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English

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Beowulf

The poem “Beowulf” from Anglo-Saxon is the first piece of English literature. It's a poem about an epic hero, a larger than life figure who symbolizes different traits of his people. Beowulf's heroic actions against Grendel, his Mother, and the dragon are representations of his prototype. Beowulf is known as a hero, and people use the words “larger than life” to describe him because of his heroic traits. “His armies, and he thought of greatness and resolved to build a hall that would hold his might” His loyalty to his people is evidence of Anglo-Saxon's ideals and virtues throughout the poem. There is also a place called the “Mead Hall” where they would spend their time drinking. Beowulf is the prototype of the epic hero because he symbolizes the Anglo-Saxon virtues of bravery, loyalty, and lasting fame.

Beowulf is the main prototype of the epic hero because he shows and explains bravery, loyalty, and a desire for glory, which are all traits of the Anglo-Saxon heroic ideal. His courage is shown when he faces Grendel without any weapons, depending only on his strength to defeat a monster, showing that he is fearless in a very dangerous situation “by God punished forever for the crime”. Also expresses the Anglo-Saxon traits of loyalty and honor, traveling across the sea to help the King and, in his last moments, he sacrifices himself to save his people. Beowulf's loyalty is very clear when he travels to Denmark to help the King. In addition, Lof is a major

influence to his actions, especially when he fights the dragon alone. Always making sure his name will live on. Beowulf is the perfect example of an epic hero through his actions that are shown throughout the poem.

Beowulf's physical strength and bravery show him as an example as a larger than life figure. His skill to defeat Grendel put him distant from regular men. The narrator shows his strength, believing "he was the mightiest man on earth, high-born and powerful." His purpose or goal is to face battles no other man would "each warrior tried to escape". Some of his battles are fighting Grendel's mother underwater and battling a fire breathing dragon. Even though he was much older he decided to battle the fire dragon because he was his people's hero.

One of the main traits of the Anglo-Saxon hero is the purpose of Lof, or gaining fame, which showed a lot of Beowulf's actions throughout the poem. Beowulf thought achieving fame was not a personal goal but it was a way of making sure of his legacy after his death. Another important thing that Beowulf shows is Comitatus, which is the bond of loyalty between warriors and their lord. Throughout the poem, Beowulf has shown respect to those who he served and led. When Beowulf arrives in Denmark to help King Hrothgar, he helps him with responsibility for these actions. This expresses his feeling of being loyal and having respectful thoughts for himself and others. Later on in the poem he becomes the king of the Geats.

Before his powerfulness, Beowulf's leadership traits had increased since he was the epic prototype of a hero. When Beowulf becomes King of the Geats, he is shown with kindness and fairness, making sure that all of his people are safe and are at peace. Beowulf always puts others before himself, especially in his later years when he was King. "he would sleep in the fire soon.

His soul left his flesh, flew to glory” His commitment to his people have shown that an epic hero is not only by their accomplishments, but also by his skills to show his honor.

An important example of characterization is when Beowulf being an epic hero is his acceptance of “destiny” or “wyrd,”. Through the poem, Beowulf knows that his fate is depending on forces out of his control, yet he never has to think twice to face danger. Whether it is in his battles with Grendel or the dragon, Beowulf knows that he may die, but he knows what could happen with his actions not knowing if he is going to make it out alive or not. “He snatched Beowulf's arm” This overall just shows a good example even when you don't know what might happen.

In conclusion, Beowulf is the epic hero showing his representation of Anglo-Saxon's traits of courage, loyalty and honor. His larger than life personality is very known for his strength, and his fighting with enemies, and also for protecting his people. Beowulf's battle is against Grendel, Grendel's mother and the dragon not only show his skills but also shows his knowledge of right from wrong. By showing these, Beowulf does not only play the role of a heroic person in his life but also leaves something special that constantly repeats over and over the traits of heroes of the world. Grendel then gets a treasure for his actions with that being said Beowulf story will keep inspiring and showing the power of heroism. “ Once more and again twisted gold” Through his actions he realizes that he can fight and face anything alone and come out undefeated. His actions also explain that it's okay to be independent at difficult times in life.

Work cited: <https://www.litcharts.com/lit/beowulf/characters>

Beowulf. Verse Translation, Burton Raffel. 1875 J.A Malmstrom