

**PPT on**  
**The Rime of the Ancient**  
**Mariner**

CC-6 (SEM.2)

# The Poet

- S. T. Coleridge (1772 – 1834) was an English poet, literary critic and philosopher
- He, with his friend William Wordsworth, was a founder of the Romantic Movement in England and a member of the Lake Poets.
- He was a major influence on Emerson and American transcendentalism.

# The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

- The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is the longest major poem by Coleridge, written in 1797–98 and published in 1798.
- This poem was a signal shift to modern poetry and the beginning of British Romantic literature .

# **The Rime of the Ancient Mariner**

- It relates the experiences of a sailor who has returned from a long sea voyage.
- Coleridge uses narrative techniques such as personification and repetition to create a sense of danger, the supernatural, or serenity, depending on the mood in different parts of the poem.

# Major Theme

- Sin, repentance, loneliness, pain and punishment are the central themes of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner."
- The Mariner commits a terrible sin when he kills the albatross.
- He spends the rest of his life trying to atone for his sin through his suffering and humility.
- He devotes his life to warning people about the dangers of sin, using his own life as a cautionary tale.

# Continued.....

- The Mariner sins against God and nature.
- He sins against nature because God loves all of creation, not just humankind.
- The poem states:

*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.*

# Continued.....

- The poem also discusses the redemptive power of the imagination, an important Romantic theme.
- The Mariner is guilty of killing the albatross. However, for a long time, he doesn't understand that he has done anything wrong.
- He can't see the beauty and wonder of God's creation.
- Ultimately, he and his shipmates remain under a curse.

# Continued.....

- It is impossible for the Mariner to achieve forgiveness until he is able to confess he has done something wrong.
- When the Mariner sees and is able to respond to the beauty of the sea snakes, he shows he has developed the imagination and empathy to understand all of creation as blessed.
- Then the curse is lifted:

*“The selfsame moment I could pray;  
And from my neck so free  
The Albatross fell off, and sank  
Like lead into the sea.”*

# Continued.....

- The poem portrays nature as a kind of active elemental force, that is too powerful for men to conquer.
- The poem conceives of nature as being an expression of the human world.

# Continued.....

- The relationship between nature and the human world after albatross is being killed.
- Harming nature is a moral failing. It is a sin. Such sins lead to punishment.

# Main Idea

- The main idea of this poem is a moral message, warning against thoughtless and foolhardy actions.
- The ancient Mariner inhospitably kills the pious bird of good omen
- The albatross had done no harm to the Mariner and other shipmates .
- In fact it had helped to guide his ship, so that his wanton killing of it appears even more inexcusable.

# Elements in the Poem

## 1. Idea of Sublime

- This poem gives sublime experience and readers are elevated to a high degree of moral or spiritual purity.
- The Rime of the Ancient Mariner creates awe and admiration

# Continued.....

## 2. Nature versus Man

- They are confronted
- Nature is compassionate
- Nature is furious
- Nature is bigger than human beings
- Nature overpowers human being
- Human beings are nothing compared to nature

# Continued.....

## 3. Albatross

- Sign of good omen
- He befriends the shipmates
- Gives them company
- Dispels their loneliness
- He connects them with the world
- Human beings are one entity and albatross are other
- He is a sign of hope

# Language and style

- In “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,” the language is beautiful.
- The poet uses incredible imagery, as well as very complex symbolism.
- Although there are several examples of the beautiful language used by Coleridge.

# Visual imagery

- Coleridge describes the situation with vivid imagery.
- He wrote, *“water, water, every where,  
and all the boards did shrink;  
water, water, every where,  
nor any drop to drink”*.
- As simple as these words are, it creates a visual picture of how desperate the sailors are.
- They are surrounded by water on all sides without any hope of survival, and it has all occurred as a punishment for the severe sin committed by the mariner.

# Continued.....

- When Coleridge uses imagery in describing snakes in the water by saying,  
*“I watched their rich attire:  
blue, glossy green, and velvet black,  
they coiled and swam; and every track  
was a flash of golden fire”*
- Coleridge uses very lengthy and deep descriptions when describing surroundings, and this allows him to control what images stick out in the readers mind.
- A writer that does this has a lot of power over the reader and this is the beauty of Coleridge’s writing.

# Symbols

- The poem used the symbols of water, wind and moon.
- There are three separate entities that became a part of the poem's narrative structure. It exist on three different levels:
  - the literal level,
  - the moral level,
  - the allegorical level

# Continued.....

- Coleridge's water, wind and moon as material objects in nature become a symbolic language
- It perfectly proves what Coleridge himself tried to propose and that is,  
    “Art imitates what is Essential in nature”.

# Continued.....

- Dario Abram rightly says that , “the symbols and images of water, wind and moon are frequent in his(Coleridge) poetry because of the similarity to his imagination”.
- It can be as still or as rough as water is, as light or as fierce as wind, and can become our guiding light even in our darkest hours just like the moon.

Thanks

**PREPARED BY**

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