



NCERT Solutions for 10th Class English Literature (Poetry): Chapter 11-The Rime of the Ancient Mariner



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NCERT Solutions for 10th Class English Literature (Poetry): Chapter 11-The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

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Question 1.

Look at the picture carefully and answer the questions given below :



- (a) What can you see in the picture? Does the man look happy? Give reasons for your answer.
- (b) Why does he have the bird hanging around his neck?(c) Have you heard of the expression—‘having an albatross around your neck’ ? What do you think it means ? Does it mean?
- (i) something that you can always be proud of
- (ii) something that you have to do because you have no choice

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(iii) something that is with you all the time as a reminder that you have done something wrong ?

(d) What is an Albatross?

Answer:

(a) I can see a man with a dead albatross hanging around his neck. The man seemed deeply distressed and repentant over his deed.

(b) The bird is a reminder of his evil action and symbolises a punishment for the sin he had committed.

(c) Self attempt

(d) An albatross is a white ocean bird with very large wings. It symbolises a thing that causes anxiety concern.

Question 2.

The teacher will now assign roles and ask you to read the poem aloud to show how the poem has been written in the first person (the parts in quotation marks spoken by the Mariner) and in the third person (where the narrator comments about the events taking place).

Answer:

Self-Attempt

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Question 3.

Here are some of the archaic words used in the poem; can you match them with the words used in modern English language that mean the same? The first one has been done for you as an example :

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(a) stoppeth	(i) why
(b) thy	(ii) entered
(c) wherefore	(iii) stopped
(d) stopp'st	(iv) you
(e) thou	(v) lunatic
(f) may'st	(vi) at once
(g) quoth	(vii) fainting fit
(h) loon	(viii) has
(i) eftsoons	(ix) can't you
(j) dropt	(x) stopping
(k) hath	(xi) church
(l) spake	(xii) enemy
(m) kirk	(xiii) yes
(n) paced	(xiv) see
(o) foe	(xv) call
(p) aye	(xvi) trouble
(q) ken	(xvii) looking
(r) swound	(xviii) your
(s) hollo	(xix) said
(t) plague	(xx) dropped
(u) look'st	(xxi) spoke

Answer:

(b) – (xviii)

(c) – (i)

(d) – (x)

(e) – (iv)

(f) – (ix)

(g) – (xix)

(h) – (v)

(i) – (vi)

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(j) – (xx)

(k) – (viii)

(l) – (xxi)

(m) – (xi)

(n) – (ii)

(o) – (xii)

(p) – (xiii)

(q) – (xiv)

(r) – (vii)

(s) – (xv)

(t) – (xvi)

(u) – (xvii)

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Question 4.

Using the words given above rewrite PART I of the poem in your own words. The first stanza has been done as an example :

It is an ancient Mariner,

And he stoppeth one of three.

‘By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,

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Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

An old sailor stopped one of the three people passing by, who asked: "Old man, with your long grey beard and glittering eye, why are you stopping me?"

The bridegroom's doors are opened wide.

And I am next of kin;

The guests are met, the feast is set:

May'st hear the merry din.

Answer:

The man chided the mariner if he could not hear the happy sounds as he was a close relative of the bridegroom and the doors of the marriage venue were opened. He further added that the guests had arrived and the dinner was arranged.

He holds him with his skinny hand,

"There was a ship," quoth he.

'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!'

Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

Answer:

But the old man held him with his skinny hands and said : There was a ship..... The man at once freed his hand from the old man's grip and said, "stop you mad old man. leave me".

He holds him with his glittering eye-

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The Wedding-Guest stood still.

And listens like a three years' child:

The Mariner hath his will.

Answer:

The mariner hypnotized the wedding guest with his glittering eyes and the guest could not move. He listened to the old mariner like a small child of three and the mariner had his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:

He cannot choose but hear;

And thus spake on that ancient man.

The bright-eyed Mariner.

Answer:

Not having any other option, the wedding guest, helplessly sat on a stone and so the ancient mariner spoke continuously.

“The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared.

Merrily did we drop

Below the kirk, below the hill.

Below the lighthouse top.

Answer:

The old mariner continued telling his story: We started our journey by the sea cheerfully and the ship sailed below the church, below the hill and below the lighthouse top.

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The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Answer:

The sun rose everyday from the left and set on the right after shining brightly for the whole day.

Higher and higher every day.

Till over the mast at noon-

The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast.

For he heard the loud bassoon.

Answer:

“Everyday the sun rose higher until it was just above our head at noon,” the old man dreamily said. By now the guest was getting impatient on hearing the sound of the bassoon, a musical instrument.

The bride hath paced into the hall.

Red as a rose is she;

Nodding their heads before her goes

The merry minstrelsy.

Answer:

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The bassoon itself signified the rosy bride had entered into the hall accompanied by a band of happy singers and musicians.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,

Yet he cannot choose but hear;

And thus spake on that ancient man.

The bright-eyed Mariner.

Answer:

The guest was too eager to go from there and was cursing himself as well as was getting irritated but he had no other option than to listen to that ancient man who spoke continuously.

“And now the storm-blast came, and he

Was tyrannous and strong:

He struck with his o’ertaking wings.

And chased us south along.

Answer:

The old man continued: “We were chased towards south by a severe and strong sea-storm that completely overtook us.”

With sloping masts and dipping prow,

As who pursued with yell and blow

Still treads the shadow of his foe.

And forward bends his head.

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The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,

And southward aye we fled.

Answer:

The old mariner recalled his horrible experience: “The ship’s front part dipped in the sea and the masts dropped down. The storm drove the ship southward with such force that the ship seemed to chase an enemy fiercely with a bent head.

And now there came both mist and snow,

And it grew wondrous cold:

And ice, mast-high, came floating by.

As green as emerald.

Answer:

The old man narrated his tale of woe unaware of the state of the mind of the wedding guest. “It grew icy cold with mist and snow everywhere. The ship was surrounded by big, bright green pieces of floating ice.

And through the drifts the snowy cliffs

Did send a dismal sheen:

Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken-

The ice was all between.

Answer:

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The ancient mariner said that the floating ice-bergs and their surface reflected the sunshine that made them gloomy. They could see neither man nor an animal as there was only ice surrounding the ship.

The ice was here, the-ice was there,

The ice was all around:

It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,

Like noises in a swound!

Answer:

The mariner recalled that they could see nothing but ice all around them. The storm howled loudly like a man in a fit and the ice also cracked making horrible noises.

At length did cross an Albatross,

Through the fog it came;

As it had been a Christian soul.

We hailed it in God's name.

Answer:

Amid the havoc, an albatross came emerging from the fog. The sailors thought it to be a messenger of God and called it on the ship.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,

And round and round it flew.

The ice did split with a thunder-fit;

The helmsman steered us through!

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Answer:

The albatross ate the food that it had never eaten. It became friendly with the sailors and flew in circles about the ship. Miraculously, the ice split making a thunderous noise and the helms man was able to steer the ship in the right direction.

‘God save thee, ancient Mariner,

From the fiends that plague thee thus!-

Why look’st thou so?’-”With my crossbow

I shot the Albatross.”

Answer:

The wedding guest exclaimed that God had saved the mariner from the devils that troubled him and other sailors then why was he looking so wretched. The mariner repentantly answered that, it was he who shot the albatross with his cross bow.

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Question 5.

Answer the following by choosing the right option from those given below :

(a) The Ancient Mariner stopped one of the three wedding guests because

(i) he wanted to attend the wedding with him

(ii) he wanted him to sit with him

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- (iii) he wanted him to listen to his story
- (iv) he wanted to stop him from going to the wedding.

Answer:

- (iii) he wanted him to listen to his story

(b) The Wedding-Guest remarked that he was 'next of kin' which means that

- (i) he was a close relation of the bridegroom
- (ii) he was a close relation of the bride
- (iii) he was next in line to get married
- (iv) he had to stand next to the bridegroom during the wedding.

Answer:

- (i) he was a close relation of the bridegroom

(c) 'He cannot choose but hear' means

- (i) the Mariner was forced to hear the story of the Wedding-Guest
- (ii) the Wedding-Guest was forced to hear the story of the Mariner
- (iii) the Mariner had the choice of not listening to the story of the Wedding-Guest
- (iv) the Wedding-Guest had the choice of not listening to the story of the Mariner.

Answer:

- (ii) the Wedding-Guest was forced to hear the story of the Mariner

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(d) 'The sun came up upon the left, / Out of the sea came he ; 'This line tells us that the' ship

- (i) was moving in the northern direction
- (ii) was moving eastwards
- (iii) was moving in the western direction
- (iv) was moving towards the south.

Answer:

- (iv) was moving towards the south.

(e) The Wedding-Guest beat his breast because

- (i) he could hear the sound of the bassoon
- (ii) he was forced to listen to the Mariner's tale when he wanted to attend the wedding !
- (iii) the sound of the bassoon meant that the bride had arrived and the wedding ceremony was about to begin and he could not attend it
- (iv) the sound of the bassoon announced the arrival of the bride and the start of the wedding ceremony.

Answer:

- (iii) the sound of the bassoon meant that the bride had arrived and the wedding ceremony was about to begin and he could not attend it

(f) The storm blast has been described as being tyrannous because

- (i) it was so fierce that it frightened the sailors

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- (ii) it took complete control of the ship
- (iii) the storm was very powerful
- (iv) the sailors were at its mercy.

Answer:

- (ii) it took complete control of the ship

(g) The sailors felt depressed on reaching the land of mist and snow because

- (i) there was no sign of any living creature
- (ii) they felt they would die in that cold weather
- (iii) they were surrounded by icebergs and there seemed to be no sign of life
- (iv) everything was grey in colour and they felt very cold.

Answer:

- (i) there was no sign of any living creature

(h) The sailors were happy to see the Albatross because

- (i) it was the first sign of life and therefore gave them hope that they might survive
- (ii) it split the icebergs around the ship and helped the ship move forward
- (iii) it was a messenger from God and it lifted the fog and mist.
- (iv) it gave them hope of survival by splitting the icebergs.

Answer:

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(iii) it was a messenger from God and it lifted the fog and mist.

(i) The two things that happened after the arrival of the albatross were

.....

(i) the icebergs split and the Albatross became friendly with the sailors

(ii) the icebergs split and a strong breeze started blowing

(iii) the ship was pushed out of the land of mist and the ice melted

(iv) the Albatross started playing with the mariners and ate the food they offered.

Answer:

(ii) the icebergs split and a strong breeze started blowing

(j) 'It perched for vespers nine' means

(i) the ship stopped sailing at nine o'clock everyday

(ii) the Albatross would appear at a fixed time everyday

(iii) the Albatross would sit on the sail or the mast everyday

(iv) the Albatross was a holy creature

Answer:

(iii) the Albatross would sit on the sail or the mast everyday

(k) 'God save thee, Ancient Mariner, / From the fiends that plague thee thus!—Why look'st thou so ? means

(i) the Mariner wanted to know why the Wedding-Guest was looking so tormented

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(ii) the Wedding-Guest wanted to know why the Mariner was looking so tormented

(iii) the Wedding-Guest wanted to know whether some creatures were troubling the Ancient Mariner

(iv) the Ancient Mariner wanted to know whether something was troubling the Wedding-Guest.

Answer:

(ii) the Wedding-Guest wanted to know why the Mariner was looking so tormented

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Question 6.

Answer the following questions briefly.

(a) How did the Ancient Mariner stop the Wedding-Guest?

Answer:

The ancient mariner stopped one of the three wedding guests forcefully. He wanted to tell him the adventurous story related to him.

(b) Was the Wedding-Guest happy to be stopped ? Give reasons for your answer.

Answer:

No, the wedding guest was not happy to be stopped because he was a close relative of the bridegroom and wanted to attend the marriage ceremony in time but he was forced to hear the story of the mariner.

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(c) Describe the Ancient Mariner.

Answer:

The ancient mariner is the narrator in the poem. He is an old sailor who has a long grey beard and glittering eyes. He seems to be frightening with unnaturally skinning hands that held the wedding guest. He seems to be a sociable guy before undertaking that fateful trip down to the Arctic. His life undergoes a major change as he shoots an albatross. He suffers from guilt and remorse for having killed the albatross. He repents his action and his penance continues through the rest of his life as he feels the urge to share his story with whoever he meets.

(d) How does the Mariner describe the movement of the ship as it sails away from the land?

Answer:

The mariner describes the movement of the ship as it sails away from the land with joy. He exclaims when he starts sailing 'The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared.'

(e) What kind of weather did the sailors enjoy at the beginning of their journey? How has it been expressed in the poem?

Answer:

The weather was fine for the sailors and the sun was also bright. The poet has given its description as such:

The sun came up upon the left.

Out of the Sea came he

And he shone bright, and on the right

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Went down into the sea.

(f) How did the sailors reach the land of mist and snow?

Answer:

The sailors reached the land of mist and snow because of the loud roaring blast that drove the ship faster towards the mist and snow.

(g) How does the mariner express the fact that the ship was completely surrounded by icebergs?

Answer:

The mariner expresses the fact that the ship was completely surrounded by icebergs by saying

“The ice was here, the ice was there

The ice was all around.

It cracked and growled, and roared and howled

Like noises in a swound.”

(h) How do we know that the Albatross was not afraid of the humans? Why did the sailors hail it in God’s name?

Answer:

We know that the albatross was not afraid of the humans because it started playing with the mariners and ate the food they offered. The sailors hailed it in God’s name because it gave them hope of survival by splitting the icebergs.

(i) What was the terrible deed done by the Mariner ?. Why do you think he did it?

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Answer:

The terrible deed done by the mariner was that he shot the albatross with his cross bow. He did it to get rid of the troubles being faced, but soon he realised his mistake to find more troubles after the death of albatross.

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Question 7.

There are a number of literary devices used in the poem. Some of them have been listed below. Choose the right ones and write them down in the table as shown in the example. In each of the cases explain what they mean.

simile, metaphor, alliteration, personification, hyperbole, repetition
--

1. The Wedding-Guest stood still, And listens like a three years' child :	Simile; the Wedding-Guest was completely under the control of the Mariner
--	--

2. Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top

3. The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he

4. The bride hath paced into the
hall,
Red as a rose is she

5. And now the storm-blast came,

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and he was tyrannous and strong :

6. With sloping masts and dipping
prow, As who pursued with yell and
blow Still treads the shadow of his
foe

7. The ice was here, the ice was
there,
The ice was all around

Answer:

(b) Repetition; here we find the occurrence of the same word 'below' used for laying supreme stress.

(c) Personification; here an inanimate thing "The Sun" has been personified like an animate thing.

(d) Simile; here the bride is compared with red rose and for comparison, the word "as" has been used.

(e) Personification; here 'the storm blast' has been animated as tyrannous and strong.

(f) Personification and hyperbole; here exaggeration — The storm has been shown as a person with unmatched powers. His powers have been exaggerated.

(g) Repetition; here the word "ice" has been repeated for emphasis.

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Question 8.

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In groups of four discuss what you think happens next in the poem. Share your views with the rest of the class.

Answer:

Self-Attempt

Question 9.

Answer the following questions briefly:

(a) In which direction did the ship start moving? How can you say?

Answer:

The ship started moving in the northern direction. We can say this because the poet says the sun rose in the right and he also says the south wind blew behind the ship.

(b) Why does the Mariner say that ‘no sweet bird did follow’?

Answer:

He says so because the mariner had killed the albatross. It no more followed the ship for food or for playing with the mariners.

(c) How did the other Mariners behave towards the Ancient Mariner at first? How many times did they change their mind about the Ancient Mariner? What does this tell us about their character?

Answer:

At first all the mariners said that the ancient mariner had done a wrong thing by killing the bird. Then, when the weather improved, they all said that he had done the right thing by killing the bird. Finally when the ship stopped moving they said he had committed a crime by killing the bird. They

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changed their mind three times. This shows that they did not have an opinion of their own or a mind of their own.

(d) How did the sailing conditions change after the ship had moved out of the land of mist and snow? What or who did the Mariners blame for this change?

Answer:

After the ship left the land of mist and snow, it entered an area where the weather was very hot. Then the ship moved into the sea where the breeze was blowing fine. From here the ship moved into a region where the weather was very hot and it was still all around. There was no breeze at all so the ship could just not move.

(e) What is indicated by the line ‘The bloody sun, at noon,/Right up above the mast did stand,/No bigger than the moon’?

Answer:

This line states that the sun was shining very bright and it was right above the ship. It was very hot but the size of the sun was not very big. The poet compares it to the size of the moon.

(f) How does the Mariner describe the fact that they were completely motionless in the middle of the sea?

Answer:

The mariner says that there was no air and no movement. He compares their ship to a painted ship which stands still on a painted ocean.

(g) What is the irony in the ninth stanza? Explain it in your own words.

Answer:

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The ship is stuck in the middle of the sea with water all around. The weather is extremely hot and mariners need drinking water. In spite of there being water, there was not a drop of c drinking water available. That is the irony in this stanza.

(h) What is the narrator trying to convey through the description of the situation in the tenth and eleventh stanza?

Answer:

Through the tenth and eleventh stanza, the poet brings out the condition of the creatures in the sea. As there was no breeze blowing, the creatures had started dying. At night it appeared as though death was dancing at the gate of the ship. The condition of the sailors was pathetic.

(i) What or who did the Mariners feel was responsible for their suffering?

Answer:

The mariners felt that the ancient mariner was responsible for their suffering. He had killed an innocent bird, the albatross, without any provocation.

(j) Describe the condition of the Mariners as expressed in the thirteenth stanza.

Answer:

The sailors were feeling very thirsty as there was no drinking water available. Their throats were dry and they could not speak even a word.

(k) Why did the Mariners hang the Albatross around the neck of the Ancient Mariner?

Answer:

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The mariners hung the albatross around the neck of the Ancient Mariner in order to remind him of the ghastly deed he had committed by killing the innocent bird.

Question 10.

Like part one, the second part also has a number of literary devices. List them out in the same way as you had done in question number seven and explain them.

Answer:

Excerpt	Literary device
1. out of the sea come he,	Personification: The sun has been compared to a human being capable of movement.
2. And it would work'em woe.	Alliteration: The letter 'w' has been repeated thrice.
3. Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,	Simile: Sun has been compared to God's glorious head.
4. The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew The furrow followed free	Alliteration: The letter 'f' has been repeated and blew and flew has repetition of ew sound.
5. And we did speak only to break the silence of the sea!	Hyperbole: The speakers have exaggerated their action of speaking.
6. All in a hot and copper sky the bloody sun at	Metaphor: Sky and the sun have been indirectly compared to

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noon

copper and blood respectively.

7. As idle as a painted
ship

Simile: The ship has been
compared to a painting.

8. Day after day, day after
Say

Repetition: The words have been
repeated.

9. Water, water every
where not any drop to
drink.

Irony: Though there is lot of water
but the sailors could not drink
even a single drop.

10. The death-fires
danced at night.

Personification: Fire has been
shown as doing a dance of death.

Question 11.

What is the rhyme scheme of the poem ?

Answer:

Rhyme scheme of the poem: ab cb

Question 12.

Find examples of the use of interesting sounds from the poem and explain their effect on the reader.

1. The ice 'cracked and
growled, and roared and
howled'

.....
.....
.....

Coleridge uses onomatopoeic
words which use harsh 'ck'
sounds to make the ice sound
brutal. He also gives the ice
animal sounds to give the
impression it has come alive and
is attacking the ship.

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Answer:

2. breeze blew _____ alliteration _____ alliteration is used to give a reinforcement to the sound.

3. foam flew _____ alliteration

4. furrow followed free _____ alliteration

5. hot and copper sky _____ metaphor, visual imagery _____ The elements in a literary work used to evoke mental images, not only of the visual sense, but of sensation and emotion as well. Sky looks like a hot piece of copper.

6. bloody sun _____ visual and sensational imagery.

7. Day after day, day after day _____ repetition _____ the poet uses this technique for emphasis.

8. Water, water everywhere _____ repetition _____ for emphasis.

9. like a witch's oil _____ simile _____ used to bring out a comparison.

Question 13.

The poem is full of strange, uncanny or supernatural elements.

Discuss how these elements appear in the poem. You should consider :

— the strange weather ;

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- the albatross as a bird of “good omen”
- the spirit from “the land of mist and snow”
- the strange slimy creatures seen in the sea
- the ocean appearing to rot
- the death fires and sea water being referred to as witch’s oils

Now write a paragraph about the supernatural elements in the poem and how they add to the events that take place in the poem.

Answer:

Supernatural elements make the poem interesting and there are surprises and surprises for the readers. The poet could have said this very incident in a simple manner. Use of these supernatural elements such as the ‘albatross being a sign of good omen, ‘the ocean appearing to rot’, ‘the death fires dancing’ etc keeps the suspense and thrill alive, besides creating a lot of visual imagery.

Question 14.

Every ship is supposed to have a log book, which is filled in every day by the captain. If he dies, the next senior officer fills it in (usually the First Mate). Decide on appropriate dates (the mariner’s tale was supposed to be thought of as already very old when the poem was published : it should be no later than about 1700 AD; other clues to the date are the light-house and the mariner’s crossbow).

If you wish you can make the log look old by staining the pages, by your handwriting and spelling. Write a series of entries for the log for the important events that take place in the ship as recorded in the poem. The first one has been done as an example.

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1701 AD

Today we left the shore at 3.30 p.m. under glorious sailing conditions. We have 230 men on board. We are sailing with cargo towards Portugal. The journey is expected to take 90 days. We are well stocked with food and water to last us 250 days in case of any emergency. Hopefully we will not face any untoward i happenings. God be with us !

You could also do this as an oral activity, recording the entries on audio tape and using voice effects and other sound effects if you can.

Answer:

Self-attempt.

Question 15.

Performing the poem

This is a very dramatic poem, excellent for reading aloud or even dramatising it. The class could be divided into groups and given the different dramatic moments from the poem to be performed as follows:

- the first storm that they encounter
- the time spent in the land of mist and snow
- the coming of the albatross and the subsequent events till they move out
- the killing of the albatross till they reach the silent seas
- the suffering of the sailors in the hot region till they hang the albatross around the Ancient Mariner's neck

Answer:

Student to role-play the situations in groups.

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Question 16.

The poem has seven parts to it. The class could be divided into five groups and each group be asked to read one part of the remaining poem. Each group would then have to report their findings. The report can be made interesting with illustrations/power point presentations. Help could be taken from the following websites:

www.online-literature.com/coleridge/646/

www.gradesaver.com/the-rime-of-the-ancient-mariner/

text.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/Col2Mar.html

www.enotes.com/rime-ancient-mariner-text

Answer:

Self-attempt

Question 17.

In your groups discuss the following :

- (i) Why did the Ancient Mariner stop the particular Wedding-Guest to listen to his tale?
- (ii) Why did he have to tell his tale to someone?
- (iii) What is the poet trying to convey through this poem?

Answer:

(i) The ancient mariner was feeling himself burdened with the crime of killing the albatross. Other mariners also felt that the ancient mariner was responsible for their suffering. They hung the albatross around the ancient

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mariner's neck as a reminder of his sin. Now in order to lighten his burden, he stopped the wedding guest to narrate to him his tale of woe.

(ii) The Ancient Mariner stopped a man on his way to a wedding function to narrate his experience at the sea. Though there was no particular reason for the Ancient Mariner to stop the wedding guest, yet there seemed a kind of moral suggestion to love all men and birds equally. He did not want others to meet the same fate as he had.

(iii) The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is a ballad. Through this poem, Coleridge conveys a message to get close to God through prayer. The Ancient Mariner committed a sin that was rebuked by all. The Ancient Mariner relieved himself of his psychological burden by telling his tale to the wedding guest. The poet associates himself with Ancient Mariner to tell this allegorical poem in order to convey a powerful message to respect all the creatures of the world.

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- Chapter 3 The Letter
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