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❧ PART 1 ❧

Grendel

PRE-GRAMMAR | Preparation

Prepare to think about the poem and its Central One Idea by drawing upon your prior knowledge, experience, or interests.

1. Briefly (2–3 sentences) tell about a favorite story that you have read or heard that has a monster or villain in it.
2. Briefly tell about your favorite epic hero. He or she may or may not be a part of the story you described above.

GRAMMAR | Presentation

Discover essential facts, elements, and features of the poem through the Reading Notes, Words to Be Defined, and Comprehension Questions.

READING NOTES

1. **Hrothgar** – king of the Danes; builder of Heorot
2. **Heorot** – the palace of King Hrothgar and the mead hall for the warrior Danes
3. **Beowulf** – warrior and king of the Geats; the hero of the poem
4. **Geats** – Scandinavian people of southern Sweden; Beowulf and his men are Geats
5. **Unferth** – one of Hrothgar's warriors, who is jealous of Beowulf and challenges his bravery
6. **Wealhtheow** – Hrothgar's wife and queen
7. **fen** (p. 2) – a low and marshy area of land
8. **moor** (p. 2) – a tract of open, uncultivated land
9. **minstrel** (p. 2) – a medieval singer or musician who sang or recited poetry and whose lyrics told of distant places or existing or imaginary historical events

10. **keel** (p. 4) – the center structure of a ship running lengthwise from bow to stern, to which the frames are attached
11. **mailcoat** (p. 6) – armor made from metal rings, worn like a shirt
12. **sword-hilt** (p. 10) – the handle of a sword
13. **lair** (p. 12) – the den or dwelling of a wild animal

WORDS TO BE DEFINED

Definitions Bank

a dazed or distressed state	preoccupied with depressing thoughts
a state of complete emptiness	repayment; compensation
apart; divided	rolled the body clumsily
awakened; stirred up	stringy, tough
confusion, disorder	the sound made by a clarion (a medieval trumpet)
enchanted; entranced	to be of use; to help
extremely hungry; voracious	uninvited
not quenched; not satisfied	

1. **Unbidden**, unheralded, so boldly trespass here? (p. 5)
2. In mournful state upon his throne sat **brooding** (p. 8)
3. Because we grieve deep for your **desolation** (p. 8)
4. Seven nights you **wallowed** in the wintry sea (p. 9)
5. Had wound his **sinewy** coils about my waist (p. 9)
6. That sword you spoke of – it will **avail** (p. 10)
7. Was proudly hailed by royal **clarion** of trumpets. (p. 10)
8. For **tumult** of Grendel and his havoc, like runaway hooves (p. 12)
9. Grendel with fierce **ravenous** stride came stepping. (p. 12)
10. Half-gorged, his gross appetite still **unslaked** (p. 13)
11. **Roused** the Danes in their hiding and shivered to the stars. (p. 13)

12. In dull **stupor** they fumbled for their swords (p. 13)
13. Tore Grendel's arm from his shoulder **asunder** (p. 13)
14. **Spellbound** they stared at the water welling with blood (p. 14)
15. A sword and bountiful **recompense** of gold (p. 16)



Read Grendel, marking the text in key places according to the method taught in "How to Mark a Book."

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the things Hrothgar gave to his warriors at feasting time for their bravery and loyalty to him?
2. In the halls of Heorot, what did they enjoy with their feasting?
3. Find two lines with strong **alliteration** that stand out to you, and write them below. (You may not use any mentioned in the Introduction.)
4. For how many years did Grendel attack Heorot?
5. Give one key **epithet** or descriptive detail about Beowulf.
6. How many warriors did Beowulf take with him to Denmark?
7. Find one **kenning** from Part 1 and explain what it means. (You may not use any mentioned in the Introduction.)
8. Give some details about how Beowulf and his men were dressed when they arrived.
9. A **flyting** occurs between Beowulf and whom? Explain what it is about and the arguments of each.
10. When Wealhtheow the Queen enters during the welcome banquet, the poet describes her appearance with a **simile** and other vivid **imagery**. Describe her appearance. Secondly, what did she bring Beowulf and his men?
11. What are some of the elements of the welcome banquet feast that Grendel must have heard and despised as he approached?
12. How does Beowulf defeat Grendel? Was he armored?
13. How do the Danes and Geats celebrate Beowulf's victory? Include a line from the text in your answer.