Anglo-Saxon Literature/*Beowulf* Test Study Guide

Test Date: September 10, 2015

**Directions: Complete ALL parts of the study guide. You do NOT have to use complete sentences. Try to answer as much as you can without your notes or textbook to give yourself a better idea of how prepared you are for the test. *Turning in a COMPLETED study guide the day before the test will earn you 10 points added to your average for the test.***

**Anglo-Saxon Background**

1. Describe the lives of the Celtic people.
2. What was the Celtic religion?
3. Why was it so easy for groups to invade Britain?
4. List groups who invaded and conquered Britain.
5. The collapse of what empire left Britain vulnerable to invasions?
6. What improvements did the Romans bring when they invaded?
7. Who ruled after the Romans?
8. For how long did they rule?
9. What leader united these clans?
10. The literature of this time has some common themes and ideals of conduct. List them.
11. In 1066, what country invaded England and who led them?
12. In what form was the Anglo Saxon literature (poetry)?
13. How was Anglo-Saxon literature passed down from generation to generation?
14. Who eventually wrote down pieces of Anglo-Saxon poetry?
15. What changes did they make?
16. Define Alliteration.
17. What is a scop? How important were these men?
18. Define kenning.
19. What is epic poetry?
20. According to the Anglo-Saxons, what was the only thing that prevented “death”?
21. Describe the hierarchy of the following (slaves, churls, thanes, and king).
22. What is the *Exeter Book*? Why is it so important today?

**Anglo-Saxon Poetry**

1. What are the core values of the Anglo-Saxon culture?
2. What is a Mead hall? Why is it significant?
3. What is a caesura? Why are they needed?

\*\*Know the following concepts\*\*

*The Seafarer*

Theme of exile

Imagery that shows isolation and despair

Christian vs. Pagan elements

Shift in the middle of the poem

*The Wanderer*

Theme of exile

Imagery that shows isolation and despair

*The Wife’s Lament*

Theme of exile

Setting

Shift in purpose in final stanza

**Beowulf**

26. What is the name of Hrothgar’s hall?

27. Beowulf was the strongest and bravest of which group of people?

28. How many men did Grendel snatch up on his first bloody trip into Herot?

1. Who was Grendel the descendent of?
2. Why did Grendel not attack the throne of Hrothgar?
3. What was the “weapon” Beowulf used against Grendel?
4. How did Beowulf’s men react as Beowulf fights Grendel?
5. What does Beowulf hang from the rafters after his fight with Grendel?
6. How many giants did Beowulf boast to have killed, making him qualified to fight Grendel?
7. Beowulf represents this quality in the poem and Grendel represents this quality, the opposite.
8. The line, “fate that night intended Grendel to gnaw the broken bones of his last human supper” foreshadow this…
9. Why can’t Beowulf and the other soldiers’ swords hurt Grendel?
10. What is the name of a story that is only spread by word of mouth?
11. What is the definition of an epic?
12. Define elegy.
13. Who is responsible for writing down the epic *Beowulf*? How did it change with the written recording?
14. Be able to identify the following:
    1. Mankind’s enemy
    2. Wextan’s son
    3. The Geat’s great prince
    4. The greedy she-wolf
    5. The great king of the Danes
    6. Whale-road
15. What does Beowulf take from the lake?
16. Who remains loyal to Beowulf during his last battle? Where did the rest of his men go
17. What motivates Beowulf?
18. Explain the motivation behind each of the three monsters in Beowulf.
19. Why is Wiglaf a worthy successor to Beowulf?
20. How do the warriors honor Beowulf after he dies?