Beowulf the RPG

David Hawes
Western Oregon University, dhawes06@wou.edu

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Beowulf the RPG

By

David B. Hawes

An Honors Thesis Presented to the Honors Committee
of Western Oregon University
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Graduation from the Honors Program

Dr. Henry Hughes, Thesis Advisor

Dr. Gavin Keulks, Honors Program Director

Western Oregon University

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Abstract

As the recent 3D movie rendition of *Beowulf* proves, the Anglo-Saxon epic is still in the minds of storytellers even over a thousand years after the first scops recited it. Recently in human history, video games have appeared as a form of storytelling. In particular, the role-playing game genre particularly suits epic stories, and thus would be an ideal carrier for the themes and adventures which have made *Beowulf* stand the test of time. Thus, this thesis seeks to create a faithful adaption of *Beowulf*. 
Reflective Essay

What follows is a reflective essay detailing my personal connection to both literature and video games, this thesis's larger context, and the integration of existing Beowulf scholarship into the script and demo of this video game.

Personal Connection

All my life I have loved storytelling and books. My mother taught me to read before I even entered Kindergarten, and I have been a bookworm ever since. I have always had an appreciation of literature and the craft of writing and have experience in many genres: academic writing, newspaper articles and editorials, poetry, short stories, novels, children's books (my fourth grade hit *How Fireflies Got Their Lights* still rests on my mother's bookshelf). Demonstrating my knack for writing and a lack thereof for illustrations, I invented a myth to explain how fireflies got their glow. In the sixth grade I wrote a science fiction story and it started to fan an ember that continued to kindle and grow through seventh grade Creative Writing class and up to the summer after ninth grade, when I bought a Macintosh Performa 575 with fifty dollars from my summer job. Since it had few games and no internet access, I quickly turned to the word processor. It came at the culmination of my until then unrecognized love for writing, watching Peter Jackson's *The Fellowship of the Ring* for the first time, and reading *The Chronicles of Narnia*. I wrote all that summer, invented a fantasy world to write in, and felt the rapturous joy of getting caught up in a story both told by others and written by myself. I continued by becoming a high school newspaper journalist, which really refined my writing and taught me to write concisely. In college, I have taken myriad literature
courses and writing workshops, which I enjoyed just as much for reading others' works as composing my own. I will graduate in a few short weeks with a B.A. in English—a testament to my passion for reading and writing.

Of Beowulf, I had my first experience in high school, APLA 4, Advanced Placement Language Arts 4—that is, senior year. We read some excerpts and the only thing I really remember about reading it then was an activity that asked us to imagine the Taberd, which I think was a hall in which a scop (poet) would have recited Beowulf. It would not be until my ENG 204 (Survey of British Literature) class that I would hear any more about Beowulf. This time, I read the entire thing. It struck me for its haunting, elegiac tone amidst epic battles. Although Beowulf did many heroic feats and slew monsters, it did not feel like works like The Odyssey or The Aeniad, which I had read for ENG 107.

Running parallel to my story of growth in literature and writing is my life as a "gamer." Even as a small boy, I loved board games, game shows, card games—The Price is Right being my favorite game show. My mother told me that when I was very young my grandpa laid the Plinko board he made himself against his legs as he sat in his easy chair and I would drop checkers down. As an adult I now enjoy more complex, skill-demanding board games than when I was a boy, but that boy still is very much alive in me. For this essay, however, I will focus on the video game genre. It surprised me when looking back in my memory that video games were a part of my life even as a kid, playing Super Mario Bros. and Duck Hunt on my dad's Nintendo, though I was nowhere near as good as my dad. My dad bought a Super Nintendo when I was older and we
enjoyed an updated version of the first three *Mario* games among others, but the first game that really hooked me was *Pokémon Blue* for the original Game Boy. I vividly remember staying with my cousin in Vancouver and playing his Game Boy for most of the time. I even remember my being stumped at how to exit the house you start in because I didn't realize the mats on the edge of the screen marked the doors. This was my first exposure to a *role-playing game* (RPG), which I will define later.

The Christmas after my experience with the Game Boy, I asked for, and received, a Game Boy Color of my own, as well as a Nintendo 64. Video games began to occupy a good chunk of my free time, and as I grew up my tastes in games matured. Out of many genres I played, a few began to emerge as my favorite. In my younger days, I favored "platformer" games, like *Super Mario Bros.* and the *Donkey Kong Country* series. They—somewhat successfully—improved my hand-eye coordination. Eventually, though, I returned to the genre of the game that I had played so much those days in Vancouver, *Pokémon Blue*, a role-playing game. After playing other excellent RPGs like the *Golden Sun* and *Final Fantasy X*, it became my favorite genre. While many games test reflexes or hand-eye coordination, RPGs tend to focus less on the game-like aspects and more on the story that it tells and the characters within it. It is a very unique method of storytelling because it combines cinematic elements, dialogue, exposition, and other storytelling tropes with interactive elements and the strategy of games. Rollings and Adams summed up RPGs nicely when they said an RPG "allows players to immerse themselves in complex worlds with [many] gameplay options."
When it came time in the fall of 2008 to start my thesis, I decided early on I wanted to adapt a work or works of literature into an RPG. I had bought *RPG Maker VX* the previous summer and made part of an RPG with it, and so I had the experience. It took a long time to commit to one work, but when I decided on *Beowulf*, I knew I had made the right decision. Its mood, characters, its themes, and most importantly, battles, are all perfect for a fantasy RPG.

**Larger Context**

It is one thing to make a video game¹ as a hobby, but another entirely to make one for a university thesis. Thus, "I want to" is not quite a good enough justification. In the end, my justification comes from this game's deep grounding in literary criticism and its potential for use in the classroom.

We've come a long way from Pong, and yet few games are praised for their art. It is akin to the situation with popular fiction novels: whatever the customer wants, you give them, as fast and cheap as you can get it. Video games today are more or less judged for their entertainment value (how fun the game is), technical aspects (how well the game takes advantage of the capabilities of its hardware), and how good the story is, usually in that order of importance. For example, the popular *Pokémon* series of games have great gameplay², great graphics, and almost no story or characterization.

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¹ By video game in this essay, I mean any kind of game run on computer, gaming console, or arcade game which allows the player to take on a persona of a character within the game. So although there are computer adaptations of games (e.g., solitaire) they do not involve the player taking on a different persona and thus I do not refer to them when referring to "video games" in this essay.

² Gameplay, written as one word, refers to the interactive elements within a game like rules, pressing a button on your game controller, and so on. For instance, in the board game *Clue*, the story is of people trying to solve Mr. Boddy's murder while the gameplay involves rolling dice, drawing cards, or marking off notes on your notepad.
This seems like a problem for an English major who has studied for four years about the importance of plot or characters. I do however, believe that there is merit in this ordering. An artistic video weaves gameplay and story elements together and can aspire to the same level of aesthetic value in poetry when a sonnet's rhythm reflects its meaning.

For this I will use an example of one of my favorite games for the Nintendo DS called *The World Ends With You*. In the game, the player character, Neku, wakes up in the middle of a street in Shibuya, Japan, with no memory of how he got there and is quickly thrust into the dangerous Reaper's Game, playing for his life. In this case, the story perfectly mirrors the gameplay, in that the player is also playing a game and has no background knowledge to fall back on. In *BioShock* for the Xbox 360, the big twist is that the player character, Jack, finds out that he is actually a sleeper agent who was programmed to obey any order that included the phrase "would you kindly?" The person manipulating him was Atlas, the voice at the other end of the radio, supposedly trying to help Jack out of the city of Rapture. This allowed the game makers to make a statement to the player about the blind following of directions given by the video game. This is similar to reading a poem about poetry, which although over-done, is appreciated and admirable in the artistic world.

Can there be art in video gaming beyond making its artificiality natural? Of course. Even within *The World Ends With You* there are examples. The main methods of

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3 The player character is a character who is directly controlled by the player, as opposed to a non-player character, which is one whose actions are pre-programmed by the computer. Player characters are usually the protagonists of the story.
attack are used by wearing pins that allow the player character to perform superhuman feats. Psychokinesis, for example, lets the player move obstacles like cars or traffic cones around the screen and damage enemies with them. From a story standpoint, this same idea of imbuing pins with magical powers comes into play with the character of Rhyme, who dies. Her soul is placed into a pin and becomes the method of attack for her brother. Here is a aesthetic blending of gameplay and story.

Another interesting perspective unique to video games is their ability to give the player ownership or control of the narrative. When Beowulf in my game slays Grendel, it is not just that the players feel emotionally invested in Beowulf as a character—it is because in a sense, the players themselves have slain Grendel. Just as Beowulf must have felt an adrenaline high after finally ripping Grendel's arm off, if the game is balanced right and a true challenge was set up, the player can also experience that same adrenaline, albeit to a smaller degree. It was not merely that the player was merely engrossed in the story enough to identify with Beowulf; the players themselves have a tangible challenge to overcome. Thus, turning an ancient epic poem into a video game seems to be a good way of bridging the 1300+ year gap between the modern student and that ancient scop who composed Beowulf.

Inevitably, this is the great potential of Beowulf: the RPG; to be a pedagogical or didactic tool rather than primarily an aesthetic experience. I don't believe my video game to be revolutionary or uniquely artistic in an indelibly "game" way. The art in my game is mostly derivative of the poem itself (which is hardly to be complained,
considering the greatness of the poem) or of storytelling tropes in general. Thus, my
game is not meant for the art connoisseur.

However, my game is not meant to regurgitate the plot or chug through a lesson
plan of plot points. I wanted to distill the poem and pass on its main flavor to the
students, not teach merely the plot points and poetic style. I wanted the player to get a
little glimpse into the poem removed from the barriers such an ancient document
inevitably has. For this reason, I aimed to achieve a balance between natural styled
speech and the alliterative Anglo-Saxon verse. I strove to alliterate where possible and
also use kennings, and these features found their way easily into my writing. I did not
attempt to write it in Anglo-Saxon verse with "paired half-lines... linked by alliteration on
stressed [sic] syllables" (Donoghue xvi). Such a deliberate pattern is great in poetry, but in
a video game, it would become cumbersome quickly. So I see my work not primarily as
an artist, or a teacher with a specific academic agenda, but as a transposer, who tries to
lift the poem out of its medium and place it in a new one, retaining its flavor. To this
end, alliteration was a spice that smelled very strongly of Beowulf.

Since video games are just now getting their toes in the door of academia, on
that ground my game is well justified. The next question, though, is whether or not my
game has a place since there is already a Beowulf-based game. Thankfully, Beowulf: The
Game, was based on the 2007 Zemeckis film, which for the purposes of research I
played and watched. Games based on films are particularly pre-judged to be awful by
the gamer community, and their prejudices (and reviews) were correct in this case. Both
the movie and the game made Grendel's mother into a succubus who seduces Hrothgar
(and thus gives birth to Grendel) and later Beowulf (and thus gives birth to the dragon).

The movie and the game made Hrothgar into a fallen man getting his just deserts by Grendel's raids and Beowulf into a fallen hero who defeats Grendel but begets an even greater evil in the dragon. Both are interesting themes, but disturbed me in that they removed the themes in the poem that resounded so strongly within me when I read it, namely, that of mourning of the passing of noble heroes.

*My thesis offers Beowulf: the RPG (or role-playing game). Video games are broken into genres much like movies, but genres are based on gameplay rather than content. For example, platforming games are ones in which the player has to guide characters across a level, jumping and running to dodge and hit enemies. Super Mario Bros. is the classic of this genre. There are hack-and-slash adventure games, in which "button-mashing" is the game mechanic of choice (quick, rapid combos of fighting moves pulled off by pressing keys). Beowulf: The Game, as discussed above, is a paragon of this genre. A role-playing game, however, is the epic poem of the gaming world. Strategy is valued over dexterity, and character development and plot are given high status since there is generally not a time limit to rush through. RPGs generally deal with saving-the-world missions or others on a like scale. Whereas games like Mario feature one main character, RPGs usually feature one protagonist and several companions fighting together. The combat in most RPGs is not in real time, so players can plan their whole team's actions ahead of time.*

It would seem it was fate that Beowulf would become an RPG. After all, J.R.R. Tolkien, the renown Anglo-Saxon scholar and very influential Beowulf critic, has been
called the father of the modern fantasy genre. Creatures similar to his elves or dwarves have been a staple of fantasy stories, which in turn are quite often the setting of RPGs. You might even say that this progression was inevitable.

**Defense of My Artistic Choices**

Early in the research process, I was excited that I'd get to delve into Norse mythology and fill out the religious background that was absent in the poem save some later interpolations of Christian references. I was confused about where to start until I read J.R.R. Tolkien's posthumous book *Beowulf and the Critics* published just five years ago. It changed my thinking about the religious background of the poem. Tolkien makes the claim that in regards to the mixing of paganism and Christianity, "the poet tried to do something definite, and difficult, which had some reason and thought behind it, though the execution may not have been entirely successful" (Tolkien 134). Simply put, the references to Christianity in the poem were planned and made by the poet, not added later. There are a few spots where a later scribe accidentally or not added some Christianity into the poem, like in l. 2186, when *drihten Wedera* ("Lord of Hosts") is substituted for *drihten Wedera* ("Lord of the Geats")—this is clearly an error by a scribe who was familiar with the phrase *drihten Wedera* from Christian texts. The evidence, Tolkien says, rests in the different religious perspectives of the speaker of the poem, Hrothgar, and Beowulf. Hrothgar is shown by the author to be "a wise and pious and noble monotheist, who refers all things to the favour of God, and never omits explicit thanks for mercies." Beowulf on the other hand shows very little distinction between
God and the old pagan belief in *wyrd*, Fate. In fact, Tolkien goes so far to say that Beowulf was originally a Christian character rewritten as a heathen to fit the poet's purposes. The poet was a Christian, according to Tolkien, who wanted to write about his country's heathen history, showing that though it was "pagan... [it was] not ignoble and fraught still with a deep significance, a past that itself had depth..." (139). Thus, I did not attempt to add any references to the Norse gods where the poet himself did not. I stayed within those ground rules, with Beowulf's conception of God the same as that of *wyrd*, and Hrothgar as a monotheist.

The second interesting choice I had to make revolved around the swimming match with Breca (and also, his "swimming" back to Geatland from Frisia). Karl Wentersdorf's article "Beowulf's Adventure with Breca" asserts that the verb translated "swim" is actually a less marked term than in English and it could also refer to traveling the ocean by boat, thus the contest was not a "swimming" match but a rowing one. He cited a text called the *Thidrekssaga*, in which a hero named Thidrek who traveled nearly the same route as Beowulf from Frisia to an island near Geatland, in a hollowed-out log (Wentersdorf 142). Thus there is both linguistic and literary evidence that it was a rowing match. I found this much more plausible since other than Grendel, his mother, and the dragon, there aren't any supernatural or superhuman episodes. It is still an amazing feat for Breca and Beowulf as boys to *row* for seven nights, but much less problematic since they held swords and wore armor. In the case of the return from Frisia, I have an even harder time imagining Beowulf carrying thirty swords, much less swimming with them!
Finally, two other journal articles influenced my game decisions. The first, "What Kind of Seat is Hrothgar's gifstol?" tackles a strange detail. The poem in lines 168-9 states that Hrothgar's *gifstol* cannot be approached (or attacked) by Grendel. Traditionally, this has been held to mean a throne, from which a king (a ring-giver) would give his gifts. However, this interpretation of the meaning would make Beowulf seem power-hungry, since the only other use of *gifstol* in *Beowulf* is in reference to Beowulf's getting burned down by the dragon (McGillivray 278, c.f., l. 2327). If Beowulf is anguished only that his throne is burning (when all the surrounding buildings are aflame too) then that seems a deep moral flaw in the hero. However, if it refers to the hall, then Beowulf is anguished by the destruction of a symbol of his people's power. Furthermore, but it would seem weak protection for Hrothgar if only his throne was safe from Grendel. McGillibray, then, believes that Hrothgar's *gifstol* (that is, his entire hall Heorot) cannot be attacked by Grendel, this explains why Heorot is not in shambles: Grendel can trespass in, or kill the thanes, but he cannot harm the hall itself. This actually caused me to re-do one of my maps in the video game, where initially Grendel knocked out the whole wall around the door to get in. Now, he simply removes the door, which according to McGillivray, was possible. Finally, Scott Gwara's call to a more straightforward reading of Beowulf's reaction to the dragon-treasure certainly colored my ending. Neither the speaker's condemnation of Beowulf's greed nor exaltation at his sacrifice were appropriate readings according to Gwara. Beowulf was simply appreciating what he gave his life for. I leaned a little more to the sacrificial reading, making note of the bounty Beowulf left for his people.
While it would be impossible to track each other individual change or choice, what follows will justify the major departures from the poem. First is the inclusion of my original character Cuthferth as the player character. It would seem that Beowulf himself would be the better choice, especially since he becomes the player character in the game after defeating Grendel. I did this to allow the suspension of disbelieve. It would be unbelievable if a seasoned warrior, killer of thousands, has to be told how to equip a sword, run, or fight. In addition, Cuthferth allows a detachment from Beowulf that echoes the third person perspective of the poem. Furthermore, if I were to start with, like the movie game, Beowulf and Breca’s match, I would run into the problem of showing an event out of sequence from its use in the poem. In many cases I condensed or expanded the poem, but I kept the progression of events the same.

The episode with Banan in the RPG was not in the poem and represents the first dungeon of the game. I included it to introduce the Germanic principle of weregild. Banan (which, not coincidentally, is an Anglo-Saxon word meaning "killer") accidentally killed a nobleman and hides out in the forest since he cannot afford the weregild. Since the players are familiar with the importance of weregild in the society after this episode is complete, they understand the significance of Beowulf’s mission to rescue Heorot, since Hrothgar once paid Beowulf’s father Ecgtheow’s weregild.

The strengths and weaknesses of weapons were pulled from various sources. Most games evoke a magic system of strengths and weaknesses (water magic beating

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4 Dungeon, in the context of an RPG, refers to an area players must explore that is not easily escapable, is filled with monsters, and adds little to the plot except for a crucial item or character the player needs to find within it.
fire magic, for example) but since Beowulf only mentions enchanted swords and armor, it didn't seem appropriate. Therefore, I used the RPG *Fire Emblem*'s system as my model, which uses a rock-paper-scissors type system to determine which weapons are effective against others.

Since there was no combat magic available within the context of the poem, I had to invent a different rationale for the superhuman abilities each character acquires, which are an integral component of RPG combat. I decided to integrate the special techniques with the idea of Fate. The characters require Fate's providence to accomplish special sword techniques or spear thrusts that have additional effects beyond simple damage. Players must expend their character's Wyrd Points to perform these feats—representing the limited allotment of providence the Measurer metes out.

I am rather pleased about how that rationale worked out since it reinforces Beowulf's conception of God. It gave the strategies involved with magic without evoking anything that wasn't in the poem.

**The Road Goes Ever On and On**

Designing and inventing this role-playing game out of Beowulf was a daunting task. Often I felt not like Beowulf, but Unferth, the beer-talker and scoffer at undertaking this thesis, or Don Quixote, tilting at windmills. My game, while it would never survive in a commercial environment without a team of proper programmers, artists, and publishers, may yet be a way of showing that games can be studious, intelligent, and relevant to a teenager. If teenagers can spend hours trying to save the
world from a giant monster in *Final Fantasy X*, why can't they spend hours trying to save Heorot from Grendel?
Script

Act 0 Scene 1

HEOROT

Hrothgar and thanes are seated in the mead hall. Background music is a harp-tune.

Harpist: the Almighty made the myriad Earth-wonders

Greenest grasslands girded with the waters

He set those light-spheres, sun and moon

To illuminate the Earth and humankind

And adorned the abdomen of the earth

With branches and brambles, breathing life

So mortal man and animal might thrive.

Hrothgar: Bravo! Thank you, song-weaver! Now, my maids, bring the mead so my thanes may celebrate!

Maids bring mead. Darkness falls and the thanes sleep after Hrothgar has retired to his palace.
Background music, however, changes, as GRENDDEL bursts into Heorot. An animation shows him ravaging the hall, dragging off thanes. The screen fades to black and the title screen appears. The screen fades again and says “12 Years Later”

Act 0 Scene 2

GEATLAND VILLAGE Cuthferth lives in a house in the village. He has a HELM there he must take to progress. His bed doubles as a healing station. There is a smithy and an apothecary in the town.

Trainer: Are you ready to be trained?

(Yes answer makes screen fades out, fades into Training map).

Trainer: First of all, put on your helm. Press ESC to open the menu. Then select Equip. Scroll down to Head, and press ENTER and then select the item you would like to equip. Then press ENTER or again to equip the item. Press ESC to exit that sub-menu.

(After it is equipped, Trainer says this).

Trainer: Alright, son, let’s see how fast you can run. Hold down SHIFT or to Run. Run over to that treasure chest and bring me back what’s inside.

(After spear is taken out:)

Trainer: Alright, good work soldier. Equip the spear you just got out of the chest.
(Waits for Cuthferth to equip Basic Spear).

Trainer: Meet Halyard, your sparring partner. Listen to me and you might be able to beat him!

Start Battle Processing. Forced Actions throughout.

Trainer: Alright, when it comes to battling, you have 4 options: Attack, Fate, Item, and Escape. Attack is a basic assault with your equipped weapon. Give it a try.

(force both characters to use a basic attack)

Now, if you only use basic attacks, battles will be long drawn-out affairs, and the Measurer isn’t likely to favor you. No, you must use your allotted Fates if you want more decisive victories. A Fate is any special skill you must exert special effort to attempt. Your ability to tempt Fate is measured by your Wyrd Points (WP). Once your WP reaches 0, you can no longer use Fates. Go ahead and attempt your Dual Attack Fate—a swift one-two punch that hits an enemy twice.

(force Dual Spear from both players)

Later you can check an opponent’s status. Go to attack, but instead of pressing ENTER, press the Shift key. Now you can see his statistics. You’ll need to learn some Reconnaissance Skills (Recon for short) to fill in the missing data, but without Recon you can still see a general idea of any target’s HP and WP levels.
Alright, soldiers, that’s enough. Save your strength for real battles! Retreat!

Trainer: I’ve asked the smithies, the apothecary, and the town cook to explain items to you.

*Next area includes 2 NPC Blacksmiths one selling Armors and the other selling Weapons. They will not sell anything right now but will explain the Elements. The apothecary and cook both sell medicinal (former) and food (latter) items.*

Armorer: There are three types of Armor: Helm, Body, and Shield. You may equip one of each type, unless you use a two-handed weapon. In this case, you may not equip a Shield. Armor, obviously, increases your DEF, but may have other effects as well.

Weapon-seller: There are three main types of weapons which each have a strength and a weakness: THRUSTING which beats SLASHING which beats BLUNT which beats SLASHING weapons. There are also PIERCING weapons, which are specifically designed to penetrate armor, and Bows which deal ARROW damage.

Trainer: Are you ready to go to Lord Hygelac’s hall?

*(Yes/No choices, yes takes to hall).*

**Act I Scene 1**

Hygelac’s Hall
King Hygelac’s retainers (including Beowulf, Cuthferth, etc.) are drinking/eating in the mead hall. Maids are walking around. This is an autorun cutscene.

Thane1: Something’s up, isn’t it?

Thane2: Must be important. I’ve never seen the men this excited.

Hygelac: My thanes, my loyal sword-arms, I have called you here because my nephew, Beowulf, son of my brother-in-law Ecgtheow has something he would like to say.

Beowulf walks to the front of the room and faces the thanes. *exclamation mark*

Beowulf: My steadfast fight-fellows, listen. Two and ten years ago, troubling news spread concerning Cain’s cursed brood: Grendel, the goblin who grabbed thirty thanes dining in the hall of the Dane-king Hrothgar. It’s now time heroes help Heorot. Fourteen fight-fellows and I will wend the whale-road in a wave-walker and rescue Hrothgar’s ravaged hall.

Elder: *exclamation mark* Indeed milord, the thane speaks truth. Someone must help the Spear-Danes. He will win us praise and honor for Geatland and defeat that fiend Grendel.

Hygelac: What say you priest?
Priest: *light bulb* Indeed, fate sides with young Beowulf. Twice today we inquired of the fates, asked advice, cast lots and found most hopeful omens for success in battle with Grendel.

Hygelac: Beowulf, the elders and I are agreed. You must take fourteen warriors and aid the long ravaged Spear-Danes. Take a complement of our finest weapons and rid the earth of the Measurer’s enemies!

Beowulf: It is no coincidence that there are fourteen warriors sitting here in our lord Hygelac’s hall. You fourteen will accompany me to Heorot. If anyone has any objections, speak now.

Ælfgar: We’re with you, Beowulf.

Thane3: Just say the word, and we’re there.

Cuthferth: (in thought) Why would Beowulf choose me to be one of the fourteen?

Beowulf: We set out at dawn!

Codex: Kennings is added to the player’s inventory.

The following are responses if the Player approaches certain NPCs:

Wiglaf (boy): I’m Wiglaf! I want to be a warrior like Uncle Beowulf when I grow up!

Thane2: I’ve never been to the land of the Danes before. Have you?
Priest: Yes, yes, the omens are good. But they boded of trials after Grendel’s defeat.

Ælfgar: I guess I better head to the fletcher to stock up on arrows!

Thane3: Beowulf always speaks of your prowess with a spear. I’ve always favored a sword. Easy to carry, easy to wield.

Halyard: You sure know your way with a spear! My shoulder’s still a little sore!

Beowulf:

Cuthferth: Sir, why did you include me in the group? I haven’t weathered battle before like the others.

Beowulf: I see that Fate favors you, thane. You’re a natural with a spear. And word has gotten around about how you protected your hunting party from a pack of wolves single-handedly when everyone else had been injured. You remind me a lot of myself at your age. Trust Fate, Cuthferth. We must never be afraid to fight God’s enemy. I feel the special call of Fate to grapple with Grendel with my bare hands. But come. We have to prepare. Whenever you’re ready, leave town and meet me in the nearby village. I’ve arranged a boat for us to be built. (When you talk to him again, the underlined text repeats).

Act I Scene 2- COASTAL VILLAGE

Woman: You looking for a boat?
Beowulf: Yes ma’am. I asked Banan to ready a great wave-walker to bear us to Heorot.

Woman: *(beat) *light bulb* Oh! You may want to find someone else. Banan is on the lam.

Cuthferth: What happened?

Woman: Banan was chopping wood to make your boat and the axe-head flew off and killed a passerby—a visiting nobleman of the Brondings.

Beowulf: *(exclamation mark)* What was his name, woman?


Beowulf: It wasn’t Breca, was it?

Woman: *(beat). *exclamation* Oh no, milord. Everyone this side of Midgard would have known if it were Breca—first of all you.

Cuthferth: *(question) thought: Who the hell is Breca?* 

Beowulf: Please continue with your story.

Woman: As I was saying, Banan can’t afford the wergild: 1200 shillings. He’s hiding in the forest. He doesn’t think his kin can afford to help him and he doesn’t have the silver himself.
Beowulf: *(beat).* My father once sought aid from another when he was unable to pay his wergild. I will find Banan and help him pay it, if I can. Men, we’re off to find Banan!

*Codex:* *Wergild added to inventory.*

**Act I Scene 3**

**FOREST-** *Large “dungeon” with some items scattered around and random battles with wolves, bats, and rats. Banan is by a campfire near the middle of the forest.*

Banan: Please don’t kill me! I’ll get you the wergild... somehow.

Beowulf: Sir, we’re not here to collect the weregild... we’re here to help you pay it. If you ready my ship, I’ll speak to the king on your behalf. I'm sure he will make arrangements.

Banan: Oh, lord Beowulf, I didn't recognize you. Forgive me. And thank you, milord. I will not forget this kindness! I should go back to put the finishing touches on your ship!

**Act I Scene 4**

**COASTAL VILLAGE-**

Banan: Milord, thanks. The king’s messenger’s just informed me that he is sending men to find my kin to help me pay the wergild, and he will lend me any money I need. Thank you. You’re ship is moored and ready to go! (If talk to again, he just says “Thanks!”)
Act II Scene 1

DANELAND SHORES

Beowulf & Co. Have just landed on the shores of Denmark.

Beowulf: Thank goodness for an easy crossing!

Cuthferth: It is a beautiful day today. You'd think we were going off with our families for a holiday at the beach, if we weren't 15 warriors clad in armor!

A guard approaches on a horse. He dismounts and faces Beowulf.

Guard: Who are you warriors armed to the teeth that in a stout ship have rowed across the sea here? You look too at ease to be hostile spears, but you also don't have permission from my people to land here either. But you look like a stronger force than have peers among any of my fight-fellows—each one of you a champion, it would seem. Please tell me where you come from and your nation so no one will suspect you of espionage.

Beowulf: Certainly friend. We are of the Geats, thanes and hearth-fellows of Hygelac. My father was a nobleman—maybe you've heard of him—named Ecgtheow. He died when winter-full and even from death is honored by wise men. We hurry to your lord in loyalty; please lead us to Halfdane’s son, your people-protector. We come on a vital mission that I won't keep secret. We've heard—you can set us right if they are wrong—the rumors of a Scylding-
foe—a monster, dark trespasser, that in twilight ravages your master’s hall. I come with aid to Hrothgar: how to defeat his foe, if his troubles are fated to end; if not, he must live in sorrow as long as his mead-hall stands.

Guard: A sharp-minded guard has to discern through promised and actions. I do believe what you say is true, that you are loyal to my lord. Come with me, and I will take you to Heorot. I’ll order my men to guard your brand-new ship until it is ready to bear its heroes back to Geatland.

*The guard remounts his horse and rides away.*

**Act II Scene 2**

**HEOROT- When the Player approaches the herald, the screen fades out and in to reveal all 15 Geats standing in front of Heorot.**

Herald: Who are you, emblazoned shield-bearers, to come to my lord Hrothgar’s hall? I am the herald of my lord and in all my years, I’ve never seen so many strangers—such stout ones at that—come. You clearly come as those on a mission rather than suppliants in exile.

Beowulf: We are fellows of Hygelac. My name is Beowulf, and I need to speak with the son of Halfdane, and explain my mission. If he will honor me by letting me speak face to face, I will tell why we are here.
Herald: I will relay your message to the Dane-king & whatever reply the ring-giver answers, I will tell you.

The screen fades to black and when it fades in we see only Hrothgar and the herald speaking.

Herald: My lord Hrothgar, Beowulf of the Geats has brought a company of respectable warriors, and they request an audience.

Hrothgar: Beowulf? I know his father, Ecgtheow. His mother was the daughter of Hrethel the Geat and men of mine have told how he has the strength of thirty in each hand. He has come by God’s hand to grapple with Grendel and deliver us. That’s what I hope, anyway. Give them welcome from Denmark.

The screen fades again, and when it fades in we see the Geats are in the hall now at Hrothgar’s throne.

Beowulf: Hail Hrothgar, from I, Hygelac’s follower. As a young man I won much renown. It troubled me to hear sailors’ hearsay how this great hall must empty when the day-lighter empties the earth of its rays. All my elder countrymen supported this mission. My war-résumé includes beating 5 beasts, conquering a den of trolls, and slaying sea monsters at night. None of Geat’s enemies remain unavenged. I now come here to do the same to Grendel and overcome him in a one-on-one bout. My only request of you is to allow me to rid Hrothgar’s hall of Grendel—with only my fight-fellows to aid me. To bring glory to Geatland, since Grendel refuses any arms but his own, I too will lay down
shield and blade and wield only muscles and sinew. Thus God’s judgement will fall on
the one whose heartbeat fails. If Grendel should win, he will feast on my fight-fellow
Geats and carry my body away to his den. If I should die, send my armor-suit forged by
Weland back to Lord Hygelac. Fate will do what she will do.

Hrothgar: Beowulf, friend, you come far to do a mighty deed for us. You follow your
father’s oath of fealty to me, forged when Heatholaf fell by your father’s hand. A feud
hovered over your people, and Ecgtheow fled to me when I was winter-few, in the
spring of my kingship. I prevented the feud by paying the Wulfings their kin’s wergild. I
hate to let anyone take up the mantle of Grendel-sufferer—how many of my men have
been dragged to Grendel by Fate’s hand? Yet God can block Grendel from his evils! To
think of all the men under my roof, drinking my mead, have been consumed by
Grendel’s unquenchable thirst. But enough talk! Let’s feast and then you can open your
word-hoard as you see fit!

**Act II Scene 3**

**HEOROT** - A table has been brought in and set with food. Maids walk around with mead.

**NPC Dialogue:**

Thane1: When I’m thr-ough wif Grennel, e’ll ne’er know what... *zzzzz*

Thane2: Try any of the fish yet? It’s outstanding! The kitchen’s out back if you need
some more.
Ælfgar: Danish mead is the best!

Halyard: Slow down, Ælfgar! The mead isn’t going anywhere!

Thane3: I don’t like feasting before a battle... it gives me indigestion.

Beowulf: Grendel will be here at sundown. Get ready before then, and let me know when sundown has come. Oh, and here are some items you might find useful.

*Receives 3 Elixirs and 1 Toadstone*

After, Beowulf will ask whether it’s sundown and the Player can respond yes or no.

**Act II Scene 4**

Unferth: Aren’t you the same Beowulf who vied with Breca? Who rowed the across the sea to stroke your ego? Who neither thane nor thrall could talk out of plying a sea-float even in winters’ storm? You rowed out there for a whole week and Breca beat you true to his boast! Then he had a happy ever after ruling over the Brondings. So I hope you get your just desserts even though you’ve been brave through a battle-buffet before—if you can even stay awake for Grendel’s approach! Pfft. You couldn’t even beat Breca—how will you beat Grendel?

Beowulf: Well, friend Unferth, you have said a lot about my bout with Breca, but it was pretty much just beer-talk. In reality, I was the stronger rower. Breca and I as boys made
our boast—to put our lives on the line far past the shore. As we rowed, we had a sword ready to strike any whales that might threaten us. We raced neck-and-neck—neither of us could break the pace or make a gap. 5 nights passed before the waves and wintry wind pushed us apart. It was then that the sea-monsters attacked—my mail-coat protected me some when they dragged me to the bottom. But I chose my moment and sliced the monsters with my sword. I killed nine monsters and on the 7th day the waves washed me into Finland. Even in the most gruesome war Breca did not do anything on par with that! So I tell you, beer-talker Unferth, my deeds surpass even the severity of Grendel’s murders and blood-feasts.

(Long beat.)

Hrothgar: Well, Beowulf, I have a few last words before as you requested, all Danish men leave the hall to bring glory to the Geats. From the time my hands could grasp a shield, I have never let anyone else hold the reins of this Dane-hall Heorot. Keep it safe, as there is none like it. Stay alert, don’t forget your fame or your foe. If you kill Grendel and live, I will withhold nothing you request.

Act II Scene 5

*Grendel, defeated, stumbles out of the hall, crying its death howls, blood in his trail.*

*Screen fades to black and back in. Beowulf & Co. are in Heorot Background  music changes to an upbeat one. Some of Hrothgar’s retainers enter the room.*
Retainer1: Milord! I saw it! Grendel, writhing with his death rattle fell, drowning in the deeps of his mere!

Retainer2: Hail Beowulf! Nowhere could be found a better warrior-king in the sky above Midgard or any of its vast expanse!

The music changes to a harp melody, and a scop begins to sing.

Scop: Sigemund when his soul sallied from life had no little praise For he died a dragon with its own lifedrops
He under a moss-bearded rock mustered the mission alone And yet his steel stabbed the serpant, bled by the best blade. Thus Sigemund secured the silver-trove and with it, Praise and glory among all people as is proper. Likewise, love and laud are the people’s largesse to Beowulf, both from buddies and from all who draw breath.

The music returns to what it was before the scop. Hrothgar (Hrothgar) stands outside Heorot to address the great crowd gathered. Grendel’s arm is visible to all from the roof. Hrothgar is gazing at it.
Hrothgar: Let the Almighty be thanked for this vision in front of my eyes. A harvest of horrors I’ve heaped from Grendel, but God works all the more wonderfully through such wonders, as is mete to the Measurer, Glory-guard. Until now I had relinquished hope for relief, my hall being stained with sword-sweat—blood washed on Heorot. Much fear followed for even the wise, far too feeble to fight hell-fiends. By the Wielder’s might, our hero hewed a deed such that none of us could contrive or connive. Champion Beowulf, I will love you henceforth as a son. Maintain this fresh familial tie forever. I will withhold no wealth I ward! I have given freely to tiny men for deeds much smaller than yours. May the Wielder reward you beyond the forever-fame your deeds secure!

Everyone enters the hall for the feast. As opposed to the one table from the pre-battle feast, the hall is full of tables and people. Beowulf is given a gold-threaded banner as a present, a breastplate, helm, and sword (the latter three wieldable weapons in-game). Some other, somewhat lesser equipment is given to the thanes. Wealththeow gives a torque to Beowulf (which will be an equipable Accessory that improves the critical hit rate, since he asked Beowulf to wear it for “luck”). Beowulf & Company can roam the town, heal, buy items, etc. They must go to a different dwelling somewhat near Heorot to continue to the next Act.

Act III Scene 1

HEOROT- Snoring sounds can be heard and there are a great number sleeping in the hall. Grendel’s mother makes a loud, mournful wail and enters the hall. One retainer shouts “Grendel’s mother! Wake up!” The retainers and thanes wake up and rush to attack her.
She wails again and jumps to a retainer and snatches him, then pounces and snatches Grendel’s arm. Then she flees Heorot. One retainer leaves the hall and then returns a few beats later with Beowulf and Hrothgar.

Hrothgar: Dead! Aeschere is dead! My best friend, my soul-father, first at my side in any battle! Will God ever dole me anything but dour fate? Grendel’s mother sucks the marrow from my soul-father in some secret den to avenge her son’s death.

(Beat). There are rumors from upland-Danes that two flesh-fiends fester in the fens. Both twisted forms of a dam and the other her troll-brood Grendel. Look for a frigid wood above a mere, weaving its roots into the sod and peat. There you will witness the water ignite over depths never plumbed by people nor beasts, which turn to attack hunt-hounds before hiding in the mere. This is where you, Beowulf, must go to vanquish the vendetta. If you do, I will again show you why I am called ring-giver and my hall a gift-seat.

Beowulf: Sir, let up on your lamenting. Payback for bereaved profits a man more than permitting tears. All men suffer the terminal disease of life, so we must gain glory before breath is gone—the only testament to a warrior. Therefore, let’s pursue this fiend-mother. I swear neither mountain, nor valley, nor ocean abyss will be adequate to stop my chase. Play the man I know you are, milord.

Hrothgar: You’re right. Ready the horses!

Hrothgar leaves. Unferth approaches Beowulf.
Unferth: I’d like to lend you my sword.

Beowulf: Hrunting! The Unbeatable Sword! Thank you. Why don’t you fetch your mail and join my fiend-hunt?

Unferth: Err… well, um… I am not trained to battle underwater… I’d only… hold you back.

Beowulf: Far be it for me to forbid the forfeit of your fame.

(Scene fades to black).

Act III Scene 2

GRENDEL’S MERE- Beowulf & Co. will cross a “dungeon” (that is, the forest/swamp along the mere), fighting sea-serpents on the way. Reaching the mere-proper will trigger a cutscene, during which (behind the scenes) all the party (save Beowulf) will be removed and Beowulf will be equipped with Hrunting as well as enchanted armor.

Beowulf: Hrothgar, if I should die in this battle, please take care of my fight-fellows, and I bequeath all the booty given to me to my Lord Hygelac, to let him know what a majestic ring-giver I met and the largesse he bestowed on me. And give back to Unferth the blade Hrunting he lent me.

A flame appears momentarily on the water. Beowulf dives into the mere, and Grendel’s mother grabs him as soon as he is underwater. She drags him to her den, which is
illuminated by firelight. Swords, shields, gold, silver, and other various treasures are visible, as well as Grendel’s corpse. There is then a forced battle.

Beowulf attacks, but the blow does no damage. The battle is aborted.

Beowulf: Hrunting has failed me! The fiend is bewitched with such strong spell-armor that Hrunting, enchanted sword, does not even nick it! How can I parry her dagger-thrusts without a threat-blade of my own?

One of the swords in the hoard glows.

Beowulf: A sword from the era of the giants!

Beowulf runs to the sword, and takes it. It is equipped to him. Then the battle resumes.

This time, he can damage GM. The final blow cuts off her head.

Beowulf: There lies Grendel’s grievous ghost-gone body. Since his mother stole back her son’s torn talon, I should take a better trophy this time!

Receive’s Grendel’s head and Giant Sword-hilt. When Beowulf exits the den, he comes out on the shore of the mere.

Cuthferth: Beowulf! He’s alive! And he’s got Grendel’s head!

(Scene fades to black).

Act III Scene 3
HEOROT Again, everyone is assembled at Heorot to celebrate.

Beowulf: Lord Hrothgar, I bring you this trophy of victory, barely won. It was God who allowed me to come out as a living conqueror. Hrunting, though it has a keen edge, could not harm Heorot’s foe. It pleased God, however, to show me a yore-sword once wielded by giants, and with it I severed the spine of the monster at the neck. The hag’s blood sizzled the steel, though, and I had to wrestle the monster’s wrists to get even the hilt. So I gave Grendel and his birth-giver what they deserved for their Dane-sins. I swear, Scylding-lord, that you may feast and fall asleep in your hall without fear.

Hrothgar: Engraved on this hilt is the history of battle and the flood which God used to free the world of the tribe of giants. Rune-written is the name of its owner, which I cannot now read.

(Beat.) Beowulf, guardian of the Geats, paragon of all proper things, prudence, and fame, I reaffirm the vows of friendship we made. You are forever the foundation of your people. With this a warning wends: Heremod, a conniving king, who tight-fisted struck too liberally and held his rings away from the Danes, depriving them of honor. By his life-finish, he mourned his lack of mirth. This is the cause of many evils, that the Almighty can bless a lord with success, renown, and wealth, and this clouds the king’s mindful mortality. I urge you, prime protector Beowulf, always keep a momento mori. I myself, before Grendel, had thought all foes of mine had faded out of the world! Thank God I lived to see this gruesome goblin-head! So feast now, and largesses will flow tomorrow!
Act III Scene 4

(Screen fades to black and back in again.)

Beowulf: Unferth, thank you for letting me borrow Hrunting. It aided me as any good fight-fellow should.

Cuthferth: (thought) That was considerate. It really wasn’t Hrunting’s fault it couldn’t bite through the sorcery on Grendel’s mother.

Beowulf: My lord Hrothgar, it is time for us to return to Geatland. Your largesses have been larger than like lords’. If there’s anything beyond beating Grendel and his mother that I can do to win your further favor, name it and I will do it. And should you be surrounded by enemy spears, you can expect a thousand thanes and I to rush to your side. And if your son ever comes to Geatland as an ambassador, he’ll be surrounded by companions and not foreign relations.

Hrothgar: Thank the Almighty for placing those treasures in your word-hoard to be freely given to me. You would make a fine king were Hygelac to die in battle with Geatland’s enemies or sickness. Your deeds have brought the Geats and the Spear-Danes into a lasting covenant. I feel deep in my bones, dear Beowulf, that this will be our parting forever, but if the Almighty allows another meeting, I pray you come quickly back here.”

Beowulf & Hrothgar both *tears*
Act IV Scene 1

FRIESIA- YEARS LATER

In a wintered forest, Beowulf is standing next to King Hygelac with men fighting all around.

Beowulf: Milord? Milord? Dead, damn it!

Beowulf must make his way through the forest, defeating 30 warriors (10 groups of 3) by himself. When he defeats the last group he is at a clearing in the forest that will allow him to escape to his boat. From here he must go back to Geatland and tell the bad news.

Act IV Scene 2

GEAT HALL

Beowulf: Queen Hygd, I come with ill tidings. King Hygelac is dead.

(Beat.)

Hygd: My lord, then you must take the throne. In war times like this, we cannot trust Heardred’s ability to protect our people from threats—he’s too young.

Beowulf: I cannot take the throne while the king’s rightful heir draws breath. He must be ring-giver and shepherd of his people now. However, I will give him all my counsel and advice born from battle-experience.
Act IV Scene 3

_Simple text summary scene_

Text: Over the years, exiles from Sweden, Eadgils and Eanmund, came to Geatland for refuge from their uncle Onela. Onela invaded Geatland after them, and Heardred was killed in the process. Beowulf took up the throne and aided Eadgils in killing Onela.

Beowulf ruled as king for 50 years...

Act V Scene 1

DRAGON’S HOARD

_A great dragon’s hoard filled with gold, silver, swords, a cup etc., are in the cave. A thief sneaks in moving very slowly and takes a cup, sneaking back out. The dragon is sleeping, as marked by *zzzz* balloon icons. A few beats after the thief vanishes, the dragon awakes *exclamation* and he stomps over to where the cup used to be and roars. He flies over the Geat Village, and the village of Geat Hall, burns them._

Act V Scene 2

ONE OF BEOWULF’S HOUSES

Thane: Milord! Milord! Our beer-hall has been burnt down!

Beowulf: No! It can’t be!
Beowulf and the thane go to the hall nearby and he gazes on it.

(Beat.) The throne-hall, standing for the glory of the Geats, is lost.

Beowulf: Thane, prepare 11 of my best warriors to accompany me to that dragon’s lair.

Thane: Very good milord. The dragon’s lair is in one of the barrows north of here.

Beowulf must go through the village of Geat Hall and then up north to the Barrows...

Act V Scene 3

THE BARROWS When Beowulf & co. get there, they see a guard has a man with him.

Guard: Milord, we believe this man to be the one who provoked that wyrm’s wrath.

Beowulf: Explain yourself!

Thief: Milord, a thousand apologies...

Beowulf: Out with it!

Thief: Milord, I found that dragon hoard and... I... stole a cup from inside.

Beowulf: Did you know it was a dragon hoard?

Thief: Well, I, uh, no. No.

Beowulf: The truth!
Thief: The dragon was sleeping there at the time.

Beowulf: Fool! You will lead us to the dragon’s lair, now.

Thief: But milord... I really don’t think that’s a good...

Beowulf: You’re coming. Guard, give this man some mail and a spear. He can be the 13th one of our number.

Thief: Milord I won’t... I can’t.

Beowulf: Now!

Thief: Okay.

The thief hurries into barrows. Every once in awhile flames appear and monsters like wolves and bats in random encounters. Eventually they come near to the correct one. Beowulf turns to address his thanes.

Beowulf: I’ve weathered many wins and losses in fights and battles, With silver-speckled sword swings I reimbursed my ring-giver for his largesse. Since he paid me with land and therefore safety, I was his on-call hero, always first in line to fight for him. I was entrepreneurial as a tyke, gambling my life, but now I am winter-full, and it is as king—not myself—I fight to gain glory for Geatland, but the dragon must leave his rock-bunker and take up my challenge in the open. And if I could, I would fight the treasure-hoarder like I did with Grendel, hand to hand, but this dragon’s breath is full of fire and poison. I
will go in breastplate and buckler, and meet whatever fate has in store. And my thanes, stay here where it’s safe to witness the battle. I claim sole and complete rights to fight this dragon—gaining either all the gold-glory, or taking the every rake from the drake’s talons.

_The battle commences, and at about 50% remaining HP on the Dragon, the battle aborts and the thanes are shown running away, while Wiglaf stays._

Wiglaf: When we swore an oath of loyalty and service to our king in exchange for armor-suits and blade-edges and helms, we promised our service. I don’t care if he wants to fight this battle himself—I’m not running back home while I still carry a sword! Beowulf! Use all your strength to delay your last breath and I shall be with you!

_The battle resumes, this time with Wiglaf in the party as well. When the dragon’s HP gets to 10% or so, Beowulf will try to land the killing blow, but his sword (Nægling) will snap. Then the dragon will counter attack breathing flames at Beowulf and biting his neck, mortally wounding him. Wiglaf attacks the dragon’s belly, weakening the flame attack. Then Beowulf will stab the dragon with a dagger, landing the killing blow._

Wiglaf: Milord—your wound is sizzling!

Beowulf: Venom from the dragon’s teeth. (_Beat._) If I had a son, this is when I’d pass down my armor to him. All that consoles me is the Sovereign will never have qualms about me, since I took care of all in my responsibility and never perjured or provoked fighting in anyone. Help me, Wiglaf. Go to the dragon-hoard and drink in the sight from
the flagon of myriad treasure in there, and bring me back some treasure that I may see
what I have bought with my life here.

_Wiglaf leaves & returns._

Beowulf: King of Glory, I thank you for the riches I’ve bought for my people, leaving
them a bounty on my death-day. Now you, Wiglaf, are in charge. Have my men build a
barrow on the coast after my pyre has extinguished, and that will be my memorial:
Beowulf’s Barrow, that the sailors may navigate ships by. You are the last
Waegmunding, Wiglaf. Fate decreed our clan to extinction, and I must go with them.

_Beowulf dies._

**Act V Scene 4**

**THE BARROW**

Wiglaf: Today is the end of Geatland as we know it. War is wending its way to Geatland
through an old vendetta that still lingers like embers in the bottom of a fire. I foresee
the Swedes taking up arms against us as they did in the old days because Beowulf, our
champion protector, is gone. I’m sure the Swedes will muster troops the minute news
reaches them of our ring-giver’s death. Now we will take the treasure, paid with drops
of our hall-head’s blood, and place it on the funeral pyre with him. Prepare the bier for
the king.
The screen fades, and when it comes back Beowulf’s body is on a pyre. 8 of them (including Wiglaf, Ælfgar, Cuthferth, and Halyard) approach, Cuthferth with a torch.

Cuthferth lights the pyre.

Text: “So the Geat people, his hearth-companions, / sorrowed for the lord who had been laid low. / They said that of all the kings upon earth / he was the man most gracious and fair-minded, / kindest to his people and keenest to win fame.”
**Assets:**

I have listed in the following section an overview of all the maps, non-player characters, and items, and character classes that the script (the dialogue and stage directions, not the computer instructions) depends on to exist.

**Maps**

**Act 0**

- World Map
- Geatish Town
- Training Grounds
- Hygelac's Hall
- Coastal Town

**Act I & Act II**

- World Map
- Channel Between Geatland & Denmark
- Danish Coast
- Lejre
- Heorot (Before Feast)
- Heorot (During Feast)
- Heorot (After Grendel)
Act III

World Map

Lejre

Heorot (GM's attack)

Grendel's Mere

Fen

Mere

Lair (Underwater)

Lair

Act IV

World Map

Friesland (Forest)

Geatish Hall

Act V

World Map

Dragon's Hoard

Beowulf's House

The Barrows

The Pyre / Beowulf's Barrow
NPCs:

Act 0

*Heorot*

Hrothgar, Scop, Grendel, Thanes

*Geatish Village by Hygelac's Hall*

*Smithy Shop*: Armor-seller and Weapons-seller

*Item Shop*: Item-seller (woman)

*House*: Boy and Girl

*Road toward Hygelac's Hall*: Trainer of New Recruits

*Training Grounds*

Trainer, Soldier, Armor-, Weapons-, and Item-sellers

*Hygelac's Hall*

Hygelac, Hygd, Heardred, Beowulf 2 Elders, 1 Priest, 2 Maids

14 Thanes (Including Ælfgar, Halyard, the Trainer, and Cuthferth)

*Coastal Village*

Banan (after found in forest)
Old Woman

Forest
Banan

Act I & II

Danish Coast: Beowulf, Danish Gard

Lejre: Innkeeper, Item-seller

Heorot:

(before feast): Herald, Hrothgar Beowulf & His Thanes

during feast: Beowulf & Thanes, Hrothgar & Queen, Unferth, Scop,

Maids, Cook

Act III

Heorot: Hrothgar & His Thanes & Queen, Beowulf & His Thanes, Maids,

Grendel's Mother, Unferth

Grendel's Mere: Beowulf

Under the Mere & Lair: Grendel's Mother

Heorot: Beowulf & Thanes, Hrothgar & Queen, Unferth, Scop, Maids,

Cook
Act IV

**Friesia:** 30 Fresian warriors (10 groups of 3), Hygelac

**Geatish Hall:** Hygd

Act V

**Dragon's Hoard (Opening Scene):** Dragon, Thief

**Beowulf's House:** Thane

**Barrows:** Guard, Thief

**Dragon's Hoard (Pre-Fight):** Thanes (including Wiglaf), Dragon

**Beowulf's Pyre:** Beowulf (dead), Wiglaf, Geats, Beowulf's Thanes

**Items** (Number of '+'s indicate relative potency, * indicate unique item)

**Weapons**

Fists (*) BLUNT

Basic Sword (+) SLASH

Basic Spear (+) THRUST

Basic Bow (+) ARROW

Fishing Spear (++) PIERCe

Longsword (++) SLASH

Wrapped Bow (++) ARROW

Thane Sword (+++) SLASH

Thane Spear (+++) THRUST & PIERCE
Thane Bow (++++) ARROW

Hrunting (given by Unferth) (*) SLASH

Relic Sword (*) SLASHING

Nægling (wielded in the battle against the dragon) (*) SLASH

Helms/Armor/Shields

Helms, Armor, Shields

Basic Helm (+)
Thane Helm (++)
Hero Helm (++++)

Basic Shield (+)
Thane Shield (++)
Hero Shield (++++)

Basic Armor (+)
Thane Armor (++)
Hero Armor (++++)

Weland Armor (*) (wielded in the battle against Grendel's Mother)

Consumable Items

Smoked Fish (+) HP Heal
Baked Fish (*) 50% HP Heal
Smoked Meat (++) HP Heal
Potion (∞) HP Heal All

Mead (+) WP Heal

Cold Water (++) Revive from KO but only from the Main Menu

Toadstone (+) Cure Poison

Doxaway Apple (++) Cure all Status Problem & a little HP

Updock Carrot (++) Cure Blindness & a little HP

Daylee Bread (∞) HP & WP heal all

Elixir (+++) Revives from KO, even in Battle.

Cherry (*) permanent increase in Spirit stat

**Character Classes**

(+ indicates boosted growth in that stat, * normal, and – stunted)

**Hero** (Beowulf)

ATK +

DEF *

SPI -

AGI *

HP *

WP *

**Equippable Items**

Fists

Swords
Hruntig
Nægling
Relic Sword
Helms, Armors, Shields

Skills (# indicates level learned)

* Judgement (Beowulf uses to land the killing blow on bosses)
1 Triple Punch (attacks 3 random enemies with 1/3 base ATK)
3 Confusion Force (deals BLUNT damage and Confuses 1 enemy)
5 Fire at Will! (ATK+ on all allies)
7 Air Blast (deals BLUNT/WIND damage to 1 enemy)
11 Poisoned Claw (deals SLASH damage and Poisons 1 enemy)
15 Holy Shield (deals BLUNT damage and Dooms 1 enemy)

Thane (Cuthferth, Wiglaf)

ATK +
DEF *
SPI -
AGI *
HP +
WP -

Equippable Items
Spears

Helms, Armors, Shields

**Skills** (# indicates level learned)

1 Dual Spear (deals THRUST damage in two attacks on 1 enemy)

3 Recon Elements (allows player to see the Elements 1 enemy is weak to)

5 War Cry (Stuns all enemies).

7 Recon HP/WP (allows player to see how much HP/WP 1 enemy has)

10 Stun Spear (deals THRUST damage and Stuns 1 enemy)

12 Recon Stats (allows player to see 1 enemy's stats)

15 Jutting Rocks (deals THRUST/EARTH damage to 1 enemy)

17 Mend (Restores HP++ to 1 ally)

20 Piercing Sleep (deals PIERCE damage and puts 1 enemy to sleep)

**Defender** (Halyard)

ATK -

DEF +

SPI +

AGI -

HP -

WP +

**Equippable Items**
Swords

Helms, Armors, Shields

Skills (# indicates level learned)

1 First Aid (Restores HP+ to 1 ally)

3 Cure (Cures Poison and/or Paralysis on 1 ally)

5 Make Haste! (AGI+ on all allies)

7 Fate Favors Us! (SPI+ on all allies)

9 Brace Yourselves! (DEF+ on all allies)

9 Paralysis Attack (deals SLASH damage and Paralyzes 1 enemy)

11 Purge (Cures any negative status condition)

13 Briney Blade (deals SLASH/WATER damage to 1 enemy)

13 Holy Shield (deals BLUNT damage and Dooms 1 enemy)

15 Aid (Restores HP+++ to 1 ally)

Archer (Ælfgar)

ATK -

DEF *

SPI +

AGI +

HP -

WP *
Equippable Items

Bows

Helms, Armors

Skills (# indicates level learned)

1 Triple Arrow (attacks 3 random enemies with ARROW damage)

3 Burden Their Feet! (AGI- on all enemies)

5 They are Doomed! (SPI- on all enemies)

7 Aim for the Eyes! (deals ARROW damage and Blinds 1 enemy)

9 Crack Their Armor! (DEF- on all enemies)

11 Flaming Arrow (deals ARROW/FIRE damage)

13 Dull Their Blades! (ATK- on all enemies)
Works Consulted


Demo Game Screenshots

Act 0 Scene 1.

Bravo! Thank you, song-weaver! Now, my maids, bring the mead so my thanes may celebrate!
Title Screen.
Act 0 Scene 2 opening.
Act 0 Scene 2.

Now run over there and get the spear inside that treasure chest. You can run by holding down the SHIFT key.
Act I Scene 1.

Something's up, isn't it?
Act I Scene 2.
Act I Scene 3. Cuthferth found Banan!
Act II Scene 1.

It is a beautiful day today. You'd think we were going off with our families for a holiday at the beach, if we weren't 15 warriors clad in armor!
Act II Scene 1. Battle with a fish and gull.
Act II Scene 1. The inn at Lejre.
Aren't you the same Beowulf who vied with Breca? Who rowed across the sea to stroke your ego? Who neither thane nor thrall could talk out of plying a seafloat even in winter's

Act II Scene 4.
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