

## Modern English *Beowulf* Passage Handout

### Lines 1-3

So. The Spear-Danes in days gone by  
and the kings who ruled them had courage and greatness.  
We have heard of those princes' heroic campaigns.

### Lines 4-7a

There was Shield Sheafson, scourge of many tribes,  
a wrecker of mead-benches, rampaging among foes.  
This terror of the hall-troops had come far.  
A founding to start with,

### Lines 7b-11

he would flourish later on  
as his powers waxed and his worth was proved.  
In the end each clan on the outlying coasts  
beyond the whale-road had to yield to him  
and begin to pay tribute. That was one good king.

### Lines 12-16a

Afterwards a boy-child was born to Shield,  
a cub in the yard, a comfort sent  
by God to that nation. He knew what they had tholed,  
the long times and troubles they'd come through  
without a leader;

Translation from Heaney, Seamus. *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000.

## Old English *Beowulf* Passage Handout

### Lines 1-3

Hwæt we Gārdena            in geardagum  
þeodcyninga            þrym gefrunon  
hu ða æþelingas        ellen fremedon.

### Lines 4-7a

Oft Scyld Scefing    sceþena þreatum,  
monegum mægþum        meodsetla ofteah,  
egsode eorlas,        syððan ærest wearð  
feascaft funden;

### Lines 7b-11

                                  he þæs frofe gebad,  
weox under wolcnum,        weorðmyndum þah  
oð þætt him æghwylc        þara ymsittendra  
ofer hronrade        hyran scolde  
gomban gyltan.        Þæt wæs god cyning.

### Lines 12-16a

Ðæm eafera wæs    æfter cenned  
geong in geardum    þone god sende  
folce to frofre;        fyenðearfe ongeat,  
þæt hie ær drugon    aldorlease  
lange hwile.