

Senior English Summer Reading Requirements

Please note that all works required will be used in next year's curriculum. Discussions, compositions, and tests will be based on these assignments.

First Assignment - Due in WCS office by Thursday, June 29

Read *Beowulf* translated by Seamus Heaney (ISBN-13: 978-0393320978). His translation is both beautiful and powerful. It also helps that this translation is the easiest for students to understand. Write a synopsis (1-2 pages) of the story, then do the following:

You are a Hollywood director who has been hired to cast and direct a version of *Beowulf* set in modern times. From the actors and actresses available today, select those you think would best portray the characters as represented in the original story. State why you have selected those performers and how their physical and emotional presence make them appropriate to play those characters. Then, decide what the setting of the movie will be and where you will film it. Explain why you have chosen this location. Finally, select one scene from the story that you would enjoy filming. How would you portray it? What changes would you make in the story that would better suit it for the visual medium of film? Be creative and have some fun with this, but don't take this assignment lightly and make absurd choices in order to be funny. Your grade will reflect how seriously you have taken this assignment.

Submit your assignment in essay form (one to two pages long) along with the completed synopsis. *Remember: there are two parts to this assignment--a synopsis and your Hollywood treatment!*

Second Assignment - Due in WCS office by Thursday August 10

Read *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* translated by Simon Armitage (ISBN-13: 978-0393334159). This 2008 translation captures the poetic essence of the Middle English original in very readable modern language. After reading, write a synopsis (1-2 pages) of the story. Then write an essay considering one of the following themes:

How does the Genesis story of the Fall play a vital role in the poem? What aspects of the Genesis story can be seen affecting the poem? How does the Christian content serve as instruction for the reader? What aspects of fallen human nature does the poem explore? In general, look into how the story deals with biblical themes and carries a Christian message.

If you have any questions during the summer, email me at housecarl@bellsouth.net.