

Final Paper Guide

Due by the end of classes. 7 to 10 pages.

Edition. An edition is the standard version of a poem or prose text. As you know, Medieval literature was copied by hand into manuscripts. Errors were common, as were variants. So, you need to ensure that you have a text that has been established by a reputable editor. Unfortunately, Mitchell & Robinson sometimes modify the poems to make it easier for students. The standard edition of all Old English poems is the *Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records*. You can find them all at this link:

<http://www8.georgetown.edu/departments/medieval/labyrinth/library/oe/oe.html>

The Exeter Book is here:

<http://www8.georgetown.edu/departments/medieval/labyrinth/library/oe/exeter.html>

The Junius Manuscript is here:

<http://www8.georgetown.edu/departments/medieval/labyrinth/library/oe/junius.html>

Use these editions in your papers.

Bibliography. Gather a list of books and articles about your poem. (Please do not gather all the books into your dorm room—other people are writing papers, too. Look at them in the library first to see if you really need them.) The best first stop is Stanley Greenfield and Daniel Calder, *A New Critical History of Old English Literature* [PR173 .G73]. You can also find bibliographies on-line here: <http://bubl.ac.uk/docs/bibliog/biggam/> And here: <http://www.oenewsletter.org/OENDB/index.php> Many of the articles you need will be available through JSTOR [<http://www.library.umass.edu/ndl/alpha/J>].

Thesis. Once you've read enough about the poem, you'll get a sense of what the major themes and issues are. These themes and issues usually revolve around a word, phrase, or image. That is your quarry! Translate the lines appropriate to your thesis.

Structure. Begin by quoting the relevant lines of your poem along with your translation. Then, give a *Kritikgeschichte*—that's a paragraph or two describing what critics have been saying about your poem. You may also want to describe other translations of the poem into English. Then, offer your own reading in the following paragraphs. As you make your argument, be sure to explain why you are translating the lines as you are.

Dictionaries. The Clark-Hall is a very good dictionary. You may also want to consult the *Dictionary of Old English* [DuBois CD-ROM 300]. Bosworth-Toller, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* [PE279 .B74].