**Jigsaw Activity:** Characteristics of Anglo-Saxon Literature in *Beowulf*

**The Big Idea:** Anglo-Saxon literature is distinguished by the following characteristics: (1) the love of freedom; (2) responsiveness to nature, especially in her sterner moods; (3) strong religious convictions, and a belief in Wyrd, or Fate; (4) reverence for womanhood; and (5) a devotion to glory as the ruling motive in a warrior’s life (from *English Literature*, 3rd ed., A Beka).

**Instructions:**

1. In *Home Groups*: Determine who will cover which area of expertise.
2. *Individually*: Find a passage from the first half of *Beowulf* (through page 113) that relates to your area, record the line numbers, and answer the following in 2-3 complete sentences: **How does the passage demonstrate the characteristic of Anglo-Saxon literature? What specifically can we conclude about Anglo-Saxon culture and the world of *Beowulf* based on the passage?** Read closely, observe, and draw some detailed conclusions.
3. In *Expert Groups* (people from the other groups working in the same area): Compare notes and share passages and ideas. If you have questions or need clarification about something related to your area, ask your fellow experts.
4. In *Home Groups*: Take turns sharing your findings and any relevant information from your Expert Group discussion. Take notes in the corresponding areas below as your fellow group members talk. Ask follow-up questions and discuss as a group.

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| Area 1: Responsiveness to Nature |
| Area 2: Religious Convictions / Belief in Wyrd (Fate) |
| Area 3: Reverence for Womanhood |
| Area 4: Warrior’s Devotion to Glory (may also consider love of freedom) |