PART 2

Nature and the Imagination

“The Bard, c.1817. John Martin. Oil on canvas, 50 x 39.96 in. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection, New Haven, CT.

“Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility.”

—William Wordsworth, preface to Lyrical Ballads
MEET WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

William Wordsworth was a true literary pioneer. He defied the conventions of his time by insisting that poetry should express deep feelings about everyday experiences. In the process, he influenced a generation of poets and helped revolutionize English poetry.

Passion for Nature Wordsworth was born in England’s Lake District, a land of breathtaking scenery. Early in life, he suffered two tragedies: the sudden death of his mother when he was eight and the death of his father about five years later. The orphaned Wordsworth children were separated. William and his brothers boarded with a couple near the school the boys attended, and their sister, Dorothy, lived with relatives. Though Wordsworth grieved over the loss of his parents, he came to love school, the people of the Lake District, and the land. The passion he developed for poetry, for simple country living, and for the natural world was to influence him for the rest of his life.

“Come forth into the light of things, Let Nature be your Teacher.”
—William Wordsworth

Rebel in France Wordsworth furthered his education at Cambridge University, graduating at the age of twenty-one. While visiting France, he became caught up in the spirit of the French Revolution, which he viewed as a struggle for social justice. He also fell in love with a French woman named Annette Vallon. Though he wanted to stay with her, lack of money forced him to return to England. The next few years were difficult ones for Wordsworth. He felt guilty about leaving Vallon, disillusioned by the increasing violence in France, and disappointed by the poor critical response to his volumes of poetry An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches. Lacking a purpose for his future, he teetered on the brink of mental collapse.

Literary Acclaim When Wordsworth was in his mid-twenties, however, his fortunes changed. He inherited money from a friend, was given a cottage in the Lake District, and was reunited with his sister, Dorothy, who was his dear friend and confidant. Soon afterward, he met Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and this meeting resulted in what is probably the most significant friendship in all of English literature. With the companionship and support of his sister and his friend, Wordsworth began to devote himself to writing poetry. He soon established his reputation as a leading young poet with a slim volume of poems entitled Lyrical Ballads, first published in 1798. That book, which includes Wordsworth’s poem “Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey” and Coleridge’s The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, became the cornerstone of English Romanticism.

Wordsworth continued to write throughout his long life, which he spent in the Lake District with his sister and his wife, Mary. His masterpiece, The Prelude, a long autobiographical poem, was published after his death.

William Wordsworth was born in 1770 and died in 1850.

For more about William Wordsworth, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poems
In the following poems, Wordsworth describes his experiences of nature and their effect on his life. As you read, think about what you can derive from appreciating nature.

Building Background
In 1800 Wordsworth added a preface to the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* to explain his new approach to poetry. Wordsworth’s innovative ideas clashed with those of his predecessors: Swift, Pope, and Johnson, the giants of Neoclassicism. They believed poetry should be an art that engages the mind more than the heart; it should be calculated rather than spontaneous, witty rather than emotional. Wordsworth, on the other hand, suggested that all good poetry springs from the “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” that the poet “recollect[s] in tranquility.” He felt that the language of poetry should be simple and natural.

Setting Purposes for Reading
**Big Idea** Nature and the Imagination
As you read, consider what these poems suggest about the relationship between humans and the natural world.

**Literary Element** Enjambment
Enjambment is the continuation of a sentence in a poem from one line to the next. Wordsworth often uses enjambment in his poetry, as in these lines from “It Is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free”:

Listen! The mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.

As you read, notice additional examples of this technique.


**Reading Strategy** Identifying Genre: Romantic Poetry
In Wordsworth’s view, Romantic poetry differed from Neoclassical poetry in its emphasis on spontaneity, its expression of powerful feelings, and its use of simple language.

**Reading Tip: Taking Notes** Use a web diagram to list examples of Romantic traits in Wordsworth’s poems.

**Vocabulary**
- **sordid** (sôr’did) adj. filthy; selfish; greedy; mean; p. 782 Putting himself before others, he used any means to achieve his sordid goals.
- **piety** (pī’ə tē) n. devoutness; reverence; p. 783 With heartfelt piety, he bowed his head upon entering the cathedral.
- **secluded** (sē klō’id) adj. shut off from others; undisturbed; p. 786 By hiding in a secluded thicket, the fox eluded the hunters.
- **repose** (ri pōz’) v. lie at rest; rest from work or toil; p. 786 Worn out from work, the farmer reposed for a while under a shady tree.

**Vocabulary Tip: Word Origins and Antonyms**
Many dictionaries provide the etymology, or the history of a word, along with the word’s definition. Words that are opposite in meaning are antonyms.

**Interactive Literary Elements Handbook** To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.

**OBJECTIVES**
In studying these selections, you will focus on the following:
- understanding genre
- evaluating diction
- analyzing sensory details
The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon! 1

This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I’d rather be

A Pagan 2 suckled in a creed 3 outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea, 4
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus 5 rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton 6 blow his wreathèd horn.

1. A boon is a gift.
2. Here, a Pagan is a believer in the ancient Greek or Roman gods of mythology.
3. A creed is any statement of faith or principles.
4. A lea (lē) is a meadow.
5. In Greek mythology, Proteus (prōtēs), an old man and a prophet, would rise from the sea and assume many forms.
6. Triton (trītən) is the son of the sea god Neptune, who makes the sound of the ocean by blowing through his conch-shell horn.
It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquility;

The gentleness of heaven broods o’er the Sea:
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.

Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham’s bosom all the year,
And worship’st at the Temple’s inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;

So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

1. Dear Child refers to Caroline, Wordsworth’s daughter with Annette Vallon.
2. According to a Jewish tradition, souls on their way to heaven rest with Abraham, a father of the Hebrew people, enjoying a state of bliss.
Earth has not anything to show more fair:  
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
A sight so touching in its majesty:  
This City now doth, like a garment, wear

The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theaters, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendor, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne’er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

Composed Upon Westminster Bridge,
September 3, 1802

William Wordsworth

A View of Westminster with the Royal Barge and Other Shipping. Joseph Nicholls. Oil on canvas, 61 x 111.7 cm. Private collection.
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. Which poem did you like best? Why?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) According to line 2 of “The World Is Too Much with Us,” with what activities are people preoccupied? How does this preoccupation change people’s lives? (b) What does the speaker think of this change?
3. (a) In lines 2–3 of “It Is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free,” to what does the speaker compare the evening? (b) What does this simile suggest about the speaker’s attitude toward nature?
4. (a) In “My Heart Leaps Up,” what natural phenomenon does the speaker admire? (b) What qualities are usually associated with this phenomenon?
5. (a) In “Composed Upon Westminster Bridge,” when does the speaker describe London? (b) Why is that time of day significant?

Analyze and Evaluate
6. (a) What is the theme, or main idea about life, of “The World Is Too Much with Us”? (b) Is this theme still relevant to life today? Explain.
7. Restate the paradox in line 7 of “My Heart Leaps Up.” In what sense does that statement seem contradictory? In what sense is it true?
8. What is the poetic form of “Composed Upon Westminster Bridge”? Which other Wordsworth poems use the same form?

Connect

LITERARY ANALYSIS

**Literary Element** Enjambment
Poets may use enjambed lines to emphasize rhyming words or to create a conversational tone, breaking lines where people would pause in conversation.

1. What lines of “The World Is Too Much with Us” are enjambed? What rhymes do the line breaks emphasize?
2. What purposes do the three examples of enjambment in the first eight lines of “It Is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free” serve?

READING AND VOCABULARY

**Reading Strategy** Identifying Genre: Romantic Poetry
Wordsworth’s poems reflect the characteristics that distinguish Romantic poetry. Review the web diagram you made on page 781, and then answer the following questions.

1. What elements in these poems reflect Wordsworth’s idea that poetry springs from “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings”?
2. To what extent is the language in these poems simple and natural?

**Vocabulary** Practice
**Practice with Word Origins** Match each vocabulary word with the meaning of its Latin root. Use a dictionary if you need help.

1. sordid a. dutiful
2. piety b. dirt

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey

William Wordsworth

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain springs
With a soft inland murmur. Once again
5 Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose

Reading Strategy  Analyzing Sensory Details  This poem was inspired by Wordsworth’s two visits to the ruins of a medieval abbey located in an area of Wales known for its striking beauty. Which details in the first eight lines help you visualize the scene?

Vocabulary

secluded (si kluˈdəd) adj. shut off from others; undisturbed
repose (riˈpōz) v. lie at rest; rest from work or toil
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage ground, these orchard tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves 'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire
The hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye;
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,

1. Copses are thick, dense growths of small trees or bushes.
2. Hedgerows are rows of bushes, shrubs, or trees that serve as fences or boundaries.

**Literary Element**  
**Diction** What does the phrase “unripe fruits” suggest about the time of year?

**Big Idea** Nature and the Imagination  
What comforts the speaker while he is in the city?
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration—feelings, too,
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen\(^3\) of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible\(^4\) world,
Is lightened—that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on—
Until, the breath of this corporeal\(^5\) frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul;
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft—
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye:\(^6\) thou wanderer through the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again;
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first

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3. Burthen is a variant form of burden.
4. Unintelligible means “incapable of being understood.”
5. Corporeal means “bodily.”
6. Sylvan means “wooded”; the Wye is the river whose banks Wordsworth walked during his visits.
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o’er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led—more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all—I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colors and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye. That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world

7. A roe is a small Eurasian deer found in lightly forested regions.
8. A cataract is a large waterfall.
9. Here, faint means "to lose heart; become depressed."
10. Recompense means "compensation; repayment."

**Literary Element**  **Diction** What do the words roe and bounded suggest about the speaker’s former reaction to nature?

**Literary Element**  **Diction** How does this image contrast with the image of “the sounding cataract” in line 76?
Of eye and ear—both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
110 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits\(^\text{11}\) to decay;
For thou art with me here upon the banks
115 Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,\(^\text{12}\)
My dear, dear Friend, and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
120 May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,

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\(^{11}\) Here, *suffer* means “to allow”; *genial spirits* means “vital energies.”

\(^{12}\) *My dearest Friend* refers to Wordsworth’s sister, Dorothy, who accompanied him on this walking tour.

**Big Idea**  Nature and the Imagination  *What does nature mean to the speaker?*
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy; for she can so inform\(^{13}\)

The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life;
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance—
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence—wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service; rather say
With warmer love—oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

13. Here, inform means “to inspire.”

**Literary Element**  
**Diction** What does the diction in this passage suggest about city life?

**Big Idea**  
**Nature and the Imagination** What does the speaker suggest about the relationship between humans and nature in lines 155–159?
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

1. Which lines of this poem did you find most meaningful? Which lines would you like to clarify or ask questions about?

Recall and Interpret

2. (a) Describe the setting of the poem. What sights and sounds does the speaker mention in lines 1–22? (b) What is the speaker’s attitude toward the sights and sounds around him?

3. (a) How many years have passed since the speaker’s first visit to the countryside overlooking Tintern Abbey? (b) Why has the speaker so often “returned in spirit” to these powerful scenes since his first visit?

4. (a) In what ways has the speaker changed since his first visit? How does he look upon nature now? (b) How does the speaker feel about the changes he sees in himself since his first visit?

5. (a) Who accompanies the speaker on his return visit? (b) How does the presence of a companion enhance the speaker’s pleasure in returning to this particular place?

Analyze and Evaluate

6. Is this poem about nature, about human nature, or about both? Explain your opinion, citing lines from the poem to support your ideas.

7. In what ways is this poem like prose? What elements are “poetic”?

8. In line 152, the speaker says that he is a “worshipper of Nature.” In your opinion, does the speaker worship nature only, or does he worship something more? Give examples to support your opinion.

Connect

9. **Big Idea** Nature and the Imagination Compare “Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey” with “It Is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free.” Consider Wordsworth’s attitude toward nature and the enjoyment of nature. What similarities do you see in these poems?

Evaluating a Literary Rebel

Francis Jeffrey, a literary critic, expressed the following opinions about Wordsworth’s poetry in articles published in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1807 and 1814. As you read the excerpts, note this critic’s reaction to Wordsworth’s poetry and Romanticism.

“With Mr. Wordsworth and his friends, it is plain that their peculiarities of diction are things of choice, and not of accident. They write as they do, upon principle and system; and it evidently costs them much pains to keep down to the standard which they have proposed for themselves.”

“The new poets are just as great borrowers as the old; only that, instead of borrowing from the more popular passages of their illustrious predecessors, they have preferred furnishing themselves from vulgar ballads and plebean nurseries.”

“If Mr. Wordsworth, instead of confining himself almost entirely to the society of . . . cottagers and little children . . . had condescended to mingle a little more with the people that were to read and judge [his book], we cannot help thinking that its texture might have been considerably improved.”

Group Activity Discuss the following questions with your classmates. Cite evidence from Wordsworth’s poems for support.

1. What is Jeffrey’s evaluation of Wordsworth’s diction?

2. What criticism does Jeffrey level at Wordsworth in the last quotation? How might Wordsworth have responded?
**Literary Element**  
**Diction**

Through his *diction*, or word choice, Wordsworth rebelled against the strict demands of Neoclassicism. Instead of using “poetic” language, he tried to use simple and natural language, which reflected the speech patterns of ordinary people.

1. In “Tintern Abbey,” does Wordsworth fulfill his intention to write poetry “in a selection of language really spoken” by people? Explain.

2. How does the diction in this poem reflect Wordsworth’s aesthetic principles and reinforce his ideas?

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**Review: Lyric Poetry**

As you learned on page 449, *lyric poetry* expresses a speaker’s personal thoughts and feelings. Lyric poems are usually short and musical, and they emphasize the experience of emotion.

**Partner Activity**  
With a partner, answer these questions:

1. Review the four poems by Wordsworth that precede “Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey.” In what ways are these poems examples of lyric poetry?

2. (a) In what way is “Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey” an example of a lyric poem? (b) What is the verse form of this poem?

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**Reading Strategy**  
**Analyzing Sensory Details**

By using *sensory details*, Wordsworth creates images, or word pictures, that evoke emotional responses in the reader. Review the examples of sensory details that you noted while reading the poems, and then answer the following questions.

1. To which senses do most of the sensory details in “Tintern Abbey” appeal? Identify images that appeal to the sense of touch.

2. Which sensory details evoke negative emotions about life in London?

3. How does the use of sensory details reinforce the theme of this poem? Cite examples to support your opinion.

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**Vocabulary Practice**  
**Practice with Antonyms**  
Find the antonym for each vocabulary word below. Use a dictionary or a thesaurus if you need help.

1. **secluded**  
   a. crowded  
   b. isolated

2. **repose**  
   a. relax  
   b. toil

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**Academic Vocabulary**

Here are two words from the vocabulary list on page R82.

- **accompany** (ə kum’ pa nē) v. to join or follow
- **highlight** (hī’ līt’) v. to point out or place emphasis on

**Practice and Apply**

1. What did Wordsworth gain when his sister accompanied him to Tintern Abbey?

2. What themes does Wordsworth often highlight in his poetry?
Writing About Literature

Analyze Sound Devices  Poets use the following sound devices to create a sense of rhythm or a musical quality, to emphasize particular words or phrases, or to reinforce meaning:

- **alliteration**, the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words
- **assonance**, the repetition of the same or similar vowel sounds in stressed syllables that end with different consonant sounds
- **consonance**, the repetition of consonant sounds, typically at the end of non-rhyming words

In a brief essay, identify examples of these sound devices in “Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey” and explain their purpose. Use a graphic organizer like the one shown below to help you organize your ideas.

**Introduction**
- State your thesis, or main idea.

**Body Paragraph(s)**
- Add examples of alliteration, assonance, and consonance and explain their purpose.

**Conclusion**
- Restate your thesis in different words. Add a related insight.

After you complete your draft, meet with a peer reviewer to evaluate each other’s work and to suggest revisions. Then edit and proofread your draft for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Reading Further

If you enjoyed reading these poems by William Wordsworth, you might enjoy these books.

**Collection:** *William Wordsworth: Selected Poetry*, edited by Stephen Gill and Duncan Wu, contains an excellent sampling of Wordsworth’s poetry.

**Critical Biography:** *Wordsworth* by Margaret Drabble is a brief, clear study of Wordsworth’s life and work.

Wordsworth’s Language and Style

**Keeping Language Simple**  Wordsworth believed that the language of poetry should be simple and natural. Notice the diction in the opening lines of “The World Is Too Much with Us”:

The world is too much with us; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;  
Little we see in Nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!

Wordsworth expresses his ideas in simple, clear language, using only one- or two-syllable words. The “voice” is that of someone talking to a friend. The chart below identifies other examples of Wordsworth’s diction and explains its effect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simple Language</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“So was it when my life began; / So is it now I am a man; / So be it when I shall grow old” (“My Heart Leaps Up”)</td>
<td>One-syllable words reinforce the continuity (from past to present to future) of the speaker’s devotion to nature’s beauty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Dear God! the very houses seem asleep” (“Composed Upon . . .”)</td>
<td>A simple personification conveys London’s stillness in the morning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Let the moon / Shine on thee in thy solitary walk; / And let the misty mountain winds be free / to blow against thee” (“Tintern Abbey”)</td>
<td>Two simple images convey the speaker’s advice to his sister.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity**  Scan Wordsworth’s poems for other examples of simple, natural language. List each example and explain its effect. Then share your list with your classmates.

**Revising Check**

**Simple Language**  Work with a partner to review your essay about Wordsworth’s use of sound devices. Look for places where you might make your word choice clearer and more direct by substituting simple and natural words for abstract or difficult ones. Revise your essay to strengthen the diction.

**Web Activities**  For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to [www.glencoe.com](http://www.glencoe.com).
The depth of Dorothy Wordsworth’s devotion to her brother William, the great Romantic poet, and of his devotion to her can be illustrated by a striking entry in one of Dorothy’s journals that describes the events surrounding William’s marriage to his childhood sweetheart, Mary Hutchinson. On the night before he was to be married, William entrusted Dorothy with the wedding ring, presumably for safekeeping. On the morning of the wedding she returned it to him. Recalling that moment in her journal, she wrote, “I gave him the wedding ring—with how deep a blessing! I took it from my forefinger where I had worn it the whole of the night before—he slipped it again onto my finger, and blessed me fervently.” Modern readers might view this revelation as odd, and apparently so did the editors of the first edition of Dorothy’s journals, who chose to omit it when the journals were published after her death. In fact, however, Mary was Dorothy’s oldest friend. Neither woman was jealous of the other. After William married, Dorothy lived with him and his wife and helped them raise their children.

“We walked to Rydale. It was very pleasant—Grasmere lake a beautiful image of stillness, clear as glass, reflecting all things. . . . The church and buildings, how quiet they were!”

—Dorothy Wordsworth
from The Grasmere Journals

Three Writers, One Soul Dorothy Wordsworth was born on Christmas Day. When she was six years old, her mother died, and Dorothy was separated from her brothers and sent to live with relatives because it was thought that an all-male household was not a fit place to raise a young girl. Many years later, Dorothy was reunited with her brother William. Dorothy and William enjoyed a deep friendship with the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, with whom they walked and talked daily for a number of years. The three were so close that Dorothy once described the trio as “three persons with one soul.”

Observer of Nature Although Dorothy wrote some poetry, her best writing is found in her journals and letters. Her Alfoxden Journal 1798 and The Grasmere Journals 1800–1803 offer a remarkably detailed and rich view of English cottage life in the first part of the nineteenth century and provide valuable insights into her relationship with her brother and her influence on his poetry. Dorothy’s journal writing (which, according to her, she pursued “because I shall give William pleasure by it”) shows her to be a keen observer of nature and of the people around her. One biographer has called her “probably . . . the most distinguished of English writers who never wrote a line for the general public.”

Later Years When Dorothy Wordsworth was in her mid-sixties, she fell seriously ill with arteriosclerosis. She became an invalid, and the disease apparently affected her mind. She remained in this debilitated state for more than twenty years until her death at the age of eighty-three.

Dorothy Wordsworth was born in 1771 and died in 1855.
Connecting to the Journal

Have you ever come across a scene in nature so extraordinary that you wanted to share it with someone? In one of Dorothy Wordsworth’s journal entries, she describes her reaction to seeing a ribbon of daffodils growing along the shore of a lake in the English countryside. As you read, think about these questions:

- What makes a natural scene memorable for you?
- What thoughts does such a scene inspire?

Building Background

In 1799 William and Dorothy Wordsworth, together with their brother John, a sea captain home on leave, settled in the rustic village of Grasmere. They lived modestly in Dove Cottage, a small house covered in the summer with the green leaves and colorful flowers of a scarlet bean plant that climbed the cottage’s exterior. Their property included a small orchard and garden and a boat on Grasmere Lake. From 1800 to 1803, Dorothy recorded descriptions of village life in and around Grasmere. William Wordsworth often turned to Dorothy’s journals for inspiration as well as for details for his poems. The journal entry you are about to read, written in the spring of 1802, inspired William to write the poem “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud,” the first stanza of which is reprinted on the next page.

Setting Purposes for Reading

**Big Idea**  Nature and the Imagination

As you read, notice how Dorothy Wordsworth’s observations reflect the Romantics’ admiration for nature, and how nature was the ideal stimulus for the imagination.

**Literary Element**  Journal

A journal is a daily record of events kept by a participant in those events or by a witness to them. Journals can provide interesting details about people’s daily lives and can also be an important source of historical information. As you read, think about the information this journal entry reveals about Dorothy’s relationship to William and her influence on his poetry.


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**Reading Strategy**  Analyzing Mood

**Mood** is the emotional quality that a writer creates in a literary work. A writer’s style, including subject matter, choice of language, setting, and tone, as well as figurative language and sound devices, such as rhyme and rhythm, contribute to a work’s mood. **Analyzing mood** means discovering how these components work together. As you read Dorothy Wordsworth’s journal entry, notice how she creates mood.

**Reading Tip: Taking Notes**  Use a chart similar to the one below to record examples of Wordsworth’s style that contribute to the mood of the journal entry.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Style Element</th>
<th>Description of Mood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The wind seized our breath...”</td>
<td>personification</td>
<td>violent weather</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**OBJECTIVES**

In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:

- understanding the characteristics of journal writing
- identifying and analyzing mood
THURSDAY, APRIL 15. It was a threatening misty morning—but mild. We [Dorothy and William] set off after dinner from Eusemere. Mrs. Clarkson went a short way with us but turned back. The wind was furious, and we thought we must have returned. We first rested in the large boathouse, then under a furze bush opposite Mr. Clarkson’s; saw the plough going in the field.

The wind seized our breath; the lake was rough. There was a boat by itself floating in the middle of the bay below Water Millock. We rested again in the Water Millock lane. The hawthorns are black and green, the birches here and there greenish, but there is yet more of purple to be seen on the twigs. We got over into a field to avoid some cows—people working, a few prim-roses by the roadside woods-sorrel flowers, the anemone, scentless violets, strawberries, and that starry yellow flower which Mrs. C. calls pile wort. When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow Park, we saw a few daffodils close to the waterside. We fancied that the lake had floated the seeds ashore and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more and yet more, and at last under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore, about the breadth of a country turnpike road. I never saw daffodils so beautiful.

They grew among the mossy stones about and about them; some rested their heads upon these stones as on a pillow for weariness, and the rest tossed and reeled and danced and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake. They looked so gay, ever glancing, ever changing. This wind blew directly over the lake to them. There was here and there a little knot and a few stragglers a few yards higher up, but they were so few as not to disturb the simplicity and unity and life of that one busy highway. We rested again and again. The bays were stormy, and we heard the waves at different distances and in the middle of the water like the sea.

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1. The daffodil, also called the trumpet narcissus, has a brilliant yellow flower with a trumpet-shaped central crown.

---

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o’er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

—William Wordsworth

---

Reading Strategy
Analyzing Mood
What mood is created by this personification of the daffodils?

Big Idea
Nature and the Imagination
The Romantics valued the unity and simplicity of nature. What principle of Romanticism is illustrated here by Wordsworth’s imaginative treatment of nature?
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. What aspect or detail of this journal entry did you find most interesting? Explain.

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) Describe the journey the Wordsworths take. (b) What weather conditions do they encounter and what stops do they make?
3. (a) What kinds of observations does the author record in this journal entry? (b) What do these observations suggest about her attitude toward nature?

Analyze and Evaluate
4. (a) What human qualities does the author give to the daffodils? (b) How does this use of personification help the reader visualize the daffodils?
5. Identify several sensory images in the journal entry and evaluate how well each one helps you imagine what the author is describing.

Connect
6. Do you think you appreciate the natural world in the same way Dorothy and William Wordsworth did? Explain.
7. **Big Idea** Nature and the Imagination The Romantics often found spiritual strength in the natural world, especially as the Industrial Revolution and urbanization increased the distance between humanity and nature. What indications of this do you find in Dorothy Wordsworth’s journal?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

**Literary Element** Journal

Journals provide a glimpse into what life was like during a certain time period.

1. What does the journal entry reveal about the time and place in which Dorothy, William, and Coleridge lived?
2. What does the journal entry suggest about Dorothy Wordsworth’s values and outlook on life? Use details from the entry to support your ideas.

**Reading Strategy** Analyzing Mood

Mood, the emotional quality of a literary work, encompasses both tone, the attitude a writer takes toward the subject, and atmosphere, which refers to the physical qualities of the work’s setting.

1. What mood is conveyed in the journal entry and what details help convey this mood?
2. How does the first line of William Wordsworth’s poem alter the mood of Dorothy’s journal entry?

**Writing About Literature**

**Compare and Contrast Imagery** Find and study a complete copy of “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud.” In a short essay, compare the images and discuss the apparent influence of Dorothy’s journal on William’s poem.

**Academic Vocabulary**

Here is a word from the vocabulary list on page R82.

complement (kom’ plə ment’) n. something that completes or makes up a whole

**Practice and Apply**

How did Dorothy Wordsworth serve as a complement to her brother William?

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
Kubla Khan and
The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

MEET SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Tales such as Robinson Crusoe and the Arabian Nights enthralled young Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and from an early age, he felt drawn to the worlds of fantasy and the exotic.

A Lonely and Friendless Youth Coleridge was born at Ottery St. Mary, Devonshire. His father was the village vicar, an unworldly but popular figure. He died when Coleridge was only nine years old. Lonely and friendless, Coleridge retreated into books and his own vivid imagination where he nurtured dreams of a better future for himself. He spent much time alone outdoors, and once, after running away after a fight and collapsing on a riverbank, spent the night there and almost froze to death. As a result, he contracted a painful case of rheumatism that plagued him for the rest of his life. At the time, opium was a standard medical treatment for such a condition, and in the course of easing his persistent attacks, Coleridge grew to depend on the drug and lamented his addiction. “Yet to my fellow men,” he wrote, “I may say that I was seduced into the accursed Habit ignorantly.”

While at Cambridge University, Coleridge became inspired by the democratic ideals of the French Revolution. Along with several friends, including the poet Robert Southey, he joined in a movement to establish an ideal community in the United States that would be removed from war and intolerance and would give all citizens an equal voice in the government. Coleridge, Southey, and others planned to set up their community by the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania. However, the utopian group disintegrated, and Coleridge moved with his wife, Sarah (Southey’s wife’s sister), and their new baby back to England to live in a small village in Somerset.

A Turning Point When Coleridge was twenty-five, he met the poet William Wordsworth. They became good friends, and Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy moved to Somerset to be near Coleridge. The two poets spent endless hours in each other’s company and soon began their famous collaboration on Lyrical Ballads, which was published in 1798 and included Coleridge’s The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. For Coleridge, this period was the happiest of his life.

“Not the poem which we have read, but that to which we return, with the greatest pleasure, possesses the genuine power, and claims the name of essential poetry.”
—Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Poet and Critic By his early thirties, Coleridge had turned most of his attention to writing prose essays and treatises on literary and religious subjects. Despite illness, depression, and drug addiction, Coleridge produced an extraordinary body of work. He became the greatest literary critic of his age, known particularly for his perceptive commentary on the plays of Shakespeare and his Biographia Literaria, a spiritual autobiography and a brilliant exposition of the romantic ideals of art and life.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born in 1772 and died in 1834.
Connecting to the Poem
Throughout history, writers and artists have written about utopias, dreamscapes, and fantastic places. In “Kubla Khan,” Coleridge envisions an exotic, foreign locale from the past. As you read, think about the following questions:

- Why are we simultaneously excited and frightened by the exotic and the unknown?
- How do imagination and creativity help us to understand other people, places, or situations?

Building Background
At the time when Coleridge wrote “Kubla Khan,” he had been taking opium to ease the pain of his rheumatism, and, to distract his troubled mind, he was reading a travel book called Purchas His Pilgrimage by Samuel Purchas (1613). He fell asleep after reading a passage relating how Kubla Khan, the thirteenth-century founder of the Mongol dynasty in China, built a beautiful palace amid a tropical paradise. According to Coleridge, during his three-hour nap he literally dreamed up three hundred lines of poetry “without any sensation or consciousness of effort.” On waking, he began writing the poem but was interrupted by a visitor. When he returned to his work an hour later, he could not remember the rest, and the poem remains an unfinished fragment.

Setting Purposes for Reading

**Big Idea**  
Nature and the Imagination
The Romantics were fascinated with the realm of dreams and nightmares, visions and creative madness. As you read, notice how these elements are intertwined in “Kubla Khan.”

**Literary Element**  
Alliteration
Alliteration is a literary device in which words or stressed syllables beginning with the same sound—usually a consonant sound—are repeated; for example, “meandering with a mazy motion.” As you read, look for examples of alliteration.


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**Reading Strategy**  
Analyzing Cause-and-Effect Relationships
A *cause* is an action or event that makes something happen; an *effect* is the result of that action or event. In a complicated narrative poem such as “Kubla Khan,” it is important to pay close attention to the ways in which events unfold over the course of each stanza in order to determine the cause-and-effect relationships.

**Reading Tip: Noting Causes and Effects**  
Use a chart to record the causes and effects you discover as you read.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kubla Khan issued a decree.</td>
<td>Walls and towers were built.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gardens were planted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Map showing Cambuluc, the capital of Kubla Khan’s Mongol Empire. British Museum, London.

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**OBJECTIVES**
In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:
- analyzing literary periods
- analyzing alliteration
- analyzing cause-and-effect relationships
In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man

Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;

And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!

As e’er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon lover!

And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced:

Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher’s flail:
And ’mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.

Kubla Khan

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

1. Xanadu (za’ na də’ə) is perhaps an altered form of Xamdu (also Shang-tu), a residence of Kubla Khan. Kubla Khan (1215–1294), the grandson of Genghis Khan, conquered China and became the first khan, or ruler, of the Mongol dynasty.
2. Decree means “order.” Kubla Khan ordered that a pleasure dome be built.
3. Coleridge probably named the river Alph in reference to the Greek river Alpheus.
4. Sinuous rills means “winding streams.”
5. Athwart a cedarn cover means “across a covering of cedars.”
6. Momently means “from moment to moment.”
7. Intermitted means “interrupted.”

Identify five examples of alliteration in lines 1–5 of this poem.
25 Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
   Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
   Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
   And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
   And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
30   Ancestral voices prophesying war!
   The shadow of the dome of pleasure
   Floatèd midway on the waves;
   Where was heard the mingled measure°
   From the fountain and the caves.
35   It was a miracle of rare device,°
   A sunny pleasure dome with caves of ice!

   A damsel with a dulcimer°
   In a vision once I saw:
   It was an Abyssinian° maid,
40   And on her dulcimer she played,
   Singing of Mount Abora.°
   Could I revive within me
   Her symphony and song,
   To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
45   That with music loud and long,
   I would build that dome in air,
   That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
   And all who heard should see them there,
   And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
50   His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
   Weave a circle round him thrice,
   And close your eyes with holy dread,
   For he° on honeydew hath fed,
   And drunk the milk of Paradise.

Reading Strategy   Analyzing Cause-and-Effect Relationships
What causes the speaker to have this vision?

Big Idea   Nature and the Imagination How does this passage indicate the power of the imagination?

33 Here, measure means "tune or melody; a rhythmic sound."
35 Here, device means "design."
37 A dulcimer (dul’ so mar) is a stringed musical instrument.
39 Abyssinian means "from Abyssinia," the former name of Ethiopia in East Africa.
41 Mount Abora is probably a reference to Mount Amara in Ethiopia.
53 The words his, him, and he in lines 50–53 all refer to the speaker of the poem.
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

**Respond**
1. How did you respond to the place described?

**Recall and Interpret**
2. (a) Describe the pleasure dome and its setting in lines 1–11. (b) How would you describe the mood of the first stanza?
3. (a) Identify images from the first stanza that suggest that the pleasure dome and its surroundings are bright and beautiful. (b) Identify images from the second stanza that suggest the surroundings are dark and dangerous. (c) What does the contrast between these stanzas suggest to you about the nature of the pleasure dome?
4. (a) What do the “Ancestral voices” in line 30 predict? (b) How is this prediction at odds with the description of the pleasure dome from the first stanza? (c) What might this suggest about people’s creations?

**Analyze and Evaluate**
5. (a) What can you infer about the speaker’s character from lines 49–54? (b) Why might the speaker think that people would be filled with “holy dread” upon seeing him?
6. (a) What might the “damsel with a dulcimer” symbolize to the poet? (b) What do you think the “honeydew” and the “milk of Paradise” symbolize?
7. (a) What does Coleridge’s use of contrasting images contribute to your understanding of the poem? (b) What do you think is the theme of this poem?

**Connect**

**LITERARY ANALYSIS**

**Literary Element** Alliteration
Poets often use alliteration to emphasize certain words, to create a musical quality, to help establish the prevailing mood of a poem, or to reinforce meaning.

1. Explain the cumulative effect of the alliterative words in lines 15–16.
2. (a) Point out all the instances of alliteration in lines 42–46. (b) Why do you think Coleridge uses this device in these lines?

**Literary Criticism**
Scholar Kenneth Burke maintains that “Kubla Khan” is in “perfect form,” the first stanza presenting a thesis (main idea); the second, an antithesis (opposite idea); and the third, a fusion of the thesis and antithesis (resolution). Write a brief analysis of the structure of the poem and include an explanation of why you agree or disagree with Burke.

**READING AND VOCABULARY**

**Reading Strategy** Analyzing Cause-and-Effect Relationships
A cause is an event or action that results in an effect. Analyzing causes and effects in literature can help you to better remember and understand what is happening.

1. What are the effects of the mighty fountain that erupts from the chasm?
2. What would happen if the speaker could remember the “damsel’s dulcimer” song?

**Academic Vocabulary**
Here is a word from the vocabulary list on page R82.

**consist** (kən sist’ v. be made up; be formed

**Practice and Apply**
Does “Kubla Khan” consist mainly of description or narration? Explain.

*Web Activities* For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
Before You Read  The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

Connecting to the Poem
Do you ever think of life as a journey? In *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, the narrator recounts his adventure at sea. During this voyage, he learns difficult lessons about nature and humanity.

- Have you ever learned a valuable life lesson by experiencing hardship or encountering difficulty?
- Do you think it is important for people to share their tales of adversity and pain?

Building Background
*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is an account of a sea voyage to distant places, with crime, death, and inhuman suffering as parts of the ghastly adventure. Initially Wordsworth collaborated with Coleridge on the composition of the poem. Before dropping out of the joint venture, Wordsworth suggested several memorable details, including the shooting of the albatross and the ship’s navigation by dead men.

Setting Purposes for Reading

**Big Idea**  Nature and the Imagination
As you read, examine the way in which the mariner interacts with both the fantastic and the ordinary.

**Literary Element**  Narrative Poetry

Narrative poetry is verse that tells a story. Narrative poems have characters, settings, and narrators who describe a series of events, much like the narrator in a novel or short story. Many narrative poems also have literary elements such as figurative language and dialogue. A narrative poem may be written in any verse form and may be rhymed or unrhymed. In this work, Coleridge chose to use a ballad stanza structure and rhyme scheme.


Reading Strategy  Reviewing

To **review** is to reread or to think over what you have read in order to help you organize ideas and remember details. Try to separate main events from supporting description.

Reading Tip: Summarizing  Summarizing what happens in each part of the poem will help you to understand its plot. Coleridge has done some of this work for you by putting a brief summary, which he calls the argument, in marginal glosses. You should rewrite and incorporate Coleridge’s notes into your own summary. *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* has seven parts. As you read, write a summary for each part.

Vocabulary

**dismal** (diz’ mal) adj. dark and gloomy; p. 808 It was a dismal afternoon, and I was glad I could stay indoors, where it was warm and bright.

**penance** (pen’ ans) n. an act of self-punishment to show repentance for a sin; p. 820 In the Greek tragedy, Oedipus puts out his own eyes as penance for having killed his father.

**impart** (im pär’ t) v. to give; donate; p. 823 Uncle Simon loves to impart little bits of wisdom to all of us at family dinners.

**Vocabulary Tip: Context Clues**  Clues to the meanings of unfamiliar words can often be found in the surrounding text.

Interactive Literary Elements Handbook  To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.

Jewelled binding with 275 jewels. Sangorski & Sutcliffe. Illuminated manuscript, 330 x 240 x 30 mm.
THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

Samuel Taylor Coleridge
ARGUMENT
How a Ship, having passed the Equator, was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancient Mariner came back to his own Country.

PART I

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
"By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?"

"The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,
"There was a ship," quoth he.
"Hold off! unhand me, graybeard loon!"
Eftsoons° his hand dropped he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

12. Eftsoons means "at once."

Literary Element | Narrative Poetry To whom does the Mariner address his tale? What is the setting of their meeting?

Big Idea | Nature and the Imagination What elements of the supernatural are at work in this stanza?
“The ship was cheered, the harbor cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk,\(^{23}\) below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

25 “The Sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

“Higher and higher every day,
30 Till over the mast at noon\(^{30}\)—”
The Wedding Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
35 Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.\(^{36}\)

The Wedding Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
40 The bright-eyed Mariner.

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23. *Kirk* is Scottish for church.
30. In this line, Coleridge is saying the sun’s position indicates that the ship has reached the equator.
36. A *minstrelsy* is a group of musicians.
“And now the Storm Blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o’ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

45 “With sloping masts and dipping prow,"°
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
50 And southward aye° we fled.

“And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

55 “And through the drifts the snowy clifts°
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken°—
The ice was all between.

“The ice was here, the ice was there,
60 The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!°

“At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
65 As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God’s name.

The ship driven by a storm toward the South Pole.

The land of ice, and of fearful sounds,
where no living thing was to be seen.

Till a great sea bird, called the Albatross,
came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality.

45. A mast is a vertical pole that supports a ship’s sails, and the prow is the forward part of a ship’s hull.
50. Aye means “ever.”
55. Clifts means “crevices.”
57. Ken means “saw; identified.”
62. A swound is a swoon or fainting fit.

Nature and the Imagination How does the use of personification here reflect the Romantic idea that the imagination is a force within the individual that reacts to the natural world?

Nature and the Imagination What is the effect of this personification?

Vocabulary
dismal (diz’ mal) adj. dark and gloomy
“It ate the food it ne’er had eat,  
And round and round it flew.  
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;  
The helmsman steered us through!

“And a good south wind sprung up behind;  
The Albatross did follow,  
And every day, for food or play,  
Came to the mariners’ hollo!

“In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,°  
It perched for vespers° nine;  
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,  
Glimmered the white Moonshine.”

“God save thee, ancient Mariner!  
From the fiends that plague thee thus!—  
Why look’st thou so?”°—“With my crossbow  
I shot the Albatross.”

PART II

“The Sun now rose upon the right:°  
Out of the sea came he,  
Still hid in mist, and on the left  
Went down into the sea.

“And the good south wind still blew behind,  
But no sweet bird did follow,  
Nor any day for food or play  
Came to the mariners’ hollo!

“And I had done a hellish thing,  
And it would work ’em woe:  
For all averred,° I had killed the bird  
That made the breeze to blow.

‘Ah, wretch!’ said they, ‘the bird to slay,  
That made the breeze to blow!’

75. A shroud is a rope that supports the mast of a ship.  
76. Here, vespers means “evenings.”  
79–81. The words [“God . . . so?”] are spoken by the Wedding Guest.  
83. This line indicates that the ship is heading north.  
93. Averred means “asserted; affirmed.”

Reading Strategy: Reviewing  What happens in this last stanza? Why does the Guest interrupt the Mariner?

Literary Element: Narrative Poetry  Does the Mariner offer any motivation for what he has done? Explain.
“Nor dim nor red, like God’s own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:°
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.

‘Twas right,’ said they, ‘such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.’

“The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow° followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

“Down dropped the breeze, the sails dropped down,
’Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

“All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

“Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

“Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

“The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

But when the fog cleared off, they justify
the same, and thus make themselves
accomplices in the crime.

The fair breeze continues; the ship enters
the Pacific Ocean and sails northward,
even till it reaches the Line.

The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

98. Uprist means “arose.”
104. The furrow is the ship’s wake.
“About, about, in reel and rout°
The death-fires° danced at night;
The water, like a witch’s oils,
Burned green and blue and white.

“And some in dreams assured were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

“And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

“Ah! well a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III

“There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

“At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.°

“A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

127. In reel and rout means “in riotous, whirling movements.”
128. Death-fires are luminous glowings supposedly seen over
dead bodies.
152. Wist means “knew.”

Big Idea  Nature and the Imagination  How do lines
125–130 demonstrate the Mariner’s imagination at work?

Reading Strategy  Reviewing  Why would the Mariner’s
shipmates hang the albatross around his neck?

A Spirit had followed them; one of the
invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither
departed souls nor angels. . . . They are
very numerous, and there is no climate or
element without one or more.

The shipmates, in their sore distress,
would fain throw the whole guilt on the
ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they
hang the dead sea bird round his neck.

The ancient Mariner beheldeth a sign in
the element afar off.
“With throats unslaked," with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!

I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, ‘A sail! a sail!'

“With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape° they heard me call:
Gramercy!° they for joy did grin,

And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

“See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal;°
Without a breeze, without a tide,

She steadies with upright keel!

“The western wave was all aflame.
The day was well nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave

---

157. *Unslaked* means "unrelieved of thirst."
163. *Agape* means "with mouths open in wonder."
164. *Gramercy* is an exclamation of surprise or sudden feeling
    similar to "Have mercy on us!"
168. *Work us weal* means "do us good; benefit us."
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

“And straight° the Sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven’s Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

“Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres?°

“Are those her ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that woman’s mate?

“Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man’s blood with cold.

“The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
‘The game is done! I’ve won! I’ve won!’
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

“The Sun’s rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o’er the sea,
Off shot the specter bark.°

“We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My lifeblood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman’s face by his lamp gleamed white;

It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face
of the setting Sun. The Specter-Woman
and her Death mate, and no other on
board the skeleton ship.

Like vessel, like crew!

Death and Life-in-Death have diced for
the ship’s crew, and she (the latter) win-
neth the ancient Mariner.

No twilight within the courts of the Sun.

At the rising of the Moon,
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb° above the eastern bar
The hornèd Moon,° with one bright star
Within the nether° tip.

“One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,°
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

“Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

“The souls did from their bodies fly—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whiz of my crossbow!”

PART IV

“I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

“I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown.”—

“Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding Guest!
This body dropped not down.

“Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

---

209. Clomb means “climbed.”
210. A hornèd Moon is a crescent moon.
211. Nether means “lower.”
212. Sailors believed that a star-dogged Moon was a sign of impending evil.

Reading Strategy Reviewing What happens to the Mariner’s shipmates and why?

Literary Element Narrative Poetry What image does this line recall? What does this suggest?

Reading Strategy Reviewing Why is the Wedding Guest frightened?
“The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

240 “I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

“I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
245 But or ever a prayer had gushed,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

“I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
250 For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

He despiseth the creatures of the calm.

And envieth that they should live, and so
many lie dead.

245. Here, or means "before."
“The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

“An orphan’s curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man’s eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

“The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

“Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoarfrost spread;
But where the ship’s huge shadow lay,
The charmèd water burned alway
A still and awful red.

“Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

“Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

“O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn . . . ; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

By the light of the Moon, he beholdeth God’s creatures of the great calm.

Their beauty and their happiness.

He blesseth them in his heart.

267. This line means “Her moonbeams mocked the hot sea.”
268. Hoarfrost is frost, especially the white coating it forms on surfaces.
270. Alway means “all along.”
276. Hoary means “white.”

Reading Strategy  Reviewing What has the Mariner seen for the last seven days and seven nights and what has he tried to do? Look back at line 244.
“The selfsame moment I could pray;  
And from my neck so free  
290 The Albatross fell off, and sank  
Like lead into the sea.”

**PART V**

“Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,  
Beloved from pole to pole!  
To Mary Queen the praise be given!  
295 She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven  
That slid into my soul.

“The silly° buckets on the deck,  
That had so long remained,  
I dreamed that they were filled with dew;  
And when I awoke, it rained.

“My lips were wet, my throat was cold,  
My garments all were dank;  
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,  
And still my body drank.

305 “I moved, and could not feel my limbs:  
I was so light—almost  
I thought that I had died in sleep,  
And was a blessèd ghost.

“And soon I heard a roaring wind:  
310 It did not come anear;  
But with its sound it shook the sails  
That were so thin and sere.°

“The upper air burst into life!  
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,°  
315 To and fro they were hurried about!  
And to and fro, and in and out,  
The wan° stars danced between.

---

297. Here, silly means “useless.”
312. Sere means “worn.”
314. Fire-flags may refer to the aurora australis, or southern lights. Sheen means “shone.”
317. Wan means “faint; dull” (compared with the fire-flags).

---

**Literary Element**  
**Narrative Poetry**  
**How does the Mariner’s action contribute unwittingly to his salvation?**

**Literary Element**  
**Narrative Poetry**  
**How has the Mariner’s situation changed?**
“And the coming wind did roar more loud,  
And the sails did sigh like sedge;°  
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;  
The Moon was at its edge.

“The thick black cloud was cleft,° and still  
The Moon was at its side:  
Like waters shot from some high crag,  
The lightning fell with never a jag,  
A river steep and wide.

“The loud wind never reached the ship,  
Yet now the ship moved on!  
Beneath the lightning and the Moon  
The dead men gave a groan.

“They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,  
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;  
It had been strange, even in a dream,  
To have seen those dead men rise.

“The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;  
Yet never a breeze up-blew;  
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,  
Where they were wont° to do;  
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—  
We were a ghastly crew.

“The body of my brother's son  
Stood by me, knee to knee:  
The body and I pulled at one rope,  
But he said nought to me."

“I fear thee, ancient Mariner!"  
“Be calm, thou Wedding Guest!  
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,  
Which to their corses° came again,  
But a troop of spirits blessed:

“For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,  
And clustered round the mast;  
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,  
And from their bodies passed.

The bodies of the ship's crew are inspired, and the ship moves on;  
[Inspired means “breathed life into” or “animated by divine or supernatural influence.”]

---

319. *Sedge* is marsh grass.
322. *Cleft* means “split.”
348. *Corses* are corpses.

**Big Idea**  Nature and the Imagination  What is the Mariner’s explanation for the crew’s revival?
“Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

“Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the skylark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!°

“And now ’twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel’s song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

“It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

“Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

“Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The Spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

“The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:
But in a minute she ’gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

“Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

The lonesome Spirit from the South Pole carries on the ship as far as the Line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

362. Jargoning means “warbling.”

Reading Strategy Reviewing Summarize what has happened so far in Part V.
“How long in that same fit I lay, I have not to declare; 
But ere my living life returned, I heard, and in my soul discerned Two voices in the air.

“ ‘Is it he?’ quoth one, ‘Is this the man? By him who died on cross, 
With his cruel bow he laid full low The harmless Albatross.

“ ‘The Spirit who bideth by himself In the land of mist and snow, He loved the bird that loved the man Who shot him with his bow.’

“The other was a softer voice, As soft as honeydew: Quoth he, ‘The man hath penance done, And penance more will do.’ ”

PART VI

FIRST VOICE

410 “ ‘But tell me, tell me! speak again, Thy soft response renewing— What makes that ship drive on so fast? What is the ocean doing?”

SECOND VOICE

415 “ ‘Still as a slave before his lord, The ocean hath no blast;° His great bright eye most silently Up to the Moon is cast—

“ ‘If he may know which way to go; For she guides him smooth or grim. See, brother, see! how graciously She looketh down on him.’

---

415. Blast means “wind.”

**Literary Element** Narrative Poetry Who are these voices and why are they important?

**Vocabulary**

*penance* (penˈəns) n. an act of self-punishment to show repentance for a sin
FIRST VOICE

"‘But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?’

SECOND VOICE

"‘The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.’

"‘Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated.
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner’s trance is abated.’

“I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
’Twas night, calm night, the moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

“All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon° fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

“The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

“And now this spell was snapped: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

“Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

“But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

The Mariner hath been cast into a trance;
for the angelic power causeth the vessel
to drive northward faster than human life
could endure.

The supernatural motion is retarded; the
Mariner awakes, and his penance begins
anew.

The curse is finally expiated.
[Expiated means “paid for” or “made
amends for.”]

427. Belated means “made late.”
435. A charnel-dungeon is a burial vault.

Literary Element Narrative Poetry How do these lines
signal a new phase of the story?
“It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

460 “Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

“Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The lighthouse top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

“We drifted o’er the harbor bar,°
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

“The harbor bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

“The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

480 “And the bay was white with silent light,
Till, rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colors came.

“A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

“Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!°
A man all light, a seraph° man,
On every corse there stood.

489. The holy rood is the cross symbolizing the Christian faith.
490. A seraph is an angel of the highest rank.
“This seraph band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

“This seraph band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

“But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot’s° cheer;
My head was turned perforce° away,
And I saw a boat appear.

“The Pilot and the Pilot’s boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

“I saw a third—I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He’ll shrieve° my soul, he’ll wash away
The Albatross’s blood.”

**PART VII**

“This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with mariners
That come from a far countree.

“He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak stump.

---

501. A *pilot* is a person who steers ships in and out of a harbor.
512. To *shrieve* is to hear confession and grant forgiveness.

**Reading Strategy**  **Reviewing** What role does the Mariner think the Hermit will play?

**Vocabulary**

+ **impart** (im pārt’) v. to give; donate
“The skiff° boat neared: I heard them talk,
‘Why, this is strange, I trow!’°
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now?”

“Strange, by my faith!’ the Hermit said—
‘And they answered not our cheer!°
The planks looked warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught° like to them,
Unless per chance it were

“Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest brook along;
When the ivy tod° is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf’s young.’

“Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared’—’Push on, push on!’
Said the Hermit cheerily.

“The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight° a sound was heard.

“Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

“Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,°
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot’s boat.

“Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

560  “I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

“I took the oars: the Pilot’s boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
‘Ha! ha!’ quoth he, ‘full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.’

570  “And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

“ ‘O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!’
The Hermit crossed his brow.°
‘Say quick,’ quoth he, ‘I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?’

“Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woeful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

“Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

“I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.
“What loud uproar bursts from that door!

575. Crossed his brow means “made the sign of the cross on his forehead.”

Narrative Poetry  How do those in the boat react to the Mariner’s movement? Why do you think they react this way?

Reading Strategy  Reviewing  Why must the Mariner tell his tale and why must the Wedding Guest listen?
The wedding guests are there:
But in the garden bower the bride
And bridemaids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

“O Wedding Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely ’twas, that God himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

“O sweeter than the marriage feast,
’Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

“To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends
And youths and maidens gay!

“Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

“He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.”

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding Guest
Turned from the bridegroom’s door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:°
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

623. Of sense forlorn means “stripped of his senses.”
Literary Element  

Narrative Poetry

Traditionally, there are three main types of narrative poetry: the epic, the romance, and the ballad. Epic poems, like Beowulf (see page 24), are long poems written in a formal style that often trace the story of a noble and courageous hero. Romances are similar to epics and often recount the exploits of heroic knights. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (see page 174) is one example. The ballad is a shorter narrative poem that is written in the form of a song.

1. Explain Coleridge’s use of a frame story to present the tale of the Mariner’s adventure.

2. (a) How would you characterize the Mariner? (b) Why do you think Coleridge wrote this poem in the ballad form?

3. (a) What incident sparks the conflict of the story? (b) What incident serves as the climax?

4. (a) What comparison does the Mariner make between himself, the water snakes, and the dead men in lines 236–239? (b) How does his view of these water snakes change at the end of Part IV in lines 272–291? (c) How does the Mariner change with this realization?

5. (a) In Part IV what happens when the Mariner prays? (b) In lines 402–409 what does the lonesome Polar Spirit decide and why? (c) What broader idea might this symbolize?

Analyze and Evaluate

6. (a) Do you think the Mariner is responsible for what happens to the ship? Why or why not? (b) Do you think the Mariner’s punishment fits his crime? Explain.

7. Coleridge added side notes to help the reader better follow the plot. Do you think they are helpful? Why or why not?

8. Coleridge once wrote that a reader must put aside his or her understanding of reality and accept the writer’s world. Identify three details in the poem that helped you accept the story as real.

Connect

9. **Big Idea** Nature and the Imagination How does this poem exemplify Romantic ideas about nature and the imagination?

Review: Ballad Stanza

As you learned on page 210, a literary ballad is written in imitation of folk ballads but has a known author. The writer may employ a ballad stanza and rhyme scheme, as well as archaic diction to achieve this effect.

Partner Activity Meet with another classmate and talk about Coleridge’s use of the elements of folk ballads in The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. Construct a chart like the one below, citing at least one example from the poem for each of the bulleted elements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ballad Element</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quatrains of alternating 4 and 3 stressed syllables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhyme scheme of abcb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iambic meter</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Repeated lines or refrains</td>
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<td>Use of slant rhymes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Archaic spellings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reading Strategy  Reviewing

Summarizing the main ideas, supporting details, actions, and plot of a literary work as you review that work will aid your understanding of it.

1. Summarize each of the seven parts of The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.

2. Write a summary of the whole poem in two or three sentences.

Vocabulary  Practice

Practice with Context Clues  Use the context clues in each sentence below to choose the vocabulary word from The Rime of the Ancient Mariner that best completes each sentence.

1. The Mariner wants the Hermit, as a holy man, to tell him what _____ he must pay to atone for his sin.
   a. dismal  b. penance  c. impart

2. By his deeds as well as his words, the father tried to _____ a sense of morality in his children.
   a. penance  b. dismal  c. impart

3. Set after a global war, the movie paints a _____ picture of a civilization that has crumbled.
   a. penance  b. dismal  c. impart

Academic Vocabulary

Here are two words from the vocabulary list on page R82.

predominant  (pri dom′ a nant) adj. most frequent; most noticeable

crucial  (krō′ shəl) adj. critical; of extreme importance

Practice and Apply

1. What are the predominant images in The Rime of the Ancient Mariner?

2. Is suspending your disbelief crucial to appreciating this poem? Explain.

Writing About Literature

Evaluate Contemporary Relevance  Two expressions from Coleridge’s poems that have entered our language are “searching for one’s Xanadu” from “Kubla Khan” and “an albatross hanging around one’s neck” from The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. Use the context of each poem to decide what these sayings mean. Then write a paragraph about each expression, giving examples of how each one could be used today.

Before you begin writing, go through the poems and collect evidence that supports your view about the meaning of each expression. Organize your thoughts about each expression in a three-column chart like the one below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expression</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

After you complete your paragraphs, meet with a peer reviewer to evaluate each other’s work and to suggest revisions. Then proofread and edit your paragraphs for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Learning for Life

Write a memo to a movie producer in which you discuss why The Rime of the Ancient Mariner would make a great movie. Outline the major events of the adventure, identifying who, what, when, and where. Give suggestions for adapting the poem into a movie, including recommendations for actors who could play the leading roles. Give reasons why these actors would be appropriate. You might also suggest a location for shooting the film.

Web Activities  For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
Building Background

In 1591 a British fleet under the command of Thomas Cavendish sailed from Plymouth, England, on a voyage to the Pacific Ocean. The trip would end in disaster. As a result of bad weather, ill luck, and a series of miscalculations, many in the fleet’s crew were lost. This disaster may have provided some of the inspiration for Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. The following selection, from Bruce Chatwin’s prize-winning book *In Patagonia*, describes the circumstances surrounding the disaster.

Set a Purpose for Reading

Read to discover the historical basis for Coleridge’s *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.

Reading Strategy

**Evaluating Historical Influences**

Evaluating historical influences involves gathering and examining the background information related to the writing of a literary work. As you read, take notes on the parallels between the historical events and the events in Coleridge’s poem. Use a two-column chart like the one below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literary Work</th>
<th>Historical Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The Rime of the Ancient Mariner’s voyage</em></td>
<td><em>Voyage of the Desire</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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On October 30th 1593,1 the ship Desire, of 120 tons, limping home to England, dropped anchor in the river at Port Desire, this being her fourth visit since Thomas Cavendish2 named the place in her, his flagship’s, honor, seven years before.

The captain was now John Davis, a Devon man, the most skilled navigator of his generation. Behind him were three Arctic voyages in search of the North-West Passage. Before him were two books of seamanship and six fatal cuts of a Japanese pirate’s sword.

Davis had sailed on Cavendish’s Second Voyage “intended for the South Sea.” The fleet left Plymouth on August 26th 1591, the Captain-General in the galleon Leicester; the other ships were the Roebuck, the Desire, the Daintie, and the Black Pinnace, the last so named for having carried the corpse of Sir Philip Sydney.3

Cavendish was puffed up with early success, hating his officers and crew. On the coast of Brazil,
he stopped to sack\(^4\) the town of Santos. A gale scattered the ships off the Patagonian coast, but they met up, as arranged, at Port Desire.

The fleet entered the Magellan Strait\(^5\) with the southern winter already begun. A sailor’s frostbitten nose fell off when he blew it. Beyond Cape Froward, they ran into north-westerly gales and sheltered in a tight cove with the wind howling over their mastheads. Reluctantly, Cavendish agreed to revictual\(^6\) in Brazil and return the following spring.

On the night of May 20th, off Port Desire, the Captain-General changed tack\(^7\) without warning. At dawn, the Desire and the Black Pinnace were alone on the sea. Davis made for port, thinking his commander would join him as before, but Cavendish set course for Brazil and thence to St. Helena.\(^8\) One day he lay down in his cabin and died, perhaps of apoplexy,\(^9\) cursing Davis for desertion: “This villain that hath been the death of me.”

Davis disliked the man but was no traitor. The worst of the winter over, he went south again to look for the Captain-General. Gales blew the two ships in among some undiscovered islands, now known as the Falklands.

This time, they passed the Strait and out into the Pacific. In a storm off Cape Pilar, the Desire lost the Pinnace, which went down with all hands. Davis was alone at the helm, praying for a speedy end, when the sun broke through the clouds. He took bearings, fixed his position, and so regained the calmer water of the Strait.

He sailed back to Port Desire, the crew scurvyed and mutinous and the lice lying in their flesh, “clusters of lice as big as peason, yea, and some as big as beans.” He repaired the ship as best he could. The men lived off eggs, gulls, baby seals, scurvy grass and the fish called pejerrey. On this diet they were restored to health.

Ten miles down the coast, there was an island, the original Penguin Island, where the sailors clubbed twenty thousand birds to death. They had no natural enemies and were unafraid of their murderers. John Davis ordered the penguins dried and salted and stowed fourteen thousand in the hold.

On November 11th a war-party of Tehuelche Indians\(^10\) attacked “throwing dust in the ayre, leaping and running like brute beasts, having vizzards on their faces like dogs’ faces, or else their faces are dogs’ faces indeed.” Nine men died in the skirmish, among them the chief mutineers, Parker and Smith. Their deaths were seen as the just judgment of God.

The Desire sailed at nightfall on December 22nd and set course for Brazil where the Captain hoped to provision with cassava\(^11\) flour. On January 30th he made land at the Isle of Plasencia, off Rio de Janeiro. The men foraged for fruit and vegetables in gardens belonging to the Indians.

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4. Here, sack means “pillage.”
5. The Magellan Strait connects the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans near the southern tip of South America.
6. Revictual means to “resupply with food.”
7. Here, tack means “course.”
8. St. Helena, first discovered in 1502, was a British island colony and port of call off the southwestern coast of Africa.
9. Apoplexy is a stroke.
10. The Tehuelche Indians were a nomadic group that inhabited Patagonia.
11. Cassava is a tuber, or a plant with bulky, underground stems, that can be dried and milled into flour.
Six days later, the coopers\textsuperscript{12} went with a landing party to gather hoops for barrels. The day was hot and the men were bathing, unguarded, when a mob of Indians and Portuguese attacked. The Captain sent a boat crew ashore and they found the thirteen men, faces upturned to heaven, laid in a rank with a cross set by them.

John Davis saw pinnaces sailing out of Rio harbor. He made for open sea. He had no other choice. He had eight casks of water and they were fouled.

As they came up to the Equator, the penguins took their revenge. In them bred a “loathsome worme” about an inch long. The worms ate everything, iron only excepted—clothes, bedding, boots, hats, leather lashings, and live human flesh. The worms gnawed through the ship’s side and threatened to sink her. The more worms the men killed, the more they multiplied.

Around the Tropic of Cancer, the crew came down with scurvy. Their ankles swelled and their chests, and their parts swelled so horribly that “they could neither stand nor lie nor go.”

The Captain could scarcely speak for sorrow. Again he prayed for a speedy end. He asked the men to be patient; to give thanks to God and accept his chastisement. But the men were raging mad and the ship howled with the groans and curses of the dying.

Only Davis and a ship’s boy were in health, of the seventy-six who left Plymouth. By the end there were five men who could move and work the ship.

And so, lost and wandering on the sea, with topsails and spritsails torn, the rotten hulk drifted, rather than sailed, into the harbor of Berehaven on Bantry Bay\textsuperscript{13} on June 11th 1593. The smell disgusted the people of that quiet fishing village . . .

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{12} Coopers repair and build wooden barrels or casks.
  \item \textsuperscript{13} Bantry Bay is in southwest Ireland.
\end{itemize}
Informational Text

“The Southern Voyage of John Davis” appeared in Hakluyt’s edition of 1600. Two centuries passed and another Devon man, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, set down the 625 controversial lines of The Ancient Mariner, with its hammering repetitions and story of crime, wandering, and expiation. John Davis and the Mariner have these in common: a voyage to the Black South, the murder of a bird or birds, the nemesis which follows, the drift through the tropics, the rotting ship, the curses of dying men. Lines 236–9 are particularly resonant of the Elizabethan voyage:

The many men so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand, thousand slimy things
Lived on and so did I.

In The Road to Xanadu, the American scholar John Livingston Lowes traced the Mariner’s victim to a “disconsolate Black Albatross” shot by one Hatley, the mate of Captain George Shelvocke’s privateer in the eighteenth century. Wordsworth had a copy of this voyage and showed it to Coleridge when the two men tried to write the poem together. . . .

Lowes demonstrated how the voyages in Hakluyt and Purchas fuelled Coleridge’s imagination. “The mighty great roaring of ice” that John Davis witnessed on an earlier voyage off Greenland reappears in line 61: “It cracked and growled and roared and howled.” But he did not, apparently, consider the likelihood that Davis’s voyage to the Strait gave Coleridge the backbone for his poem.

14. Richard Hakluyt (1552–1616) was a British geographer and chronicler of British exploration. The second edition of his nautical record was completed and released between 1598 and 1600.
15. Expiation is the act of making atonement.

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. In your opinion, what aspects of this account most resemble the events in Coleridge’s poem? Explain.

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) As he died, what did Cavendish accuse Davis of? Describe the events that led to the accusation. (b) Why do you think Cavendish came to this conclusion?

3. (a) For what reason did the crew kill the penguins on Penguin Island? (b) Why do you think they needed so many penguins?

Analyze and Evaluate
4. Based on the descriptions in this passage, do you agree with Chatwin that the killing of the penguins provided Coleridge’s inspiration for the killing of the albatross? Explain.

5. (a) Why do you think Davis told the crew to accept God’s “chastisement”? (b) In what ways does Davis’s notion of divine punishment echo the themes of Coleridge’s poem?

Connect
6. Based on the chart you made while reading, do you believe that these events gave Coleridge “the backbone for his poem,” as Chatwin claims? Support your opinion with evidence from this selection and from The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.

OBJECTIVES
- Evaluate the historical influences that shape elements of a literary work.
- Connect a literary work, including character, plot, and setting, to its historical context.
from the Introduction to 
Frankenstein

MEET MARY SHELLEY

The daughter of two celebrated writers and social thinkers, Mary Shelley might have been destined for literary stardom even if she had never met and married the great Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. No one could have predicted, however, that at age eighteen she would write Frankenstein, a novel that in its day far outstripped the popularity of her famous husband’s poetry.

Mary Shelley was the daughter of the radical philosopher William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, whose well-known writings included one of England’s first treatises on women’s rights. Nevertheless, Shelley’s childhood was not a happy one. Her brilliant mother died from complications following childbirth; her father remarried a woman with a family of her own and little time for her stepdaughter. However, Shelley did get to meet many British intellectuals of the day. Young admirers of William Godwin’s writings often gathered at the philosopher’s home; one of these literary lights was Percy Bysshe Shelley, the man who was to become her husband.

In 1816 the couple traveled across Europe to Switzerland and took up residence near Lord Byron—who at the time, unlike Percy Shelley, was a glamorous celebrity. It was during their stay in Switzerland that Mary Shelley began writing the book that became one of the best-known gothic novels of all time. Published anonymously two years later, Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus tells the now familiar story of a “mad” scientist, Dr. Frankenstein, who gives life to a creature made from parts of corpses. Although Frankenstein’s “monster” is sensitive and kind, his appearance arouses hatred and fear, dooming him to misery. The novel was an instant hit, and Britain was buzzing with speculations (all wrong) about its author. Mary Shelley was highly pleased with its success, but her happiness was short-lived: in 1822 her twenty-nine-year-old husband died.

New Mission Mary Shelley devoted much of the rest of her life to establishing her late husband’s reputation as one of the great English poets. Her efforts were successful. A complete collection of Shelley’s works, painstakingly edited by his widow, was published in 1847, and Shelley’s poetry began to receive the critical acclaim that it now enjoys. Mary Shelley continued to write to support herself. Her later works, however, never matched Frankenstein in originality of conception or emotional power. That masterpiece remains popular with readers to this day—a testament to the overwhelming power and scope of her imagination.

Mary Shelley was born in 1797 and died in 1851.

Literary Life The Shelleys’ life together was romantic but troubled. Only one of their children survived past infancy, Mary Shelley suffered a breakdown, and her husband was sometimes unfaithful. Still, the Shelleys were passionate about many of the same things, including literature and languages. They often read together, usually the classics, sharing their responses at length.

“Nothing contributes so much to tranquilize the mind as a steady purpose—a point on which the soul may fix its intellectual eye.”

—Mary Shelley

LiteratureOnline Author Search For more about Mary Shelley, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Essay
In this essay, Mary Shelley examines the creative process and describes what inspired her to write *Frankenstein*. As you read, think about the following questions:

- What moments of creative inspiration have you experienced?
- What might have triggered these experiences?

Building Background
In 1831, when the novel *Frankenstein* was being prepared for a new edition, the publishers asked Mary Shelley to write an introduction that answered the question so many still asked: How could a young woman of eighteen have created a novel so far removed from her own experience? Mary Shelley’s Introduction offers fascinating insights into the genesis of a literary work.

Setting Purposes for Reading
**Big Idea**  Nature and the Imagination
As you read, consider the importance of nature and the imagination to this Romantic writer.

**Literary Element**  Gothic Novel
Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* is a *gothic novel*. A gothic novel has a gloomy, ominous setting and elements of mystery, horror, or the supernatural. The first gothic novel, *The Castle of Otranto*, was written by Horace Walpole (1717–1797) and tells the eerie and horrifying story of a royal family’s demise. This novel sparked a fascination with not only gothic writing, but gothic painting and architecture as well. As you read the introduction to *Frankenstein*, look for gothic elements.


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**Vocabulary**

- **incite**  (in sit’)  v.  to urge or provoke; p. 836
  *The angry speaker nearly incited a riot.*

- **illustrious**  (i Ius test as)  adj.  famous and distinguished; p. 838
  *The illustrious author gave a series of lectures about her life and work.*

- **relinquish**  (ri ling kwish)  v.  to give up; to put aside; to abandon; p. 838
  *Jamal’s grandfather decided to relinquish his driving privileges.*

- **acute**  (a kuit’)  adj.  sharp; intense; p. 839
  *A swollen appendix caused him acute pain.*

- **transient**  (tran’ shant)  adj.  lasting only a brief time; temporary; p. 839
  *Because of the cool climate, that region has only a transient growing season.*

**Vocabulary Tip: Word Parts**  You can often figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word by analyzing its parts: its root, prefix, or suffix.

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**Reading Strategy**  Activating Prior Knowledge
You derive meaning from a literary work by relating what you read to what you already know. To better understand this selection, you must draw upon your *prior knowledge* about the act of writing, the creative process, and the story of *Frankenstein*.

**Reading Tip: Taking Notes**  On a chart like the one below, record the connections you make between your prior knowledge and the events the author describes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Prior Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary Shelley struggled to find an idea for a ghost story.</td>
<td>I, too, sometimes have writer’s block.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**OBJECTIVES**
In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:

- understanding the gothic novel
- activating prior knowledge
The publishers of the Standard Novels, in selecting *Frankenstein* for one of their series, expressed a wish that I should furnish them with some account of the origin of the story. I am the more willing to comply because I shall thus give a general answer to the question so very frequently asked me—how I, then a young girl, came to think of and to dilate\(^1\) upon so very hideous an idea.

It is true that I am very averse to bringing myself forward in print, but as my account will only appear as an appendage\(^2\) to a former production, and as it will be confined to such topics as have connection with my authorship alone, I can scarcely accuse myself of a personal intrusion.

It is not singular that, as the daughter of two persons of distinguished literary celebrity, I should very early in life have thought of writing. As a child I scribbled, and my favorite pastime during the hours given me for recreation was to “write stories.” Still, I had a dearer pleasure than this, which was the formation of castles in the air—the indulging in waking dreams—the following up trains of thought, which had for their subject the formation of a succession of imaginary incidents. My dreams were at once more fantastic and agreeable than my writings. In the latter I was a close imitator—rather doing as others had done than putting down the suggestions of my own mind. What I wrote was intended at least for one other eye—my childhood’s companion and friend; but my dreams were all my own. I accounted for them to nobody; they were my refuge when annoyed—my dearest pleasure when free.

I lived principally in the country as a girl and passed a considerable time in Scotland. I made occasional visits to the more picturesque parts, but my habitual residence was on the blank and dreary northern shores of the Tay, near Dundee. Blank and dreary on retrospection, I call them; they were not so to me then. They were the aerie\(^3\) of freedom and the pleasant region where unheeded I could commune with the creatures of my fancy. I wrote then, but in a most commonplace style. It was beneath the trees of the grounds belonging to our house, or on the bleak sides of the woodless mountains near, that my true compositions, the airy flights of my imagination, were born and fostered. I did not make myself the heroine of my tales. Life appeared to

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1. Here, *dilate* means “to speak or write at length.”
2. An *appendage* is an addition or accompaniment.
3. An *aerie* is a nest or retreat.
me too commonplace an affair as regarded myself. I could not figure to myself that romantic woes or wonderful events would ever be my lot; but I was not confined to my own identity, and I could people the hours with creations far more interesting to me at that age than my own sensations.

After this my life became busier, and reality stood in place of fiction. My husband, however, was from the first very anxious that I should prove myself worthy of my parentage and enroll myself on the page of fame. He was forever inciting me to obtain literary reputation, which even on my own part I cared for then, though since I have become infinitely indifferent to it. At this time he desired that I should write, not so much with the idea that I could produce anything worthy of notice, but that he might himself judge how far I possessed the promise of better things hereafter. Still I did nothing. Traveling, and the cares of a family, occupied my time; and study, in the way of reading or improving my ideas in communication with his far more cultivated mind, was all of literary employment that engaged my attention.

In the summer of 1816, we visited Switzerland and became the neighbors of Lord Byron. At first we spent our pleasant hours on the lake or wandering on its shores; and Lord Byron, who was writing the third canto of *Childe Harold*, was the only one among us who put his thoughts

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**Big Idea**  
**Nature and the Imagination**  
In what ways was Shelley’s childhood conducive to her future career as a novelist?

**Reading Strategy**  
**Activating Prior Knowledge**  
Why did Mary Shelley’s husband have such high expectations of her?

**Vocabulary**  
*incite* (in sit’*) v. to urge or provoke

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4. George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788–1824) was an English Romantic poet.
5. A *canto* is a division of a long poem.
6. *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* is one of Byron’s best-known poems.
upon paper. These, as he brought them successively to us, clothed in all the light and harmony of poetry, seemed to stamp as divine the glories of heaven and earth, whose influences we partook with him.

But it proved a wet, ungenial summer, and incessant rain often confined us for days to the house. Some volumes of ghost stories translated from the German into French fell into our hands. There was the History of the Inconstant Lover, who, when he thought to clasp the bride to whom he had pledged his vows, found himself in the arms of the pale ghost of her whom he had deserted. There was the tale of the sinful founder of his race whose miserable doom it was to bestow the kiss of death on all the younger sons of his fated house, just when they reached the age of promise. His gigantic, shadowy form, clothed like the ghost in Hamlet, in complete armor, but with the beaver up, was seen at midnight, by the moon's fitful beams, to advance slowly along the gloomy avenue. The shape was lost beneath the shadow of the castle walls; but soon a gate swung back, a step was heard, the door of the chamber opened, and he advanced to the couch of the blooming youths, cradled in healthy sleep. Eternal sorrow sat upon his face as he bent down and kissed the forehead of the boys, who from that hour withered like flowers snapped upon the stalk. I have not seen these stories since then, but their incidents are as fresh in my mind as if I had read them yesterday.

“We will each write a ghost story,” said Lord Byron, and his proposition was acceded to. There were four of us. The noble author began a tale, a fragment of which he printed at the end of his poem of Mazeppa. Shelley, more apt to embody ideas and sentiments in the radiance of brilliant imagery and in the music of the most melodious verse that adorns our language than to invent the machinery of a story, commenced one founded on the experiences of his early life. Poor Polidori had some terrible idea about a skull-headed lady who was so punished for peeping through a keyhole—what to see I forget: something very shocking and wrong, of course; but when she was reduced to a worse condition than the renowned Tom of Coventry, he did not know what to do with her and was obliged to dispatch her to the tomb of the

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7. Acceded means “consented.”
8. The four of us consisted of the Shelleys, Byron, and John Polidori, Byron’s personal physician.
9. The noble author refers to Byron.
10. According to legend, Peeping Tom of Coventry lost his eyes as punishment for looking at Lady Godiva when she rode naked through Coventry.
Capulets, the only place for which she was fitted. The illustrious poets also, annoyed by the platitude of prose, speedily relinquished their uncongenial task.

I busied myself to think of a story—a story to rival those which had excited us to this task. One which would speak to the mysterious fears of our nature and awaken thrilling horror—one to make the reader dread to look round, to curdle the blood, and quicken the beatings of the heart. If I did not accomplish these things, my ghost story would be unworthy of its name. I thought and pondered—vainly. I felt that blank incapability of invention which is the greatest misery of authorship, when dull Nothing replies to our anxious invocations. “Have you thought of a story?” I was asked each morning, and each morning I was forced to reply with a mortifying negative.

Everything must have a beginning, to speak in Sanchean phrase, and that beginning must be linked to something that went before. The Hindus give the world an elephant to support it, but they make the elephant stand upon a tortoise. Invention, it must be humbly admitted, does not consist in creating out of void, but out of chaos; the materials must, in the first place, be afforded: it can give form to dark, shapeless substances but cannot bring into being the substance itself. In all matters of discovery and invention, even of those that appertain to the imagination, we are continually reminded of the story of Columbus and his egg. Invention consists in the capacity of seizing on the capabilities of a subject and in the power of molding and fashioning ideas suggested to it.

Many and long were the conversations between Lord Byron and Shelley, to which I was a devout but nearly silent listener. During one of these, various philosophical doctrines were discussed, and among others the nature of the principle of life, and whether there was any probability of its ever being discovered and communicated. They talked of the experiments of Dr. Darwin (I speak not of what the doctor really did or said that he did, but, as more to my purpose, of what was then spoken of as having been done by him), who preserved a piece of vermicelli in a glass case till by some extraordinary means it began to move with voluntary motion. Not thus, after all, would life be given. Perhaps a corpse would be reanimated; galvanism had given

11. The tomb of the Capulets was the setting of Romeo’s and Juliet’s deaths in Shakespeare’s play.
12. Platitude means “lack of originality; dullness; triteness.”
13. Invocations are prayers or appeals to a higher power.
14. Sanchean phrase refers to Cervantes’s Don Quixote, in which the character of Sancho Panza often uses proverbs to express common sense.
15. In response to claims that others could have discovered the New World before him, Columbus challenged guests at a banquet to make an egg stand on end. When nobody could do it, he tapped one end of the egg flat and stood it on the table, bolstering his claim that the others could only follow his lead.
16. Dr. Erasmus Darwin was a physician and scientist and the grandfather of the famous naturalist Charles Darwin.
17. Vermicelli (vur’s ma chē’ ē) is a long, slender noodle thinner than spaghetti.
18. Here, galvanism may refer to the use of electricity to stimulate muscle tissue.
token of such things: perhaps the component parts of a creature might be manufactured, brought together, and ended with vital warmth.

Night waned upon this talk, and even the witching hour had gone by before we retired to rest. When I placed my head on my pillow, I did not sleep, nor could I be said to think. My imagination, unbidden, possessed and guided me, giving the successive images that arose in my mind with a vividness far beyond the usual bounds of reverie. I saw—with shut eyes, but acute mental vision—I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life and stir with an uneasy, half-vital motion. Frightful must it be, for supremely frightful would be the effect of any human endeavor to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world. His success would terrify the artist; he would rush away from his odious handiwork, horror-stricken. He would hope that, for his incitement, it would never have taken one train of feeling, to my husband, and yet but for his incitement, it would never have taken the form in which it was presented to the world. From this declaration I must except the preface. As far as I can recollect, it was entirely written by him.

And now, once again, I bid my hideous progeny go forth and prosper. I have an affection for it, for it was the offspring of happy days, when death and grief were but words, which found no true echo in my heart. Its several pages speak of many a walk, many a drive, and many a conversation, when I was not alone; my readers have nothing to do with these associations. . . .

19. A phantasm is an image or illusion.

**Vocabulary**

- **acute** (ə küt′) adj. sharp; intense
- **transient** (tran′ šant) adj. lasting only a brief time; temporary

**Literary Element** Gothic Novel Which details in this passage create an ominous mood?

**Reading Strategy** Activating Prior Knowledge How did Shelley overcome her writer’s block?

**Progeny** means “offspring, or the product of a creative effort.”

**Shelley’s companion** was her husband, who died in a boating accident in 1822.
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. What insights or ideas about the writing process did this selection give you?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) Why does Shelley write this account of the origin of her story even though she claims she is “averse to bringing [her]self forward in print”? (b) What does this contradiction tell you about her personality?
3. (a) According to the second paragraph, what childhood activity did Shelley find more agreeable than writing? (b) How did Shelley’s parents and husband influence her as a writer?
4. (a) Describe the events that led up to Shelley’s idea for the plot of Frankenstein. (b) Do these factors support her theories about invention? Explain.

Analyze and Evaluate
5. Do you agree with Shelley’s assessment of what is needed for invention? Why or why not?
6. Shelley was not alone when she conceived of and wrote Frankenstein. What part did other writers play in her success?

Connect
7. Shelley sought to appeal to “the mysterious fears of our nature and awaken thrilling horror.” What books or movies have you read or seen that meet this description?
8. Big Idea Nature and the Imagination How does Shelley suggest that imagination is more important than reason?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Gothic Novel
The trappings of gothic fiction include haunted castles, clanking chains, mysterious graveyards, and restless spirits. Originally the term gothic novel referred only to works with a medieval atmosphere or setting. Gradually, however, its meaning expanded to refer to any work that featured terror or gloom.

1. Describe the gothic elements of Shelley’s waking dream that inspired Frankenstein.
2. In your opinion, what accounts for the popularity of gothic novels today?

Literary Criticism
Author Brian W. Aldiss argues that the Introduction to Frankenstein contains evidence that the novel should be classified as science fiction (fiction in which scientific facts or theories inform the plot). With a partner, list elements from the introduction that support Aldiss’s opinion.

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy Activating Prior Knowledge
When you read, you filter the words on a page through your prior experience and knowledge. Review the chart you made on page 834.
1. What prior knowledge helped you the most in understanding this selection?
2. Which aspects of the selection do you wish you’d known more about prior to reading the text?

Vocabulary Practice
Practice with Word Parts Match each vocabulary word with the definition of its Latin root. Use a dictionary if you need help.
1. incite a. to leave behind
2. relinquish b. to make bright
3. acute c. to put in motion
4. illustrious d. to sharpen
5. transient e. to cross, pass by

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.