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| **Unit Title** | The Anglo-Saxon Period (449-1066) | | | | | **Length of Unit** | 9 days | |
| **Unit Description and Rationale** | This unit introduces students to the literature of the Anglo-Saxon Period of English literature, with a particular focus on *Beowulf.* As this is the earliest period in English literature, it provides a foundation for the development of English literature to come. Here we see the beginnings of the interaction between paganism and Christianity that we will be tracing throughout the course. *Beowulf* also provides a point of connection with the more recent literature of J.R.R. Tolkien, with which many of the students will be familiar. In addition to reading, understanding, and discussing the literature, students will get hands-on experience reading and reciting texts in Old English (Anglo-Saxon). | | | | | | | |
| **Critical Vocabulary:** includes the academic and technical vocabulary, semantics, and discourse which are particular to and necessary for accessing a given discipline. | | | | | | | | |
| Anglo-Saxon, Wyrd, scop, gleeman, caesura, accent, alliteration, parallelism, kenning, epic | | | | | | | | |
| **Unit Generalizations**  ***My students will understand that…*** | | | **Guiding Questions**  **Factual Conceptual** | | | | | |
| Anglo-Saxon literature is characterized by (1) the love of freedom; (2) responsiveness to nature, especially in her sterner moods; (3) strong religious convictions, and a belief in Wyrd, or Fate; (4) reverence for womanhood; and (5) a devotion to glory as the ruling motive in a warrior’s life. (A Beka, *English Literature*) | | | What historical and cultural factors influenced these characteristics? What do they tell us about the Anglo-Saxons as a people? | | | | | Where and how are these characteristics expressed in Anglo-Saxon literature? How should a Christian reader interact with and evaluate these characteristics? |
| Anglo-Saxon poetry typically has these formal elements: (1) four principal beats (accented syllables) per line, (2) alliteration, and (3) unrhymed lines. | | | What were the historical and cultural factors that influenced this form? | | | | | How do these formal elements shape the meaning and experience of the literature? |
| *Beowulf* is a pagan Germanic epic poem that likely came to England with the Anglo-Saxons around 450 AD but was later Christianized by the monks who wrote, copied, and preserved it around 900-1000 AD. As such, it frequently exhibits a tension between pagan and Christian ideals. | | | What is the history of the composition of *Beowulf* as it concerns the intersection of Christianity and paganism? | | | | | Where and how does *Beowulf* exhibit a tension between its pagan past and Christian present? How does the author attempt to resolve the tension? |
| Anglo-Saxon (Old English) is Germanic in origin and significantly different from Modern English in appearance, sound, and structure. | | | What is the linguistic genealogy of Old English? Where does it come from? | | | | | How does the sight, sound, and structure of Old English affect our experience of Anglo-Saxon literature? What is lost in the translation to modern English and what is retained? |
| **Critical Content: My students will KNOW…** | | | | | **Key Skills: My students will be able to (DO)…** | | | |
| * The basic history of the Anglo-Saxon settlement of England and the development of Old English. * The history and influence of *Beowulf* as the oldest surviving Germanic epic. * The plot, setting, characters, structure, and themes of *Beowulf*. * The status of Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* as one of our earliest sources of English history. * The content, theme, and structure of “The Seafarer.” * The story of Caedmon, his significance as the first known Anglo-Saxon poet, and the subject matter of his hymn. * The distinguishing characteristics of Anglo-Saxon literature. * The definitions of critical vocabulary words related to the Anglo-Saxon Period. | | | | | * Discuss the plot, setting, characters, themes, and structure of *Beowulf*. * Describe the historical significance and literary legacy of *Beowulf* as work of epic literature. * Identify and describe the distinguishing characteristics of Anglo-Saxon literature. * Read, memorize, and recite literature in Old English. * Use critical vocabulary words related to the Anglo-Saxon period in literature when analyzing and discussing texts. | | | |
| **Performance Assessment:** *The capstone/summative assessment for this unit.* | | | | | | | | |
| **Claims:**  (Key generalization(s) to be mastered and demonstrated through the capstone assessment.) | | Anglo-Saxon (Old English) is Germanic in origin and significantly different from Modern English in appearance, sound, and structure. | | | | | | |
| **Stimulus Material:**  (Engaging scenario that includes role, audience, goal/outcome and explicitly connects the key generalization) | | Old English copies of the following texts:   * *Beowulf*, lines 1-11 * “Our Father” * “Caedmon’s Hymn”   YouTube links to recitations:   * Beowulf: The Epic in Performance - Benjamin Bagby, voice and medieval harp, <https://youtu.be/2WcIK_8f7oQ> * Beowulf (Old English), <https://youtu.be/bLKDasq65q0> * Caedmon’s Hymn (Spoken in Old English), <https://youtu.be/049PnnCEYNs> * Reading of The Lord's Prayer in Modern, Middle, and Old English, <https://youtu.be/2gy82lniAUA> | | | | | | |
| **Product/Evidence:**  (Expected product from students) | | Students will memorize and recite in Old English the opening 4 lines of *Beowulf* and either “Caedmon’s Hymn” or “Our Father” (The Lord’s Prayer). | | | | | | |
| **Differentiation:**  (Multiple modes for student expression) | | N/A | | | | | | |
| **Supporting Texts** | | | | | | | | |
| **Primary**  *(Fiction, Poetry, Drama, Creative Nonfiction, Historical Documents)* | | | | **Secondary**  *(Information, Academic Research, Literary Criticism)* | | | | |
| *Beowulf*  *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*  “Caedmon’s Hymn”  “The Lord’s Prayer”  “The Seafarer”  *English Literature,* A Beka | | | | Tolkien, “*Beowulf*: The Monsters and the Critics” | | | | |

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| **Learning Experience #1** | |
| **Date:** |  |
| **Time:** |  |
| **Description/Overview:** |  |
| **Generalization Connection:** |  |
| **Teacher Resources:** |  |
| **Student Resources:** |  |
| **Critical Content (KNOW):** |  |
| **Key Skills (DO):** |  |
| **Assessment:** |  |
| *Lesson Plan and Instructor Notes* | |
| Preview |  |
| Prepare |  |
| Model |
| Practice |
| Discuss |
| Assign |  |
| Close |  |