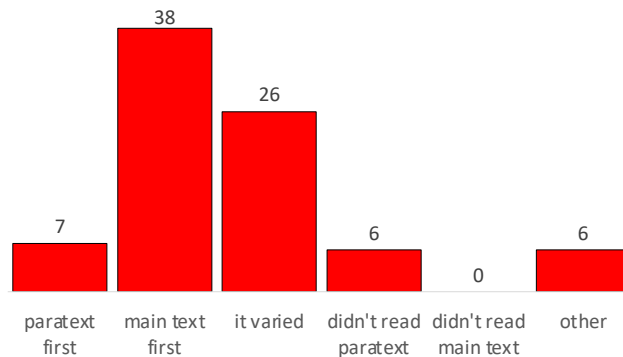


### Attendance Question

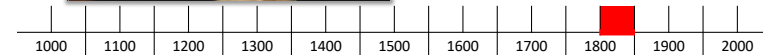
How did you read the paratext of Coleridge's  
"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" vis-à-vis the main text?



### Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822)



- descended from an aristocratic family; attended Eton and Oxford
- expelled for publishing pamphlet *The Necessity of Atheism* (1811)
- became well known in radical circles for *Queen Mab* (1813)
- married Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, of *Frankenstein* (1816)
- wrote his greatest works in exile from England in Italy
- died in a shipwreck at age 29 (NAEL D759-62)



### Shelley, *The Necessity of Atheism* (1811)

There is no God!

This negation must be understood solely to affect a creative Deity. The hypothesis of a pervading Spirit coeternal with the universe, remains unshaken.... [H]aving no proofs from [any] of the three sources of conviction [evidence of the senses, reason, and testimony of others], the mind cannot believe the existence of a creative God.... Every reflecting mind must acknowledge that there is no proof of the existence of a Deity.

- written by Shelley when he was a student at University College, Oxford; sent to all College Heads
- at the time, most Oxford dons were ordained by the Church of England; promotion of atheism was a punishable crime
- resulted in Shelley's expulsion from Oxford when he refused to acknowledge authorship
- updated in 1813 and appended to Shelley's epic poem *Queen Mab* (Wikipedia)

### Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry* (1840)

Poetry is not like reasoning, a power to be exerted according to the determination of the will. A man cannot say, "I will compose poetry." The greatest poet even cannot say it: for the mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness: this power arises from within, like the colour of a flower which fades and changes as it is developed, and the conscious portions of our natures are unprophetic either of its approach or its departure. Could this influence be durable in its original purity and force, it is impossible to predict the greatness of the results; but when composition begins, inspiration is already on the decline, and the most glorious poetry that has ever been communicated to the world is probably a feeble shadow of the original conception of the poet. (NAEL D876)

Percy Bysshe Shelley. *A Defence of Poetry*. 1840.

## 📖 Shelley, “Mont Blanc” (1817)

It was composed under the immediate impression of the deep and powerful feelings excited by the objects which it attempts to describe; and, as an undisciplined overflowing of the soul, rests its claim to approbation on an attempt to imitate the untameable wilderness and inaccessible solemnity from which those feelings sprang.

**Percy Bysshe Shelley. Preface. *History of a Six Weeks' Tour*. 1817.**

- originally appeared as the conclusion to the anonymously published travel narrative *History of a Six Weeks' Tour Through a Part of France, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland* (1816), written by Percy Bysshe Shelley and Mary Shelley following a tour of Chamonix
- subsequently appeared in the collections *Posthumous Poems* (1824) and *Poetical Works* (1840), both organized by Mary Shelley

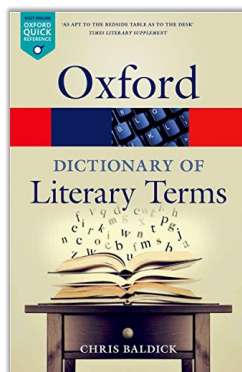
## Mont Blanc



Max572 (CC BY-SA 3.0)

- the highest mountain in the Alps and in western Europe, located near Italy and France border
- rises 4,805.59 m (15,766 ft) above sea level
- ownership has long been disputed between Italy vs France
- the most popular contemporary climbing route, the Goûter Route, takes two days to complete
- one nearby town, Chamonix, was the site of the first Winter Olympics in 1924 (*Wikipedia*)

## the sublime



- a quality of awesome grandeur in art or nature, surpassing the merely beautiful; loftiness of thought and feeling
- associated with terrifyingly impressive natural phenomenon, such as mountains, volcanoes, storms, the sea, etc.
- characterized by obscurity, vastness, power
- challenged the restraint of neoclassicism, paving the way for Romanticism (Baldick 346-47)

## hymn

A mighty fortress is our God,  
a bulwark never failing;  
our helper he, amid the flood  
of mortal ills prevailing.  
For still our ancient foe  
does seek to work us woe;  
his craft and power are great,  
and armed with cruel hate,  
on earth is not his equal.

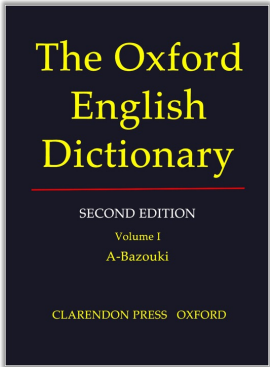
**Martin Luther, “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” (1529)**

Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound)  
That sav'd a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.

**John Newton, “Amazing Grace” (1779)**

- a song or lyric poem set to music in praise of a divine or venerated being
- sometimes given to a poem on an elevated subject, such as Shelley's “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty” (1816)
- sometimes praises an historical hero, such as McDiarmid's “First Hymn to Lenin” (1931)
- related to the *ode* in its encomiastic purpose and tone (Baldick 346-47)

awful



- **1.1.a.** That which inspires or instils fear, terror, or dread; terrible, dreadful; (from the 18th century often) extremely shocking or distressing; horrific.  
– earliest use ca. 1175
- **1.1.b.** Not pleasant or desirable; disagreeable, objectionable; bad. (Chiefly North American colloquial in early use.)  
– earliest use 1781 (*OED*)

 Shelley, “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty” (1818)



- x / x / x / x / x /
- |          |   |                   |
|----------|---|-------------------|
| <b>a</b> | The awful shadow of some unseen Power                 | iambic pentameter |
| <b>b</b> | Floats though unseen among us; visiting               | iambic pentameter |
| <b>b</b> | This various world with as inconstant wing            | iambic pentameter |
| <b>a</b> | As summer winds that creep from flower to flower;     | iambic pentameter |
| <b>a</b> | Like moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower, | iambic hexameter  |
| <b>c</b> | It visits with inconstant glance                      | iambic tetrameter |
| <b>c</b> | Each human heart and countenance;                     | iambic tetrameter |
| <b>b</b> | Like hues and harmonies of evening,                   | iambic pentameter |
| <b>d</b> | Like clouds in starlight widely spread,               | iambic tetrameter |
| <b>d</b> | Like memory of music fled,                            | iambic tetrameter |
| <b>e</b> | Like aught that for its grace may be                  | iambic tetrameter |
| <b>e</b> | Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery. (1-12)          | iambic pentameter |

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