

Reading 2 Questions

1. Shield Sheafson was described as courageous, strong, and a torrent of terror at the beginning of the First Fitt. Those are all great qualities of “one good king”. His people were exceptionally loyal to him, respected him, and could trust him to keep them safe.
He was a pirate.
2. The purpose of treasure to kings, in the tale of Beowulf, was to ensure that his Thanes remained immensely loyal because he would give them generous gifts of the treasure he owned.
3. The dragon in *The Hobbit* was consumed by the need to hoard and guard his treasure. A good Saxon king would share his treasure with his people.
4. Festive events took place in the Heorot, like drinking, feasting, and singing.
Ring-giving also happens at the Heorot. It is the center of their culture.
5. The foreshadowing of the downfall of the Heorot eventually came true. The monster Grendel was enraged by the joy and celebration that was in the Heorot and decided to destroy it.
The foreshadowing was that the Heorot would burn. The problem would come from kin-killing.
6. The great and the good, the glory, the feasting. Everything joyous and good brought pain to Grendel.
7. In the Heorot, they were singing of the creation of the earth, the sun and moon, the fruit and trees, and man and beast, all created by the “Almighty”.
8. Grendel was descended from Cain, who became the first murderer, the first of the evil of humanity, when he killed his brother, Abel. Just like Abel, Grendel was angry and resentful toward God and decided to take it out on other people.
Grendel is part of the clan that is marked by kin-killing.
9. Shield Sheafson and Grendel were both described as “a wrecker of mead benches”, which is exactly what Grendel does.
10. I think that the Shieldings believed in some higher power, but they were led astray once hard times came. They turned to idols and demons instead of the one true God.

11. When we are first introduced to Beowulf, we don't know his name, but he is described as a noble and a brazen leader. The Coast Guard says he is a mighty, massive, strong man with deadly armor.
12. Tolkien seems to borrow a lot from Anglo-Saxon culture. The dwarves are similar to the Shieldings. They mostly had generous and great kings in the Lord of the Rings/The Hobbit books, just as they did in Beowulf.
The dwarves love treasure and are very loyal to their kings, just as the Shieldings are.

Reading 3 Questions

1. The poet's description is appealing to the sight and the sound.
The poet focused on the sounds of the army approaching and the light catching on their armor, making them seem more intimidating.
2. I would guess that bee-wolf means bear. A bear eats honey, and is fierce like a wolf.
3. Beowulf has battled beasts, trolls, sea monsters, and warriors.
4. He plans to battle Grendel with only his bare hands, because he has heard that Grendel does not use weapons, and to bring more glory to Hygelac.
5. In line 442, Beowulf says that God will decide if he dies or not, but then in line 456, he says, "Weland wove it. Wyrd must go as it is." Weland is a Norse god who was known for making weapons and armor. Wyrd is the Saxon word for fate. There's some conflict in this, because first he gives the credit to God, and then he switches over to Norse mythology.
6. Beowulf came to Hrothgar's aid partly because Beowulf's father was good friends with the Danes and lived with them, fought battles for them, until he died.
7. Unferth was very envious and he was threatened by Beowulf coming to do the job he should have done. He tells a story about how Beowulf's friend beat him in a rowing contest to discredit Beowulf.
8. Tolkien borrows some of the theme of Norse mythology.