

Cornell Notes

Name Shelbi Braun

Date 9/8/11

Topic Anglo saxon poetry

Class/
Subject Howman/p. 3/Eng. 12

10:16

Anglo saxon
poetry

- Read
- Annotate
- TPCASTT

all of the poems (3)

Answer Q's #1-8 on the last
page

- do this in your notebook

Due Tomorrow 😊

10:45

*Vocab Quiz: Friday

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The Seafarer / The Wanderer / The Wife's Lament

Poetry from the EXETER BOOK

Key Standard
RS.4 Analyze how poets use imagery, personification, figures of speech, and sounds to influence readers' emotions.
Other Standards RS.2, RS.7

Connect to Your Life

Lonely Times Remember a time when you felt lonely or isolated. Perhaps you were separated from your friends or family as a result of a move or a vacation, or maybe you simply felt alone. How did you react to the situation—with anger or with sadness? What helped you cope with the situation? With a partner, discuss your personal definition of loneliness.

Build Background

Leaving Loved Ones Behind Life in Anglo-Saxon times was filled with hardships that separated people from their loved ones for long periods—or permanently. Outbreaks of disease, attacks by wild animals, and natural disasters such as storms and floods killed many before their time. Frequent warfare wreaked havoc on small communities, bringing untimely death to some and scattering others, who might be forced into permanent exile; if their communities' protectors had been slain in the fighting.

Also facing the hardship of separation were the men who left behind their families and communities to travel the sea. Sailing the ocean in primitive boats and in all kinds of weather, these seafarers had to face both physical danger and intense loneliness. The women and children they left behind endured months and even years without knowing whether their husbands and fathers would ever return.

The three Old English poems you are about to read reflect the uncertainty of life in Anglo-Saxon times, as well as the Anglo-Saxons' human needs and desires. Each deals, in one way or another, with the effects of separation.

Focus Your Reading

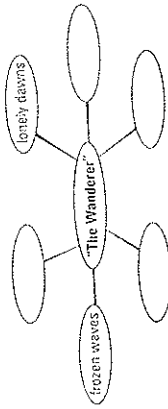
KEY TERMS **KENNING** A prominent characteristic of Old English poetry is the use of kennings—descriptive compound words and phrases—in place of simple nouns. Common kennings include *ring-giver* for a king or lord and *helmet bearer* for a warrior. Kennings are often metaphorical, like *heaven's candle* for the sun. The following lines from "The Wife's Lament" contain a kenning for the sea:

*First my lord went out away from his people over
the water-tumult.*

Look for other examples of kennings as you read the three poems.

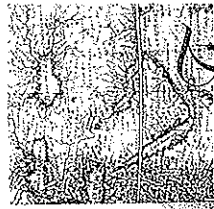
ACTIVE READING **INTERPRETING DETAILS** These poems from the Exeter Book are filled with details that can help you visualize these scenes, objects, and people being described. Interpreting these details will help you decide what ideas, moods, and attitudes the poems convey. For example, "lonely dawns" and "frozen waves" "The Wanderer" suggest emptiness and desolation.

READER'S NOTEBOOK As you read each poem, create a cluster diagram like the one below to help you organize the descriptive details in the poem. Jot down the ideas, moods, or attitudes that the details seem to convey.



from *The*

Seafarer



his 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
Of smashing surf when I sweated in the cold
As it dashed under cliffs. My feet were cast
In icy bands, bound with frost,
With frozen chains, and hardship groaned
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,
Hung with icicles. The hailstorms flow,
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,
The death-noise of birds instead of laughter,

GUIDE FOR READING

2-3 Did the sea literally sweep the speaker back and forth? If not, what might he mean?



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,
 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.
 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!
 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,
 Grown so brave, 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,
 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
 Leaping to journeys, always set
 In thoughts travelling 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,
 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
 Of the world, returning ravenous with desire,
 Flying solitary, screaming, exciting me
 To the open ocean, breaking oaths
 On the curve of a wave.



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,
 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,
 That life born in the love of God
 And the hope of Heaven. Praise the Holy
 Grace of He who honored us,
 Eternal, unchanging creator of earth. Amen.

Translated by Barton Raffel

Thinking through the Poem

1. Comprehension Check What conflicting emotions does the seafarer feel when he sets off on a sea voyage?
2. What images remain with you after reading this poem? Describe the images, or draw a sketch of them.
3. Why do you think the seafarer chose a life at sea in spite of its hardships?

THINK ABOUT

 - the feelings he expresses in lines 58-64
 - the problems recounted in lines 81-102
 - the view of fate expressed in the final lines
4. Why do you think the seafarer tells about his life and its hardships? Cite details from the poem to support your opinion.

Thus the joys of God
 Are fervent with life, where life itself
 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 throats
 Would fall: illness, or age, or an enemy's
 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
 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
 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.
 Those powers have vanished, those pleasures are dead
 The weakest survives and the world continues,
 Kept spinning by toil. All glory is tarnished,
 Bent like the men who mold it. Their faces
 Blanch as time advances, their beards
 Withier 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,
 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.
 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



The Wanderer



his lonely travel: longs for grace,
For the mercy of God; grief hangs on
His heart and follows the frost-cold foam
He cuts in the sea, sailing endlessly,
Aimlessly, in exile. Fate has opened
A single port: memory. He sees

His kinsmen slaughtered again, and cries:
"I've drunk too many lonely dawns,
Grey with mourning. Once there were men
To whom my heart could hurry, hot
With open longing. They're long since dead.
My heart has closed on itself, quietly
Learning that silence is noble and sorrow
Nothing that speech can cure. Sadness
Has never driven sadness off;
Fate blows hardest on a bleeding heart.
So those who thirst for glory smother
Secret weakness and longing, neither
Weep nor sigh nor listen to the sickness
In their souls. So I, lost and homeless,
Forced to flee the darkness that fell
On the earth and my lord.

GUIDE FOR RE

5-7 What has happy wanderer's kinsmen his memory be like has fate limited his port?

Leaving everything,

Weary with winter I wandered out
On the frozen waves, hoping to find
A place, a people, a lord to replace
My lost ones. No one knew me, now,
No one offered comfort, allowed
Me feasting or joy. How cruel a journey
I've travelled, sharing my bread with sorrow
Alone, an exile in every land,
Could only be told by telling my footsteps.
For who can hear: "friendless and poor,"
And know what I've known since the long cheerful ni
When, young and yearning, with my lord I yet feared
Most welcome of all. That warmth is dead.

He only knows who needs his lord,
As I do, eager for long-missing aid;
He only knows who never sleeps
Without the deepest dreams of longing.
Sometimes it seems I see my lord,
Kiss and embrace him, bend my hands
And head to his knee, kneeling as though
He still sat enthroned, ruling his thames.
And I open my eyes, embracing the air,
And see the brown sea-billows heave,
See the sea-birds bathe, spreading
Their white-feathered wings, watch the frost
And the hail and the snow. And heavy in heart
I long for my lord, alone and unloved.
Sometimes it seems I see my kin
And greet them gladly, give them welcome,
The best of friends. They fade away,
Swimming soundlessly out of sight,
Leaving nothing.

How loathsome become
The frozen waves to a weary heart.
In this brief world I cannot wonder
That my mind is set on melancholy,
Because I never forget the fate
Of men, robbed of their riches, suddenly
Rooted by death—the doom of earth,
Sent to us all by every rising
sun. Wisdom is slow, and comes

But late. He who has it is patient,
He cannot be hasty to hate or speak,
He must be bold and yet not blind,
Nor ever too craven, complacent, or covetous,
Nor ready to gloat before he wins glory.
The man's a fool who flings his boasts
Hotly to the heavens, heeding his spleen
And not the better boldness of knowledge.

What knowing man knows not the ghostly,
Waste-like end of worldly wealth:
See, already the wreckage is there,
The wind-swept walls stand far and wide,
The storm-beaten blocks besmeared with frost,

The mead-halls crumbled, the monarchs thrown down
And stripped of their pleasures. The proudest of warriors
Now lie by the wall: some of them war
Destroyed; some the monstrous sea-bird
Bore over the ocean; to some the old wolf
Dealt out death; and for some dejected
Followers fashioned an earth-cave coffin.
Thus the Maker of men lays waste
This earth, crushing our callow mirth:
And the work of old giants stands withered and still."

He who these ruins rightly sees,
And deeply considers this dark twisted life,
Who sagely remembers the endless slaughters
Of a bloody past, is bound to proclaim:
"Where is the war-steed? Where is the warrior? Where is
his war-lord?
Where now the feasting-places? Where now the mead-hall
pleasures?

Alas, bright cup! Alas, brave knight!
Alas, you glorious princes! All gone,
Lost in the night, as you never had lived.
And all that survives you a serpentine wall,
Wondrously high, worked in strange ways.
Mighty spears have slain these men,
Greedy weapons have framed their fate.

These rocky slopes are beaten by storms,
This earth pinned down by driving snow,
By the horror of winter, smothering warmth
In the shadows of night. And the north angrily

Hurls its hailstorms at our helpless heads.
 Everything earthly is evilly born,
 Firmly clutched by a fickle Fate.
 Fortune vanishes, friendship vanishes,
 Man is fleeting, woman is fleeting,
 And all this earth rolls into emptiness."

So says the sage in his heart, sitting alone with
 His thought.

It's good to guard your faith, nor let your grief come forth
 Until it cannot call for help, nor help but heed
 The path you've placed before it. It's good to find your
 grace

In God, the heavenly rock where rests our every hope.

Translated by Burton Raffel

Thinking Through the Poem

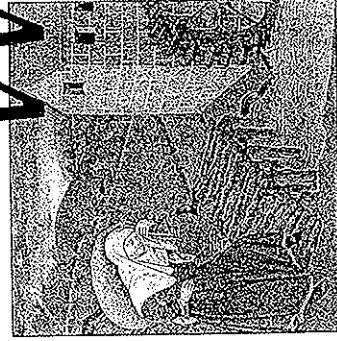
1. **Comprehension Check** What happened to cause the poem's title character to become a wanderer?
2. What emotion does this poem chiefly evoke in you? Share your reaction with classmates.
3. How would you describe the wanderer's present life and his feelings about it?

THINK ABOUT IT
 { the experiences he describes in lines 8-22
 the life he led before he became a wanderer
 his remarks in lines 90-108

4. Do you agree with the attitude toward grief expressed in lines 12-16? Why or why not?



The Wife's Lament



Poverty carrying a sack of wheat to the mill reaches a dangerous bridge (about 1450-1475).
 Rome: L'Amour, King of Naples. From *Le Manuscrit de sainte Plateriac*, M.705, f. 38v.

I make this song about me full sadly
 my own wayfaring. I a woman tell
 what griefs I had since I grew up
 new or old never more than now.
 Ever I know the dark of my exile.

First my lord went out away from his people
 over the wave-tumult. I grieved each dawn
 wondered where my lord my first on earth might be.
 Then I went forth a friendless exile
 to seek service in my sorrow's need.
 My man's kinsmen began to plot
 by darkened thought to divide us two
 so we most widely in the world's kingdom
 lived wretchedly and I suffered longing.

My lord commanded me to move my dwelling here.
 I had few loved ones in this land
 or faithful friends. For this my heart grieves:
 that I should find the man well matched to me
 hard of fortune mournful of mind
 hiding his mood thinking of murder.

Thanksgiving

Connect to the Literature

1. What Do You Think?
 - What happened after the wife's husband went to sea?
 - Why do the husband and the wife live apart?
 - What does the wife wish her husband to feel?

Literary Analysis

[KENNING] Anglo-Saxon made frequent use of her descriptive terms and phrases substituted for simple nouns. Translation of Old English kenning may appear as a compound word, like *won-used for the sea* in "The Wife's Lament." A kenning may be a group of two or more like *swan road*, another kenning for the sea. The *Beowulf* itself can be interpreted as a kenning for "bee-wolf," a kenning for (because bears like honey) are often found around.

Cooperative Learning Identify two more kennings and explain why. Then copy the chart below creating your own kennings in the first column. Your ideas and examples with a small group of class members.

Form	Example
city	
journey	
ship	
tree	
river	

[REVIEW: ALLITERATION] rhythm, the most important of sound in Old English alliteration, the repetition of consonant sounds. List examples in all three

Think Critically

2. Evaluate the kind of life the wife has led. Support your evaluation with details from the poem.
3. How would you describe the wife's opinion of her husband's behavior?
 - the influence of her husband's kinsmen
 - the vow that the husband and the wife made to each other
 - the wife's thoughts in lines 42–50
4. In your opinion, how might the husband respond to his wife's accusations?

THINK ABOUT

5. **[ACTIVE READING: INTERPRETING DETAILS]** Get together with a partner and discuss the cluster diagrams of descriptive details you created in your **READER'S NOTEBOOK**. What moods do the details help convey?

Extend Interpretations

6. What If? Suppose that the husband of the speaker in "The Wife's Lament" returned to her. Describe their reunion.
7. Comparing Texts Compare the plights of the three poems' title characters. Who do you think faces the most difficult hardships? What makes you think this way? Defend your opinion.
8. Connect to Life In the modern world, many refugees leave their countries to escape dangers, not knowing when or if they will ever return to the homelands and people they love. How do you think the loneliness and other hardships they face compare with those endured in Anglo-Saxon times? Cite evidence from the poems to support your opinion.

Blithe was our bearing, often we vowed
 that but death alone would part us two
 naught else. But this is turned round
 now . . . as if it never were
 our friendship. I must far and near
 bear the anger of my beloved.
 The man sent me out to live in the woods
 under an oak tree in this den in the earth.
 Ancient this earth hall, I am all forgoing.

The valleys are dark, the hills high
 the yard overgrown, batten with briars
 a joyless dwelling. Full of the lack of my lord
 seizes me cruelly here. Friends there are on earth
 living beloved, lying in bed
 while I at dawn am walking alone
 under the oak tree through these earth halls.
 There I may sit the summerlong day
 there I can weep over my exile
 my many hardships. Hence I may not rest
 from this care of heart which belongs to me ever
 not all this longing that has caught me in this life.

May that young man be sad-minded always
 hard his heart's thought while he must wear
 a blithe bearing with care in the breast
 a crowd of sorrows. May on himself depend
 all his world's joy. Be he outlawed far
 in a strange folk-land—that my beloved sits
 under a rocky cliff, tamed with frost
 a lord dreary in spirit, drenched with water
 in a ruined hall. My lord endures
 much care of mind. He remembers too often
 a happier dwelling. Woe be to them
 that for a loved one must wait in longing.

Translated by Ann Stanford

29 "Earth hall" refers to the speaker's living quarters. What kind of place do you think it is?

42–50 In these lines, the speaker seems to wish for her husband the same sad, lonely life that he has forced her to endure.

