***Reading Group 1 – Beowulf - Discussion Leader***

1. **What do you think is one of, if not the, main theme in this story? Why?**
   1. I think the main theme in this story is the theme of the battle between “The way of God/Piety” and the “Way of Man/Sin” All throughout the story we see all of the characters give glory to God and constantly speaking of God’s superiority over everything. And all of the villains in the Story (Grendel, Grendel’s Mother, etc.) all extend from Cain, who in the bible killed his brother Abel, and was banished for breaking God’s law and committing the world’s first murder. So here we see the heroes of the story practicing piety and subjection to God Almighty, and the villains being the ones who reject God and perform malicious and selfish deeds.
2. **Who/What do you think Beowulf, Grendel, and their battle represent? Why?**
   1. As somewhat stated previously, I believe that Beowulf and Grendel represent either God’s own spirit and the truly pious man (Beowulf) and the Devil and man’s internal Sin Nature (Grendel). Beowulf is the man who was mighty and fearless and fighting for good, doing whatever it takes to protect others and vanquish evil, giving glory to God. And Grendel is the spawn of Cain, who was cursed by God, and does nothing but satisfy his own desires.
3. **Who/What do you think Grendel’s mother represents and why is her battle with Beowulf important?**
   1. Assuming that Grendel is Sin or Demons’ then Grendel’s mother would be either Lucifer himself, The overall force of Evil in the world (Sin), or maybe even Cain who was directly cursed by God and banished to live beneath the sea. This battle is important because it shows the power of Beowulf who, by the assistance and will of God, was able to vanquish the ultimate source of evil in the world, the evil that spawned Grendel, a beast so terrible that no man could face it except Beowulf.

**BONUS – Do any of these themes seem similar to other works and/or stories that you have heard?**

This story’s basic pattern is very similar certain events of the bible. It could be seen that Beowulf represents God himself or Jesus, and that his defeat of Grendel was the defeat of Sin and Death in this world when he Died on the Cross and rose again as found in the bible. With the second battle against Grendel’s mother representing his Second Coming to earth, where he will eradicate the Devil, and completely rid this world of all sin.

**Passage 1 – pp1237-38 – lines 86-114**

This passage is important as it explains about Grendel’s nature and his heritage, how he came from Cain, God’s cursed and the world’s first murderer. We see Grendel as a pure source of evil, as this passage begins to paint the picture of this horrid demon that our hero Beowulf will fight.

**Passage 2 – pp1250-51 – lines 665-702**

This passage is important because it stresses the piety of Beowulf and the other heroes of this story as Beowulf rests, preparing for his fight with Grendel. This passage is riddled with phrases expressing God’s Glory and power, but my personal favorite is the one which I think holds the most influence “Through the strength of one they all prevailed, they would crush their enemy and come through in triumph and gladness. The truth is clear: Almighty God rules over mankind and always has.”