment.



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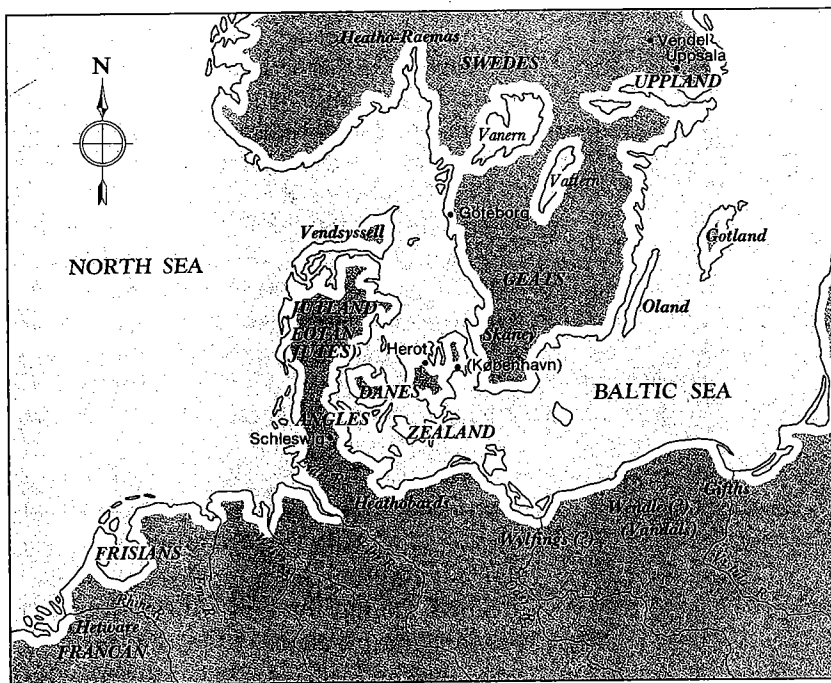
FROM
Beowulf

Translated by
BURTON RAFFEL

English literature begins with *Beowulf*. It is England's heroic epic, a proper beginning for a national literature, but it belongs to everyone because it is profoundly human. The poem shapes and interprets materials connected with the tribes from northern Europe, the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, who invaded England after the Romans left in the fifth century. Their tribal history is in the poem. It is remote, even monstrous, and yet familiar: "keeping the bloody feud/Alive . . . and paying the living/For one crime only with another" (lines 90–94). It is a history of festering pride, loud talk, and drunken violence, of spies, bloody borders, and raids. But against this dark background the poem presents another kind of history. It is a history in which a stranger comes openly to help rather than covertly to kill and loot, in which eating and drinking and speaking and gift-giving are natural ceremonies uniting young and old, in which heroic strength is wise and generous. It is a history of ideal possibilities.

The only surviving manuscript of *Beowulf* dates from around 1000, but the work itself was probably composed sometime during the eighth century. The poem, which recounts the exploits of third- or fourth-century Geats (gêts) and Danes (see map below), is doubtless based on earlier unwritten stories that had been passed from generation to generation by word of

The geography of *Beowulf*.
Redrawn after F. Klaeber,
Beowulf.



mouth. The Anglo-Saxons of Britain shared a common group of heroes with other Germanic peoples, and the hero Beowulf certainly has his origins in an earlier, pagan era. The author of the written version that has come down to us seems to have been a Christian. The language of this version is Old English. The translation you will read in Modern English is by the poet Burton Raffel.

Beowulf, like all epic poems, is about a hero who becomes leader of his people. The action is extraordinary, the hero larger than life. The diction is stately and many of its scenes—the banquet, the battle, the boast, the voyage, and the funeral—are traditional. The general tone of the poem is somber, owing to a vision of evil in the world, a belief in the power of Fate (*Wyrd* is the Old English word for it) to rule human destiny, and resignation to the certainty of death.

The opening of the poem tells about the ancestors of the Danish king Hrothgar (hföth'gär). Hrothgar wins great fame and wealth in battles. He builds a mead-hall called Herot, to commemorate his victories. The mead-hall (or banqueting-hall) is so called because of a popular drink, mead, a fermented liquor made of water, honey, malt, and yeast, which was drunk at banquets and celebrations. Herot is also intended to be a place of peace and community. It is a symbol of the loyalty and interdependence of the lord and his faithful warriors. However, Fate has the monster Grendel in store for the Danes.

The Coming of Grendel

Then Hrothgar, taking the throne, led
 The Danes to such glory that comrades and kinsmen
 Swore by his sword, and young men swelled
 His armies, and he thought of greatness and resolved
 To build a hall that would hold his mighty
 Band and reach higher toward Heaven than anything
 That had ever been known to the sons of men.
 And in that hall he'd divide the spoils
 Of their victories, to old and young what they'd earned
 In battle, but leaving the common pastures
 Untouched, and taking no lives. The work
 Was ordered, the timbers tied and shaped
 By the hosts that Hrothgar ruled. It was quickly
 Ready, that most beautiful of dwellings, built
 As he'd wanted, and then he whose word was obeyed
 All over the earth named it Herot.
 His boast come true he commanded a banquet,
 Opened out his treasure-full hands.
 That towering place, gabled and huge,
 Stood waiting for time to pass, for war
 To begin, for flames to leap as high
 As the feud that would light them, and for Herot to burn.

Hrothgar builds a great mead-hall for his warriors.

The Seafarer

Translated by
BURTON RAFFEL

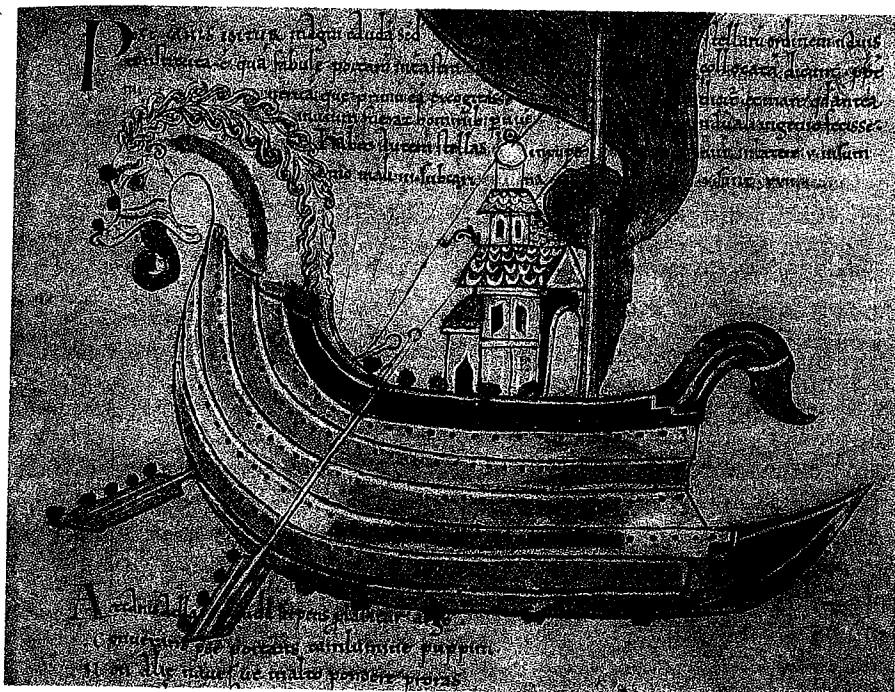
"The Seafarer," an anonymous poem of uncertain date, was found in the so-called *Exeter Book*, one of the four important collections of Anglo-Saxon poetry that have survived. The poem is lyrical and elegiac. The speaker of the poem, an old sailor, speaks of the terror and the wonder he feels for the sea.

The poem conjures up what going to sea in an open, high-prowed ship must have been like in Anglo-Saxon days. The Irish Sea and the North Sea waters were very different from the tranquil, warm waters of the Mediterranean Sea, which had been the waterway of the Greeks and the Romans.

Because of the importance of the sea to an island people, British poetry is frequently concerned with the sea, and the images and feelings expressed in "The Seafarer" recur in many later poems.

This tale is true, and mine. It tells
How the sea took me, swept me back
And forth in sorrow and fear and pain,
Showed me suffering in a hundred ships,
In a thousand ports, and in me. It tells 5
Of smashing surf when I sweated in the cold
Of an anxious watch, perched in the bow
As it dashed under cliffs. My feet were cast
In icy bands, bound with frost,
With frozen chains, and hardship groaned 10
Around my heart. Hunger tore
At my sea-weary soul. No man sheltered
On the quiet fairness of earth can feel
How wretched I was, drifting through winter
On an ice-cold sea, whirled in sorrow, 15
Alone in a world blown clear of love,
Hung with icicles. The hailstorms flew.
The only sound was the roaring sea,
The freezing waves. The song of the swan
Might serve for pleasure, the cry of the sea-fowl, 20
The death-noise of birds instead of laughter,
The mewling of gulls instead of mead.
Storms beat on the rocky cliffs and were echoed
By icy-feathered terns and the eagle's screams;
No kinsman could offer comfort there, 25
To a soul left drowning in desolation.
And who could believe, knowing but
The passion of cities, swelled proud with wine
And no taste of misfortune, how often, how wearily,

I put myself back on the paths of the sea. 30
 Night would blacken; it would snow from the north;
 Frost bound the earth and hail would fall,
 The coldest seeds. And how my heart
 Would begin to beat, knowing once more
 The salt waves tossing and the towering sea! 35
 The time for journeys would come and my soul
 Called me eagerly out, sent me over
 The horizon, seeking foreigners' homes.
 But there isn't a man on earth so proud,
 So born to greatness, so bold with his youth, 40
 Grown so grave, or so graced by God,
 That he feels no fear as the sails unfurl,
 Wondering what Fate has willed and will do.
 No harps ring in his heart, no rewards,
 No passion for women, no worldly pleasures, 45
 Nothing, only the ocean's heave;
 But longing wraps itself around him.
 Orchards blossom, the towns bloom,
 Fields grow lovely as the world springs fresh,
 And all these admonish that willing mind 50
 Leaping to journeys, always set
 In thoughts traveling on a quickening tide.
 So summer's sentinel, the cuckoo, sings
 In his murmuring voice, and our hearts mourn
 As he urges. Who could understand, 55
 In ignorant ease, what we others suffer
 As the paths of exile stretch endlessly on?
 And yet my heart wanders away,
 My soul roams with the sea, the whales'
 Home, wandering to the widest corners 60
 Of the world, returning ravenous with desire,
 Flying solitary, screaming, exciting me
 To the open ocean, breaking oaths
 On the curve of a wave.
 Thus the joys of God
 Are fervent with life, where life itself 65
 Fades quickly into the earth. The wealth
 Of the world neither reaches to Heaven nor remains.
 No man has ever faced the dawn
 Certain which of Fate's three threats
 Would fall: illness, or age, or an enemy's 70
 Sword, snatching the life from his soul.
 The praise the living pour on the dead
 Flowers from reputation: plant
 An earthly life of profit reaped
 Even from hatred and rancor, of bravery 75



Dragon Ship from an Anglo-Saxon manuscript, Cott. Tib. BV Pt. 1, 40 v. (def.), tenth century.

Flung in the devil's face, and death
 Can only bring you earthly praise
 And a song to celebrate a place
 With the angels, life eternally blessed
 In the hosts of Heaven.

The days are gone	80
When the kingdoms of earth flourished in glory;	
Now there are no rulers, no emperors,	
No givers of gold, as once there were,	
When wonderful things were worked among them	
And they lived in lordly magnificence.	85
Those powers have vanished, those pleasures are dead.	
The weakest survives and the world continues,	
Kept spinning by toil. All glory is tarnished.	
The world's honor ages and shrinks,	
Bent like the men who mold it. Their faces	90
Blanch as time advances, their beards	
Wither and they mourn the memory of friends.	
The sons of princes, sown in the dust.	
The soul stripped of its flesh knows nothing	
Of sweetness or sour, feels no pain,	95
Bends neither its hand nor its brain. A brother	
Opens his palms and pours down gold	
On his kinsman's grave, strewing his coffin	

With treasures intended for Heaven, but nothing Golden shakes the wrath of God For a soul overflowing with sin, and nothing Hidden on earth rises to Heaven.	100
We all fear God. He turns the earth, He set it swinging firmly in space, Gave life to the world and light to the sky. Death leaps at the fools who forget their God. He who lives humbly has angels from Heaven To carry him courage and strength and belief. A man must conquer pride, not kill it, Be firm with his fellows, chaste for himself, Treat all the world as the world deserves, With love or with hate but never with harm, Though an enemy seek to scorch him in hell, Or set the flames of a funeral pyre Under his lord. Fate is stronger And God mightier than any man's mind. Our thoughts should turn to where our home is, Consider the ways of coming there, Then strive for sure permission for us To rise to that eternal joy,	105
That life born in the love of God And the hope of Heaven. Praise the Holy Grace of Him who honored us, Eternal, unchanging creator of earth. Amen.	110
	115
	120

For Study and Discussion

Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

- The first 64 lines of the poem express contrasting feelings about seafaring. **a.** What are those feelings? **b.** How do they change with the seasons?
- The transitional sentence, lines 64–66, connects seafaring with religion. **a.** What sets of ideas is the poet trying to compress into this sentence? **b.** How, if at all, are they related to the feelings about seafaring in the opening section?
- Lines 80–102 contrast the dismal present with the glorious past. What are the main points of the contrast?
- 4a.** What are the meanings of “home” in line 117?
b. What kind of “seafaring” does the poet finally advocate?
- Some critics consider this poem a kind of dialogue or conversation between two opposing attitudes. Imagine the poem as a conversation between

two speakers. Which lines would be spoken by each one? Give line numbers. Try giving each speaker a name to characterize the attitude expressed.

Writing About Literature

Comparing Attitudes

In a short essay compare the speaker of this poem and his attitudes toward fate and the sea with Beowulf and his attitudes.

Comparing Translations

Burton Raffel's translation of “The Seafarer” is one of several attempts to capture the feeling and style of the Old English poem. Read another Modern English translation, such as that of J. Duncan Spaeth, *Old English Poetry* (Princeton University Press, 1922). Comment on the translators' different approaches. For assistance in writing your essay, see the section called *Writing About Literature*.

For Study and Discussion

Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. The opening lines of the excerpt (lines 1–51) offer a vivid contrast between Grendel's world and Hrothgar's battle hall. **a.** How does the poet's use of imagery emphasize this contrast? **b.** With what aspects of nature is Grendel associated?
2. We learn that Grendel lives apart from human beings, in bitter exile. **a.** Considering the importance of fellowship and community in Anglo-Saxon society, why is Grendel's isolation significant? **b.** In what way does Grendel represent the element of disorder in the world?
3. When Beowulf arrives at Hrothgar's court, he introduces himself to the Danish king and his thanes (lines 163–211). **a.** What is Beowulf's motive in coming to the aid of the Danes? **b.** What characteristics does Beowulf reveal about himself in this speech?
4. A highly dramatic episode occurs when Unferth, one of Hrothgar's courtiers, attempts to belittle Beowulf's strength. **a.** How does Beowulf refute Unferth's charge? **b.** What heroic deeds does he boast of?
5. Study the description of Beowulf's battle with Grendel. **a.** Which details make this a heroic struggle between mighty adversaries? **b.** Besides being exciting, how is the battle with Grendel a representation of good against evil? **c.** What is the significance of Beowulf's meeting Grendel alone and unarmed?
6. The warriors who follow Grendel's footprints to the lake have no sense of sorrow, feel no regret for Grendel's suffering. **a.** How did you respond to him after he was wounded? **b.** How do you think the poet wanted you to respond? Point out specific lines that support your answer.
7. It has been noted that the account of Beowulf's funeral (lines 527–572) blends Christian and pagan-heroic sentiment. Find examples of both pagan and Christian elements in this passage.
8. In what ways does *Beowulf* illustrate the following Anglo-Saxon ideals of conduct: (a) allegiance to lord and king; (b) love of glory as the ruling motive of every noble life; and (c) belief in the inevitability of fate?

Literary Elements

Characteristics of Anglo-Saxon Poetry

Anglo-Saxon poetry had a strong oral tradition behind it. The poems were memorized or extemporized rather than written and were recited by **scops**, wandering poets who chanted their poems in the mead-halls of kings and nobles.

Anglo-Saxon poetry does not usually rhyme, but the poems have very strong rhythms, suitable for chanting. The rhythm of a line depends primarily on the number of **beats**, or accented syllables. Each line has four beats. The number of unaccented syllables in a line may vary. Some lines may be long and others short. Each line has a strong pause, or **caesura** (sī-zhōōr'ə), after the second beat. Each line is thus divided into two parts, each with two beats.

Alliteration is used to bind together the two halves of a line. One or more accented syllables in the first half of a line almost always alliterate with the first accented syllable in the second half.

If the jingle about Old King Cole were put into Anglo-Saxon verse form, it might sound like this:

*Cole was the King; he was keen and merry;
Mirthful he was, with minstrels in mead-hall.
He called for his cup; he called for his pipe.
His fiddlers were three, and fine was their trilling.*

Raffel's translation re-creates the effect of alliteration in freer patterns:

*He slipped through the door and there in the silence
Snatched up thirty men, smashed them
Unknowing in their beds and ran out with their bodies,
The blood dripping behind him, back
To his lair . . .*

Another characteristic of Anglo-Saxon poetry is the use of **kennings**. A kenning is a metaphorical phrase or compound word used instead of the name of a person or thing. For example, Grendel is called the "shepherd of evil" (line 403). Kennings are closely related to riddles. What might the following kennings refer to: "the whale-road"; "the sea-paths"; "God's bright beacon"; and "Heaven's high arch"?

KENNING In Old English poetry, an elaborate phrase that describes persons, things, or events in a metaphorical and indirect way. The Anglo-Saxon poem "The Seafarer" contains kennings, such as "whales' home" for the sea.

See page 30.

LYRIC A poem, usually a short one, that expresses a speaker's personal thoughts or feelings. The **elegy**, **ode**, and **sonnet** are all forms of the lyric. As its Greek name indicates, a lyric was originally a poem sung to the accompaniment of a lyre, and lyrics to this day have retained a melodic quality. Lyrics may express a range of emotions and reflections: Robert Herrick's "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time" reflects on the brevity of life and the need to live for the moment, while T. S. Eliot's "Preludes" observes the sordidness and depression of modern life.

See page 555.

MASQUE An elaborate and spectacular dramatic entertainment that was popular among the English aristocracy in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Masques were written as dramatic poems and made use of songs, dances, colorful costumes, and startling stage effects.

See pages 145, 282.

MAXIM A concise statement expressing a principle or rule of conduct.

See page 429.

MELODRAMA A drama that has stereotyped characters, exaggerated emotions, and a conflict that pits an all-good hero or heroine against an all-evil villain. The good characters always win and the evil ones are always punished. Originally, melodramas were so called because melodies accompanied certain actions (*melos* means "song" in Greek). Also, each character in a melodrama had a theme melody, which was played each time he or she made an appearance on stage.

METAPHOR A figure of speech that makes a comparison between two things that are basically dissimilar. "Life is a dream," "Life is a vale of tears," and "Life is a hard road" are all examples of metaphor. Unlike a **simile**, a metaphor does not use a connective word such as *like*, *as*, or *resembles* in making the comparison.

Many metaphors are implied, or suggested. An **implied metaphor** does not directly state that one thing is another, different thing. Alfred, Lord Tennyson uses an implied metaphor in these lines from "Crossing the Bar":

I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.

By capitalizing the word *Pilot*, the poet implies a comparison between God and the pilot of his ship.

An **extended metaphor** is a metaphor that is extended throughout a poem. In "Crossing the Bar," Tennyson compares death to a voyage at sea, at the end of which he will meet the "Pilot," or God.

A **dead metaphor** is a metaphor that has become so commonplace that it seems literal rather than figurative. Some examples are the *foot* of a hill, the *head* of the class, a *point* in time, and the *leg* of a chair.

A **mixed metaphor** is the use of two or more inconsistent metaphors in one expression. When they are examined, mixed metaphors make no sense. Mixed metaphors are often unintentionally humorous: "The storm of protest was nipped in the bud" or "To hold the fort, he'd have to shake a leg."

See page 637.

METAPHYSICAL CONCEIT See **Conceit**.

METAPHYSICAL POETRY The poetry of John Donne and other seventeenth-century poets who wrote in a similar style. Metaphysical poetry is characterized by verbal wit and excess, ingenious structure, irregular meter, colloquial language, elaborate imagery, and a drawing together of dissimilar ideas.

See pages 146, 263.

METER A generally regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in poetry. In these lines from Robert Burns's poem "O, My Luve's like a Red, Red, Rose," the stressed syllables are marked (') and the unstressed syllables are marked (˘):

As fáir árt thóu, mý bonnie lass,
So déep in lúve am I;
And I wíll lúve thee stíll, mý déar,
Tíll a' the seas gang drý.

See **Scansion**.

METONYMY (mə-tōn'ə-mē) A figure of speech in which something very closely associated with a thing is used to stand for or suggest the thing itself. "Three sails came into the harbor" is an example of metonymy; the word *sails* stands for the ships themselves. Other common examples of metonymy are *crown* to mean a king, *hardhat* to mean a construction worker, and *White House* to mean the President. William Shakespeare uses metonymy in the following lines from his play *Cymbeline*: