

# Samuel Taylor Coleridge



[http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/romantic/topic\\_3/illustrations/imc\\_coleridge.htm](http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/romantic/topic_3/illustrations/imc_coleridge.htm)

# Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* (1817)

- Disagrees with Wordsworth about poetry: for Coleridge, poetry came out of the willing suspension of disbelief for the moment
- Disagree with Wordsworth over the “language of real life”: Every man’s language varies. Instead of “real”, we should use “ordinary”. (p. 503)

## “On the Imagination, or Esemplastic Power” p. 496

- Fancy: shuffling of sense data
- Imagination
- Primary Imagination: the oneness of objects or concepts, possessed by every man
- Secondary Imagination: breaks down the familiar perceptions and constructs a new creative unity, the poet's vision of truth

# “Dejection: an Ode” (1802)

- Trimeter to pentameter
- ABBA CC
- Nature: What he thought was in Nature was actually a product solely of his own mind.



<http://www.neuronnexion.fr/dferment/lab/lab.html>

“The new moon with the old moon  
in her arms”



# “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” (1797)

- Rhyme:
- Basically ballad form
- tetrameter (four beats) alternates with trimeter (three meter)
- ABAB or ABABAB
- Language: intentionally ancient, to produce the impression that this poem comes of the ancient past

# Albatross



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Short-tailed\\_Albatross](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Short-tailed_Albatross)



# “Kubla Khan” (1816)

- Basically iambic tetrameter
- ABAABCCDEDE
- ABAABCCDDFFGGHIIHJJ
- ABABCC
- ABCCBDEDEFGFFFGHHG



# “Kubla Khan”

- A poem about and a demonstration of the workings of the Secondary Imagination (which “dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create”)
- The “sacred river”

flail



<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flail>



# “Frost at Midnight”

- Compare the difference between Wordsworth’s and Coleridge’s views about the relationship between nature and the children.

# Question

- What Coleridge calls, in Chapter XIII, the "secondary imagination" is the creative imagination of the artist. How does he describe the relationship of this power to the world of objects? What characterizes all objects as objects, and how does the secondary imagination differ? What does it do to the world of objects?

# Question

- This poem has a narrative “frame”—a tale set within a tale. Why does Coleridge make the Mariner’s auditor a Wedding-Guest? Also, who is the tale’s *first* auditor and what significance does that person have in the context of the strange nature of the tale?

# Question

- How is the albatross described? To what is it compared, and is that comparison significant?

# Question

- In which way is “Kubla Khan” an interesting poem? Give your answer in terms of Coleridge’s discussion on imagination and fancy.



# Question

- Read Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" and answer whether or not Wordsworth can give a positive answer to the question that elicit Coleridge's despair in "Dejection: an Ode".