

After reading the following background information about the Anglo-Saxon elegy, respond to at least one topic of the forum. Learn from the discussion of "The Wanderer" as a elegy by reading the responses of your peers.

The Anglo-Saxons, who left their homes and their way of when they migrated to England, often mourned the life they left behind in northern Germany and described their new life as a form of exile. As a result, they often created oral poems called **elegies**. In addition to the characteristics of common to all Anglo-Saxon poetry (alliteration, caesura, regular rhythm, and kenning), the elegy also includes the following three elements:

#### Lyric

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

#### Loss

- expression of mourning for an entity (person, place, object, quality, lifestyle, or time period)
- **ubi sunt** convention focuses on the fleeting nature of human existence

#### Nostalgia

- expression of longing for what once existed through descriptive details
- enhances the sense of loss

### **"The Wanderer" as a Lyric**

The elegy is structured into three distinct parts:

- an introduction during which the Anglo-Saxon *scop* establishes the nature of the wanderer's existence
- a body in which the wanderer speaks about his losses and nostalgia in first person
- a conclusion during which the *scop* stresses the importance of faith

Focus on the body of the elegy, and discuss how the wanderer reveals his character through his own words. Consider the repetition of ideas, images, and specific words the wanderer uses throughout the poem and what those details reveal about his attitude. Support your ideas with quotations from the elegy.

### **Loss in "The Wanderer"**

What is the main loss that the wanderer mourns? What smaller, specific losses are related to the central loss? In what ways do the losses he has suffered color his entire life? Support your ideas with specific quotations from the elegy.

### **Nostalgia in "The Wanderer"**

Throughout the elegy, the wanderer misses the camaraderie with his fellow warriors and his allegiance to his lord. How does he express this nostalgia through particular images in the poem? Support your ideas with specific quotations from the elegy.