



1. Beowulf Quiz

1. Who first started to settle in Britain in ca. A.D. 400?

- a) Celtic druids
- b) Norman priests
- c) Roman emperors
- d) Christian monks**

2. In which year is it thought that the British pagan religions had been totally replaced by Christianity?

- a) ca. 499
- b) ca. 599
- c) ca. 699**
- d) ca. 799

3. Which of the following is a Christian belief?

- a) Fatalism
- b) Fate
- c) Revenge
- d) Providence**

4. “Animism” was typical of ancient tribes. Which of these options best describes this trend of thought?

- a) That the energy obtained from meat and fish is vital for one’s spiritual wellbeing
- b) That it is essential to maintain a positive outlook on life
- c) That everything has its own soul or spirit**
- d) That humans are part of nature, as an animal species

5. In medieval numerology, which number represented perfection?

- a) 1
- b) 3**
- c) 10
- d) 5

6. In the Anglo-Saxon world, what was considered the worst kind of punishment?

- a) Torture
- b) Public humiliation
- c) Imprisonment
- d) Exile**

7. What was the Anglo-Saxon ritual of gift-giving called?

- a) Widsith**
- b) Wyrstith
- c) Wyrd
- d) Wergild

8. Which of the following was considered a virtue and moral duty in AngloSaxon culture?

- a) Forgiveness
- b) Compassion for one's enemy
- c) Revenge**
- d) Removing of belongings before burial

9. What does the "King and Comitatus" relationship state?

- a) That the Lord must provide shelter and riches to his thanes in return for protection**
- b) That the King must provide lands and titles to his children
- c) That the tribe must promise to respect the laws and religion of the King
- d) That the Lord and his thanes must commit themselves to a life of celibacy

10. Which of these rituals were carried out by Anglo-Saxon warriors before they went into battle?

- a) Praying
- b) Meditating
- c) Boasting**
- d) Dancing

11. Anglo-Saxon epic poems were sung by which highly respected people?

- a) Scops**
- b) Scaps
- c) Scips
- d) Scups

12. The mnemonic function is linked with the oral tradition of Anglo-Saxon literature. What was it used for?

- a) To shock readers
- b) To foreshadow events
- c) To give hindsight
- d) To aid memory**

13. During the Anglo-Saxon period, the ruling motive of every noble life was what?

- a) Love of glory**
- b) Family honour
- c) Wealth and material possessions
- d) Love of nature

14. In which of these centuries is Beowulf's plot set?

- a) 3rd Century A.D.
- b) 5th Century A.D.**
- c) 7th Century A.D.
- d) 10th Century A.D.

15. In which of these centuries is the oral version of the anonymous poem thought to be composed?

- a) 4th Century A.D.
- b) 5th Century A.D.
- c) 8th Century A.D.**
- d) 9th Century A.D.

16. When did two Christian scribes write the Beowulf MS.?

- a) 7th Century A.D.
- b) 9th Century A.D.
- c) 10th Century A.D.**
- d) 12th Century A.D.

17. Before being moved to the British Museum in 1753, the Beowulf MS. formed part of a collection of medieval manuscripts assembled by which English antiquarian?

- a) Sir Robert Bruce Silk
- b) Sir Robert Bruce Cotton**
- c) Sir Robert Bruce Velvet
- d) Sir Robert Bruce Jean

18. In which year was the Beowulf MS. badly damaged by a fire at Ashburnham House in Westminster?

- a) 1730
- b) 1731**
- c) 1732
- d) 1733

19. The Beowulf MS. is mainly written in which dialect?

- a) North Saxon
- b) East Saxon
- c) West Saxon**
- d) South Saxon

20. How many verses is Beowulf composed of?

- a) 2045
- b) 4892
- c) 3186**
- d) 4573

21. Which of these is not a defining feature of Beowulf's couplet structure?

- a) A fairly free number of unstressed syllables
- b) "Head-rhymes" of syllable-initial sounds
- c) Two heavily stressed syllables in each unit
- d) "End-rhymes" of the final syllable sounds**

22. In the poem, each verse is divided into two sections, called hemistichs. Which literary device is used to create the pause in between the hemistichs?

- a) Haltering
- b) Parone
- c) Caesura**
- d) Detention

23. The terms "orcneas" and "ealuscerwen" appear only once in Beowulf. What are they examples of?

- a) Alliteration
- b) Compound names
- c) Personification
- d) Hapax legomena**

24. How would you describe the poem's elegiac mood?

- a) Lyrical
- b) Dignified
- c) Solemn
- d) All of the above**

25. Which of these kennings is not used in Beowulf to refer to the sea?

- a) Sail-road
- b) Bath-way
- c) Whale-path
- d) Tear-pond**

26. Under which Old English poetic genre can Beowulf be classified?

- a) Short elegy with lyrical tone
- b) Riddle
- c) Epic poem**
- d) Gnostic verse

27. Which of these literary devices particularly characterises the text?

- a) Omniscient narrator**
- b) Onomatopoeia
- c) Circumlocution
- d) Malapropism

28. Which of the following is not a major theme in Beowulf?

- a) Honour as a virtue in Anglo-Saxon life
- b) Pride which can lead to negative consequences
- c) Love vs. lust**
- d) Fate vs. providence

29. According to the poem, which elements construct a person's identity?

- a) Deeds and courage
- b) Friendship
- c) Lineage
- d) a) and c) are correct**

30. From which Northern Germanic tribe does Beowulf originate?

- a) The Danes
- b) The Angles
- c) The Jutes
- d) The Geats**

31. What is the name of the great mead hall described in Beowulf as “the foremost of halls under heaven”?

- a) **Heorot**
- b) Feorot
- c) Sheorot
- d) Meorot

32. Hrothgar is the King of which tribe?

- a) The Geats
- b) **The Danes**
- c) The Frisians
- d) The Britons

33. For how many years has Grendel been terrorising the Danes before Beowulf’s arrival?

- a) 5 years
- b) 7 years
- c) **12 years**
- d) 45 years

34. Before the epic battle between Beowulf and Grendel in the great hall, which of these events take place?

- a) Grendel falls asleep
- b) Beowulf sharpens his sword
- c) **Grendel kills one of Beowulf’s men**
- d) Beowulf kills Grendel’s mother

35. Grendel and his mother are described as the descendents of which biblical figure?

- a) Abel
- b) **Cain**
- c) Judas
- d) Moses

36. How does Beowulf kill Grendel?

- a) With a sword
- b) **By pulling off his arm**
- c) With a bow and arrow
- d) By decapitation

37. After Grendel dies in the marshes, his mother decides to take revenge. Which warrior does she kill in the hall?

- a) Hrothgar
- b) Ælfhere
- c) Wiglaf
- d) Æschere**

38. How does Unferth show Beowulf that he wishes to make amends with him?

- a) By shaking his hand
- b) By placing his helmet at his feet
- c) By giving him his sword "Naegling"
- d) By giving him his sword "Hrunting"**

39. The sword which Beowulf finds on a cabinet and uses to behead Grendel's mother is made of which metal?

- a) Gold**
- b) Silver
- c) Copper
- d) Bronze

40. When Beowulf discovers Grendel's corpse in the lair, what does he decide to do?

- a) Cut off a lock of his hair to take to Geatland
- b) Bury him under an Elm tree in Heorot
- c) Wrap him in cloth and throw him in the lake
- d) Sever his head to take to Heorot**

41. What does Hrothgar give to Beowulf to show his appreciation for killing Grendel's mother?

- a) He gives his daughter's hand in marriage
- b) He gives him the keys to his castle
- c) He gives him the sword "Nægling"**
- d) He gives him a hug

42. After his triumphant return to Geatland, Beowulf does what?

- a) Recounts his adventures to King Hygelac and Queen Hygd**
- b) Goes back home and sleeps for a whole week
- c) Goes to his father's grave and leaves his sword there
- d) Gives his wife and children a treasure chest

43. Following the successive deaths of both Hygelac and his son, Beowulf becomes the King of the Geats, ruling wisely for how many years?

- a) 20
- b) 30
- c) 40
- d) 50**

44. What does the slave-thief do to enrage the dragon before its fight with Beowulf?

- a) Pulls its tail
- b) Steals a cup from the treasure-hoard it was guarding**
- c) Eats one of its eggs
- d) Throws a rock at it

45. Beowulf eventually manages to slay the dragon by stabbing which part of its body?

- a) Head
- b) Back
- c) Side**
- d) Heart

46. When Beowulf realises that the dragon's bite is venomous and he is dying, what does he ask of Wiglaf?

- a) To assure that his ashes are buried with the dragon's treasure**
- b) To carry him to his castle to see his wife and children
- c) To tell his troops to have a feast in his honour
- d) To bring him some food and take off his armour

47. What does the gift of the golden torque symbolise in the poem?

- a) Transferral of power**
- b) Lucifer's flame
- c) Religious salvation
- d) Eternal youth

48. Beowulf's funeral barrow overlooks what?

- a) His castle
- b) His favourite forest
- c) The sea**
- d) The site where he killed the dragon

49. After Beowulf's death, what do the Geats fear?

- a) That Grendel's uncle will seek revenge

- b) That the dragon will haunt them eternally
- c) That God will condemn them to eternal damnation
- d) That enemy tribes from the North and South will attack them**

50. Which two virtues need to find a balance in great rulers according to the text?

- a) Prudence and courage**
- b) Patience and generosity
- c) Intelligence and politeness
- d) Tolerance and strength