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## Literature Teaching Unit

Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide



The Rime of the Ancient  
Mariner and Other Poems  
of the Romantic Era

(Ed.) Paul Moliken

- Learning objectives
- Study Guide with short-answer questions
- Background information
- Vocabulary in context
- Multiple-choice test
- Essay questions
- Literary terms



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# The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

## and Other Poems of the Romantic Era

### Notes

This Poetry Teaching Unit is designed to be worked through in the order presented. Occasionally, a study question on one poem may refer to another poem encountered earlier in the Unit. This approach encourages students to build on what they have learned and to recognize connections among different poets and poems.

Teachers wishing to bypass certain poems or to teach them in a different order will find, however, that the Unit can be easily adapted to the individual needs of any classroom. The vast bulk of study questions focus on the particular poem at hand; the test questions are arranged by author. To adapt the Unit, teachers should simply scan the study and test questions and delete any undesired items before reproducing the pages for students.

Please also note that in order to complete the essay portion of the provided test, students will need access to their books or to photocopies of the pertinent poems.

All references come from the Prestwick House Literary Touchstone Classics edition of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner and Other Poems of the Romantic Era*, copyright 2007.

## Objectives

By the end of this Unit, students will be able to

1. understand and explain the relationship between a poem's form and its content.
2. compare and contrast two or more related poems through an examination of both form and content.
3. compare and contrast two or more poets' treatment of the same subject matter or theme.
4. describe and analyze different meters such as iambic pentameter, tetrameter, trimeter, etc.
5. describe and analyze different rhyme schemes such as Terza Rima, etc.
6. identify and comment on significant characteristics of Romantic era poetry, for example, references to nature, the imagination, the role of the poet, the importance of feeling over rational thought, etc.
7. comprehend the significance of the relationships among the six major Romantic era poets.
8. recognize the connections and relationships among the poems by the six major Romantic era poets.
9. identify the following elements of sound and point out examples of each in the text: alliteration, assonance, internal rhyme, onomatopoeia, repetition.
10. identify the following literary devices and point out examples of each in the text: allusion, apostrophe, imagery, irony, metaphor, paradox, personification, oxymoron, simile.
11. identify the following forms and elements of poetry and point out examples of each in the text: free verse, enjambment, narrative poem, narrator, point of view, quatrain, sonnet, speaker, stanza, theme, tone.
12. understand the effect of repetition in a poem.
13. appreciate the aesthetic value of poetry.
14. recognize specific word choices and analyze their meaning.
15. distinguish between poet and speaker.
16. define unfamiliar vocabulary terms listed in the study guide.

### Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. Discuss the relationship between the content and the margin commentary in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.
2. Discuss the symbolism of shooting an albatross in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.
3. Compare and contrast the portrayals of human nature and creation in William Blake's "The Lamb" and "The Tyger."
4. Analyze the differences between "The Chimney Sweeper" from *Songs of Innocence* and "The Chimney Sweeper" from *Songs of Experience*.
5. Discuss the role of memory and recollection in William Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey."
6. Compare and contrast images of childhood and images of adulthood in Wordsworth's "Intimations of Immortality" ode.
7. What is the relationship between life and death in "Intimations of Immortality"?
8. Compare and contrast the concepts of nature in William Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" and Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind."
9. Explain and analyze the relationship between form and content in "Ode to the West Wind."
10. Trace the Romantic desire for a deep and meaningful communion with nature in two or more poems. Why is a close connection with nature so important to the Romantics? Be sure to cite specific passages.
11. Discuss and analyze possible causes for melancholy and sadness in Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey," Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," and John Keats' "Ode on Melancholy."
12. Explain how George Gordon, Lord Byron uses sensory images to enhance "She Walks in Beauty."
13. Discuss Lord Byron's attitude toward freedom, liberty, and imprisonment in "On the Castle Chillon."
14. Discuss Lord Byron's treatment of human agency and free will in "Prometheus." Consider prerequisites, challenges, and consequences of human agency and free will.

# The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

## and Other Poems of the Romantic Era

### The Rime of the Ancient Mariner by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

#### VOCABULARY

alway – always  
aught – anything  
averred – asserted, insisted  
clombe – climbed  
corses – corpses  
eftsoons – soon afterwards  
Gramercy! – an expression of gratitude  
hoar-frost – a light coating of frost  
hulk – a ghost ship  
ken – [Old English] see; know, understand  
kirk – a church  
nought – nothing  
perforce – by necessity  
restless gossameres – tattered sails  
sere – withered, dry  
shrieve – to hear confession and offer absolution  
silly – useless  
spectre-bark – a ghostly ship  
swound – a fainting spell  
tod – a heavy mass  
trow – to think, suppose  
twain – the two crew members, male and female  
weal – well-being  
wist – know, believe  
wont – accustomed to

1. Who was the co-author of Coleridge's collection *Lyrical Ballads*, in which *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* first appeared?

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5. What literary device is contained in the line “Five miles meandering with a mazy motion”? To what earlier line can this phrase be contrasted?

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6. “Kubla Khan” is often considered to be a poem that describes what the Romantics considered to be the challenges of the creative process of writing a poem. Keeping that in mind, what might be the metaphorical meaning of the “pleasure-dome” and the “sacred river”? Pay especially close attention to what happens to the pleasure-dome and the sacred river throughout the poem.

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7. “Through wood and dale the sacred river ran, / Then reached the caverns measureless to man, / And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean...” What do these lines indicate about the sacred river?

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8. Explain the significance of what Kubla Khan heard.

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**“Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, on Revisiting  
the Banks of the Wye during a Tour, July 13, 1798” (from Lyrical Ballads)  
by William Wordsworth**

VOCABULARY

- burthen - burden
- cataract – a waterfall
- copses – small stands of trees
- corporeal – having a physical body
- interfused – blended in to become part of something
- roe – a young deer
- sylvan – relating to a park or wood

1. According to the first stanza of the poem, how many times has the speaker visited the banks of the river Wye, and how long ago was his last visit?

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2. Identify which word in the first few lines of the poem is an example of onomatopoeia.

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3. In the first stanza of the poem, what “connect[s] / The landscape with the quiet of the sky”?

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4. What season brings the speaker back to the region of the river Wye?

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