

Anglo-Saxon Boast Assignment

The Anglo-Saxon hero was celebrated in poetry and song, and he was expected to tell of his exploits and adventures. These tales were his boasts. Beowulf boasts of his prowess in lines 141-166 of *Beowulf*. Using these lines as models, write your own “Anglo-Saxon” boast which meets the following criteria:

- be at least 20 lines long
- explain three of your past accomplishments and boast of one future accomplishment
- imitate the Anglo-Saxon poetic form with four accented beats per line, no end rhyme, and the inclusion of at least four caesuras
- contain four kennings, multi-word metaphors which re-name people, places, or things.
- include at least three strong examples of alliteration.
- color-code & label each of the above elements (except length)
- use strong and appropriate diction
- be typed and appropriately decorated in keeping with the accomplishments mentioned in the boast
- performed boastfully—In addition to the visual presentation, you will also perform your boast to class—an Anglo-Saxon “flying” of sorts. A winner will be crowned!

Example:

“Hail, Hrothgar!

Higlac is my cousin and my king; the days

Of my youth have been filled with glory. Now Grendel's

Name has echoed in our land: sailors

Have brought us stories of Herot, the best

Of all mead-halls, deserted and useless when the moon

Hangs in skies the sun had lit,

Light and life fleeing together.

My people have said, the wisest, most knowing

And best of them, that my duty was to go to the Danes'

Great king. They have seen my strength for themselves,

Have watched me rise from the darkness of war.

Dripping with my enemies' blood, I drove
Five great giants into chains, chased
All of that race from the earth. I swam
In the blackness of night, hunting monsters
Out of the ocean, and killing them one
By one; death was my errand and the fate
They had earned. Now Grendel and I are called
Together, and I've come. Grant me, then,
Lord and protector of this noble place,
A single request! I have come so far,
Oh shelterer of warriors and your people's loved friend,
That this one favor you should not refuse me—
That I, alone, and with the help of my men,
May purge all evil from this hall.

YELLOW = kennings

BLUE = past accomplishments

GREEN = future accomplishment

RED = four accented beats

PURPLE = caesura

TURQUOISE = alliteration

Anglo-Saxon Boast Rubric

| | | |
|--|------------------|-------|
| Presentation | 20 points | _____ |
| Visual appeal | | |
| Performance | | |
| Format requirements | 10 points | _____ |
| Length | | |
| Color-coded & labeled | | |
| Diction | 10 points | _____ |
| Content | 20 points | _____ |
| three present accomplishments | | |
| one future accomplishment | | |
| Conventions of Anglo-Saxon poetry | 20 points | _____ |
| No end rhyme | | |
| Four beats per line (overall) | | |
| Caesuras | | |
| Kenning (four examples) | 10 points | _____ |
| Alliteration (3 examples) | 10 points | _____ |
| <hr/> | | |
| Total | | _____ |

Anglo-Saxon Boast Pre-writing

- Brainstorm a list of at least FIVE marvelous things you have done in the past. (You have more than five spaces here so that you can brainstorm MORE!) This could be everything from a piano recital when you were seven to pee-wee football to working a job to making All-State Choir to overcoming a fear, disability, or stereotype. BRAG ON YOURSELF!
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.
 - 7.
 - 8.
- Next, you need a goal to brag about. What do you want to BE when you grow up? Your goal could be to graduate, to go to a certain college, to enter a certain profession, etc. Consider the goal you set in response to the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Students (Covey) article.

- Now, brainstorm a list of kennings that you could use to describe or rename the people involved in your accomplishments above or the places you went to accomplish these goals or the names of the accomplishments themselves. (EX. Your football coach—"the great play planner," your mother—"laundry washer," etc.)
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
- Now you need THREE examples of alliteration. Alliteration is when you repeat a consonant sound at the BEGINNING of a word *at least TWO* times in ONE line.
Ex. "secret sessions, talking of terror" You could combine this with a kenning such as "fabulous fence builder" for your grandfather who builds fences on his ranch.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- Now it's time to write. You might begin by writing a paragraph about yourself in which you use all of the elements above. Don't worry about making lines of poetry or putting in the pauses (caesuras). JUST WRITE.
 - You could begin your boast just like Beowulf did
 - Hail _____
 - I am the son/daughter of _____.
- Revise your boast by putting it into the correct format, strengthening diction, incorporating characteristics of Anglo-Saxon poetry, etc. (see directions & rubric)
- Then, type up your boast and decorate it. You can decorate it on the computer, or you can decorate it by printing it and putting it on construction paper, scrapbook paper, etc. with appropriate decorations.
- Make sure you color-code & label (make a key or legend) the elements in your boast— alliteration, past accomplishments, future goal, caesuras, four beats in a line, kennings.