Old English

Historical context

- 410 AD: last Roman legions leave
- 450 AD: Anglo-Saxons arrive
- Celts and Romano-Britons crushed

Literary context

- verse form steeped in oral tradition
- verse strongly rythmic
- Christian and pagan elements overlap

Social context

- loyalty to lord and kindred
- heroic ideal
- yearning for fame

Key works

- *Beowulf*
- *The Dream of the Rood*
- *Caedmon's Hymn*
- *The Ecclessiastical History of the English People*
- *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*

Key concepts

- Heptarchy
- wergeld
- mead hall

Key terms

- alliteration
- kenning
- ceasure