

**Beowulf Reading Guide**

**Name:**

*Section 1 (Page 3 to Page 15 [line 193])*

In this section find examples of

- Kenning:
- Alliteration:

1. Who is Shield Sheafson? What qualities did he have? How are they viewed? (3)
2. Describe Shield's funeral. (5)
3. All right, now that we learned all that family history, who is the current ruler of the Shieldings? (7)
4. What is the mead-hall called? What social qualities do you think this mead-hall represents? (7)
5. What made Grendel attack the mead-hall? (9)
6. From whom is Grendel descended?
7. For how long has Grendel been attacking the mead hall?
8. What does the author say about the Shieldings on page 15 that introduces a possible Christian element?

*Section 2 (Page 15 [line 194] to Page 35 [line 498])*

In this section find examples of

- Kenning:

The group of people that helps the Shieldings is known as the \_\_\_\_\_. Their leader in the mission is \_\_\_\_\_. His father is \_\_\_\_\_. The king of this group is \_\_\_\_\_.

9. This group journeys across the sea. What do they do when they land that tells the readers that they are different from the Shieldings? (17)
  
10. How are the Geats dressed when they present themselves to Hrothgar? What epic characteristic can we apply to this?
  
11. Around line 407, Beowulf starts to deliver his resume in a form called the **boast**. What has Beowulf done that makes him qualified to fight Grendel? (29)
  
12. How does Beowulf plan to fight Grendel? What reason does he have for it? (31)
  
13. What does Hrothgar imply about the men who tried to defend Heorot before? (33)

*Section 3 (Page 35 [line 499] to Page 47 [line 702])*

In this section, find examples of

- Variation:
14. What is the quality, which the author subtly points out, that made Unferth challenge Beowulf's credibility? (35)
  
  15. What incident does Unferth bring up to embarrass Beowulf? (35)
  
  16. What actually happened, according to Beowulf's account? How does Beowulf defend himself against Unferth's taunts? (39)
  
  17. How is the role of Wealhtheow, Hrothgar's wife, described? (41)
  
  18. How is Beowulf given Christ-like attributes on pages 45 and 47?

*Section 4 (Page 47 [line 703] to Page 57 [line 862])*

In this section, find examples of:

- Kenning:

19. As Grendel eyes up Heorot, how is he described in a way that assures us he's a complete villain? (51)

20. Describe the fight between Beowulf and Grendel. (51-55)

21. How did Grendel finally die?

*Section 5 (Page 57 [line 863] to Page 89 [line 1250])*

22. Why does the poet tell the story of Sigemund?

23. How does Hrothgar demonstrate comitatus? (63)

24. How was Grendel's defeat commemorated? (65)

25. What detail on page 67 lets us know this is a community of good people?

26. Summarize the next story performed by the minstrel.

27. What special gifts are bestowed upon Beowulf? (85)

28. Beyond winning material goods, Wealhtheow announces that Beowulf has won what quality? (87)

*Section 6 [Page 89 [Line 1251] to Page 113 [Line 1631]]*

29. How are the Danes praised?

30. Who does Grendel's mother first kill? Why is this such a terrible transgression? (See page 93.)

31. What is Beowulf's attitude towards the death (especially murder)? (97)

32. What sight do Hrothgar's men witness at the swamp? (99)

33. How does Unferth help? (101)

34. Where does Beowulf travel for his battle? (103)

35. Why is Beowulf in jeopardy? (105)

36. How does Beowulf succeed? (109)

37. Describe the two miracle-like events that occur after the battle.

a. Miracle #1 (page 109):

b. Miracle #2 (page 111):

38. What does Beowulf do to Grendel's corpse? (109)

*Section 7 (Page 113 [line 1632] to Page 129 [line 1887])*

39. How do the men prove/celebrate the death of Grendel's mother?
  
40. For what purpose does Hrothgar discuss Heremod? (117)
  
41. At Line 1726, Hrothgar transitions into a sermon-like speech. Summarize the points he makes for Beowulf.
  
42. What event does Hrothgar use as an example of fallibility/fragility? (123)
  
43. What symbolizes happiness in the land? (113)
  
44. Despite Beowulf's history with Unferth, how does he show (again) that he's a good guy? (125)
  
45. What does Hrothgar say in his final praise of Beowulf? (127)
  
46. What do Beowulf and Hrothgar reveal about their personalities when they part?

*Section 8 (Page 129 [line 1888] to Page 149 [Line 2199])*

47. The poet introduces the story of Queen Modthryth. How is she different from Hygd, Hygelac's wife?
  
48. What's the "world's candle"? (135)
  
49. What will happen when Freawaru gets married, according to Beowulf? (139)
  
50. In recounting the fight with Grendel, what new detail do we learn from Beowulf? (143)

*Section 9 (Page 149 [Line 2200] to Page 165 [Line 2425])*

51. Suddenly, we jump ahead in time. How long has Beowulf been ruling?
52. What is the latest disturbance in Beowulf's kingdom, and how was it provoked?
53. How did the treasure get to this location?
54. What trouble is the dragon causing specifically? (157)
55. Why does Beowulf believe this destruction happened? (159)
56. Summarize the flashback to how Beowulf became king. (159, 161)
57. Describe Beowulf's state of mind as he prepares to fight the dragon. (165)

*Section 10 [Page 165 [Line 2426] to End]*

58. On the way to finding the dragon, what episode does Beowulf recall from his childhood? (165)
59. Describe the conflict between Beowulf and the dragon.
60. How does Wiglaf reason with the other soldiers? (177-178)
61. How does the battle end?
62. Why is Beowulf satisfied with his life? (185)

63. How will Beowulf be memorialized? (189)

64. What have Beowulf's people seemingly gotten in exchange for his death? (191)

65. Why does Wiglaf speak "disdainfully and in disappointment"? (193)

66. What does the messenger predict? (197)

67. What happens to the treasure?

68. Describe the funeral ceremony.