**Lanval Lesson Plan**

**Pre-class**: Transition from Anglo-Saxon, brief overview of Anglo-Norman language and culture, mention of term “courtly love”

**Class session:**

1. Ten-minute writing exercise with two questions:
   1. “Describe “romantic love” according to medieval literature (using the text we’ve read so far, *Lanval*.)”
   2. “Describe “romantic love” according to your own (contemporary) understanding.”
2. PowerPoint: factual information about medieval marriage; explanation of the idealized system of courtly love; explanation of chivalry and its development; images from manuscripts depicting tournaments, chivalric behavior, etc.
3. Group activity: class divided into three groups. Each one assigned a character (Lanval, Guinevere, fairy queen).
   1. Instructions: identify lines that describe their assigned character, copy out those lines, and then discuss the character.
4. Full-class discussion: beginning with character analyses, moving into discussions of gender roles, loyalty, lordship, courtly love, etc.

**Post-class:** Blog post assignment:

**Hindsight on modern romance:** After we’ve read and discussed Marie de France’s Lanval in the context of courtly love and chivalry, you know now that love as portrayed in medieval literature often does not resemble the realities of medieval love. Choose a contemporary genre of literature or film (romance, Young Adult, erotica, science fiction, fantasy, mystery, thriller), and think about how love and romance are portrayed in that genre. Imagine you’re a student of literature or film in the year 2500, studying the literature of the 21st century. What conclusions would you draw about love and romance based on the genre you’ve chosen to analyze? How does this match up with what you (the real you) know about love and romance in contemporary real life? (There’s no need to be personal, but you may use personal details.) 250-500 words.

**The Wanderer Lesson Plan**

1. PowerPoint: elegies; Anglo-Saxon poetics (alliteration, half-lines, caesura, kennings); sampling of Anglo-Saxon themes; manuscript information on *The Wanderer*; images of manuscript pages
2. Activity: “Round-the-room paraphrase”:
   1. Class in circle.
   2. Instructions: Read a few lines and stop where the sentence/ thought seems to end. Paraphrase those lines.
   3. Modeled by me with the first five lines.
   4. Acknowledge when you don’t know how to paraphrase / don’t understand. Ask questions on your own lines or after someone else has read and paraphrased. Add interpretation or offer possible insights when appropriate.

**Beowulf Lesson Plan**

**Day 1:**

1. Review basic plot details (lines 1-1250).
2. Introduction of themes: list five “aspects” to focus on (women’s roles, heroes, monsters, poetry and songs, boasting).
3. Open to class: any other aspects to add? (They added five: religion, armor, voyages, lineage, and I forgot the other one because I don’t have my list with me…)
4. Divided into five groups, each discussed another “aspect” (heroes, monsters, lineage, boasting, women’s roles). They chose religion, but I left that for Day 2.
5. Full-class discussion of one group’s findings (they chose to start with monsters, which led to a discussion of the “heroes” group as well).

**Day 2:**

1. Read for this class: lines 1251-2199.
2. PowerPoint: clarification of lineage and maps showing the places where Beowulf happens (since in previous session there had been some confusion). Images of Sutton Hoo artifacts and of burial mounds.
3. Exercise: kennings – finding in the text and creating their own.
4. Brief lecture on religious elements (pagan and Christian) in Beowulf, emphasizing fluidity with some historical context:
   1. Wyrd (fate) + God’s hand
   2. Pride + humility
   3. Unnatural creatures + descendants of Cain
   4. Death rites and burial practices
5. Group activity: four groups, each assigned one of the above aspects of religion in Beowulf.
   1. Instructions: read through the two sections we’ve read so far (Grendel and Grendel’s mother) and identify any passages that deal explicitly or implicitly with your assigned topic. Mark them and/or copy them out, and discuss their significance within the text as a whole.
6. Full-class discussion of groups’ findings.

**Day 3:**

1. Read for this class: through the end of the text.
2. Entire session as full-class discussion, drawing on all the topics discussed during groupwork of the last two sessions.