

Incoming Sophomore CP and Level 2 Summer Reading Requirements 2018

This summer you will be required to read *Kin of Cain: A Short Bernicia Tale* by Matthew Harffy. The story focuses on a group of Anglo-Saxon warriors who must track down a monster who has been ravaging villages in their kingdom. As the warriors follow the beast into the wilderness, they face numerous obstacles and must question what it means to be a man, a hero, and a monster. You must purchase a physical copy of the text for use in the classroom. Do not rely on borrowing a copy from the library or on ebooks. Ebooks will not be permitted in the classroom. Your completed assignment is due August 27, 2018.

Responses should be written in complete sentences and typed in Times New Roman, size 12 font, with the MLA heading as follows:

Student first and last name

Your teacher's name

British Literature

27 August 2018

Kin of Cain: A Short Bernicia Tale Study Guide

1. Using **four** examples from Chapter 1, describe what the culture of the Anglo-Saxon people is like. What is important to them? What do they believe in? Where and how do they live? Cite page numbers in your answer.
2. Early in the novella, what does Octa reveal about his past? How does this impact him in his search for the monster?
3. Using **two** examples of death from the book, describe how Anglo-Saxons treat their deceased. What do they believe about the afterlife? How should bodies be laid to rest? Why? How can a person die with honor?
4. Why do Hrothgar and Modthrith seem odd to the warriors? How do they look and act differently? What does this indicate about their characters?

5. How does Unferth dishonor himself for the first time? How does he dishonor himself a second time? What do these instances suggest about the Anglo-Saxon culture? How do Octa and Bassus each react to Unferth's actions?
6. Octa mentions "wyrd" many times throughout the story. Find **three** times he mentions it. Copy the sentences, citing line numbers. Then, explain what "wyrd" means, based on the sentences you have chosen. Finally, explain why "wyrd" is important to the Anglo-Saxons.
7. What does Octa realize about the beast during their final battle? What does this allow him to do and feel?
8. What is revealed about Modthrit, Hrothgar, and Wealhtheow in the moments after the monster is slain? What is the monster's name revealed to be?
9. Examine Chapter 19. What do the warriors tell the king about Unferth, Wiglaf, and Grendel when they return? How does the king react? What do they bring him to hang in the mead hall? Why?
10. Ælfhere, the scop, ends the novel. Scops had a central part in Anglo-Saxon culture; they created the songs of the history of their people, which were passed down for generations. Why is the battle with Grendel so important to Ælfhere? What changes will he make to the story, and why? How does Octa feel about these changes, and how does he help Ælfhere?