Rime of the Ancient Mariner

Study Guide questions

Part I

1. Who does the mariner stop to tell his story?
2. Where was this person going? Why did this person stop and listen to the mariner?
3. The mariner begins his story and says the ship initially sailed in which direction? What problem did they encounter?
4. How does the albatross seem to help the ship out of the mess?
5. What did the mariner do to the albatross? Why? Symbolic of?

Part II

1. As the ship heads north, the shipmates blame the mariner for what? They then change their mind and praise him. Why?
2. What problem befalls the ship now? How is the mariner punished by the crew? Symbolic of?

Part III

1. In Part III, what does the mariner spot? Why is this a cause for concern?
2. Coleridge uses much imaginative imagery to describe the ship. How is it described? Use quotes as necessary.
3. Who are the two crew members aboard the ship? What are they doing as their ship pulls alongside the mariners?
4. Who won the Mariner?
5. At the end of Part III, what happens to the crew of the mariner’s ship?

Part IV

1. At the beginning of Part IV, what does the WG fear?
2. Why does the mariner hate the slimy creatures? Why does he begin to adore them?
3. As a result of his changing feelings, what does he unconsciously do? As a result, what happens to the albatross? Symbolic of?

Part V

1. State what happens to the mariner in Part V stanza 1, 2 and 3. Symbolic of?
2. What happens to his ship? His shipmates (inhabited by?)? When the sun comes up, what do they do?
3. Although the mariner can feel no wind, the ship is sailing along nicely. To what does he attribute this?
4. What do the two spirits do to the mariner? Why? He still hears them speaking and one identifies the mariner as the one who shot the crossbow. Quote the other spirit’s response.
5. The mariner has already done penance. How so? (Two).

Part VI

1. Miraculously, the mariner sails back to port. What signals the shore crew to send a row boat to the mariner’s ship?
2. Name the three people in the row boat. Symbolic of?

Part VII

1. What happens to the mariner’s ship?
2. What must the mariner forever do as penance? How does he know who to target?
3. What is the final theme of the poem? Quote it!