

# Beowulf

## Teachers' brief notes

Anglo-Saxon sagas are stories that mix references to real events with characters and events from Anglo-Saxon legends.

They were told to entertain people, particularly at feasts which involved lots of eating and drinking late into the night!

They also had another important purpose in that that characters and the plot contain important messages about Anglo-Saxon culture, such as the value that they placed on courage, repaying debts and loyalty to ones clan.

The sagas were a way of encouraging these values and passing them on from one generation to the next.

In the most famous saga, the hero Beowulf [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beowulf\\_\(hero\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beowulf_(hero)) battles against three enemies:

- **Grendel** <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grendel>
- **Grendel's mother** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grendel%27s\\_mother](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grendel%27s_mother)
- **An unnamed dragon** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Dragon\\_\(Beowulf\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Dragon_(Beowulf))

In the final battle, Beowulf is fatally wounded.