

Before-Reading Activities

Directions: Before you read Episodes 10-12 of *Beowulf*, review the vocabulary and terms for this reading and answer the short-answer questions.

Vocabulary Word	Definition
linden (noun)	a type of tree that has large heart-shaped leaves and yellowish flowers
strife (noun)	very angry or violent disagreement between two or more people or groups
gallows (noun)	a structure on which a criminal who has been sentenced to death is killed by being hanged
transitory (adj.)	lasting only for a short time
abated (verb)	decreased in strength
remnant (noun)	part of something that is left when the other parts are gone
refuge (noun)	a shelter or protection from danger or trouble
plundered (verb)	stole things from somewhere with force
pyre (noun)	a pile of wood for burning a dead body
impelled (verb)	caused to feel a strong need or desire to do something

Definition

Example

imagery	descriptive details that appeal to one or more of the five senses to create a picture in the reader's mind	I stood on the beach and studied the way the sunlight painted subtle pictures on the water.
mood	the author's use of words and descriptions to evoke certain feelings in the reader	Charles Dickens wrote in <i>The Pickwick Papers</i> , "The river, reflecting the clear blue of the sky, glistened and sparkled as it flowed noiselessly on ... " The mood of this line is calm or peaceful because it evokes calm and peaceful feelings in the reader.
theme	the underlying meaning of a literary work, which may be stated directly or indirectly	Common themes might be love, friendship, and vengeance.

hints provided by a writer about what will happen later in a narrative

These lines from Act I, Scene IV, of *Romeo and Juliet* foreshadow the end of the play: "I fear too early, for my mind misgives / Some consequence yet hanging in the stars / Shall bitterly begin his fearful date / With this night's revels, and expire the term / Of a despised life closed in my breast / By some vile forfeit of untimely death."

1. In three to five sentences, summarize Episodes 7-9 of *Beowulf*.
2. Frequently throughout the epic, the author uses light and dark imagery to show changes in mood or differences in character. For example, in Episode 8, the narrator states, "Suddenly light glittered, / a light brightened within, / as bright and clear as / the candle of the sky" when discussing the underwater cave after Grendel's mother is defeated. Think about other movies in which light and dark are used to represent good and evil. Why do you think this technique is used in *Beowulf*?

During-Reading Activities

Directions: Read Episodes 10-12 of [*Beowulf*](#). As you read, answer these questions.

Episode 10

1. The reader learns more about how Beowulf became king at the beginning of this section. Starting with how Hygelac lost his crown, summarize the events that led to Beowulf taking his place on the throne.

2. What does Beowulf decide to do about the dragon? Using the text, give an example of how the author foreshadows the outcome of this battle.

3. What does Beowulf tell his men about how he met the late King Hygelac?

4. Beowulf makes his last major boast of the epic in Episode 10. Reflect on similar speeches given by Beowulf and other characters in the epic. Why do you think the act of boasting was so important to warriors back then?

Episode 11

1. Consider these lines:

He who once ruled a nation
was encircled by fire;
no troop of friends,
strong princes,
stood around him:
they ran to the woods
to save their lives.

What do you think the narrator is trying to say about facing one's fears?

2. Why does Wiglaf scold his fellow warriors before rushing to Beowulf's aid?

3. What explanation does the narrator give as to the reason Beowulf's weapons consistently fail in battle compared to when he uses his bare hands?

4. Describe the role that Wiglaf plays in the battle.

5. How does the dragon's third attack affect Beowulf? How does Beowulf counter this attack?

Episode 12

1. Before his death, what items does Beowulf exchange with Wiglaf?

2. In Wiglaf's speech to the cowardly warriors, he states, "Death is better / to any man / than a life of disgrace." What do you think about this quote? Is it still relevant today? Why or why not?

3. What are some of the predicted effects of Beowulf's passing?

4. Describe the mound built for Beowulf. How does this ceremony compare to Shield's at the beginning of the story?

5. The epic ends with the Geat warriors mourning Beowulf's death, but otherwise the story is left open-ended. What do you think will happen now that the funeral for the Geat king has taken place? Do you agree with the effects predicted by the characters in *Beowulf*? Why or why not? Use evidence from the text to support your predictions.

After-Reading Activities

Directions: Now that you have finished reading *Beowulf*, complete the following short-answer questions. When you are finished, save your work and complete the rest of the lesson.

1. Identify two themes that you saw in *Beowulf*.
2. How does the author develop and intertwine these themes throughout *Beowulf*? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
3. *Beowulf* was written at least 1,000 years ago and takes place in the sixth century. Based on what you read, what can tell about the Anglo-Saxon culture of this time? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.