

Beowulf theme analysis essay sample

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As in most stories, the epic poem Beowulf has a theme that applies to almost everyone in real life. In this case, Beowulf showcases that to live a full life, it is often the case that we must actively seek out and overcome obstacles. To find out who we are, it is often necessary to move in directions that will bring us into conflict with the things that we fear. This of course is regardless of the consequences, since everyone needs to have bravery at some point to face these challenges. This story addresses the human need to actively pursue these trials, no matter how terrifying. For example, the main character, Beowulf, continues to seek out danger all because he wants to lead his life through the pursuit of glory. He explains his actions fully when he arrives onshore and speaks to a guard: To that mighty-one come we on mickle errand, to the lord of the Danes; nor deem I right that aught be hidden. We hear—thou knowest if sooth it is—the saying of men, that amid the Scyldings a scathing monster, dark ill-doer, in dusky nights shows terrific his rage unmatched, hatred and murder. (IV, 13-20)

Beowulf and his men go searching for danger and they accomplish this by offering to help Hrothgar defeat Grendel. It was not their personal duty to do this but they choose to be adventurous. Another reason why this is the theme is because Hrothgar returns to Beowulf and requests that he go and defeat Grendel's vengeful mother. Beowulf accepts to fight and defeat her, despite the fact that she is out to specifically kill Beowulf; especially since he is the one who murdered her son. This is exemplified when Beowulf says to Hrothgar, " Each of us all must his end abide/in the ways of the world; so win who may/glory ere death" (4-7). He shows that he believes that he's going to wait for his death anyway; it might as well be while seeking himself and his

glory. Finally, this is a universal theme because it is not only Beowulf and his men who must continue to seek adventure; it is everyone in the real world as well. If every person in the world refused to do this, then nothing would ever get accomplished. That is exactly why fears must be faced and challenges must be overcome; people need to figure out who they are and what they stand for.