Paideia Discussion: Grendel/Beowulf

Most of the time, once we decide where we stand on an issue, we refuse to communicate with others in a controlled, intellectual, and adult manner. A Paideia discussion is a prepared conversation that will teach you have to both agree and disagree with others constructively. If you do not do the preparation, you cannot participate in the discussion and will receive a zero for classwork for the day. Please do the following to prepare:

Complete your readings for *Grendel* and *Beowulf*

Answer **SIX** of the following questions (including question 10) with at least one piece of textual evidence to back up your answers:

1. What are the similarities between *Beowulf* and *Grendel*? Think about wording, topics, *characterization*, etc.
2. What are the differences between *Beowulf* and *Grendel*? Think about the wording, topics, *characterization*, etc.
3. Which text do you have the strongest emotional reaction to? Why? Which text do you enjoy more
4. Think about the perspective and point of view of each text. How do these literary devices affect the way you perceive the text? Do you agree or disagree with the use of perspective to influence you this way?
5. Look at the female characters in the text. Who speaks? Who has influence over other characters in the tale? What does this say about how our societies view gender?
6. Look at the different species/groups of people in the texts. How are the Decedents of Cain (monsters, Grendel and his mother) portrayed? How are the humans (Beowulf, Unferth, Hrothgar, etc.) portrayed? How do you feel about them?
7. Beowulf believes in the power of fate while Grendel is an existentialist. How do those differing views affect how you perceive the characters? How do those different views change their actions?
8. If you could rename one of the texts, what would you rename it?
9. Do you like *Beowulf* or *Grendel* better? Why?
10. Write one question for the class. What is something that you want to talk about?

Note: This is the first discussion that will be graded for more than participation. Your grade will be based on the depth of your answers, the quality of your questions, your ability to agree/disagree constructively, and your willingness to keep the intellectual conversation moving. YOU MUST SPEAK THREE TIMES DURING THIS DISCUSSION.