**Short Answer**

Write your response to the questions in this section on the lines provided. You may be asked to give an oral response to one of the following questions. Take a few minutes to expand your answers and prepare an oral response. Find additional details in *Beowulf* that will support your points. If necessary, make notes to guide your response.

1. a. What elements describe a legendary hero? **Unusual circumstances of birth, leaves family and lives with others, traumatic events leads to quest, special weapon, supernatural help, proves self on quest, journey and suffers a wound that cannot be healed, atonement with father, prepared to fight or die at any moment.**

b. How is Beowulf a Legendary Hero?
   **He is born into royalty. The slaughtering of the Danes leads Beowulf on a quest, where he proves himself by not only killing Grendel but also his mother. He kills the dragon and is fatally wounded, leading to his death. Multiple times he is prepared to fight or die. Hrunting is his sword.**

2. a. What are the elements of an Epic Poem?
   **1) Plot centers around a Hero of Unbelievable Stature. The epic hero completes what everyone only attempts. In ancient epics, the hero often is either partially divine or at least protected by a god or God. 2) Involves deeds of superhuman strength and valor. Accomplish feats no real human could. 3) Vast Setting. The action spans not only geographical but also often cosmological space: across land, sea, into the underworld, or thru space or time etc. 4) Involves supernatural and-or otherworldly forces. Gods, demons, angels, time/space travel, cheating death etc. 5) Sustained elevation of style. Overwritten. Overly formal, highly stylized (poetry, lyricism (singing), exaggeration) 6) Poet remains objective and omniscient. The narrator sees and knows all and presents all perspectives.**

b. Discuss the oral tradition of storytelling.
   **Anglo-Saxons valued oral tradition greatly. This was a way to tell later generations of their history and to pass their views of religion on. Scops, Anglo-Saxon story tellers, are the key to passing oral tradition from**
generation to generation during those times. The King would hire a Scop to keep him entertained, usually with a harp. A Scop was ranked very high among the society. The scop would tell or sing his stories usually during feasts and other festive activities at the Mead Hall.

3. Hail, Hrothgar! Higlac is my cousin and my king; the days of my youth have been filled with glory. Now Grendel’s name echoed in our land: sailors have brought us stories of Herot, the best of all mead-halls, deserted and useless when the moon hangs in the skies the sun had lit, light and life fleeing together. My people have said, the wisest, most knowing and best of them, that my duty was to go to the danes’ great king. They have seen my strength for themselves, have watched me rise from the darkness of war… .”

a. How does the following quote show that Beowulf is a legendary hero?
   ____Identifies that he is of noble birth. Identifies that he has proven himself before. Identifies that he is there on a quest.

b. How does the following quote show that Beowulf is an Epic Poem?
   _____Identifies that he has travelled across land and sea. Elevation of written language.

4. How does the watchman’s opinion of Beowulf in lines 158-165 illustrate the warrior’s role as a legendary hero?
   ____The watchman sees Beowulf as confident, honest, and great and observes that he carries noble weapons. These things make him seem larger than life, strong, and self-confident.

5. Put the following quotes in your own words
   a. “[Grendel’s] thoughts were as quick as his greed or his claws.”
      ____The monster thinks very quickly, just like he kills very quickly.

   b. The Geat warriors are “…trying to open/A path for his evil soul.”
      _____The Geats are trying to kill Grendel.

   c. “When he comes to me, I mean to stand, not run from his shooting flames, stand till fate decides which of us wins.”


When the dragon comes to me, I will not back down. It is up to fate who will live or die.

Then he saw the mighty water witch and swung his sword, his ring-marked blade, straight at her head; the iron sang its fierce song.

He swung his sword at Grendel’s mother’s head. (This is also an example of personification fyi)

6. What does the author of *Beowulf* mean by the underlined words in the following quotes:
   a. “…he came riding down. Hrothgar’s lieutenant, spurring his horse, needing to know why they’d landed, these men in armor. Shaking his heavy spear in their faces, he spoke.”
      He is attempting to intimidate Beowulf and the warriors to protect the land and get more information out of them.
   b. “I remember how we sat in the mead-hall, drinking and boasting of how brave we’d be when Beowulf needed us, he who gave us these swords and armor: all of us swore to repay him, when the time came kindness for kindness – with our lives, if he needed them.”
      All the warriors swore to repay Beowulf for his kindness when Beowulf would need them in the future.
   c. “You’re the last of all our far-flung family. Fate has swept our race away. Taken warriors in their strength and led them to the death that was waiting.”
      He could mean that all of the family line except Wiglaf has died off. He could also mean that Wiglaf is that last of the true heroes because Wiglaf was the only one who did not run away in the face of danger.

7. What aspect of Beowulf’s battle with Grendel tells you that Beowulf is honorable?
   He refuses to use weapons because Grendel uses none.

8. What aspect of Beowulf’s battle with Grendel’s mother tells you that Beowulf is a true warrior?
   He only takes what is necessary to prove that he has killed Grendel, instead of robbing the cave of it’s treasures.
9. What does Beowulf give Wiglaf before he dies? What does this gesture mean? Explain. He gives him his necklace and jewelry. This is a symbol of leadership and means that Beowulf has passed down the leadership of the Geats to Wiglaf.

10. In a Venn diagram, compare and contrast the characters of Beowulf and Wiglaf. Write their differences in the parts of the circles that do not overlap. Write their similarities in the parts of the circles that overlap. The overlapping circles should show that both men are great warriors, have royal blood, inherited wealth, are brave, loyal, and honorable, are leaders, and believe in God and fate. Differences may include that Beowulf is older and is a greater lord than Wiglaf.

11. How is Beowulf Honorable/Loyal/Brave? He fights against Grendel, Grendel’s mother and the dragon. He is willing to fight or die at anytime. He is willing to fight the dragon alone to protect his people, even at his old age.

12. How is Wiglaf Honorable/Loyal/Brave? He is the only Geat to not run away when Beowulf needed him most to fight against the dragon.

13. After Beowulf’s death, why do the Geats build a tower to memorialize him? Why is this action ironic? Beowulf requests a tower be built in his honor for passing ships to see and for his people to remember him by. This is ironic because all of the Geats except Wiglaf abandoned him in battle.

14. What provides solace for the characters in Beowulf, according to the poet? Focus on the meaning of solace in your response. Belief in God could provide comfort and relief for the characters in Beowulf.

15. Beowulf requests that he alone “purge all evil from this hall.” What does he want to do? What aspect of an epic hero is being revealed here? Explain. He wants to cleanse all evil from the hall by killing Grendel. Epic heroes want to complete what everyone else fails at.
16. Fill in the chart for the following elements present in *Beowulf* and discuss the allusion being made.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pagan elements</th>
<th>Christian elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worshipping multiple gods</td>
<td>belief in one personal God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superstitious belief in monsters, magic and dragons</td>
<td>belief in a rewarding afterlife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief that fame was the only guarantee of immortality</td>
<td>giving thanks to God for help in battles against evil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. **Create** (do not simply find from the book) a kenning for the following characters:
   a. Hrothgar ______ student answer ____________
   b. Beowulf ____ student answer
   c. Wiglaf ____ student answer
   d. Grendel ____ student answer
   e. the watchman _____ student answer

18. What is the meaning of the following symbols?
   a. Sea ____ The sea is the hostile face of nature, nature-as-enemy. Beowulf sails across the sea to fight. He fights in a body of water.
   b. Treasure ____ accomplishments and the vanity of human wishes. You can’t take treasure with you when you die.
   c. Necklace ____ Rulership and royalty.

19. Many people think that *Beowulf* develops themes that apply in life today. What are some themes from *Beowulf* that also apply today?
examples include:
The fight between good and evil, the glory of generous rulers who try to help their people, and the importance of loyalty and courage, are still important. The emphasis on physical strength and violence should not be part of today’s world.
The battle between good and evil is too simple an idea for today’s complex world.

20. One of the main reasons we study literature from different cultures and different times is to learn about the people who wrote these stories down. From Beowulf we can speculate on the values, religion and culture of Anglo-Saxon people. Choose three values you can identify from Beowulf, show how the story illustrates those values. Use examples from the text to support your ideas.

21. During our reading of Beowulf, we describe Beowulf as a hero. This one virtue that is prominent in Anglo-Saxon culture. What other virtues did Beowulf possess that embody the conduct of the Anglo-Saxon culture? Please identify five virtues Beowulf possesses and describe two virtues in detail using specific examples from the reading.

22. Some ancient peoples, such as the Germans and Greeks, believed that only by achieving fame and glory will a person be remembered after death. How does Beowulf reflect this statement? Give at least three examples from Beowulf to support your opinion.