

## Teaching with the Dictionary of Old English: Sample Assignment

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### Assignment 2: Word in Context & Omeka Exhibit

#### Overview

This assignment will require you to do four things:

1. explore a word within an Old English passage
2. explore the meanings of that word through the Dictionary of Old English and DOE Corpus
3. explore visual representations of that word in the material culture of Anglo-Saxon England
4. create a digital exhibit that showcases your discoveries, using Omeka.net

#### Details

Select an Old English word from A to H (noun, verb, or adjective) occurring in an Old English passage you have studied. Look up the word in the Dictionary of Old English and in the DOE Corpus.

Then write a brief essay (750-1000 words) answering the following questions: What are the word's meanings and usage patterns? Is your Old English passage typical or atypical of these usage patterns? How do the word's senses and usage fit within the themes and rhetorical strategies of your selected passage and within the selected Old English text as a whole?

After writing your brief essay, read or watch the following resources:

- Miriam Posner, [Up and Running with Omeka.net](#) and [Creating an Omeka Exhibit](#)
- Omeka.net: [How to configure your site, add items, and create exhibits](#)

Once you understand how Omeka works, sign up for a free account at omeka.net and use the free software to create an Omeka exhibit that illustrates how your word is represented in the material culture of Anglo-Saxon England.

Your exhibit should have:

1. A narrative (your essay above) explaining the word's meanings, usage patterns, and significance within your chosen passage.
2. At least four images of Old English artifacts. You may find some good examples via the British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts, British Museum artifacts. Before using artifact images from a collection, check if you are allowed to use them.
3. A one- or two-sentence explanation, for each artifact, of its relevance to your chosen word.
4. Dublin Core metadata for at least the following Dublin Core fields:
  - a. Title
  - b. Subject
  - c. Description (one sentence)

- d. Source
- e. Publisher
- f. Date

### **Learning Outcomes**

After completing this assignment, students will

- Become familiar with basic Dictionary of Old English and Dictionary of Old English Corpus searches, and understand their importance as scholarly tools in rigorous readings of Old English texts
- Be aware of the diversity of texts in the Dictionary of Old English Corpus, beyond the canonical literary texts in undergraduate anthologies
- Practice close reading, using the meanings and usage of one Old English word as a window both into a specific text and into the wider Old English literary tradition
- Gain basic working knowledge of the content management software Omeka
- Gain basic understanding of metadata, specifically the Dublin Core metadata standard
- Cultivate visual and historical literacy by working with archival material
- Gain an interdisciplinary perspective by bringing material culture to bear on a literary passage and a word's semantic field