

BUILD SKILLS

The Seafarer • The Wanderer • The Wife's Lament

LITERARY ANALYSIS

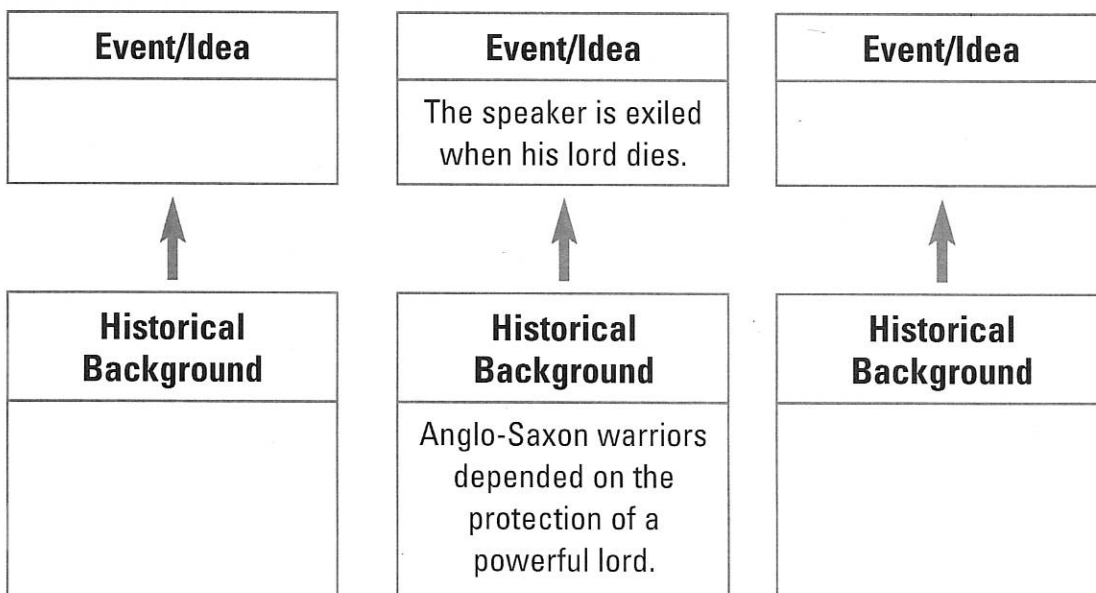
A lyric poem expresses the thoughts and feelings of a single speaker. **Anglo-Saxon lyrics** were composed so they could easily be memorized and recited again. They have these elements:

- Lines with regular rhythms, usually four strong beats
- **Caesuras**, which are rhythmic breaks in the middle of lines where the reciter could pause for breath
- **kennings**, which are two-word poetic renamings of people, places, and things, such as the kenning *whales' home* for the sea
- **Assonance**, which is the repetition of vowel sounds in unrhymed, stressed syllables (for example, "batter these ramparts")
- **Alliteration**, which is the repetition of initial consonant sounds in accented syllables (for example, "smashing surf")

Notice how these elements add a unique flavor to Anglo-Saxon lyrics.

READING STRATEGY

Knowing about the period in which a work was written will help you understand it better. Apply historical background information as you read the poems in this grouping. Use a diagram like the one below for "The Wanderer."



PREVIEW

The Seafarer • The Wanderer

Translated by Burton Raffel
• Charles W. Kennedy

Summaries In “The Seafarer,” a sailor returns again and again to the sea. He describes the fear and loneliness of such a life. He concludes that the only home he has is the “heavenly home.” “The Wanderer” tells of the sad journeying of a man who no longer has a lord. He wants the comforts of the mead-hall. He concludes that the earth is a horrible place.

Note-taking Guide

Use this chart to recall things lost or missed by the persons in these two poems. Record examples of people, things, or experiences lost in each poem. Write the line number in parentheses after each example you find.



The Seafarer	The Wanderer
shelter and quiet of land (line 13)	his lord (line 12)

PREVIEW

The Wife's Lament

Translated by Ann Stanford

Summary In "The Wife's Lament," a woman talks about her life in the dark, overgrown place where her husband has sent her to live. She is all alone and friendless. She wishes he would experience the same grief.

Note-taking Guide

Use this chart to recall things lost or missed by the speaker of the poem. Record examples of people, things, or experiences lost. Write the line number in parentheses after each example you find.



The Wife's Lament

her husband's love and friendship (lines 21-25)

APPLY THE SKILLS

The Seafarer • The Wanderer • The Wife's Lament

1. **Analyze:** Choose one of the poems. Identify two images or details the poet uses to show his or her sadness or isolation.

2. **Literary Analysis:** Find two kennings in the poems. Explain what each kenning means.

3. **Literary Analysis:** Use the graphic organizer below to compare the lesson that each poem teaches about suffering.

Poem	Cause of Suffering	Insight Gained
"The Seafarer"	He feels like an outcast at home and at sea.	We are exiles on earth. Heaven is home.

4. **Reading Strategy:** Why is understanding a warrior's relationship to his lord important to appreciating "The Wanderer"?

5. **Reading Strategy:** How does understanding the position of Anglo-Saxon women help you understand "A Wife's Lament"?

“The Seafarer,” translated by Burton Raffel
“The Wayfarer,” translated by Charles W. Kennedy
“The Wife’s Lament,” translated by Ann Stanford
Reading Warm-up A

Read the following passage. Pay special attention to the underlined words. Then, read it again, complete the activities. Use a separate sheet of paper for your written answers.

Many cultures strive to extend their knowledge of the world. The Vikings, the Arabs, and the Polynesians are noteworthy for mapping the world’s oceans. These peoples were the earliest and most successful navigators. From the end of the eighth century, Scandinavians used the tides, currents, and stars to explore the rivers of Russia and the Black Sea. The billowing sails on their longships also permitted voyages across the freezing Atlantic to Iceland and North America. Once they arrived, they attempted early settlements, which quickly failed. The Norsemen were more successful in the British Isles and Northern France, where they built thriving kingdoms.

During the same period, the Arabs discovered a sea route to China, via the Strait of Malacca. This allowed more goods to be transported to Europeans who were smitten by the riches of the east.

Meanwhile, the Polynesians colonized the islands of the Pacific. Perched on their canoes and braving the hot sun that might scorch them, they trusted the winds to unfurl their sails and carry them great distances across empty oceans. Once they were closer to land, oars were essential. Without them, it was hard to avoid the reefs that destroyed larger European sailing ships centuries later.

No matter when they lived, or what part of the world they explored, these sailors had one thing in common: the companionship of the terns that hovered and whirled over their vessels.

1. Circle the words that tell what many ancient cultures strive to do. Then, explain what **strive** means.
2. Circle the word that tells what was billowing. Then, rewrite the sentence, using a synonym for **billowing**.
3. Circle the words that explain what had the Europeans smitten. Then, describe how someone who is **smitten** might behave.
4. Circle the words that describe where the sailors perched. Explain what **perched** means.
5. Underline the word that is a clue to the meaning of scorch. Describe something that might **scorch**.
6. Circle the words that tell what the winds unfurl. Then, describe something you have seen **unfurl**.
7. Circle the phrase that describes what the terns did. Then, tell where you might find **terns**.
8. Describe how something that whirled might look.

“**The Seafarer**,” translated by Burton Raffel

“**The Wanderer**,” translated by Charles Kennedy

“**The Wife’s Lament**,” translated by Ann Stanford

Literary Analysis: Anglo-Saxon Lyric Poetry

Anglo-Saxon poetry was recited or chanted aloud to an audience by wandering poets. In order to make the poems easier to listen to and to be memorized, they were developed with strong rhythms. Each line has a certain number of beats, or accented syllables—almost always four. Many lines have a **caesura**, or pause, in the middle, after the second beat. Anglo-Saxon poetry also contained **kennings**, two-word metaphorical names for familiar things. Note these examples of rhythm, caesura, and kennings in these lines:

Rhythm: No hárps ríng in his héart, nó rewárd

Caesura: No pássion for wómen, [pause] no wórlldly pléasures

Kenning: Nóthing, only the oceán’s heáve

1. Mark the syllables that have a strong accented beat (´) in these lines from “The Seafarer.”
 But there isn’t a man on earth so proud,
 So born to greatness, so bold with his youth,
 Grown so brave, or so graced by God
 That he feels no fear as the sails unfurl.
 2. In the lines in passage 1, how many caesuras are there? Write the word that appears before each caesura.
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3. Mark each syllable that has a strong accented beat (´) in these lines from “The Seafarer.”
 Those powers have vanished, those pleasures are dead.
 The weakest survives and the world continues,
 Kept spinning by toil. All glory is tarnished.
 4. Underline the kenning in these lines from “The Wife’s Lament.”
 First my lord went out away from his people
 over the wave-tumult. I grieved each dawn
 wondered where my lord my first on earth might be.

“The Seafarer,” translated by Burton Raffel
“The Wanderer,” translated by Charles Kennedy
“The Wife’s Lament,” translated by Ann Stanford

Reading Strategy: Connect to Historical Context

Recognizing the **historical context** and the characteristics of the period in which a work was written helps you notice relevant details and ideas. For example, if you know that Anglo-Saxon culture was male-dominated, you may be able to understand the poet’s line: “My lord commanded me to move my dwelling here.”

DIRECTIONS: Use your understanding of Anglo-Saxon historical context to help you understand the following excerpts. In the right column, record how your comprehension is affected by what you know.

Excerpt	How Historical Context Aids Understanding
<p>1. “The Seafarer”: “This tale is true, and mine. It tells/How the sea took me, swept me back/ And forth in sorrow and fear and pain,/Showed me suffering in a thousand ships, . . .”</p>	<p>1.</p>
<p>2. “The Wanderer”: “So have I also, often in wretchedness/Fettered my feelings, far from my kin,/Homeless and hapless, since days of old,/ When the dark earth covered my dear lord's face,/And I sailed away with sorrowful heart,/ Over wintry seas, seeking a gold-lord . . .”</p>	<p>2.</p>
<p>3. “The Wife's Lament”: “I must far and near/ bear the anger of my beloved./The man sent me out to live in the woods/under an oak tree in this den in the earth./Ancient this earth hall./I am all longing.”</p>	<p>3.</p>

“The Seafarer,” translated by Burton Raffel
“The Wanderer,” translated by Charles Kennedy
“The Wife’s Lament,” translated by Ann Stanford
Vocabulary Builder

Using the Suffix -ness

A. DIRECTIONS: Answer each of the following questions, changing the underlined word to a word with the suffix -ness.

1. Why did she think the cake was too sweet? _____
2. How did the bright light affect you? _____
3. Did you think Ryan was eager enough to convince Mrs. Malone that he should be in the band? _____
4. What do you think the teacher thought when Alan was so helpful on Thursday?

Using the Word List

admonish	rapture	compassionate	fervent	blithe
rancor	sentinel	redress	grievous	winsomeness

B. DIRECTIONS: On the line, write the letter of the definition for each word in the right column.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>___ 1. fervent</p> <p>___ 2. compassionate</p> <p>___ 3. sentinel</p> <p>___ 4. admonish</p> <p>___ 5. grievous</p> <p>___ 6. rancor</p> <p>___ 7. redress</p> <p>___ 8. blithe</p> <p>___ 9. rapture</p> <p>___ 10. winsomeness</p> | <p>A. ill-will</p> <p>B. advise; caution</p> <p>C. expression of joy</p> <p>D. someone who guards</p> <p>E. cheerful</p> <p>F. having great feeling</p> <p>G. sympathizing; pitying</p> <p>H. causing sorrow; hard to bear</p> <p>I. compensation, as for a wrong</p> <p>J. charm; appeal</p> |
|---|---|

C. DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter of the word that best completes each sentence.

1. James was kind and caring; he was a _____ person.
 A. flippant B. apathetic C. blithe D. compassionate
2. It was the queen’s _____ hope that her subjects respected her just rule.
 A. grievous B. fervent C. blithe D. important
3. The _____ kept watch over the sleeping troops.
 A. elegy B. sentinel C. tradition D. exile

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“The Wanderer,” translated by Charles Kennedy
“The Wife’s Lament,” translated by Ann Stanford
Grammar and Style: Compound Predicates

A **compound predicate** consists of two or more verbs having the same subject. The complete compound predicate includes the verbs; their modifiers, objects, and complements; and conjunctions.

A. PRACTICE: *In each passage, underline the compound predicate, and circle the subject.*

1. . . . and my soul/Called me eagerly out, sent me over/The horizon
2. The world’s honor ages and shrinks, . . .
3. I grieved each dawn/wondered where my lord my first on earth might be.
4. . . . the sea took me, swept me back/and forth in sorrow and fear and pain,/showed me suffering. . . .
5. . . . and day by day/All this earth ages and droops into death.

B. Writing Application: *Rewrite each sentence so that it has a compound predicate.*

1. Hardship groaned around my heart.

2. The weakest survives.

3. Lonely and wretched, I wailed my woe.

4. Ever I know the dark of my exile.

5. I must far and near bear the anger of my beloved.

“The Seafarer,” translated by Burton Raffel
“The Wanderer,” translated by Charles Kennedy
“The Wife’s Lament,” translated by Ann Stanford
Support for Writing

Use the chart below to record images and details about feelings that relate to the theme of exile in each poem.

Poem	Feelings and Images
“The Seafarer”	
“The Wanderer”	
“The Wife’s Lament”	

On a separate page, write a draft of an essay that explores the theme of exile in each poem. Use examples that show the richness of imagery and powerful feelings in the poems.

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“The Wanderer,” translated by Charles Kennedy
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Support for Extend Your Learning

Listening and Speaking

Use the lines below to analyze ways of using performance strategies to make your **oral interpretation** of a poem more interesting.

What mood should I project? Does the mood change during the poem? _____

Where can I shift the tone and pitch of my voice? _____

How and where can I use gestures and facial expressions while reading? _____

Research and Technology

Use the chart below to gather information for your **Help Wanted page**. List possible occupations in the first column. In the second column, list job requirements that include the duties of the job, along with the skills and experiences that are needed.

Occupations	Job Requirements
	Duties: _____ Skills: _____ Experience needed: _____
	Duties: _____ Skills: _____ Experience needed: _____
	Duties: _____ Skills: _____ Experience needed: _____

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Enrichment: Social Studies

These poems are about exiles—persons who for one reason or another find themselves far from home. During Britain’s Anglo-Saxon period, many people were exiles due to various migrations into and out of the British Isles.

DIRECTIONS: Read the following paragraph about some of these fifth-century migrations. Label and draw lines on the map to illustrate these migrations.

At the start of the fifth century, England was under Roman rule. In 410, the Romans began leaving England, having been called back to Rome to defend it. This left an opportunity for new groups of people to come and take the land. Beginning in 449, a wave of people came to the British Isles seeking new lands. The three main groups were the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes. The Angles came from southern Denmark, eventually settling in the eastern half of England. The Saxons came from northern Germany and settled in the southern part of England. This part of England is now the counties of Essex, Sussex, and Wessex. The Jutes probably came from northern Denmark and northern Germany, near the mouth of the Rhine River. They settled in an area just south of London, in what is now called Kent, and on the Isle of Wight. Many natives of these lands, the Celtic Britons, were forced to move west and north. Eventually many of them settled in Wales.

