

Beowulf Unit

Daily Lesson Plan Differentiations

The following plans are intended only as suggestions. Please adapt them any way you choose.

Differentiation Suggestions:

1. Establish a writing component for each literature unit to help make it relevant for students. For example, read and discuss *Beowulf's* Boast, then segue into writing resumés and cover letters. A chart appears in this unit.
2. Compare *Beowulf* to other heroes. Bring in Joseph Campbell's 12 step discussion of the hero to determine whether *Beowulf* is a true hero. Use this to compare him to other heroes from books, movies, television, and real life. Here is a useful resource:
<http://www.skepticfiles.org/atheist2/hero.htm>
3. Another interesting activity is to have students complete the on-line Viking Game at BBC.co.uk. They learn about building longboats and can appreciate what *Beowulf's* journey might have been like. Of course, *Beowulf* was a Geat, not a Viking, but the time periods and practices are similar. See this link:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/vikings/launch_gms_viking_quest.shtml
4. A discussion of the women of *Beowulf* is also instructive. Have them discuss Wealtheow's position in society. She appears to be respected as the queen, but speaks very little. She does not appear in the Prentice Hall excerpt so you would need to bring in additional materials for this.
5. Have students point out and discuss passages in which it is clear that the monks who transcribed the tale added their own Christian viewpoint to the story. An example appears on page 41 in lines 90-103.
6. Further extension suggestions appear throughout the unit.

NB: Many websites are suggested here. Always read each one thoroughly and carefully before showing it to students to determine whether it is appropriate and engaging for your classes.

A Thematic Approach:

You may want to coordinate with a Social Studies teacher to create a more cross-curricular approach to this course. The themes are matched to the chronological time periods and can be worked in with the existing instructional calendar. Here are some suggested themes by unit:

Anglo-Saxons: war, political influence, religious influence

Medieval: Feudal structure to independence, new middle class

Restoration (17th and 18th Centuries): Return to normalcy, political stability, social upheaval, rule and chaos, social order, tradition

Romantic: “FIRE”: Freedom, Ideals/Imagination, Rejection of Rules, Escapism/Emotion

Victorian: industrialization, frightening change, escape to simpler time such as Arthurian legend

Modern: death, war, destruction, horror and atrocity, inhumanity of humans, uncertain future

Other cross curricular concepts: mandatory public schooling in 1881, voting rights for non-landowning men and women, religion v. science, religion v. government, separation of church and state, divine right.

The Chronological Approach:

Most teachers approach this course as chronological and teach the time periods in order. In this case, follow the instructional calendar provided.

Another approach is to teach the course backwards, beginning with the Modern and Postmodern periods and working backward in order to the Anglo-Saxons. A benefit to this approach is that students master skills and literary terms with more modern, easier-to-read material and are more prepared for the difficult pieces in the Anglo-Saxon, Medieval, and Renaissance periods. A downside to this approach is if your grade level uses common assessments and benchmarks that are tied to the literature. In this case, you would all have to adopt the same approach to the course. In a grade level with, for example, vocabulary-focused common assessments, this reverse chronological approach can work even with only one teacher using it.

Writing Assignments:

You may choose to incorporate a writing assignment with each unit. Here is a suggestion for an assignment that is relevant to each unit:

<i>Literature Component</i>	<i>Writing Component</i>	<i>AKS Covered</i>
Anglo-Saxons: Beowulf	Resumé, cover letter, college essay	AKS E 30-38, 41, B 7-18
Medieval: Canterbury Tales	Speech (Persuasive)	AKS A 1-4, E 40, B 7-18
Renaissance: Shakespeare	Literary Analysis	AKS E 35, 30-38, B 7-18
Restoration: Pope, Swift	Satire (creative piece)	AKS B 11-12, E 37, 41, B 7-18
Romantic: Poetry	Personal Narrative	AKS E 30-39, B 7-18
Victorian: Poetry	Explication	AKS A 1-4, B 7-12, E 31&42
20 th Century	Journalism piece	AKS D 26-29, E 30-38, B 7-18
Class Novel	Interview, interview skills	AKS A 5&6, B 7-18
British History and Culture	Research	AKS E 30-38, 42-45, G 52, B 7-18

AKS E 30-38 are general Writing AKS and will be applied throughout the course.

Timing of Writing Assignments:

If you choose to use a long-term assignment such as the Senior Memory Book, it is best to introduce it in the first two weeks.

It is also best to begin the research project early. This will allow for plenty of research time as well as drafts, conferences, and revisions.

Senior Language Arts
Unit 1: *Beowulf and the Anglo-Saxons*
Day 1

This lesson and those that follow are intended to be suggestions, not prescriptions. Please change or adapt them as you feel will best benefit your students.

Materials: Textbook, other materials depending on product in step 4.

Activities:

1. Have students look at page 1 of the textbook. Explain that this text incorporates the Anglo-Saxon and Medieval history in this section, so they will need to use this information for up to 12 weeks. They should take good notes and review the information often.
2. Divide students into groups. There are 10 sections of the history material (each has a blue title). You may choose to have more than 10 groups and subdivide the sections on pages 8 – 10 as they are longer than the others.
3. Assign a section of the history to each of the groups and have students read carefully. It is best to point out that minor details such as dates are usually less important on the tests and the final exam than major concepts, so encourage them to notice that the area now known as Britain was repeatedly invaded over hundreds of years and interpret what that might have meant for its population rather than simply writing down the dates of the invasions.
4. Have each group create a product to share their information with the class. You may choose to use notes to teach them about good note-taking skills (see www.rdale.k12.mn.us/.../web_folders/tyler_livingston/cues%20for%20taking%20double-column%20notes.ppt for a useful PowerPoint on Cornell Notes). Other options include: skits, newspaper articles, TV news broadcasts, or an informal reporting out.
5. Have students look at pages 14, 15, 36, and 37. It is best if the teacher guides the students through this material as it is fairly technical. Have students take notes. You may need to complete this tomorrow if time is an issue. Page 15 does not explain each type of kenning, but you may want to supplement this. The textbook describes compound kennings only, but there are many prepositional and possessive kennings in the poem “Beowulf.” See <http://english.basd.k12.wi.us/mocarski/englishliterature/Lit1/kennings.html> for a good explanation with examples. Show students examples (choose them before class) immediately to reinforce the information. There are many examples in the first section of “Beowulf.”

Assessment: Give a daily grade for their products in step 4. Assess whether they were thorough, critical thinkers and whether they gathered all of the relevant information.

Extension/Differentiation: Ideas are provided on pages 4, 5, and 12 of the textbook. Also see this unit for a “Hero Reaction Guide” that students can complete and use to discuss their expectations about “Beowulf.”

Senior Language Arts
Unit 1: *Beowulf and the Anglo-Saxons*
Day 2

Materials: Textbook, overhead if you choose to use it in steps 4 and 5.

Activities:

1. Complete step 5 from yesterday if necessary. Review the material if completed yesterday. A review suggestion is to have students create kennings about themselves and share them. Students can also create alliterative descriptions of themselves or each other.
2. Read aloud “The Wrath of Grendel” on pages 39-41. Stop at each indentation (for example, read lines 1-29) and then stop and discuss. Start with basic plot, then discuss what is clearly Anglo-Saxon (such as the battle hall in line 4) and what was added by the Christian monks (such as the creation story in lines 6-13). Ask students questions as you move through the piece, such as “How is Grendel characterized?” and “What does it mean that he is compared to Cain?”
3. Stop when you have 20 minutes left in class.
4. Break students into groups and have them find examples of the literary terms on page 15. Remind students that page 15 does not contain all of the types of kennings. Refer them to their notes.
5. Have groups report out to the class. Tell them whether their examples are accurate or not.

Assessment: Observe and evaluate students. You may choose to institute short pop quizzes every few days to be sure that students review the material at home. You may choose to give a bonus question if you find that the material is difficult for students.

Homework: Students often find reading most of this curriculum at home very difficult. You may choose to use pop quizzes to motivate students to study their notes and review the material instead, though a higher-level class may be comfortable reading and understanding the pieces at home. You can then base class discussion around their reading to draw out the deeper significance of the passages they read.

An effective homework piece is having students complete the writing assignment that you give with this unit as homework. Set due dates for prewriting, drafts, revisions, and the final copy early and remind students often. Establish writing time in class for working, conferencing, and peer editing. You may use the resume and cover letter suggestion from this unit, or a literary analysis suggestion is provided on page 61 of the textbook (see page 63 for peer editing suggestions). If you choose a creative piece, see this unit for an assignment sheet on writing your own epic.

Extension/Differentiation: Suggestions are provided on almost each page of the textbook for this unit. You may also choose to use the novel *Grendel* as an extension activity. Page 62 of the textbook provides grammar and style activities that go with the poem.

Senior Language Arts
Unit 1: *Beowulf and the Anglo-Saxons*
Days 3 – end of “Beowulf” discussion

Materials: Textbook and appropriate items for the activities that you choose for each day.

Activities:

1. Review material from the previous day each day. Use a variety of methods such as quizzes, the game “Around the World,” “Jeopardy,” or give 5 minutes to answer a discussion question in a journal or writer’s notebook.
2. It will take a good deal of time to get through “Beowulf.” Some classes will need more time than others. It is best not to rush them too much and overwhelm them, but they also will become bored quickly if the class moves too slowly. Use pop quizzes and class discussion to assess whether students need a faster or slower pace.

Read a section or two each day, discuss it, and then add a group activity to keep students interested and motivated. Suggestions include:

- a. Discuss the “Hero Reaction Guide” provided in this unit. Have students share and debate their answers.
- b. Evaluate whether Beowulf is an Epic Hero. The characteristics are: Glorified, On a quest, Ethical, Strong. (Mnemonic acronym: GOES, as in “Beowulf GOES to fight Grendel without being asked.”) Divide the class into 4 groups – one for each characteristic – and have them determine whether he fits the characteristics. It is instructive to do this 3 times: after the battle with Grendel, after the battle with Grendel’s mother, and after the battle with the dragon. Students should see that Beowulf starts taking money for his battles and that he fights the dragon for a much less ethical reason than he fights Grendel.
- c. You may also have them compare the version of the story in *Grendel* by John Gardner to see whether, from his own perspective, Grendel is an epic hero.
- d. Discuss whether Beowulf fulfills the Anglo-Saxon Earthly Virtues. They are: Bravery, Loyalty, Generosity, Friendship (mnemonic: **Brit Lit is Good Fun.**)
- e. Discuss whether Wiglaf is an Epic Hero and fulfills the Anglo-Saxon Earthly Virtues.
- f. Find additional examples of kennings, alliteration, assonance, and caesura in later sections of the poem.
- g. Have students choose famous figures from history or the present and decide whether they could be considered Epic Heroes or whether they fulfill the Anglo-Saxon Earthly Virtues. Students are often very creative with this and discuss people from Abraham Lincoln to 50 Cent.
- h. Use fine art transparencies in the ancillary materials to reinforce learning.

Unit Extensions:

1. Find a section of Beowulf in Old English with a translation (see <http://rpo.library.utoronto.ca/poem/19.html>) and have students assess the differences between the original version and the excerpt in the book, especially in terms of syntax, ease of reading, perspective, etc. Have students discuss why the book incorporates the excerpt it does (likely answers: plot, perspective on Beowulf, contributions by monks).
2. Discuss whether students still agree with the answers on the “Hero Reaction Guide” after reading “Beowulf.”
3. Compare “Beowulf” to epics that students have read previously such as “The Odyssey,” “The Iliad,” or “The Aeneid.”
4. See <http://archive.salon.com/books/feature/2000/04/20/beowulf/index.html> for an interesting and humorous article comparing Beowulf to a WWE wrestler named “Stone Cold” Steve Austin. Read this piece before showing it to students as it will not interest all classes. Students may choose to create an imaginary fight for Beowulf with a favorite athlete in the style of this article. NOTE: You may choose to delete the next-to-last sentence before handing the article to students.
5. See http://www.spencer.k12.wi.us/Riordan/worldly_english_links.htm for further ideas.

Review suggestions in preparation for a test:

1. “Beowulf” charades
2. “Around the World”
3. Hand back and review pop quizzes. Have students use their old quizzes to test each other.
4. Have students create discussion questions and pose them to the rest of the class.
5. Find images (use Google images search) for pictures relevant to the poem (long boats, monsters, friends, loyalty, soldiers, etc.) and put them on transparencies. Have students guess and discuss how they relate to the text. 10-15 is a good number.

Ending the “Beowulf” Unit:

1. Assess through a major test.
2. You may have done many small in class projects throughout the unit, so you may choose not to do an additional creative project. If you do, however, students often enjoy writing their own epics. An assignment sheet appears in this unit.
3. Have students peer edit and turn in the writing assignment that you chose for this unit.

Where to go from here:

1. Assess how many days remain in the 9 week period and plan accordingly.
2. “The Seafarer” appears on page 17 of the textbook. Have students read it and apply the skills that they learned from reading “Beowulf” to understanding it.
 - a. Is the narrator an epic hero?
 - b. Compare the discussion of fate in this poem with that in “Beowulf.” The Anglo-Saxons believed in fate rather than divine intervention and did not believe in an afterlife. In a class discussion or a writing activity, have students evaluate the Anglo-Saxon view of fate using these two poems as examples. See the extension activity on page 18.
 - c. See enrichment activities on page 17.
3. “The Wanderer” appears on page 21 with similar extension activities provided in the textbook.
4. “The Wife’s Lament” appears on page 25.

Hero Reaction Guide

Name: _____

In this unit, we will study the heroic tradition. The following statements are about heroes. Think about each one and indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement. Provide a brief reason or example to support your answer.

1. I know exactly what a hero is. _____
2. Everyone has the potential to be a hero. _____
3. There are no heroes left in the world. _____
4. I know someone personally whom I consider a hero. _____
5. I think that we need heroes. _____
6. I like movies and television shows about heroes. _____
7. A person can do heroic things and still not be a hero. _____
8. Everyone and every culture can agree on the qualities that make a hero. _____
9. All heroes must struggle against great odds. _____
10. All heroes must be victorious over all obstacles. _____
11. A hero must use violence to achieve his/her goals. _____
12. Men are more likely to be heroes than women. _____
13. Physical strength is the most important type of strength for a hero. _____
14. I have done something heroic. _____
15. People envy heroes. _____
16. I hope to be a hero someday. _____
17. It is stupid to risk your life for obscure ideals and other people. _____
18. Anger gets in the way of heroic action. _____
19. Animals can be heroes. _____
20. It is okay for a hero to use any means to achieve his/her goal. _____

Literary Terms Practice Sheet

NAME: _____

Alliteration: _____

...hoping to kill anyone he could trap on this trip to high Herot.

...the struggling great bodies beating at its beautiful walls ...

...gold-covered boards grating as Grendel and Beowulf battled across them.

So Hrothgar's men lived happy in his hall till the monster stirred ... and made his home in a hell not Hell but earth.

Caesura: _____

... Grendel went up to Herot, wondering what the warriors would do in that hall when their drinking was done.

I've heard that my people, peasants working in the fields, have seen a pair of such fiends wandering in the moors and marshes, giant monsters living in those desert lands.

...smashed them unknowing in their beds and ran out with their bodies, the blood dripping behind him, back to his lair ...

...to glow across the land and light it; the corners of the earth were made lovely with trees and leaves, made quick with life ...

Assonance: _____

... lying in waiting, hidden in mist, invisibly following them

... And wondering what the bravest of warriors could do. And sometimes they sacrificed to the old stone gods, made heathen vows, hoping for Hell's support ...

... sung of the ancient beginnings of us all, recalling the Almighty making the earth ...

...and again twisted gold, heaped-up ancient treasure, will reward you for the battle you win!

Kennings: _____

Check the box to indicate the type of each kenning below.

	Comp	Prep	Poss		Comp	Prep	Poss
Her evil skin				Warm words			
She-wolf				Lit in the sky			
Water's heat				Greybeards			
Water witch				Covered with glory			
Its fierce song				Giver of rings			
Brown with dried blood				God's hatred			

Remember, if it's not a metaphor, it's not a kenning – Grendel really is his mother's only son, so "his mother's only son" is not a kenning.

1. What were the Celts like?
2. What group took over after the Romans left Britain?
3. What benefit did the Christian church bring to the English people?
4. How did the Vikings treat English churches and villages when they invaded?
5. Why was Alfred the Great considered a national hero?
6. What was feudalism, the system brought by William the Conqueror from Normandy (France)? (See the picture on page 7.)
7. Who was Thomas Becket? How did he die?
8. How did the Magna Carta affect King John?
9. Who ended the Wars of the Roses and how?
10. How did the plague help end feudalism?
11. What is the poem "Beowulf" about?
12. What ideas appear in "Beowulf" because of the 300+ year gap between when it was composed and when it was written down?
13. Who was Geoffrey Chaucer?
14. What were most plays about during the Medieval Period?
15. What cool thing did Gutenberg invent?
16. When does *The Canterbury Tales* refer to Thomas Becket?
17. What is *The Canterbury Tales* about?
18. What is a Medieval Romance about? (Hint: not love.)
19. Whom is one of the most popular series of ballads about?
20. Where did England get its name (from what group of people)?

Page 15:

1. Scops were: _____.
2. Anglo-Saxons had a _____ view of the world.
3. _____ dominated Anglo-Saxon society.
4. Caesura:
5. Assonance:
6. Alliteration:
7. Kenning:
 - a. Compound:
 - b. Prepositional:
 - c. Possessive:

Page 37:

1. Epic:
2. Epic Hero: Glorified, On a quest, Ethical, Strong. GOES.
3. Anglo-Saxon earthly virtues: Bravery, Loyalty, Generosity, Friendship. British Lit is Good Fun.

Page 39:

1. Anglo-Saxons believed that life was ruled by _____.
2. Missionaries taught them that _____ were at the center of creation.

Test Review Material for Flashcards

What were the Celts like?

Farmers and hunters, lived in fierce clans

What benefit did the Christian church bring to the English people?

Promoted peace and unified people

How did the Vikings treat English churches and villages when they invaded?

Sacked and plundered, burned villages and killed villagers

Why was Alfred the Great considered a national hero?

Defended against Danish invasion, maintained civilization, and encouraged learning

What was feudalism, the system brought by William the Conqueror from Normandy (France)?

Hierarchy of land control – kings-nobles-knights-serfs

Who were the scop? (pronounced shopes)

Bards/storytellers

How did Anglo-Saxons view the world?

Fatalistic, grim

What is caesura?

Alliteration with a pause – usually a comma or semi-colon

What is assonance?

Repetition of vowel sounds – can be at beginning or middle of words

What is alliteration?

Repetition of consonant sounds at beginning of words

What are kennings?

metaphors

What is an epic?

Long poem – tells a story – has a hero

What 4 qualities does an Epic Hero have to have?

Glorified, On a quest, Ethical, Strong (GOES)

What are the 4 Anglo-Saxon earthly virtues?

Bravery, Loyalty, Generosity, Friendship

Did Anglo-Saxons believe that life was ruled by fate or God?

fate

What prompts Beowulf to help Hrothgar by defeating Grendel? (Trick question)

Nothing – he comes of his own accord – wants to help

What is unrealistic about Beowulf's trip to the lair?

He sinks for hours through the water

Why does Beowulf cut off Grendel's head?

Final revenge

Give 1 or 2 contradictions in the poem.

He kills 30 men then 15, there are 14 Geats, one is eaten by G, then there are 14 again

What is Grendel unable to touch?

Hrothgar's throne

Whom did the Danes ask for help?

Old stone gods (pre-Christian)

Why will Beowulf use weapons against the dragon when he hasn't used them before?

It is an impossible task, plus he is old now

What "fails" Beowulf in each battle?

weapons

How does Wiglaf convince the Geats to help Beowulf?

Reminds them of favors and gifts from Beowulf

What are some symbols and images added by Christian monks after the poem was composed?

Cain and Abel, H's throne protected by God, Wiglaf praises God, Creation in part 1, light shining down (?)

What honor does Beowulf give Wiglaf?

He'll be next King of Geats

What does Beowulf say that indicates the decline of Anglo-Saxon society?

Wiglaf is the last of "our far-flung family"

What do the Geats put in Beowulf's tower?

Dragon's treasure

What does the end of the poem indicate about how this story was started and spread?

Geats remembering Beowulf share story, tell about his bravery

What is the purpose of Beowulf's boast?

Prove his strength and show respect for Hrothgar

What 2 things does G's comparison to Cain indicate?

Both are murderers and exiled from the community

Extra Credit: What effect did Edgetho have on Beowulf's decision to help Hrothgar?

Beowulf Essay Topics

1. How does Beowulf fit the definition of an epic? Be sure to define an epic, and mention Beowulf's context in Anglo-Saxon society, the Anglo-Saxon earthly virtues and the characteristics of an epic hero.
2. Describe the influence of outside forces on this poem. Be sure to include Christians, Pagans, Scops, Monks, Animism and/or Scandinavian folk tales. Be sure to point out any contradictions that you see within the poem.
3. Choose a dichotomy that is present throughout the poem and explain its significance to each of the three battles. An example is good/evil – clearly, Beowulf fights for good and Grendel, his mother and the dragon for evil. Are you sure that the dragon really fights for evil? What symbols, allusions and images connect Beowulf with good and his opponents with evil? Other ideas are: light/dark, heaven/hell, powerful/weak, brave/fearful.

Dichotomy:
Opposites on the same spectrum

Examples:
Light/dark
Male/female
Good/evil
Beowulf/Grendel

Non-examples:
Apples/oranges
BMW/Mercedes
School/fun
Beowulf/Cain

Choose 5 dichotomies present in Beowulf and find 2+ examples for each.

SAMPLE:

Good/evil

- 1. People: Cain/Abel & Beowulf/Grendel**
- 2. Places: Herot/Grendel's lair & Herot/exile (moors, marshes)**

Light/dark

- 1. Line 1: "down in the darkness" (Grendel)**
Line 9: "setting the sun and moon to glow" (God)
- 2. Line 41: "with the sun's first light" (Danes)**
Line 74: "shadow of death" (Grendel)

SUGGESTIONS:

Happiness/sadness

joy/misery

Hero/criminal

Sound/silence

Community/exile

Dichotomy Test Planner

Choose a dichotomy, such as light/dark or good/evil. Try to be original.

List 3 – 5 examples of your dichotomy here. Some examples should be simple, like the first example, and some should be more complex, like the second example:

Good/evil

1. **People: Cain/Abel & Beowulf/Grendel**
2. **Places: Herot/Grendel's lair & Herot/exile (moors, marshes)**

Light/dark

1. **Line 1: "down in the darkness" (Grendel)**
Line 9: "setting the sun and moon to glow" (God)
2. **Line 41: "with the sun's first light" (Danes)**
Line 74: "shadow of death" (Grendel)

What is the significance of your dichotomy to the story as a whole? Does it characterize the Epic Hero? Does it show which side is good and which is evil? Does it help the reader understand the plot or characters in a new way? Does it reinforce Christianity or Animism throughout the poem?

Sample Beowulf Essay: Topic 3

Dichotomy: Heaven/Hell (*No, you may NOT use this one!*)

The dichotomy of Heaven and Hell is found throughout the poem *Beowulf*. It reflects the blending of cultures faced by the Anglo-Saxons as well as the influence of Christian monks on an essentially Pagan poem. It further serves to characterize Grendel, Beowulf, the Geats and the Danes.

In “The Wrath of Grendel”, the monster is described as living in “darkness”, often a metaphor for Hell. He is also separated from the society of warriors at Herot. This is significant for two reasons. First, it allies him with the Biblical character of Cain, who was exiled as a murderer and apparently marked by God physically. Grendel, too, is physically different from the Danes, and it is because of his crimes that he cannot be part of their community. This suggests that Grendel is exiled from Heaven as Cain was exiled from Eden, or the presence of God and man. The second way in which Grendel’s aloneness is significant is that the Hebrew version of Hell, Sheol, is really defined as a cold, dark place where the dead are separated from God and from the living. This relates directly to Grendel’s marsh area, which is described as “a hell, not Hell but Earth”. His lair is described in “The Monster’s Lair” as deep down, dark and having a hellish light around it. It is said to be so evil that it makes Heaven weep. Clearly, the poem establishes that Grendel is not going to enter Heaven. He is associated with “demons” and “fiends”, all Hellish creatures that are in eternal opposition to God and therefore excluded from Heaven. A kenning used to describe Grendel later in this part is “hell-forged hands”, suggesting that he was created in Hell. Grendel is said never to touch Hrothgar’s throne because it is protected by God. Grendel cannot know God’s love, so he is permanently exiled from Christian society according to the poem.

It is not just Grendel who is characterized through the dichotomy of Heaven and Hell. When Grendel attacks the Danes, they turn to God for help. When the attacks continue, they turn to the old stone gods, “hoping for Hell’s support”. This was probably added by the Christian monks to demonstrate the link between Paganism and Hell; their additions to *Beowulf* often emphasize the superiority of Christianity as they saw it. The poem then gives a stern warning to those who do not trust God when trouble strikes, indicating that they will remain separated from God and spend the afterlife in Hell. The Geats are also shown focusing on Heaven after Beowulf’s death as they glorify him, using words like “praise” and “glory”. They seem to believe that he is in Heaven, whereas he most likely would not really have been Christian.

Beowulf, too, is characterized in terms of Heaven and Hell. When he kills Grendel’s mother, a light, as bright as “Heaven’s own candle” (the sun), shines on him from no apparent source. This suggests that God blesses his destruction of the monster. This also happens after he and Wiglaf have won the treasure from the Dragon. The battle with the dragon consists of Beowulf coming through fire and flames that burn him, much like the common Christian concept of Hell. Later, as he is dying after the battle with the Dragon, he thanks God for the treasure, calling him the “Father in Heaven”, reminding readers that Beowulf will soon die and enter Heaven. As Beowulf is dying, Wiglaf sprinkles him with water, perhaps signifying baptism. When Beowulf dies, the poem says that his soul went to “glory” and was “on high”, both metaphors for Heaven. By sending Beowulf to Heaven when he dies, the monks who transcribed the poem are sending a message to their audience that Heaven awaits those who believe and live accordingly.

TIPS:

- Leave blank lines after your TS and after each paragraph so that you can go back and add information where it fits best.
- Be sure to support everything you say with CD. You don't have to memorize quotations, but be prepared with plenty of details.
- Organize your ideas into a few body paragraphs, and reflect that in your introduction. Go back and add to your intro. if necessary as you write.
- Proofread! Grammar counts!
- Flip back through the poem/your notes. Get all of the references you can. Try to cover most or all of the poem – don't just use examples from one section!

Epic Hero Group Activity

GROUP NAMES:

1. What is the greatest **STRENGTH** of each group member? It can be physical strength, or emotional or spiritual strength ...
2. The last time each of us was **ETHICAL** was ...
3. If we were all going on a **QUEST**, we would want to go to ... Because ...
4. If we were going to be **GLORIFIED**, we would all want ...
5. An **EPIC HERO** (like Beowulf) has to have all 4 characteristics above: **STRONG**, **ETHICAL**, on a **QUEST** and must be **GLORIFIED**. Examples are Superman and President Bush (this is definitely open for debate, but many people feel this way about him)! Choose a modern person and demonstrate how (s)he is an epic hero. My example:
Usher
 - a. **STRONG**: Have you seen how much he works out? He must be strong.
 - b. **ETHICAL**: He gives to charity and appears at charity events.
 - c. On a **QUEST**: He said he wants to have more multi-platinum albums, so that is his quest.
 - d. **GLORIFIED**: His fans glorify him, and he also glorifies himself with clothing and jewelry.

Your example:

- a. **STRONG**:
- b. **ETHICAL**:
- c. **QUEST**:
- d. **GLORIFIED**:

The Epic Poem Project

DUE DATE:

1. Choose a hero. You can be your own hero, or you may choose a real person, but you must give your hero superhuman qualities like Beowulf. Your hero must meet all 4 criteria for an epic hero by the end and display the 4 Anglo-Saxon earthly virtues.
2. Beowulf is a symbol - he has a place in the epic, but also in the religion behind the epic. You should base your epic on a religious or philosophical world view and develop characters who are symbolic within that world view. Just as Beowulf (messiah), Grendel (devil) and Hrothgar and the Danes (church) are symbolic of Christian figures, your hero must represent his cultural and spiritual background. You can use your own religion or philosophy of life, or you may create one, but either way you must assume that I know nothing about it and attach a $\frac{1}{2}$ page explanation of it and its use in your epic at the end of your project.
3. Your epic should have 5 parts similar in length to those in Beowulf. They should have descriptive titles as do those in Beowulf. There is no maximum length, only minimum - about 50 lines of a similar length to those in the book.
4. Your epic must contain at least 3 examples EACH of alliteration, assonance, caesura and kenning. You MUST highlight them.
5. You should include a cover page with illustrations and your title.
6. Any strong resemblance to another person's work will result in a zero.

* In the event of uneven numbers, a group of three may be formed or one person may work alone. In either case, each person must write 2 parts of an epic poem, and the project must contain all of the other requirements.

Here are a few ideas:

- Beowulf put everyone else first, such as when he came to help Hrothgar without being asked.
- Appearance may be deceiving and people may change - remember when Hrothgar and his men change religion.
- Beowulf uses details and exaggeration to get your attention.
- Beowulf is divided into 3 main parts - one for each of Beowulf's three battles.
- In Beowulf, there is a clear good side and evil side, and the good side is under attack. This inspires people to side with the hero.

The Epic Poem Project:
Grading Rubric

- 5 parts similar in length to Beowulf that fit the definition of an epic.

1 2 3 4 5

- $\frac{1}{2}$ page explanation of worldview is attached and the hero clearly fits and represents this worldview throughout the poem.

1 2 3 4 5

- Contains all literary elements: Alliteration, Assonance, Kenning, Caesura (3 of each, highlighted).

1 2 3 4 5

- Cover page with illustrations is present, as are descriptive titles for each part.

1 2 3 4 5

- Hero meets requirements (4 characteristics of an Epic Hero and 4 Anglo-Saxon earthly virtues).

1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL _____
X4
 _____/100

BONUS: You may only receive bonus once!

_____ Performed musically for the class

_____ Created additional visuals

_____ Created and presented dramatic version to the class

_____ Other (pre-approved): _____

	Grendel	G's Mother	Dragon
Glorified			
On a quest			
Ethical			
Strong			
Bravery			
Loyalty			
Generosity			
Friendship			

Kennings:

Compound (“raven-haired”)

Possessive (“heaven’s high arch”) (“her evil skin”)

Prepositional (“frozen with fear”) (“winters of grief”) (“running to his doom”)

What type of kenning is this? Check the correct box.

KENNING	Compound	Possessive	Prepositional
Greedy she wolf			
Host of sea beasts			
Sea beasts			
Battle hall			
Geats’ proud prince			
Water’s heat			
Water witch			
Ring-marked blade			
Strongest of soldiers			
Brown with dried blood			
Ocean’s face			
Her only son			
Ruler of the Heavens			
Heaven’s own candle			
Heathen’s only hope			
Lit in the sky			
Blessed with their magic			
The best of kings			
Heat of the dragon’s breath			
Hurrying to its fate			
Edgetho’s quarrel			
The harp’s rejoicing call			
His last human supper			
His evil steps			
Shepherd of evil			
Guardian of crime			
Greybeards			
Infamous killer			
Wakeful sleeper			
Death’s cold grip			

Beowulf Extra Credit!

This extra credit is good for up to 6 points on the Beowulf test.

Here's what you do:

Create 1 original kenning (that means you wrote it yourself - it's not from the book or a classmate) per type of kenning. Provide a translation for each (your kenning is a metaphor for something ... tell me what that something is).

Type of Kenning:	Compound	Prepositional	Possessive
Your kenning here:			
Translation:			

You must do one per type; it's all three or nothing at all. If you want double bonus, you may do this twice for all 6 points:

Type of Kenning:	Compound	Prepositional	Possessive
Your kenning here:			
Translation:			

Beowulf Extra Credit!

This extra credit is good for up to 6 points on the Beowulf test.

Here's what you do:

Create 1 original kenning (that means you wrote it yourself - it's not from the book or a classmate) per type of kenning. Provide a translation for each (your kenning is a metaphor for something ... tell me what that something is).

Type of Kenning:	Compound	Prepositional	Possessive
Your kenning here:			
Translation:			

You must do one per type; it's all three or nothing at all. If you want double bonus, you may do this twice for all 6 points:

Type of Kenning:	Compound	Prepositional	Possessive
Your kenning here:			
Translation:			

Honors Beowulf Project

1. Choose 3 themes from Beowulf. Ideas to get you started include reversal, heroism, humility, ethics, and questioning.
2. Write about each theme, citing examples from the text. Be detailed, thorough and specific. You may write 2+ paragraphs per theme, or you may create an outline for each. A good rule of thumb is 10+ examples per theme with explanations of their significance. Cover the entire text. See example on reverse (Note: example drawn from full version of poem with different line numbers).
3. Attach a visual to each theme. You may draw pictures, create a mix CD with 1 corresponding track per theme (and a print-out of edited & relevant lyrics), develop a creative performance for the class, or an idea of your own (run it by me first).
4. Choose 2 allusions from the epic and complete steps 2 & 3 for each.
5. Choose 1 character (excluding Beowulf) that you think is central to the story and identify his or her main trait. Ideas include Wiglaf or Welthow. Complete steps 2 & 3 for this character.
6. Any strong resemblance to someone else's work will result in a zero on at least that portion of the assignment.

Checklist & Due Dates:

- | | |
|----------------|------|
| 1. Outline | DUE: |
| 2. Rough Draft | DUE: |
| 3. Final Draft | DUE: |

Sample Outline Format

(no, you may not use this as one of your themes)

THEME: Judgment

Line #	KEY WORD(S)	RELATION TO THEME
21	banished ... punished	God judges Grendel as He did Cain, Grendel = murderer = judges by God
28	again defeated	God's judgment = repeated defeat
35	thoughts quick as claws	Grendel doesn't judge like humans/God - animalistic, irrational
65	sung in men's ears	men re-tell story, judge Grendel evil
100	no solace	God judges those who turn from Him
130	bravely... welcome	Wulfgar judges that Beowulf can see Hrothgar while wearing armor (Beowulf is important/respected)
169	Higlac would think	B fears being judges unworthy
204	bought the end	Hrothgar does not judge Edgetho
240	you ... fool	Unferth misjudges Beowulf
370	pleased with words	Welthow judges Beowulf well
435	flooded with fear	Reader judges Grendel - weak
542	warrior seemed worthier	Men judge Beowulf honorably
556	stag with great horns	deer judge lair too evil to enter
630	God gave judgment	God is on B's side
660	repaid	B fulfils God's judgment against Grendel & his mother
668	I would ...	B judges self, says not weak to use weapons
747	none came	reader judges Geats for not helping B
751	a good man	Wiglaf judged well
764	boasting	Wiglaf judges Geats - weak, scared
808	lead my people	B judges Wiglaf - worthy to rule
832	his greatness	Geats judge B's life, he was great

Honors Epic Project: Grading Rubric

• Covers entire text and all parts of assignment.	1	2	3	4	5
• Depth of thought is evident (Bloom's Taxonomy).	1	2	3	4	5
• Thorough development of each piece.	1	2	3	4	5
• Sufficient original detail supports each piece.	1	2	3	4	5
• Visuals are relevant and support each piece.	1	2	3	4	5
				TOTAL	_____
				X4	_____
					_____/100

Multi-Genre Beowulf Project

You may choose any of the options below for this assignment.

Each assignment is designed to be individual work. If you choose to work with a partner, you must complete the requirements for each person. Partners may turn in work together under one title page with the same illustrations. They may connect their pieces however they choose. See the end of the assignment for ideas. Some dialogue may overlap, but it should be very minor and the examples of literary elements should be different for each person.

There will be some time to work in class, but you will also have to do some work on your own. We have Lab A101 on Thursday Jan. 11 and Jan. 18 for half of the block.

Due date: Monday, 22 January

Beowulf: The Epic

7. Choose a hero. You can be your own hero, or you may choose a real person, but you must give your hero superhuman qualities like Beowulf. Your hero must meet all 4 criteria for an epic hero by the end and display the 4 Anglo-Saxon earthly virtues.
8. Beowulf is a symbol - he has a place in the epic, but also in the religion behind the epic. You should base your epic on a religious or philosophical world view and develop characters who are symbolic within that world view. Just as Beowulf (messiah), Grendel (devil) and Hrothgar and the Danes (church) are symbolic of Christian figures, your hero must represent his cultural and spiritual background. You can use your own religion or philosophy of life, or you may create one, but either way you must assume that I know nothing about it and attach a $\frac{1}{2}$ page explanation of it and its use in your epic at the end of your project.
9. Your epic should have 4 parts that have descriptive titles as do those in Beowulf. There is no maximum length, only minimum - about 50 lines of a similar length to those in the book.
10. Your epic must contain at least 3 examples EACH of alliteration, assonance, caesura and kenning (1 of each type). You MUST highlight them.
11. You should include a cover page with illustrations and your title.

EC: Add a description of one of the characters using an allusion like the section that describes Grendel in terms of Cain. Show what these 2 characters have in

common (Cain and Grendel, for example, are both murderers and exiles). This may be 20 - 30 lines instead of 50.

Grendel: A New View

1. Read an on-line summary of John Gardner's novel *Grendel* and write a 1 paragraph analysis of the main idea of the book.
2. Read the attached excerpt and write a 1 paragraph response to it. Include ideas such as how Grendel appears differently in the novel as opposed to the poem, how violence and anger affect Grendel, how the idea of a hero is different in the novel, and what motivates Grendel to act the way he does. You may instead choose to write an outline or notes.
3. Write your own short story titled *Grendel*. It should focus on one scene between Grendel and another character from the poem *Beowulf*, such as Beowulf or Hrothgar. You must write one full scene (at least 1 ½ typed, double-spaced pages) that shows a different view of Grendel and why he acts the way he does. Choose a scene from *Beowulf* to write from Grendel's perspective, for example.
4. You should include a title page with illustrations.
5. Your dialogue must contain at least 3 examples EACH of alliteration, assonance, Caesura and kenning (1 of each type). You MUST highlight them.

EC: Add a third character to your story. This will make it closer to 2 pages than 1 ½. Be sure that this character is important – do not just have him come in, say a few lines, and leave. His presence should reveal something new about your main character.

The Herot Journal-Constitution

1. Create a newspaper for a day in Denmark during Grendel's attacks. Create a front page that looks as professional as possible.
2. Include an interview. You might ask Beowulf about why he came to help Hrothgar, or you might interview Hrothgar about trying to help his people. You should have approximately 10 questions and 10 answers.

3. Include one article about the way the poem *Beowulf* was written. Explain alliteration, assonance, kenning (3 types), and caesura. Give 3 examples of each. At least 1 of each of the 3 examples should be original. This should be about 1 page long (typed, double-spaced).
4. Include a "photo essay" about Grendel's attacks on Herot. You may draw the pictures or set up scenes and take real photographs. Give each photo a caption explaining what is happening.
5. Create an advertisement for something that might have been sold during this time. Use the pictures in your textbook to get ideas, or get ideas from the poem itself and the activities that people participate in during the poem. Have a picture and a slogan.

EC: Find out who Unferth was, and write your interview with him. Start with Google - Spark Notes will also be helpful.

IDEAS:

- One person might write the epic poem and "publish" it in his partner's newspaper.
- One person might write an epic featuring a "lost" episode of *Beowulf*. Her partner could then write the short story option of the same scene from Grendel's view.

Student Name _____

Grade _____

The Epic Hero Project Rubric

- All parts turned in complete and on time
1 2 3 4 5
- (At least) Four parts of at least 50 lines each/or criteria for Newspaper/or MLA and other criteria for *Grendel a New View*
1 2 3 4 5
- Contains (at least) three examples of all four literary elements—and highlighted/identified
1 2 3 4 5
- All parts appear and have sufficient depth and analytical content to demonstrate understanding of text
1 2 3 4 5
- Hero meets requirements (4 characteristics of an Epic Hero)
1 2 3 4 5
- Grammar/Mechanics/Usage
-1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10

Total (from above) _____

X4 = _____/100

Extra Credit _____/25

Student Name _____

Grade _____

The Epic Hero Project Rubric

- All parts turned in complete and on time
1 2 3 4 5
- (At least) Four parts of at least 50 lines each/or criteria for Newspaper/or MLA and other criteria for *Grendel a New View*
1 2 3 4 5
- Contains (at least) three examples of all four literary elements—and highlighted/identified

1 2 3 4 5

- All parts appear and have sufficient depth and analytical content to demonstrate understanding of text

1 2 3 4 5

- Hero meets requirements (4 characteristics of an Epic Hero)

1 2 3 4 5

- Grammar/Mechanics/Usage





-1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10

Total (from above)_____

X4 = _____/100

Extra Credit _____/25

Four Characteristics of an Epic Hero

<p>Strong</p> 	<p>Ethical</p> 
<p>Quest</p> 	<p>Glorified</p> 

As you read, list examples of how Beowulf fits the characteristics of an Epic Hero.