**ENGLISH IV – *BEOWULF***

**MY PERSONAL GRENDEL**

In what is one of the most widely quoted speeches in American history, the Abolitionist Frederick Douglass said, “if there is no struggle, there is no progress.” Becoming who we are – our best selves – requires struggle, not just against the external world, but with our own internal natures as well. In an approximately three paragraph essay, you’re going to consider the following: What is your daily struggle?

In *Beowulf*, the Danes struggled with Grendel for years; how they engaged in this conflict would in part define them as a people. So, what is your Grendel? It may be something quite ordinary such as shyness or thoughtlessness, or it may be a bad habit you cannot break (smoking, swearing, biting fingernails, etc.). Still other struggles may deal with far greater concerns (cancer, diabetes, etc.). Think about your personal Grendel and write an essay describing your particular problem.

In **paragraph one**, introduce your topic by referring to the epic poem and describing the problem the monster, Grendel, created for the Danes. What problems did Grendel cause? Who or what did Grendel represent for the Danes? How did they deal with the monster? After addressing these issues, conclude your paragraph by identifying and connecting your own Grendel to Beowulf’s battle with the epic monster.

In **paragraph two**, describe your problem and the trouble it causes in detail. Be very precise in your description. How long has it been a problem? What examples can you give of its effect on your life and how have you dealt with it this far in your life? Elaborate and provide specific information. Be sure to begin your paragraph with a topic sentence that is broad enough to function as a sort of umbrella covering all the points you make.

In **paragraph three**, explain exactly how you plan to overcome your problem. Like Beowulf, you should have a plan of action that allows you to confidently declare your ability to conquer this Grendel (In other words, boast a bit!). Conclude your essay by making a final connection to the literature. That is, compare your struggle and your ability to defeat it to Beowulf as he faces the monster Grendel in the epic.

RUBRIC:

1. Introduces topic with a strong connection to the literature and ends with a statement of specific personal concern; ideas are coherent, unified, and fully developed.

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1. Clearly begins with an effective topic sentence and describes the Grendel including several incidents and examples; ideas are fully explained and well-organized.

\_\_\_\_\_\_/20

1. Explains the plan of action for conquering your Grendel; ideas are clear, logical and convincing.

\_\_\_\_\_\_/20

This essay uses first person but avoids any second person references (any form of YOU). The essay is written in precise, vivid language that is formal in tone. There **are no abbreviations, contractions, slang expressions, or clichés.**

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Essay is formatted properly and typed according to MLA Standards and teacher’s expectations. You have a creative title and the rubric is attached.

\_\_\_\_\_\_/20

Your total grade: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/100