

Student Copy

Eng. IV, Mrs. Brown

Name: _____

Old English and Medieval Periods (449-1485 A.D.)

Snapshot of the Period:

1. Name the three periods of the Changing English Language.

Old English, ^{Early} Middle English, Modern English

2. How did literature evolve?

From works transmitted orally, often to the accompaniment of a lyre or harp, to works that were written down

Historical Background:

3. The Celts were the first inhabitants of Britain and Ireland. They were farmers and hunters who were organized in tightly knit clans with loyalty to its chieftain.

Among the Celts was a class of priests known as the Druids. Their primary duty was to settle disputes. Scholars attribute the beginning of British literature to the Druids because they were the first storytellers.

4. The Romans were the next invaders of Britain. How long did Roman rule of Britain last and why did it end? Rule lasted more than 300 years and ended when European tribes invaded Italy and Roman soldiers left to defend their homeland

5. Who were the next invaders of Britain? Germanic tribes, the Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes. Where did they originate? "Angle Land" is now know as England..

6. What was the effect of the next incursion, led by the Roman cleric St. Augustine? Roman cleric. Converted the pagan to Christianity. The Bible of these Christians was the Latin of St. Jerome and they brought Latin learning with them.

7. What were the consequences of the invasions by the Danish of Denmark (also known as Danes or Vikings) and the Norse of Norway? Who stopped the invasion of the rest of the island of England? 8th century. Danes came. Raided and looted the towns and monasteries of the northeast, but eventually they settle that area. Alfred the Great, considered first King of England, stopped them. Danes were converted, assimilated, and contributed to language. Negotiated a truce that had England formally divided between the Saxons and the Danish. Also encouraged a rebirth of learning and education.

8. The Normans, led by William, Duke of Normandy, changed the Anglo-Saxon culture by confiscating lands and controlling government and business. He gradually remade English along feudal lines.
- What is the basis of the feudal system? Form of government, social order, and land tenure; Exchange of property for personal service
 - Name the social classes in the feudal triangle, or pyramid.
 - King parceled out land among his powerful supporters
 - Nobles (Barons, Lords, Lesser Lords) received special privileges and land. In return, each paid certain fees, or taxes, and supplied a specified number of knights should king require them.
 - Knights usually received smaller parcels for land, called manors, for their services
 - Peasants worked the manors and were the lowest class, a/k/a serfs

9. The Warrior Society (handout)

- What was the relationship between the warrior (a/k/a thane or later, knight) and his lord based on? Mutual trust and respect
- What did the warrior vow to give his lord? loyalty
- In turn, what did the lord give his warrior? care and reward for service
- What happened to the treasure the warrior seized in the name of his lord? divided among warriors
- Why were mead halls important? gathering place for celebration and distribution
- What was *wergild*; how was wergild determined, and when was it paid? man price/determined by rank of society/paid when kinsman was killed even if it was an accident.
- Why was wergild significant? doing the right thing

What is the relationship between literature and place? p. 6

- What is an important theme in the literature of this period? *Sense of place*
- What is the importance of the sea? *protective barrier but separation*
- Name two important poems of this period with this theme. *"The Wanderer" / Seafarer*
- Who provided the first copy of these poems? *Anglo-Saxon Monks*
- What influence did the monks have on literature from this period? *Added Christians values to literature*

I will provide the following information:

1. Why did scholars attribute the beginning of British literature to the Druids?
first storytellers
2. Anglo-Saxon beliefs
 - a. What was the Anglo-Saxon religion and view of life?
pagan belief - life in hands of fate
 - b. What is *wyrd*? fate
 - c. What is the Christian belief? each person has the individual freedom to determine his/her own path
 - d. The monks first transcribed oral stories into the written documents. How does this act contribute to the spread of Christianity? Interjected Christian beliefs into pagan stories

Literary Terms to know:

1. Kenning - synonym for a simple noun
Examples: bent-necked woad, ringed-prow, or sea-wood for ship
swan-road or whale-road for the sea
twilight spoiler for a dragon storm of swords for a battle
2. Caesura - A pause or break in a line of verse. Useful device for scopos who had to recite hundreds of lines of poetry
3. Alliteration - repetition of initial identical consonant sounds
"The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew, the furrow followed free."

"The Wanderer"

4. Elegy - One type of lyric poem in which the loss of someone or something is mourned

"Beowulf"

5. Epic - A long, narrative poem
6. The 4 Characteristics of an Epic
 - (1) Hero is of imposing stature, or national or international importance
 - (2) setting is vast, covering great nations, the world, or universe
 - (3) actions consists of deeds of great valor or requiring superhuman courage
 - (4) supernatural forces such as gods, angels, demons, interest themselves in the action.

7. The Hero's Journey

- (1) Hero sets out to right a wrong
- (2) Hero experiences conflict and confrontation
- (3) Hero returns home with a new attitude

8. The single most important virtue of a hero is ___courage___. Courage is the instrument by which the hero realizes himself.