

Study Guide for “Rime of the Ancient Mariner”

Biographical Background of SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

1. How old was Coleridge when he learned to read?
2. What books had a big influence on his as a child?
3. How was Coleridge different from other children?
4. At the age of 17, Coleridge began a life-long relationship with opium. What were the circumstances that led to his later addiction?
5. When he was 21, Coleridge and his friend Robert Southey were planning a trip to the new nation of America. What did they plan to do there?
6. In 1797 Coleridge began the most important relationship of his life (*possibly* excepting his marriage). Who was this relationship with?
7. “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” was first printed in a book called *Lyrical Ballads*. How did the critics like *Lyrical Ballads*?
8. The video claims that “the poet in Coleridge died at the age of 26.” Who is blamed for this “early death”?

THE POEM

Part I

1. Describe the Ancient Mariner physically.
2. Why does the Wedding Guest stop to listen to the Mariner (even though it means he will miss the wedding)?
3. Where is the ship blown by the raging storm?
4. What sort of trouble do the sailors find themselves in?
5. What good event do the sailors associate with the albatross?

Part II

6. Why does the Mariner kill the albatross?
7. When the Mariner kills the albatross, first his shipmates {curse/praise} him because
8. Then they {curse/praise} him because
9. Then, finally, they {curse/praise} him because

10. As a symbol of the Mariner's guilt, the albatross is

Part III

11. Who are the two passengers on the "rescue ship"?

12. What do the Mariner's shipmates do as they expire?

Part IV

13. What is "worse than an orphan's curse"?

14. What must the Mariner do before he is able to pray?

Part V

15. What relief is sent to the mariner, and by whom?

16. How can a ship sail if all her crew are dead?

17. What is "penance"? Has the Mariner done his yet?

Part VI - VII

18. Why are the Pilot and the Pilot's Boy afraid?

19. Why was this particular Guest singled out by the Mariner to hear his tale?

20. What is the lesson of the tale that the Mariner preaches?