

AP English Notes  
September 29, 2004

We saw a film on Greece today. I will give a quiz at the beginning of class tomorrow.

**Research topics are due on September 30.**

Remember I do not accept the biographical research of individuals; instead, I would like you to research their concepts of psychology, philosophy, and religion as related to writing and/or character usage and development.

**Here are a few research topics that could be used:**

Carl Jung  
John Keats  
Plato  
Sophocles  
Rousseau  
Fyodor Dostoyevski  
Islamic Heroes in Literature  
Joseph Conrad  
Nietzsche  
Shakespeare  
The Soul Mate in Literature  
George Bernard Shaw  
Freudian Concepts in Literature  
Oedipal Complex  
Archetypes in Literature  
Martin Luther Kings' Philosophy  
Gandhi Love (Agape, Eros)  
Women in Shakespeare (Choose one play)  
Leadership in Shakespeare  
Psychology in Literature—  
choose one Freud, Jung, Frankl

**Beowulf continues**

Hygelac, the leader of Geats, “sinks in the surges of war,” translated this mean that Hygelac died in battle. (Pseudo history and the other portions of the epic poem tell us that Beowulf assists Hygd (Hygelac’s wife) by aiding Hygelac’s son (Heardred) to rule the Geats. Later, Hygelac’s son dies and Beowulf rules the Weder Geats. Thus, Beowulf became King among the Geats.

One day, after Beowulf had reigned wisely and courageously for some fifty years, a servant/slave, who was running from his owner stumbled upon an ancient treasure. While the treasurer’s guardian dragon slept, he stole a golden goblet which he presented to his owner, hoping to be forgiven for his neglect of duty.

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When the dragon discovers that the goblet is missing, he is furious and begins to ravage and burn the Geat villages with fire. Beowulf was now an old man. Nevertheless, he is determined to rid his kingdom of this scourge.

Sensing that this might be his final battle, he pauses to gather strength, bid farewell to his faithful subjects, and to reflect on his long life of valiant deeds. Eleven of his thanes accompany him to battle the dragon, the thirteenth thane is the slave that stole the goblet. At the moment when the thanes are needed they flee into the forest. Before they run, Wiglaf—one of the eleven (a visitor from the Northern Sweden-Scylfings)—shames the men who accept Beowulf gifts and run when they are needed. Wiglaf stays to help in the battle.

Beowulf elects to use the sword Naegling (The Nail) in this final battle. The moment of confrontation arrives. Beowulf advanced toward the dragon's cave, so that he might engage the beast in battle.

*... It is not your venture . . .  
to match [Your] might with the fearful foe's,  
to do this heroic deed. By daring  
shall I gain the gold, or dire battle,  
ending life, will take your lord away!*

Finding his shield less protection than he had hoped against the dragon's fiery breath, he still plunged on through the flames and struck the dragon's head with his famed and ancient sword - to no effect. His foil (sword) shattered on the creature's bony head, and the infuriated dragon only belched forth more intense fire. Once again Beowulf was forced to rely on his grip. In the savage exchange, of all the Geat's thanes, only Wiglaf, a younger kinsman, stood by to defend the ruler. (The other ten have fled into the forest. To leave your liege lord is a dishonorable thing—no one will receive them after this cowardly act.)

The dragon rushed and sank its terrible teeth into Beowulf's neck. But Wiglaf fearlessly smote the beast on its underside with his sword; with his war-knife (dagger), Beowulf gave the dragon the death blow.