**Learning Contract: *Beowulf***

Students will:

**Know:**

* Some of the characteristics of Old English poetry (kenning, alliteration, caesura)
* The characteristics of an epic hero
* The characters of *Beowulf*

**Understand:**

* The need for heroes in Anglo-Saxon culture
* The influence of both Christianity and Paganism on the Anglo-Saxons

**Be able to:**

* Identify literary devices used in Anglo-Saxon poetry
* Recall the events of the epic poem *Beowulf*
* Compare and contrast the Christian and Pagan influences on the Anglo-Saxons
* Formulate an opinion on the role of fate in one’s life
* Design and create alternative methods to tell the story of Beowulf
* Apply knowledge of *Beowulf*
* Imagine how Beowulf’s story would be told from another point of view
* Determine if Beowulf is an epic hero

**Working Guidelines for Learning Contracts**

1. Stay on task at all times with the activities you have chosen.
2. Work on the chosen activities only after the required reading or the lesson for the day has been completed.
3. Work quietly so you do not disturb others.
4. When you need help and the teacher is busy, quietly ask someone else who is working on the same activity.
5. If a classmate cannot answer your question, write down your question and ask it later; begin working on another activity.
6. If the teacher is having a conference with another student, do not interrupt unless you have an emergency.

I agree to the above conditions. I understand that if I do not follow them, I may lose the opportunity to continue with this independent contract.

Student’s signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**READING CONTRACT**

***Beowulf***

**Directions:** Complete five activities from the following list by the end of class on Oct. 9. You must complete tasks 1 and 2. Choose three other assignments to complete from tasks 3-9. You may use textbooks, library books, the Internet (except Wikipedia!), encyclopedias, and *Beowulf* to help you.

1. Complete the epic hero chart, citing two examples for each characteristic. Be sure to write the complete line from the poem (in quotation marks), citing the line number(s) for each.
2. Kennings, Alliteration, Caesura Chart. Three examples for each literary device. Be sure to write the complete line(s) from the poem, citing the line number(s) for each.
3. Retell the events in *Beowulf* as a children’s story, including color illustrations. Use 8 ½ x 11 paper. Make a cover, and be especially careful about word choice. This is supposed to be a children’s story.
4. Write a resume for Beowulf, outlining his qualifications as an epic hero. Include all of the essential elements of a good resume. Remember, Beowulf will be trying to sell himself to a potential employer.
5. *Beowulf* – **the Comic Book!** Illustrate key scenes from *Beowulf* with short narrative sections and dialogue bubbles. **WARNING!!! Do NOT copy known illustrations.**
6. Create a **different point of view** by **retelling a segment of the story** from the point of view of another character in the story: Grendel, Grendel’s mother, Wiglaf, etc. Do not change the outcome of the segment. Use standard writing assignment format.
7. Think about the characteristics of Old English poetry that we have studied. Then write at least 10 lines of poetry in a style and rhythm like that of *Beowulf*. You can extend one of the scenes in the poem or create an entirely original scene. Your poetry should be suitable for oral recitation.
8. The epic hero is a larger-than-life figure whose qualities reflect lofty social ideals. Study the characteristics of an epic hero. Using those characteristics, write an essay (2-4 pages) showing that Beowulf fits the criteria of an epic hero and explain why such heroes were important to the Anglo-Saxon people.
9. In the bleak view of the early Anglo-Saxons, humans were at the mercy of *wyrd*, or fate. Consider your own views concerning fate. Do you believe that each person can control his or her destiny? Can people generally determine their future, or does chance play a key role? With thoughtful reasons and specific examples, write a 3-5 page essay supporting your opinion on fate.

I have chosen tasks \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_ to complete.

Student’s signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher’s signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_