

## Elegy Assignment

Your task is to compose an elegy, following the conventions of the Anglo-Saxon elegy, the oldest form of English literature. The Anglo-Saxons, who left their homes and their way of when they migrated to England from northern Germany, often mourned the life they left behind, fellow warriors who had died, or relationships they had lost. Write an elegy in which you mourn the loss of someone or something that is no longer a part of your life.

### IDEAS & VOICE

#### Lyric (40 points)

- narrative poem that expresses the thoughts and feelings of a single speaker that is composed in **first person**

#### Loss (40 points)

- expression of mourning for an entity (person, place, object, quality, lifestyle, or time period) including specific details

#### Nostalgia (40 points)

- expression of longing for what once existed through descriptive details of positive past experiences

### ORGANIZATION

#### Stanza Organization (30 points)

1. **Lyric & statement of Loss**  
These poems begin with the narrator stating his or her perspective and purpose.
2. **Detailed description of Loss**  
Then, the narrator tells about his or her sorrows and what caused them.
3. **Nostalgic contrast**  
In contrast to the mournful present, the narrator reveals the blissful past with nostalgic memories.
4. **Lyric & future hopes**  
Finally, the narrator returns to the present and states his or her hopes for the future.

### WORD CHOICE

#### Alliteration (20 points)

- **repetition of initial consonant sounds** in proximate words, usually within the same line of poetry

#### Kenning (20 points)

- a metaphorical phrase used to replace a concrete noun that emphasizes a specific inherent quality of the noun  
four types of kennings:
  - open compound** (*wakeful sleeper* = ghost)
  - hyphenated compound** (*gold-friend* = king)
  - possessive** (*grave's embrace* = death)
  - prepositional phrase** (*Warden of men* = God)

### SYNTAX

#### Regular Rhythm (10 points)

- a pattern of four accented (stressed) syllables per line of poetry and **8-12 total syllables per line**

#### Caesura (10 points)

- a **natural pause** or break in the middle of a line of poetry
- divides the line's four stressed syllables and emphasizes rhythm
- usually **marked by punctuation** or syntax change