

## *Old English/Anglo-Saxon Period*

Years: 449-1066

### Content:

- strong belief in fate
- juxtaposition of church and pagan worlds
- admiration of heroic warriors who prevail in battle
- express religious faith and give moral instruction through literature

### Style/Genres:

- oral tradition of literature
- poetry dominant genre
- unique verse form
  - caesura
  - alliteration
  - repetition
  - 4 beat rhythm

### Effect:

- Christianity helps literacy to spread
- introduces Roman alphabet to Britain
- oral tradition helps unite diverse peoples and their myths

### Historical Context:

- life centered around ancestral tribes or clans that ruled themselves
- at first the people were warriors from invading outlying areas: Angles, Saxons, Jutes, and Danes
- later they were agricultural

### Key Literature/Authors:

- *Beowulf*
- Bede
- *Exeter Book*