Epic Poetry
“Beowulf” and “Iliad”

GRADE LEVEL: 11th Grade

NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN THE CLASS:
Each class period consists of 21 to 24 students.

SUMMARY:
This unit will focus on two epic poems. The unit and the texts are excerpts found in the students’ textbook, The Language of Literature: British Anthology. We will focus on the heroes and villains of the tales, as well as several poetry terms. “Beowulf” and “Iliad” are two stories about heroes that were written many years ago that still play an important role in today’s entertainment. Students will complete a final project that will assess their understanding of the texts. However, throughout the unit, students will discuss their reactions to the characters – especially focusing on the heroic qualities of the characters.

I CAN STATEMENTS (Some Anticipated Outcomes)
I can summarize each epic poem in my own words through the written word or through pictures.
I can analyze the characteristics of the characters in each poem.
I can compare and contrast the heroes and villains of old with today’s heroes and villains.
I can identify epithets and figurative language in an epic poem.
I can define key words to a text.
I can design a picture, comic strip, song/rap, essay, etc. from what I learned in the stories.
I can justify the actions of each character in the tale.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Reading
Key Ideas and Details
- RL.9-10.2 – Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RL 9-10.3 – Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a test, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

Craft and Structure
- RL 9-10.5 – Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it and manipulate time create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
- RL 9-10.7 – Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.

Writing
Research to Build and Present Knowledge
- W.9-10.7 – Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Speaking & Listening
Comprehension and Collaboration
- SL.9-10.1 – Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and
expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

RESOURCES:
- Student textbook
- “Beowulf Shrinklit” poem
- YouTube clips
- Katy Perry’s “Fireworks”
- Warlord’s “Achilles’ Revenge”
- Movie: “Troy”

INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES/STRATEGIES:

(a) Generalities of Lesson Plans

1. Week One
   Monday – PowerPoint presentation to introduce the time period of “Beowulf” as well as the epic poem itself. Pre-reading writing activity about heroes with a YouTube clip on modern heroes (a collage of Marvel movies). Introduce the characters of the tales and listen to Seamus Heaney’s introduction.

   Tuesday – Warm-up: Harry Potter Alliterations. Refresh what was discussed the previous day. Read aloud “Grendel” and “Beowulf” excerpts – pause for understanding during the reading and after each, discuss the characteristics of the characters. Homework: Interpretive drawing of Beowulf or Grendel.

   Wednesday – Warm-up: Figurative Language worksheet and listen to Katy Perry’s “Fireworks.” Share drawings in small groups and then as a large group. Refresh what was read the previous day and read “The Battle with Grendel” together. Homework: Read “Beowulf’s Last Battle” and come to class with a summary of the passage.

   Thursday - Warm-up: Writing response. Group activity: students will answer questions pertaining to the reading and share answers with the class. Read “The Funeral of Beowulf” and discuss the entire excerpt. Go over Epic Poetry Characteristics chart as a class. Read “Beowulf Shrinklit”

   Friday – Warm-up: Writing response. Discuss “Beowulf” and ask for any questions about the tale. Play “Beowulf” Jeopardy for a review. Pop-quiz following the game.

2. Week Two
   Monday – Warm-up/Pre-reading activity. Introduction PowerPoint to “Iliad.” Hand out jobsheet for Epithet project. YouTube clip on the Trojan War.

   Tuesday – Warm-Up: Writing response. Read aloud Book 18 and conclude with a summary and discussion questions. Discuss point-of-view, theme, wrath of Achilles, revenge, glory, honor, etc. Read aloud Book 22 (Reader’s Theatre). Homework: Re-read at home and complete worksheet for Book 22. Continue to work on Epithet.

   Wednesday – Warm-up: Writing response. Refresher of Book 18. Discuss Book 22 in small group and then as a whole class. Read aloud Book 24. Talk about entire excerpts. Homework: Epithet is due on Friday.

   Thursday – Warm-up: Listen to “Achilles’ Revenge” by Warlord and have students respond to it in writing. Group activity: Students act out a scene from the poem to the class. Homework: Work on Epithet.

   Friday – Warm-up: Writing response. Students turn in their names. Watch clips from “Troy” and discuss the differences and similarities. Introduce culminating project.
3. **Week Three**
   
   Monday – *Warm-up: Citing and Plagiarism. Share some names (Epithets) with the class. Work on Projects in class.*
   
   Tuesday – *Warm-up: Thesis Statements. Work on projects in the lab.*
   
   Wednesday – *Warm-up: Their, There and They’re. Work on projects in lab. Projects due tomorrow.*
   
   Thursday – *Warm-up: Writing response. Presentations*
   
   Friday – *Presentations*
   
   **(b) Lessons will be taught through oral presentation, large group discussion/analyzing and read-aloud, and student presentations.**

**UNIT SCHEDULE**

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<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introduction to &quot;Beowulf&quot; and Epic Poetry</td>
<td>&quot;Grendel&quot; and &quot;Beowulf&quot;, Alliterations</td>
<td>&quot;The Battle with Grendel&quot;, Figurative Language</td>
<td>&quot;Beowulf’s Last Battle&quot; and &quot;The Funeral of Beowulf&quot;, &quot;Beowulf Shrinklit&quot;</td>
<td>Jeopardy</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Introduction to &quot;Iliad&quot;, Epithet Project</td>
<td>&quot;Book 18&quot; and &quot;Book 22&quot;</td>
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<td>Acting</td>
<td>Names due, &quot;Troy&quot; clips and Introduce project</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Share Epithets, Work on projects in class</td>
<td>Lab</td>
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**ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES DURING UNIT:**

Students will be continuously assessed through formative assessment. Students will be randomly called on during mini-lessons and large group discussions. During the large group discussions, students will be demonstrating their understanding through individual and choral responses. There will be exit-slips at the end of each period. The final assessment will be the “Beowulf”/ “Iliad” Tic-Tac-Toe Project.
GENERAL INTRODUCTION LESSON PLAN:

A. Standards: (Common Core)
   - Writing: #3 Write to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
   - Speaking and Listening: #1 – Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborate discussions with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
   - Reading Literature:
     - #4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text.

B. Objective(s):
   - To understand the history/background to Beowulf.
   - To understand and appreciate an epic poem that explores tests of courage.
   - To compare and evaluate translations.

C. Anticipatory Set:
   - The teacher will be playing music to set the mood for Beowulf as the students enter the classroom.
   - After the Background information – The teacher will facilitate a pre-reading writing activity on heroes.

D. Objective/Purpose (told to students):
   - “Today we are going to get a little background/history prior to reading Beowulf so that you can understand the context in which it was written. We will also learn the characteristics of epic poetry.”

E. Input:
   - Task Analysis: Students will need to be able to read and write at an 11th grade level.
   - Step-by-Step
     a. The teacher will have Norse music playing as students enter the classroom.
     b. After attendance is taken, the teacher will begin her PowerPoint that covers the Anglo-Saxon Medieval Periods (The Roman Empire, Anglo-Saxons, and the Danish Invasion).
     c. After the Danish Invasion slide, the teacher will facilitate and writing activity on heroes. How do the students perceive heroes? What are their qualities?
     d. Half-way through the writing activity, the teacher will show a YouTube clip about 21st Century Marvel heroes – this will help students come up with some things that they can add to their writing.
     e. The teacher will then allow a few more moments to wrap up their writing.
     f. Then the class will hold a discussion and make a list of the qualities of a hero (teacher will use their lists and make a wordle).
     g. After the writing activity, the teacher (or a student) will read aloud the history background on page 24 about Beowulf.
        i. There is a brief Old English YouTube clip so that they can here it in its original language.
     h. Then the class will go over the characteristics of an epic poem – pretty straight forward, but emphasize that these characteristics are required.
     i. The teacher will pass out the character list (along with the epic poetry characteristics) and go through the characters.
     j. Due to the fact that the student’s book does not have the introduction/prologue to the poem, the students will read along as Seamus Heaney reads his translation (4:47).
     k. If there is enough time, the students will discuss what they just read/listened to.
     l. The teacher will inform students that they will be reading aloud the next day.

   - Thinking Levels – Bloom’s Taxonomy
     a. Knowledge: Define an epic poem; Identify the main characters; Know the background of the epic poem.

   - Learning Styles/Accommodations
     a. The teaching will be a mixture of Reading, Writing, Listening and Viewing.

   - Methods and Materials
     a. Students will need their journals, a pencil, and their textbook.
     b. Teacher will need the textbook, PowerPoint and the Internet.

F. Modeling
- Listening/Reading along as someone else reads.

G. **Check for Understanding**
   - Checking for understanding will occur though classroom discussion.

H. **Guided Practice**
   - Power Point, Listening and Viewing

I. **Closure/Exit Slip**
   - Students will write down something new that they learned today that they found interesting.

J. **Assessment**
   - Knowledge will be assessed through discussion and the exit slip.
Introduction to Beowulf

The Roman Empire

Anglo-Saxon Period 449-1066

The Danish Invasion

Pre-Reading Activity!

About Beowulf
**Epic Poetry** – is a long narrative poem that deals with the adventures of a hero.

The 7 Characteristics
1. The hero is a person of high importance/status.
2. The actions of the hero determine the fate of many.
3. The hero performs courageous/superhuman deeds.
4. The plot is complicated by the supernatural.
5. The setting is large-scale (foreign lands + long journey).
6. There are long speeches said by main character.
7. It has universal ideas (Good vs. Evil, Life and Death etc.).

**Opening Read by Seamus Heaney**

**Exit Slip**

- On your piece of paper that you used for the hero activity, write down one thing that you found interesting from today's lesson.

**Websites used:**

- [http://www.rajottwinterson.com/images/capt_richard_wm08.jpg](http://www.rajottwinterson.com/images/capt_richard_wm08.jpg)
- [file/2011/06/Beowulf_Seamus_Heaney.jpg](file/2011/06/Beowulf_Seamus_Heaney.jpg)
LESSON PLAN – INTRODUCTION TO “ILIAD” and EPITHET PROJECT:

A. Standards: (Common Core)
   - Writing: #3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
   - Speaking and Listening: #1 – Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborate discussions with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
   - Reading Literature:
     - #4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text.

B. Objective(s):
   - To understand the history/background to Iliad and the Trojan War.
   - To understand an epic poem that explores tests of courage.
   - To identify epithets and create one.

C. Anticipatory Set:
   - Students will complete a short writing prompt at the beginning of the hour.

D. Objective/Purpose (told to students):
   - “Today we are going to get a little background/history prior to reading Iliad, so that you can understand the context in which it was written. We will also review the characteristics of epic poetry and be introduced to epithets.”

E. Input:
   - Task Analysis: Students will need to have understood Beowulf and epic poetry.
   - Step-by-Step
     a. Warm-up/Writing Prompt
     b. The teacher will ask several questions to see what the students already know about the Iliad and the Trojan War.
     c. Iliad introduction PowerPoint
        i. Homer
        ii. Beliefs about historical accuracy
        iii. The Characters
        iv. The Setting
        v. The Cause of the War story
     d. Introduce Epithet Project
     e. YouTube history clip – the Trojan War background information.
     f. Exit-Slip: Something new learned
   - Thinking Levels – Bloom’s Taxonomy
     a. Knowledge: Identify main characters; Identify epithets; Recall the definition of an epic poem.
   - Learning Styles/Accommodations
     a. The teaching will be a mixture of Writing, Listening and Viewing.
   - Methods and Materials
     a. Students will need their journals, a pencil, and their textbook.
     b. Teacher will need the textbook, PowerPoint and the Internet.

F. Modeling
   - The teacher will lead the students through the PowerPoint and also show examples for the Epithet Project.

G. Check for Understanding
   - Checking for understanding will occur though classroom discussion.

H. Guided Practice
   - Power Point, Listening and Viewing

I. Closure/Exit Slip
   - Students will write down something new that they learned today that they found interesting.

J. Assessment
   - Knowledge will be assessed through discussion and the exit slip.
WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED THE ILIAD?
- Another Epic Poem!
- Author: Homer
- Theories
- 8th Century BC
- What does the title mean?
- Western Literature's most famous epic.
- Why are we reading it?

ACCURACY
- Fiction or Non-Fiction?
  - Reflections of truth
  - Agreement that between 1240-1200 BC the city of Troy was destroyed by Greeks.
- How to read it today?

THE CHARACTERS
Characterization is the way in which authors convey information about their characters.

The Greeks
- Achaean – Is another term for the Greeks.
- Achilles – The protagonist and hero of the Iliad. He is the greatest Greek warrior.
- Agamemnon – The King of Mycenae, brother to King Menelaus, and commander-in-Chief of the Greeks in the war. He and Achilles do not get along.
- Paris – Prince of Troy and husband of Helen. He is partly responsible for the war. He is not a great warrior, is self-centered, and is portrayed as a playboy.
- Priam – The King of Troy that has the respect of both Trojans but the Greeks. He is too old to fight, but is known for his wisdom and caring rule.

The Trojans
- Dardan – Is another term used for the Trojans.
- Deiphobus – A Trojan warrior and son of King Priam.
- Hector – A Prince of Troy and the commander of Trojan and Greek forces. He is the greatest Trojan warrior and one of the most noble characters in the Iliad. He is known for his integrity and the pain he endures in the poem.
- Paris – Prince of Troy and husband of Helen. He is partly responsible for the war. He is not a great warrior, is self-centered, and is portrayed as a playboy.
(Pallas) Athena – Goddess of Wisdom and War. She plays an important role in the myths of the Greeks.

Apollo – The god of prophecy, light, poetry and music. He fights for the Trojans.

Heracles – This is another name for the widely known Hercules.

Thetis – A sea nymph and mother of Achilles.

Zeus – King of the gods, he was neutral in the war until a plea for help.

Mount Olympus – This is the home of the gods and is believed to be where the Greek gods and goddesses live.

THE SETTING OF THE STORY

- The Trojan War
  - Trojans vs. Greeks
  - The cause .....

THE CAUSE OF THE WAR...A STORY TOLD BY MISS JAGER

- Hera
- Athena
- Aphrodite

Paris chooses between the goddesses.

Paris takes Helen to Troy.

EPITHETS

- A descriptive term (word or phrase) that either accompanies or replaces a name or name of a thing.
- Sometimes called a glorified nickname.
- Examples:
  - "Thou beslubbing swag-bellied rascal!" - Shakespeare
  - "He who must not be named" - Harry Potter
  - "The boy who lived" - Harry Potter
  - "Windy City" - Chicago
  - "Earth-shaker," "dark-haired god powerful lord," and "enrider of the earth" - Poseidon

GLEN
Hands of Art.

ROTATION
Ecology

The Sword of Salvation.

Jeremy
This is England!

Knight