Worksheet for *Beowulf*

1. Our translator is _________________________________________________________________.
2. (p. ix) ___________________________________ was a 16th century scholar whose name appears on a surviving ___________________.
3. (p. x) “It is essentially an _____________________________ poem, concerned with ____________ ____________________________.”

4. Shild was a rich, much-loved Danish king who had been ________________________ as a child and changed his own ______________.
5. Shild’s son was named ________________.
6. Describe Shild’s funeral. __________________________________________________________
7. Beo’s son ________________ was the next king. He had three sons named ________________, ________________, and _________________. He also had a daughter named ________________ who married the Swedish king ________________.
8. Which of Healfdane’s son became king next? _______________________________________
9. Hrothgar built a hall named _______________. What was its purpose? ___________________
10. What disturbs the monster “living down in the darkness”? ____________________________
11. What is the subject of the songs? _________________________________________________
12. Explain about Grendel’s parents. _________________________________________________
13. What is the fate of the “thousand forms of evil”? _________________________________

1. After a night of drinking, the warriors fall asleep. Describe Grendel’s attack on the hall.

2. Why does Hrothgar cry? __________________________________________________________
3. How did the warriors find safety from Grendel? _____________________________________
4. “Hate __________________________.”
5. For how many years does Herot sit empty? __________________________________________
6. How does the world find out about what’s going on with the Danes? __________________

7. Grendel seeks no ____________________; he offers no _________________. 

9. What do some of the Danes revert to? ________________________________ What are they seeking? __________________________________________________________

3

1. Beowulf is a ________________, a subject of ______________________. He is ________________ and ___________________________ than “anyone anywhere __________________________________.

2. Why do the Geats urge Beowulf to undertake his adventure to help Hrothgar? ______________

3. How many Geats accompany Beowulf? ________________

4. Who greets the Geats when they land on Danish soil? ________________________________

5. This man is obviously impressed with ________________________!

(FYI: The Geats lived in southwest Sweden. Higlac died in a raid by the Franks in 521 A.D.)

4

1. Beowulf’s father was named __________________________.

2. We knew Grendel was a nocturnal hunter. Now we find out that no one ______________________!

3. What adorns the tops of the Geats’ helmets? _____________________________________________

5

1. What are “mail” shirts? _______________________________________________________________

2. Employing a neat phrase, Wulfgar refers to his king as their _________________.

(FYI: This construction of a compound word is called kenning. A whale-road was the ocean. High-built meant tall.)

3. Wulfgar assures Hrothgar that the Geats are no beggars. On what does he base this assertion? __________________________________________________________

6

1. According to the stories, Beowulf is as strong as ________ men!

2. What are the Geats instructed not to bring with them? ________________________________

3. What is a “mead-hall”? _______________________________________________________________

4. Yuck! Beowulf has emerged from war ____________________________!

5. What does Beowulf mean when he says “Now Grendel and I are called together, and I’ve come”? __________________________________________________________

6. What will Beowulf use to battle Grendel? ________________ Why? __________________________

7. “God must decide ________________.”

8. If Beowulf does die, what instructions does he want Hrothgar to follow? ________________

9. “Fate will ________________.”
1. Explain about Beowulf’s father and the kindness Hrothgar showed to him. 
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

2. Hrothgar can’t seem to understand why _________ won’t help them in their battle against Grendel. You’re smarter than the average bear. How would you explain it to him? ___________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

8
1. Unferth is _______ and _______ when he speaks to Beowulf. He is clearly ____________.
2. Unferth reminds the crowd of the story when Beowulf had a swimming contest with _______. It lasted for ____ nights. Elders had warned them of the ________________, but there was no checking Beowulf’s _______________. In the end, _____________ won.
3. Beowulf says Unferth has the story wrong, probably because he’s _________________. Beowulf says he had to slow down to swim with Brecca, to stay by his side. On the fifth night, ______
_________________________. He was attacked by a sea monster.

9
1. The attacks continued. He “_________________________” offered them his razor-sharp sword.” He made the seaways safe for many sailors. So the reason he didn’t win the swimming contest with Brecca was because he was just a little busy killing _____ “sea-huge monsters.” He hasn’t heard any such tales of courage and glory about Unferth or Brecca!
2. Whoa! What past act has condemned Unferth? ___________________________________________________________________________________
(FYI: To the Anglo-Saxons, killing kin was unforgivable. Wergild (man-payment) was made to murdered man’s family, but there was no way to make amends for killing one’s kin.)
3. Via an insult, what explanation does Beowulf offer as to why Grendel keeps terrorizing the Danes? ___________________________________________________________________________________

4. How long does Beowulf predict it will take him to kill Grendel? ___________________________
5. Who is Welthow? ______________________________ What kenning is used to describe her?
____________________________________________ Meaning? _______________________________
6. If Beowulf is successful, how will Hrothgar reward him? _____________________________________

10
1. Night comes, and so will Grendel. Beowulf will meet Grendel with his hands _________________.
2. What thoughts do the other Geats have as they fall asleep? _______________________________
3. Beowulf does not fall asleep. He is ____________ to meet his _______________. He is angry “at the thought of his coming. Why would he be angry? ____________________________________

11
1. Grendel’s eyes burned “with a ________________________________________________.”
2. How many men does Grendel eat before he comes to Beowulf’s bed? ________________
3. Holding onto each other, what is Grendel’s one thought? ______________________________
4. What does Beowulf do to Grendel’s claws? _________________________________________
5. Herot was very well built. Only _____________ might be able to destroy it.

6. The men in the hall listen to the horrible shrieking of “______’s _______________” as he struggled in the arms of the man who was the _______________ on earth.

1. All the other men in the hall jump from their beds, swords drawn, to try to help Beowulf. Why are they ineffective? __________________________________________________________________________

2. Fighting with Beowulf, Grendel discovers what it’s like to “feud ________________________.”

3. Grendel escapes! What does he leave behind in Herot? ______________________________________

4. What does Beowulf do with it? __________________________________________________________

12

13

1. People from all over come to Herot and follow Grendel’s great footprints to the ________________.

2. Describe the water. ______________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

3. Everyone is happy that Grendel is dead, and they say wonderful things about ________________.
being very careful not to insult/ignore _______________________________________________________.

4. Old soldiers who knew the adventures and sang the songs of ancient heroes, started singing about
Beowulf. They compared him to ____________________________, son of Vels, who killed a dragon that
dissolved ____________________________________________________. They also sang of
__________________________, once the mightiest king, who deserved to “suffer and die” because ____________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________.

5. Why did people follow Beowulf? __________________________________________________________________________

14

1. Strange. . .we know who Beowulf’s father is but ____________________________________________.
Can you offer an explanation for this? ______________________________________________________________________

2. What reward does Hrothgar offer to Beowulf? ________________________________________________

3. Beowulf had planned to squeeze Grendel so tightly that his _______________________
and __________________________________________________________. Why didn’t that happen?
____________________________________________________________________________________

4. Upon examination, they discover that Grendel’s claws were hard as ____________________________.

15

1. What part of Herot was left undamaged? ________________________________________________
Explanation? __________________________________________________________________________

2. Solve the riddle: “. . running wildly from what no one escapes, struggle and writhe as he will.
Wanting to stay, we go.” ________________________________________________________________

3. List the five gifts given to Beowulf. ______________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

16

1. How does Hrothgar honor the Geat eaten by Grendel? ________________________________________

2. If you walk on the earth long enough, you’re sure to meet ________ and ____________.
3. A poet tells the story of a battle long ago between Finn and Hnaf. In the battle, ________ was killed. Hengest takes Hnaf’s place. What does Finn offer? ________________________________

4. Yuck! Describe the cremation scene. ________________________________

17

1. Why does Hengest kill Finn? __________________________________________
2. After Finn’s death, Hengest and his warriors return to Denmark with __________________________.

Now let’s play the battle of the H’s!

3. Who is Hrothulf? ___________________________ Who was his father? ________________________
4. Who are Hrethric and Hrothmund? ___________________________________________
5. What does Welthow expect of Hrothulf and why? ______________________________

18

1. More gifts for Beowulf: (3) ________________________________
2. What will last forever? ________________________________ So far, so good!
3. What is the “Danes’ custom”? ________________________________
4. What sleeps with them tonight? _______________________________

19

1. For how long has Grendel’s Mother been living in the lake? __________________________
2. Grendel’s Mother enters Herot, kills a Dane, and runs away with his body. Why is this significant? __________________________________________
3. What else did she take? __________________________________________
4. Where was Beowulf while all this was happening? __________________________
5. “They’d ________  _________. Danes and ________  ________, and on one had _______. Both had ________!”

20

1. List some newly learned details about the Grendels’ lake. _______________________________
2. Chased by hounds, a deer who is driven to the shore of that lake __________________________.
3. What request does Hrothgar make? ________________________________

21

1. According to Beowulf, what is the noblest of goals? ________________________________
Do you agree? ________________________________
2. What do the warriors see on the cliff above the water? ________________________________
3. Who are the Grendels’ neighbors in the lake? ________________________________
4. Why does Beowulf dress himself in battle gear before entering the lake? ________________________________
5. He'll wear Hrothgar's _______________. Unexpectedly, Unferth gives him a ______ named ________________, hardened in blood.
6. Why is Unferth ashamed? __________________________________________________________
7. “But Beowulf and ___________ ___________ ______________. . .”

1. Beowulf speaks a will of sorts. What does he want done if he dies? ____________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________

2. How long does it take him to get to the mud bottom? _______________________
3. Grendel’s mother takes Beowulf into a _________________________ where he is protected from (2 things) __________________________. __________________________. 
4. Oh, no! What doesn’t work? __________________________
5. The battle is on! She gets him on his back, sits on his stomach, and draws her dagger. What saves him? ____________________________________________________________

22
1. With what does Beowulf slay Grendel’s Mother? _________________________________________
2. Beowulf finds Grendel. What does he do to him? _________________________________________
3. Evening comes. The Danes _______________ and The Geats _______________.
4. What two things does Beowulf bring back from the cave? ________________________________
5. How does the lake change? _________________________________________________________
6. It takes _____ men to carry the head, yet Beowulf can lift it by the ___________. What a guy!

23
1. What does Beowulf do with the sword hilt? ___________________________________________
2. On the sword hilt are carved pictures of battles between __________________________.
3. Hrothgar wants Beowulf to learn __________________________________________.

24
1. To be really happy and successful, Beowulf must learn to push ______________________
2. How long has Hrothgar reigned? _________________________________________________
3. Why does Hrothgar cry when he says goodbye to Beowulf? ____________________________

25
1. Who is Higd? ______________________________________________________________________
2. What does “niggardly” mean? _____________________________
3. What should women “walk in?” _____________________________________________________

26
1. Ah, there is to be a wedding in Hrothgar’s family. His daughter ________________ will marry Froda’s son ________________. But Hrothgar is wrong to think that this wedding will bring peace with the ________________.
2. “A bride can bring a ___________ __________, make ___________ silent for a ____________, but ___________ ___________. "

29
1. Who is Honshew? ____________________________________________________________________
2. Comment on the pouch that hung from Grendel’s side. __________________________________________

1. Besides the obvious, what made the Danes sad about Esher’s death? ____________________________

30

1. What does Beowulf give to Higd? _____________________________________________________________
2. A man must use God’s gracious gift of __________________ only in war, and then he must use it ________________.
3. Beowulf does become king of the Geats after which two men died? ____________________________
4. How long has Beowulf been king? _______________ How old do you think he is? _______________
5. How does the trouble with the dragon start? __________________________________________________

32

1. How did all the treasure get into the tower where the dragon slept? ___________________________

2. “Take these treasures, earth now that no one living can enjoy them. They were yours, in the
beginning; allow them to return” sounds an awful like which adage? __________________________

3. How had the dragon ended up in the tower? _____________________________
4. Why had the man taken the cup? __________________________________________________________
5. Translate: “till the Almighty’s candle went out. . .” ________________________________________

33

1. What does the dragon vomit? ___________________________
2. Beowulf plans to battle the dragon _____________ because he saw nothing _______________.
3. Higlac is killed. Who offers Beowulf the crown? ______________ Why does he refuse it? _______
4. What was Onela’s intent? ________________________________________________________________

34

1. Beowulf travels to Sweden and kills _______________.
2. What journey had the cup taken? __________________________________________________________
3. Beowulf doesn’t feel fear, but he is aware he is ________________.
4. What happened to Herbald, Higlac’s older brother? _________________________________

35

1. How did Beowulf kill Dagref the Frank? _____________________________________________________
2. Why will Beowulf fight? __________________________________________________________________
3. Beowulf didn’t use any weapons against Grendel. Why will he use shield, armor, and sword against
the dragon? __________________________________________________________________________
4. Beowulf is succumbing to two sins in this scene. They may prove the death of him. What are they?

5. Beowulf stands at the entrance to the cave and ________________________________!

6. Oh, no! His shield _______________; his sword ______________! “…for the first time in his life that famous prince ____________ ____________ ____________ ___________ . . .”

7. What do Beowulf’s comrades do?

36

1. It is _______________, son of ________________, who comes to Beowulf’s aid.

2. What battle cry of the Three Musketeers might serve Wiglaf’s devotion? _______________________

3. Beowulf hits the dragon in the head with ________________, his ________________. It breaks. Why? _______________________________________________________________________

4. Explain Beowulf’s injury. _____________________________________________________________

37

1. How does Wiglaf help? _______________________________________________________________

2. If you want to kill a dragon, don’t forget to ________________________________!

3. What is stinging Beowulf? __________________________________________________________________

4. How sad! Beowulf has no ________ to leave his ____________ to.

5. What is Beowulf’s request of Wiglaf? ________________________________________________

38

1. Beowulf says he sold his ________ for this _______________ and sold it _______________.

2. With no son to succeed him, Beowulf tells ________________ to be king.

3. What burial request does Beowulf make? ________________________________________________

4. “Fate has ____________ ____________ ______________ _._.”

39

1. What will happen to the men who were too afraid to enter the cave, the ones who ran into the forest? _____________________________________________________________________________

40

1. Once the word gets out that Beowulf is dead, which two groups are likely to come to attack the Geats? _____________________________

41

1. For fighting with them and helping them defeat the Swedes, Higlac promises great treasure to _______________ and _______________.

2. What does Wiglaf think should burn with Beowulf’s body? ________________________________

42

1. How does Wiglaf blame Beowulf for Beowulf’s death? ______________________________________

2. Why does Wiglaf take a select few men into the cave? ________________________________
3. What do they do with the dragon? ______________________________________________________

1. After the body has burned, an old woman shows up and sings a song filled with many things. List
them. ____________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

2. What goes into Beowulf’s monument? _____________________________________________

3. Write something very insightful about the ending scene...twelve of the bravest Geats riding their
horses around the tower, telling stories of glory of their dead king. Think! _________________

______________________________________________________________________

Thinking outside the Beowulf box: Who are the heroes we sing about today? Who
are these men or women who are bigger than life? Consider heroes from literature,
songs, dramas, films, and TV shows (especially cartoons). Why are we drawn to
heroes? What do they give us? What need do they fill?