

## Lesson 7 – Thinking About It

➤ **LEARN:**

Before we begin our reading, we are going to do a little activity which will help you better relate to the characters of our story. Through this activity, we will explore different situations in which you've found yourself, situations which you will hear echoed in our tale.

➤ **ACTIVITY:**

1. This is a family activity. Print out the last page of this lesson. Cut apart each short passage, fold each strip up, and place them all in a paper bag. As a family, take turns drawing a question and then sharing your answer.
2. At the end of this unit, you will be doing an oral presentation. For this presentation, you will either recite a passage of *Beowulf* or you will present your analytical essay. If you think you may choose the former option, you will need to keep an open mind throughout your reading in case a certain passage should particularly capture you. I won't put a length requirement on the passage of your choosing, so use your own discretion in choosing one that will make a great presentation.

➤ **FORUM:** Choose one of the topics you discussed with your family and post your answer on the **Forum**.

*Comment on at least one other post.*

What is your definition of a hero? In other words, in your opinion, what makes a hero a hero? Who is/are your hero(es)? What makes this/these person/people (a) hero(es) to you? Tell about a time when you were facing something really difficult—a tough decision, a tough situation. How did you work it out? Did someone help you? Did this person become a hero to you? Why or why not?

Describe a time in your life when you feel you were a hero to someone. What did you do to become that her? What were your feelings during the situation? After you realized you were a hero, how did you feel? What characteristics did you feel you possessed that made you a hero?

Describe a time when you had to do battle with a person. The situation does not have to be a physical battle. It could be a verbal battle, a battle of the minds, or a battle of wills. You could also consider a battle you had with a machine (ie: your bike, a car). Tell about your feelings and whether you won or lost. Also state what the reward was for winning.

Describe a time when you were sent to a place, sent to do something, or sent to meet someone by God (ie: you felt God calling you to complete this specific task). What were your feelings? What was the task? What was the outcome?

Describe a time in your life when everything was going well, and then tragedy struck; everything was going your way, and suddenly something horrible happened. What was the tragedy? What were you feeling? Did you learn anything from the tragedy? If so, what?

Describe a time in your life when you sought praise or fame. What was the situation? Who did you want to notice you? Why did you feel you needed the praise or fame? What was the outcome of the situation?

Describe a time in your life when you stood up for your family, a friend, or your country. What was the situation? What were you feeling at the time? Did you learn anything from the situation? If so, what?

## Lesson 14 – Beowulf 7

### Chapter XXXII (32) (Lines 2221-2311)

#### Summary:

In this chapter, we hear some details about the history of this treasure that now lies deep in a cave, protected by a dangerous dragon. Apparently, an ancient group of people met with their demise, save one lone survivor. The poet relates the lone survivor's words as he laments brighter days gone by. The thief who stole the goblet was a slave and meant no harm in stealing it.

Notes: Do you notice a foreshadow in lines 2309-2311?

### Chapter XXXIII (33) (Lines 2312-2390)

Several different things take place in this chapter. First, are you surprised that Beowulf wants to fight this dragon? Is he a little crazy? I mean, he's got to be around 70 years old, right? But the dragon is destroying his kingdom, and he feels it is his duty to take care of the problem.

Secondly, we hear a few of the details that were lacking in chapter 31 when we covered 50 years in a few lines. We hear some history about Beowulf's victories in battles against humans. In addition, we find out that Queen Hygd offered Beowulf the throne after Hygelac's death (I imagine this caused a bit of attention between Heardred and his mom!). Beowulf refused since Heardred was the proper heir. When Heardred died, however, he willingly took over.

### Chapter XXXIV (34) (Lines 2391-2459)

#### Summary:

Beowulf forces the thief to lead a team of warriors to the dragon's lair. Beowulf knows this will not end well for him, and he becomes quite nostalgic and saddened as he relates some of his family history. He relates how his uncle Herebeald was accidentally killed by his other uncle Haethcyn. Although kinsman generally avenge a family member's death, in this case, there could be no revenge.

#### Notes:

1. Can you spot the litote in line 2432?
2. I struggled trying to see the significance in Beowulf's digression into the tale about his uncles. Obviously, Beowulf is likely to become quite nostalgic at this point. In looking forward to death, it is human nature to also look back over your life; however, generally you look at the good you've done, not something so sad as this situation. What I believe the significance is, though, is that in the situation with the two sons, Hrethel their father could do nothing. His hands were tied; he could only observe the situation in sadness. I think Beowulf can relate to this because he feels a bit helpless. He knows his fight with the dragon will lead to death, but his hands are tied. He can do nothing that will give a better outcome.

➤ **FORUM:** What do YOU think is the significance of this brief digression?

*Respond to this question on the **Forum**.*

### Chapter XXXV (35) (Lines 2460-2601)

#### Summary:

Here Beowulf looks back on some of the other things that have happened in his life—battles he has fought and won; his remembrances paint more of a victorious picture than did his memories in the previous chapter! By the middle of the chapter, Beowulf is ready to fight his last battle. The warrior and the dragon begin to fight. Beowulf gets in one good strike, but it isn't enough. As the fight continues, all of Beowulf's men retreat into the forest except for one!

#### Notes:

1. Notice the epithet in 2513. I think it's kind of funny that the other kings had epithets that left off the world "old". Of course, in many cultures, the elderly are greatly revered!
2. Can you find the litote in line 2564?

### **Chapter XXXVI (36) (Lines 2602-2693)**

#### Summary:

Wiglaf, the one lone warrior who stayed behind to help Beowulf, is mad! He runs into the woods where he finds the rest of the cowardly band of warriors, and he scolds them and tells them they better get back over there to help fight! He wonders how they can expect to return home if they haven't at least tried to help. We don't hear their response, but apparently Wiglaf is unsuccessful because he returns to the battle by himself.

The chapter does not end well for Beowulf. The dragon sinks his fangs into Beowulf's neck, and we wonder if this is the end for him.

Notes: Notice in line 2680, the sword Beowulf is using is named Naegling. I suppose they named their weapons because these swords were so very important to the warriors. They were not only an aid in battle, but they were also somewhat of a status symbol. Many of the weapons, swords especially, had incredible histories, and it was always an honor to receive one such sword as it was handed down to you.

➤ **ACTIVITY:** Read Chapters XXXVII-XLII (Lines 2694-3182)

## Lesson 75 – Julius Caesar Act II, Scene i

### ➤ **LEARN:**

I think by far the most fascinating character in this scene is Brutus. We find Brutus at the beginning of this scene simply contemplating the whole idea of power and Caesar and justice, the idea that he, in lines 65 and 66, comments on: “Since Cassius first did whet me against Caesar, I have not slept.” Clearly, his mind is reeling, and his conscience is waging war within him.

Have you ever experienced something similar to Brutus? I mean, not that you’ve ever been asked to commit murder, but just that you’re going along your merry way, not a worry in the world, and suddenly someone makes a comment or asks you a question that completely changes your thinking? That’s how I imagine it with Brutus. Here he is, friends with Caesar, a man whose popularity could lead him to great things. Brutus is probably feeling pretty good about his friend Caesar, maybe even thinks about how his status could be elevated if Caesar were put into authority. But then his thoughts are broken by Cassius raising this question about how Caesar might deal with “too much” power. In lines 10-36 we hear Brutus’ struggle with this: On the one hand, he says, he’s always known Caesar to be a stand-up guy who wouldn’t abuse power; on the other hand, he mentions, Caesar has never gone completely to the top, so who is Brutus to say how he would handle that? Being made the number one guy might be just enough for him to feel so important he would ignore the “little guys”.

So all of these worries are creeping into Brutus’ mind. And then he receives the letters Cassius planted. That seems to be the end of the personal war waging within Brutus. The war is over. He picks a side. Then Cassius and his conspirators show up, and Brutus more or less takes over, making decisions about an oath, about whether or not to involve Cicero, and about sparing Antony’s life.

The scene ends with an exchange between Brutus and his wife, Portia. Again, we observe the ongoing theme of private self versus public self. Portia knows something is bothering Brutus, but he refuses to open his private self to her.

### ➤ **FORUM:**

1. Discuss Brutus’ motivations. As you compose your answer, contrast him with Cassius. Use textual support for your answer.
2. While Cassius appears to be the mastermind behind this plot against Caesar, the conspirators—even Cassius himself—are quick to follow the advice of Brutus. Explain this.

*Post your answers in the **Forum**. Comment on at least one other post.*

### ➤ **ACTIVITY:** Read Act II, scene ii-iv.

## Lesson 82 – Drama, Drama, Drama

➤ **LEARN:**

I'm sure you guessed already that you would be writing your own drama at the end of this unit, right? In a minute I'm going to give you your writing assignment. First, I want to encourage you by telling you I know that writing a play can sound like a daunting task, but I think you'll find it's not nearly so difficult as you think it is. In order to erase some of your potential trepidation, why don't you take a look at **Writing Tips** for some information about playwriting?

So, are you ready? Here is your assignment:

➤ **ACTIVITY:**

Simple: Write a play!

Challenge: Choose an historical figure or historical event and write a play based on that person or pinpoint in history.

For either choice, be sure to include a Character Description as an introduction to your play.

For this lesson, complete your brainstorming. Don't forget to check with **Writing Tips** for brainstorming help.

## Lesson 93 – *Pride and Prejudice*, Chapters 9 & 10

### ➤ **LEARN:**

Between Mrs. Bennet and Miss Bingley, these two chapters are quite comical. Ever the meddling mama, Mrs. Bennet arrives at Netherfield and boasts about Jane's beauty, tries to convince Bingley to stay around, and argues the merit of the country over the city with Darcy. Clearly Elizabeth is mortified and does all she can at several junctures to lead the conversation elsewhere. Then there is the matter of Miss Bingley who is clearly taken with Darcy and jealous of Elizabeth because she recognizes Darcy's attraction. The exchange about Darcy's letter is hysterical. What trite compliments she pays him, and he simply brushes them away.

### ➤ **FORUM:**

1. What purpose do you suppose is served by the girls' extended stay at Netherfield and by Austen's decision to spend more than a couple of chapters describing it?
2. Discuss this quote from the book about Darcy: "He really believed that were it not for the inferiority of her connections he should be in some danger."

*Answer the questions above in the **Forum**. Comment on one other post.*

- ### ➤ **ACTIVITY:** Read Chapters 11 and 12.