

Grendel Group Work #3S – Chapters 7-8 – timekeepers DO YOUR JOB! Try to give me at least 2 pages



1. Look at the beginning line of Chapter 7. What does Grendel believe is “everything.” Why (be specific) and use 2 quotes here (look to the next page or earlier too). He also says on this first page “form is function” (the motto of architect Louis Sullivan and his protégé, Frank Lloyd Wright). What does this mean here – how does Grendel’s form *reflect* his function? Ok, you’ve gotta think here: How does that idea (Grendel’s form reflecting his function) work better for the story, Beowulf than it does for this novel, *Grendel*. Think about Unferth’s surprise at the “talking” monster. Be specific in your answer.

2. Look closely at pages 99-101. Why is Grendel **so** enraged about the fate of Wealtheow? About how she is being *used*? How is her “sacrifice” such a “wretched violation of sense!” (101)? Why does he say “Mercy”? What is the connection (think hard here) with his first appearance in the mead hall? How does this “trade” (for her) both enforce and violate men’s use of theories? Use a total of at least 3 quotes in answering this question.

3a. Grendel makes a third decision of life over death on page 110 – what (who) is it? The chapter ends with him saying he “changed [his] mind.” How does this fit with his decision to bring Unferth (in Chapter 6) back to the hall? To subvert the visions of “blind old poets and dragons”? Be specific, thoughtful, and brilliant.

3b. Now look at the last stanza of Wealtheow’s spoken *poem* on page 116. Who is it talking about? How can this be specifically (one quote from each) connected to Grendel’s bitterness about Baby Grendel (what he was before Chapter 2)? Think (and look) back to the scene with Grendel and his mother after his first encounter with men (and remember how his mother is so traumatized by his loss of innocence [the ability to keep playing cat and mouse with the universe]).

4. (**give enough time here timekeepers**) Grendel and the dragon both believe that Man would theorize His way to hell, given the opportunity. The question is, *why*? Does your group believe that this need to theorize or rationalize can be connected to our modern fascination with conspiracy theories and with labeling facts as “fake news”?

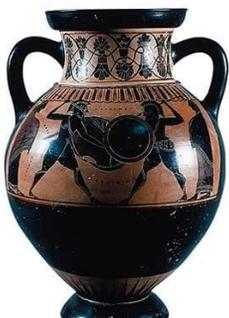
from “Autowreck” Karl Shapiro

Already old, the question Who shall die?
Becomes unspoken Who is innocent?
For death in war is done by hands;
Suicide has cause and stillbirth, logic.
But this invites the occult mind,
Cancels our physics with a sneer,
And spatters all we knew of denouement
Across the expedient and wicked stones.



Consider the assassination of John F. Kennedy, or the idea of the CIA creating the AIDS virus. Recently, a poll found that 36% of Americans believe that the World Trade Center was in fact destroyed by U.S. missiles, rather than hijacked airplanes.. If relatively simple reasons exists for these tragedies, why then do we choose to believe nearly impossible and complex stories? Think!

Find in your books where Grendel first attacks and devastates the Mead Hall. How do the men react? Whom do they (and others) blame? Why don’t they blame Grendel – how does this fit in with our obsession with conspiracies. Find quotes and incidents (at least 2) from the novel in putting together your answer. Finally connect what you wrote to the excerpt from “Autowreck above.



5a. On page 100, Grendel states that the beauty of Wealtheow tore him “apart as once the Shaper’s song had done.” What is the connection between the two (her beauty and the shaper’s song_? Think hard here – why, precisely did the Shaper’s song tear him apart? Make sure your group answers that. Now, what is the contradiction in Wealtheow’s beauty – does it have anything to do with what you answered in question 2 (ahh – aren’t you glad you did such a good job up there).

5b. John Keats, the poet, wrote (in a poem we will see again towards the end of the year) that “beauty is truth, truth beauty/ that is all you know on earth, and all we need to know.” What does this have to do with the power of Wealtheow’s beauty and of the Shaper’s words on Grendel? How does this *belie* (ooh – there’s that word again that you had to look up before) Grendel’s frustration with the Shaper’s story – just as Grendel believes that the Shaper’s words belie...(nope you gotta look it up)? Be specific – find at least one quote that restates why Grendel is so torn by the Shaper’s words – after you find that answer the question fully and completely.