

Samuel Taylor Coleridge: *Kubla Khan* (p.757-760)

Kubla Khan:

1. What is the **mood** of the poem? How does it make you feel?
2. In the first stanza, what **images** create pictures of the pleasure-dome that Kubla Khan decrees?
3. Compare the associations of the “deep romantic chasm” with those of the dome. Why is the chasm called a “savage” place? What *ominous note* is introduced toward the end of the second stanza?
4. In the third stanza, what does the speaker see in a vision? What does the speaker say he wants to do?
5. Notice that the *Kubla Khan* is dreamlike in that it has many images, not necessarily united to a central thought. We do not know, for example, where each of the described objects is located in relation to the other. They seem to be floating. What other qualities does the poem share with the world of dreams? How does it differ from reality? Why do dreams appeal to the **Romantic** poets?
6. The speaker in the poem has been interpreted as being an artist, perhaps a poet. Why would the “damsel with a dulcimer” be important to the speaker? What ideas about creativity and re-creation does the poet bring out in the second part of the poem?
7. What could the “dome in air” which the speaker wants to create **symbolize**?
8. Many people feel a *sinister foreboding* about this poem. Find ten words or phrases which might give a reader that impression.
9. Many ancient cultures regarded poets as seers who had a special relationship with the gods and thus were to be treated with reverence. How might Coleridge be alluding to such beliefs in the closing lines of the last stanza?
10. Describe the **rhyme scheme** and **meter** of the poem. What examples of **alliteration** add to the poem’s music?

Samuel Taylor Coleridge: *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (p.762-786)

1. Who is the **narrator** of the **ballad**? To whom is he telling his story?
2. On what occasion does the **speaker** tell his story?
3. In Part II, what consequences result from the Mariner's killing of the albatross? In a broader context, this shows his contempt for what? What do you think the albatross **symbolizes**?
4. Who were the two in a ghost ship, and what were they doing? What happens to the Mariner's shipmates after the appearance of the two in the ghost ship?
5. What might this **symbolize** about the effect of guilt on an individual's perceptions of and in relations with others? Now, what do you think the albatross **symbolizes**?
6. In Part IV, why is the Mariner unable to pray? What happens to change this?
7. Describe in detail the changing mental states of the Mariner in Part IV. Given the circumstances, are these changes believable?
8. In Part V, the ship is sailing with the aid of the dead crew, including the man's _____.
9. In Part VI, what is found above the dead men's bodies?
10. At the end of the **ballad**, how does the Mariner describe his current life?
11. Name three effects the Mariner's story has on the Wedding Guest. In your opinion, does each effect seem likely or unlikely? Explain.
12. What is the Mariner's penance (ll.408-409)? Does it seem fair to you that he should have to do any sort of penance? Why?
13. Explain in your own words the Mariner's **moral** (ll.612-617). Does the story indicate that he ought to have added something to his moral conclusion? Explain.

This ballad is famous for its use of vivid **figurative language** and memorable **sound devices**. Find in the poem (identify & give line numbers) a striking example of each of the following:

14. **Simile:**
15. **Metaphor:**
16. **Personification:**

Romantic poetry achieves much of its lyricism, emotion, and beauty from the use of poetic sound devices: **alliteration**, **consonance**, **assonance**, and **internal rhyme**. In each of the following passages, identify what kind of poetic sound device is used and tell what words exemplify the sounds. (Some lines have more than one type of device or more than one example.)

17. "Five miles meandering with a mazy motion..."
18. "And we did speak only to break..."
19. "Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken..."
20. "Glimmered the white Moonshine..."
21. "The ship was cheered, the harbor cleared..."
22. "A hot and copper sky..."
23. "He holds him with his skinny hand..."
24. "The death fires danced at night..."
25. "His flashing eyes, his floating hair!..."