*Beowulf* Prologue Reading

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| Hwæt! Wé Gárdena      in géardagum |  | Listen! We --of the [Spear-Danes](http://www.heorot.dk/beowulf-rede-notes.html#r1)      in the days of yore, |
| þéodcyninga      þrym gefrúnon**·** |  | of those clan-kings--      [heard](http://www.heorot.dk/beowulf-rede-notes.html#r2) of their glory**.** |
| hú ðá æþelingas      ellen fremedon**.** |  | how those nobles      performed courageous deeds**.** |
| Oft Scyld Scéfing      sceaþena þréatum |  | Often [Scyld, Scef's](http://www.heorot.dk/beowulf-rede-notes.html#r4) son,      from enemy hosts |
| monegum maégþum      meodosetla oftéah**·** | **5** | from many peoples      seized mead-benches; |
| egsode Eorle      syððan aérest wearð |  | and terrorised [the fearsome Heruli](http://www.heorot.dk/beowulf-rede-notes.html#r6)      after first he was |
| féasceaft funden      hé þæs frófre gebád**·** |  | found helpless and destitute,      he then knew recompense for that:- |
| wéox under wolcnum**·**      weorðmyndum þáh |  | he waxed under the clouds,      throve in honours, |
| oð þæt him aéghwylc      þára ymbsittendra |  | until to him each      of the bordering tribes |
| ofer hronráde      hýran scolde, | **10** | beyond the [whale-road](http://www.heorot.dk/beowulf-rede-notes.html#r10)      had to submit, |
| gomban gyldan**·**      þæt wæs gód cyning**.** |  | and yield tribute:-      that was a good king! |
| Ðaém eafera wæs      æfter cenned |  | To him a heir was      born then |
| geong in geardum      þone god sende |  | young in the yards,      God sent him |
| folce tó frófre**·**      fyrenðearfe ongeat**·** |  | to comfort the people;      He had seen the dire distress |
| þæt híe aér drugon      aldorléase | **15** | that they suffered before,      leader-less |
| lange hwíle**·**      him þæs líffréä |  | a long while;      them for that the Life-Lord, |
| wuldres wealdend      woroldáre forgeaf: |  | Ruler of Glory,      granted honour on earth: |
| Béowulf wæs bréme      --blaéd wíde sprang-- |  | [Beowulf (Beaw)](http://www.heorot.dk/beowulf-rede-notes.html#r18) was famed      --his renown spread wide-- |
| Scyldes eafera      Scedelandum in**.** |  | Scyld's heir,      in Northern lands**.** |
| Swá sceal geong guma      góde gewyrcean | **20** | So ought a young man      by good deeds deserve, |
| fromum feohgiftum      on fæder bearme |  | (and) by fine treasure-gifts,      while in his father's keeping, |
| þæt hine on ylde      eft gewunigen |  | that him in old age      shall again stand by, |
| wilgesíþas      þonne wíg cume**·** |  | willing companions,      when war comes, |
| léode gelaésten:      lofdaédum sceal |  | people serve him:      by glorious deeds must, |
| in maégþa gehwaére      man geþéön**.** | **25** | amongst his people, everywhere,      one prosper**.** |
| Him ðá Scyld gewát      tó gescæphwíle |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Then Scyld departed      at the destined time, | [**\*\*26-52\*\***](http://www.heorot.dk/beowulf-rede-notes.html#e26) | |
| felahrór féran      on fréan waére**·** |  | still in his full-strength, to fare      in the [protection of the Lord Frea;](http://www.heorot.dk/beowulf-rede-notes.html#r27) |
| hí hyne þá ætbaéron      tó brimes faroðe |  | he they carried      to the sea's surf, |
| swaése gesíþas      swá hé selfa bæd |  | his dear comrades,      as he himself had bid, |
| þenden wordum wéold      wine Scyldinga | **30** | when he yet wielded words,      that friend of the Scyldings, |
| léof landfruma      lange áhte**·** |  | beloved ruler of the land,      had ruled for a long time; |
| þaér æt hýðe stód      hringedstefna |  | there at the harbour stood      with a ringed-prow, |
| ísig ond útfús      æþelinges fær**·** |  | icy and keen to sail,      a hero's vessel; |
| álédon þá      léofne þéoden |  | they then laid down      the beloved prince, |
| béaga bryttan      on bearm scipes | **35** | the giver of rings and treasure,      in the bosom of the boat, |
| maérne be mæste**·**      þaér wæs mádma fela |  | the mighty by the mast;      many riches were there, |
| of feorwegum      frætwa gelaéded**·** |  | from far-off lands      ornate armour and baubles were brought; |
| ne hýrde ic cýmlícor      céol gegyrwan |  | I have not heard of a comelier      keel adorned |
| hildewaépnum      ond heaðowaédum |  | with weapons of battle      and war-dress, |
| billum ond byrnum**·**      him on bearme læg | **40** | [bill-blades](http://www.heorot.dk/beowulf-rede-notes.html#r40) and byrnies;      there lay on his breast |
| mádma mænigo      þá him mid scoldon |  | many treasures,      which with him must, |
| on flódes aéht      feor gewítan**·** |  | in the power of the waves,      drift far off; |
| nalæs hí hine laéssan      lácum téodan |  | in no way had they upon him fewer      gifts bestowed |
| þéodgestréonum      þonne þá dydon |  | with the wealth of a nation,      than those did |
| þe hine æt frumsceafte      forð onsendon | **45** | who him in the beginning      had sent forth |
| aénne ofer ýðe      umborwesende**·** |  | alone upon the waves      being but a child; |
| þá gýt híe him ásetton      segen gyldenne |  | yet then they set up      the standard of gold, |
| héah ofer héafod**·**      léton holm beran**·** |  | high over head;      they let the sea bear, |
| géafon on gársecg**·**      him wæs geómor sefa |  | gave to the [ocean,](http://www.heorot.dk/beowulf-rede-notes.html#r49)      in them were troubled hearts, |
| murnende mód**·**      men ne cunnon | **50** | mourning minds;      men cannot |
| secgan tó sóðe      seleraédenne |  | say for certain,      (neither) court-counsellors |
| hæleð under heofenum      hwá þaém hlæste onféng**.** |  | (nor) heroes under heaven,      who received that cargo**.** |