

## Senior Honors English

### ***Grendel*: Pre-reading Assignment (75 points)**

**Directions:** We are about to undertake the reading of a very complex and sophisticated novel. The novel not only uses the story of the epic poem *Beowulf* as the basis for its plot, but it also parallels Grendel's development with the evolution of Western philosophy. In preparation for this reading you will need to familiarize yourselves with some of these philosophies. To this end, you will need to engage in a small research project. Below are several philosophical positions that have emerged over the course of time.

- |              |                     |
|--------------|---------------------|
| 1. Orphism   | 5. Skepticism       |
| 2. Solipsism | 6. Machiavellianism |
| 3. Sophism   | 7. Existentialism   |
| 4. Nihilism  | 8. Empiricism       |

#### **For each of these philosophies, complete the following:**

- A. A brief summary (2-3 sentences) of the stated philosophy.
- B. Identify the timeframe when it is believed to have emerged.
- C. Identify who the proponents of this philosophy were (where applicable).
- D. A short personal response (2 – 3 sentences) to the philosophy. For example, consider some of these questions as prompts for your response:
  - Do you find this philosophy interesting?
  - Is it still relevant in today's world?
  - What challenges do you see with this way of thinking?

#### **Also, as a separate item, briefly state Aristotle's 12 Virtues.**

You should be able to find helpful information from online resources, databases, or websites. Please make sure that you are using credible sources. Consider using the Stadium library's online resources.

**Due Date: Friday, November 1, 2013**