Section Five: The Battle with Grendel's Mother
Pages 57 - 61

1. Which of the following details from lines 450 - 458 do not suggest that the underwater lair of Grendel's mother is an evil place?
   a. "He leaped into the lake, would not wait for anyone's answer."
   b. "At last he saw the mud at the bottom." Evil is associated with darkness.
   c. Beowulf sinks "for hours...through the waves" until he finally reaches the bottom, suggesting a descent into hell.
   d. "She welcomed him in her claws, clutched at him savagely."

2. Reread lines 464 - 474. All the following details below of the battle and the setting are characteristic of an epic except one. Which detail is not characteristic of an epic?
   a. The setting is on a grand scale—an underwater battle-hall with a "high-arching roof," a fiery lake—and the battle pits a fearless hero against a powerful, supernatural creatures.
   b. Beowulf performs in remarkable heroic fashion, holding off the monsters.
   c. Beowulf's men wait on the shoreline for him.
   d. Beowulf remains alive underwater without air for hours.

3. Reread lines 458 - 512. Where does the battle take place?
   a. The battle takes place on the swampland where Grendel had lived.
   b. The battle takes place inside Hrothgar's mead-hall, Herot, when Grendel's mother returns to take another victim.
   c. The battle takes place inside a battle-hall, at the bottom of the lake in which Grendel's mother resides.
   d. The battle takes place on the shoreline of a fiery lake where supernatural beings live.
Beowulf

____ 4. Which of the following is not a way in which the poet creates suspense in the narrative?

a. The poet shows Beowulf in a vulnerable position for the first time.
b. Beowulf's sword proves ineffective against Grendel's mother, and his protective helmet fails him.
c. She turns the tables and takes him down, drawing a dagger with which to kill him. Only his mail shirt saves him.
d. Beowulf is almost tossed outside the walls of the battle-hall, directly into the path of a fire-breathing demon.

____ 5. In what ways is the account of the struggle between Beowulf and Grendel's mother very contemporary?

a. This kind of struggle between good and evil occurs between fearless war heroes and evil dictators in modern-day wars and politics.
b. This kind of fierce, seesawing struggle between a fearless hero and a super-powerful enemy occurs in many modern-day novels and movies, such as in the Superman and Spider-Man movies and the comics they are based on.
c. This kind of struggle is contemporary because many teens feel this type of epic battle navigating the treacherous social world of high school.
d. None of the above.

____ 6. What does the light describe in lines 526 – 528?

a. The light suggests that good has triumphed over evil, and heaven has triumphed over hell.
b. The light suggests that Grendel's mother has won, and the light that is Beowulf's life has gone out.
c. The light suggests that evil has triumphed over good, and that hell has triumphed over heaven.
d. The light suggests that Grendel has been restored, and his demon body has regrown its arm.

____ 7. What do lines 549 – 555 suggest about attitudes toward fame in the Anglo-Saxon period?

a. The lines suggest that people judged a man's life by his actions and that fame was of paramount importance.
b. The lines suggest that fame was more important than honor and loyalty in Anglo-Saxon society.
c. The lines suggest that religion and community was paramount over the individual and selfish needs.
d. The lines suggest that seeking fame for yourself but not your people was selfish and unvirtuous.
8. What are the Danes and the Geats doing while Beowulf is battling Grendel's mother?
   a. They are back at the mead-hall placing bets on whether or not Beowulf will return, and how long it will take him to do so.
   b. They are on the ship that brought them to Denmark, determining who will get his possessions if he does not return.
   c. They are waiting at the edge of the lake, staring down into the water.
   d. They are hunting in the woods, hoping to take down a large stag for the evening's celebratory feast. They do not doubt Beowulf's abilities.

9. What shifts in setting occur in this passage?
   a. The action moves from the bottom of the lake, where Beowulf battles Grendel's mother and cuts off Grendel's head, to the mead-hall, where Hrothgar, the Danes, and the Geats are waiting to see if Beowulf will return.
   b. The action moves from the edge of the lake where Hrothgar, the Danes, and the Geats don't bother to wait and see if Beowulf will return, to the bottom of the lake where Beowulf battles Grendel's mother.
   c. The action moves from the swamp where Hrothgar, the Danes, and the Geats wait for Beowulf to bring them Grendel's head, to the bottom of the lake where Grendel's mother kills Beowulf, then back to the shoreline where the crowd waits for Grendel's mother to slaughter them.
   d. The action moves from the bottom of the lake, where Beowulf battles Grendel's mother and cuts off Grendel's head, to the edge of the lake, where Hrothgar, the Danes, and the Geats are waiting to see if Beowulf will return. Then the setting shifts back to Beowulf, who swims back up to land.

10. How do the shifts in setting heighten the narrative tension?
   a. Readers know that Beowulf has been killed, and are eager for the skeptical onlookers to figure it out so they can flee to safety.
   b. Readers know that Beowulf has been killed, and are eager for the onlookers to be killed as well since they didn't help their hero.
   c. Readers know that Beowulf needs help to defeat Grendel's mother, and are eager for his followers to dive in after him.
   d. Readers know that Beowulf has survived, and are eager for the skeptical onlookers to learn that they have drawn the wrong conclusion.
Beowulf

11. Reread lines 587 - 594. Why do you think the Geats want the Danes to see Grendel's skull?
a. The Geats, taking great pride in Beowulf's victory, want to share in his glory, and brag about his heroism.
b. The Geats, belonging to a great line of scientists want to bring the skull back with them to study its biology.
c. The Geats paying patronage to a pagan religion, believe that they can manipulate the demonic power in the skull to reinforce their weapons.
d. The Geats decided to forgo hunting that day and will need something for a meal, and they hope that by consuming the meat, they will inherit some of the monster's powers of invincibility.

12. Why does Hrothgar ask Beowulf to battle Grendel's mother?
a. Hrothgar believes that it is Beowulf's duty to slay Grendel's mother because he brought on her wrath when he killed Grendel.
b. Grendel's mother killed Hrothgar's closest friend, and Hrothgar believes that only Beowulf can slay her.
c. Grendel's mother possesses even more power than Grendel, and Hrothgar would like to challenge Beowulf to capture her alive so that they may use her to defeat a dragon protecting a hoard of gold.
d. None of the above.

13. What does Beowulf do after he kills Grendel's mother?
a. Beowulf ransacks the rest of the battle-hall to look for jewels and other treasure to carry back to his Geats.
b. Beowulf returns the sword to its special resting place, and then carries Grendel's head, and his helmet back up to the surface.
c. Beowulf uses the giants' sword to cut off Grendel's mother's head, and then carries both heads back to the surface as trophies of his victories.
d. Beowulf finds Grendel's body, cuts off his head, and carries the head and the hilt of the giants' jeweled sword back up to the surface.

14. Compare the two monsters. Does the behavior of Grendel's mother seem as wicked or unreasonable as Grendel's behavior?
a. It is more understandable. c. It is unreasonable and wicked.
b. It is wicked. d. It is justified.

15. What evidence supports the answer to question 14?
a. She is as wicked as her son and will continue his evil raids after his death.
b. She is motivated by a desire for revenge for her son's death.
c. She is motivated by a need for food and a meal has come to her lair.
d. She is right that two wrongs can atone and equal justice.