

Beowulf Study Guide: FORMAT

- o **Identifications.** For these questions, you will have to define/describe a character or term from the poem *and explain its significance* (how it plays an important role in the epic as a whole).

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E** **Wealhtheow** – Wealhtheow is queen of the Danes and Hrothgar’s wife. She plays the role of hostess in the poem, as well as carrying gifts to Beowulf after he arrives back in the mead hall after slaying Grendel. She also desires security for her sons, asking Hrothgar to ensure their protection by Beowulf. Wealhtheow is significant in the poem because she embodies the value of hospitality and gift-giving. The author places great emphasis on these qualities as those of a great king or leader, and without Wealhtheow, the reader would not have such a clear example.

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Y** You cannot successfully study for IDs without writing IDs. Create a Google Doc, flash cards, or whatever study method best serves you and write IDs for each character/term. Don’t forget to include both parts: description AND significance. Note: You can certainly use SparkNotes to study, but memorizing character info from there to regurgitate on my test will not go well.

- o **Matching.** These questions ask you to match up a term, character, or phrase with one that corresponds. This is not your kid brother’s matching section: each choice can be used more than once, once, or not at all, so you won’t be able to use process of elimination here. You have to know your stuff.

E X A M P L E	___ baklava	A. sweet pastry made from phyllo dough
	___ Olivia	B. a word meant to silence the class
	___ duck	C. a 9th year student

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Y** The best way to study for matching questions is to create IDs for all characters/terms (which will familiarize you with them) and to review the plot details of Beowulf, perhaps by creating a plot mountain or bullet point list of them for yourself.

- o **Essay.** You will have a full class period to answer an essay question using your epic. Though an in-class essay will never be as polished as one we take through the writing process, I *will* look for essay organization and evidence from the text in your answer.

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Y** Study your essay organization notes (the hour glass and half sheets). Annotate your epic thoughtfully. For instance: will it help you to make notes on the bottom of the page every time a new event unfolds so that you can easily find an event during the essay? Will it help you to record the page numbers of major events inside the front cover? Use annotations to your advantage.

Beowulf Study Guide: CONTENT

Characters:

Beowulf
Hrothgar
Grendel
Grendel's mother
dragon
Shield Sheafson
Wealhtheow
Unferth
Wiglaf
Ecgtheow

Terms/ideas:

kenning
alliteration
Mead Hall
Golden Torque

Themes:

Old English timeline (LA handbook)
Heroic code and qualities of a leader
Definition of an [epic](#)

Other:

Be able to summarize main points and recall key details of the plot.
Be able to compare/contrast characters.
Be able to compare/contrast ideas from *Beowulf* with ideas from *Epic of Gilgamesh*.
Be able to use exceptional essay organization.

In Tutorial on 1/22:
Optional (but highly recommended) study session with Julie. Come prepared with MATERIALS to contribute and study!