

Beowulf

Part Two Questions

Responding

1. Do you think Beowulf grows in stature as a hero? Explain.
2. Do you think that Wiglaf will be a worthy successor to Beowulf? Why?

Recalling

3. Summarize the battle between Beowulf and Grendel's mother
4. What happens to Beowulf when he attempts to fight the dragon alone?
5. Why does Wiglaf denounce the soldiers of Beowulf?
6. Why does Wiglaf stay and help his King?
7. Why does Wiglaf bring the treasure back to Beowulf?

Interpreting

8. Compare the three battles that Beowulf has with Grendel, Grendel's mother, and the dragon. How are they the same? How are they different?
9. How are the three battles different versions of the poem's main conflict (good vs. evil)?
10. Beowulf is able to defeat Grendel and Grendel's mother; however, he loses his life when

he battles the dragon? What does this suggest about the theme of good vs. evil?

11. Describe Beowulf's attitude toward death or mortality in each of the following passages: lines 179-189, lines 481-492, and lines 665-691. How does his attitude change over time?

Applying

12. Reread the tribute to Beowulf in the last eight lines of the poem. Identify the pagan and Christian influences in the qualities for which the king is praised.
13. One prominent Germanic pagan belief is that fame is the only thing that will survive a human's death. What evidence do you find in this poem of the importance placed on public esteem and reputation? What value do you feel modern society places on fame?
14. In his 20th century novel *Grendel*, writer John Gardner tells the story of Grendel's attacks against the Danes from the monster's point of view. Considering the perspective of Grendel, Grendel's mother, and the dragon, what reasons might each of them have to hate Beowulf and other men?
15. Monsters (villains) like Grendel often combine human and animal features. Think of other monsters from literature, television, or film that combine these features. What makes such monsters (villains) so disturbing?