

Name _____
 Grendel Active Reading Assignment
 English 4

Requirements: Choose ONE of these two options that will most help you make sense of the reading.

1. For each set of reading (mostly by chapter), do TWO of the following FOUR options from Window Notes.
2. OR answer the relevant discussion questions that relate to each chapter.

Bring these with you to class for a quality discussion, and perhaps for credit. If you do not have questions answered before the relevant class discussion, you MAY NOT make them up unless you come in during lunch or after school to complete the assignment with the teacher.

Window Notes: Select two (2) that best help your learning style.

<p>Facts:</p> <p>Write 4 sentences that summarize the plot; identify key things to help you review for the test later.</p>	<p>Questions:</p> <p>Write 4 questions that are most pressing for us to discuss in class. What would help you understand the reading better?</p>
<p>Feelings:</p> <p>Write 4 sentences that explain your reactions to events, characters, style, etc.</p>	<p>Ideas:</p> <p>Write 4 sentences of connections, observations about symbolism, themes, or any insights that you got during the reading.</p>

Discussion Questions:

Use these questions to help provide focus and purpose for your reading. Write your inferences as you read, using textual evidence within each response. Please write at least two sentences per question.

Chapter 1

1. What literally bothers Grendel about the ram on the first two pages of chapter 1? Now, what metaphorically bothers him about the ram (why is he REALLY upset)?
2. How does Grendel consider himself better than the ram and the other animals in the forest?
3. Why does Grendel call his war “idiotic” (Gardner 5)?
4. Why is Grendel so upset with the religious rituals (14)? What do they have in common with the ram?

Chapter 2:

1. Describe Grendel’s interaction with the bull (bottom of 19-22): what does this reveal about Grendel’s character?
2. What does Grendel realize on page 22? How does his realization develop his character? How do you interpret this revelation?
3. What characterizes Grendel’s first meeting with the humans (23-27)? How old is he here? What surprises you about their reaction?

4. How is Grendel's mother portrayed? How does that compare with your expectations?

Chapter 3

1. How does human society appear through Grendel's eyes? (32)
2. What effect does the Shaper have? How? (34)
3. Why is it "incredible" to Grendel that he may be related to men? (36)
4. How is Grendel "torn apart by poetry"? (44)
5. Why does Grendel feel "LOST! "? (45)

Chapter 4

1. Why does Grendel move like a crab? (48)
2. Who is the Shaper and what might he represent? (51)
3. What does Grendel realize about alienation? (53)
4. Why might Grendel want the Shaper's story to be true? (55)

Chapter 5

Connect a school of philosophical thought with your reading—see separate assignment page.

Chapter 6

1. (79-80: "Some three or four nights later..." paragraph) Why is Grendel so joyous in this chapter?
2. (85: "And now I was raining apples at him and laughing myself weak..." paragraph): Why does Grendel defeat Unferth with apples? What do the apples symbolize? Why does he insult Unferth based on his virginity? Why is virginity even an issue with Grendel?
3. (88-89: re-read these pages) Unferth following Grendel to his lair: How would you characterize Unferth based on his actions in this section? What do the references to poetry have to do with this scene?
4. (90: re-read this page) What do you make of Unferth falling asleep in the lair and not being able to fight Grendel? Why is Unferth bitter now?
5. How is this Unferth different from the one who challenges Beowulf in the original poem? Why would Gardner have identified him that way?

Chapter 7

1. At the beginning of this chapter, Grendel states that "Balance is everything" (92): why is Grendel talking about balance at the same time that he mentions he might be crazy? Is Grendel crazy? Why does the chapter end with the references to balance?
2. Who is Hygmod (96)? What does he do?
3. What is the "treasure that will change [Hrothgar's] mind" (99)?

4. Describe Wealtheow's affect on Hrothgar's men? (103)
5. Why does Grendel attack her but then not kill her?

Chapter 8

1. What does each section of this chapter communicate about Hrothulf and his purpose in the novel?
2. Why is Hrothulf in this novel?

Chapter 9

1. Grendel feels that "something is coming" on p.126. What might it be?
2. How does Grendel probably feel about Ork's statement that "nothing is in vain"? (132)
3. Explain Ork's idea that "beauty requires contrast." (133)
4. What might the "black sun with spiders" image on page 137 symbolize?

Chapter 10

1. Why does Grendel fight with the zodiac? (140-)
2. What does Grendel mean by "one evil deed missed is a loss for all eternity"? Does he *mean* it?

Chapter 11

1. How does Grendel react to seeing the Geats—and "the leader"—for the first time? Why?
2. What is Grendel's final theory about life? He thinks, "All order, I've come to understand, is theoretical, unreal—a harmless, sensible, smiling mask men slide between the two great, dark realities, the self and the world—two snakepits." What does this thought, on p. 157, mean?
3. "The stranger" claims that, "Fate often enough will spare a man if his courage holds" on p. 162. How does "the stranger" contradict Grendel's philosophies?

Chapter 12

1. What does the hero mean by saying such things as "*It is coming*" and "*The world will burn green, sperm build again*" on page 170?
2. Who/what is the force Grendel feels on page 173 when he's "feeling the dark power moving in me like an ocean current, some monster inside me, deep sea wonder, dread night monarch astir in his cave, moving me slowly to my voluntary tumble into death"?
3. Does Grendel feel joy at the end? If so, why? If not, why not?