

### Dialogue Poem:

- Poem utilizing alternating stanzas to indicate different voices discussing a specific topic about which their opinions and perspectives differ
- Sample topics from literature: Victor Frankenstein and his monster talking about Elizabeth's murder, Arthur Dent and Ford Prefect conversing about the destruction of the Earth, or Beowulf and Grendel's mother discussing Grendel's death

### Assignment:

Your task is to write a dialogue poem in which you portray a conflict that exists in your literature circle text. Remember that conflict may take one of several forms (**external**, a struggle against some outside force, another character, society as a whole, or some natural force; or **internal**, a conflict between forces or emotions within one character). I will evaluate your poem based on the following qualities:

- Two voices in conversation
- Conflict of differing perspectives
- Use of specific detail
- Understanding of literary source
- Unified form of poem
- Appropriate diction to convey voice

The following poem was written by a seventh-grade Hispanic student from Chicago to dramatize a mother and son's differing (yet ultimately similar) perspectives about the son's future.

### **I Have a Feeling**

Pepe is my only child.

I love my kid.

But my child has changed.

He has problems.

I want to talk to him.

My kid left home.

He stays out late every night.

It's 4 A.M. and *mi hijo* Pepe's not home yet.

He's having problems.

I have a feeling . . .

I am the only one.

My ma doesn't love me.

I'm a gang member.

I sell drugs.

I don't want to listen.

I went with my homeboys.

I don't wanna go home.

Where am I?

What is happening to me?

. . . something bad is going to happen.

The following poem by Casey Roberts, 2002 Salem graduate, portrays the conflict in the Anglo-Saxon epic poem *Beowulf* between Hrothgar, king of the Danes, and Grendel, the outcast. Notice the different perspectives of the two speakers and their distinctly different diction.

Hail, brethren!

*Oh, Grand—another speech!*

Tonight, as was frequently accustomed long ago, we dine in the once-magnificent hall of Herot. We shall make merry on this joyous occasion; however, let us not forget the vile circumstances for these now infrequent occasions.

*Go ahead—blame your troubles on the big, bad monster!*

A great evil has incarnated itself in our land. It plunders our beautiful countryside, and ravages the magnificent Herot, shaming our beloved Denmark and thriving all the while!

*Thriving?! I'm starving! Danes are so bony--*

This new and unprecedented iniquity, Grendel as we now refer to it, is the most wretched brute to ever roam our realm. I have yet to view this monster myself, thus I would be grateful if any one of ye might provide me a description.

*Yeah, the view from behind those thick castle walls isn't all that great, is it?*

Grendel must be stopped! It is imperative that we succeed, and furthermore, God wills it! My brethren, I ask of thee, raise thy holy sabers in battle against this beast of evil!

*Why not fight your own battles, Hrothgar?*

Fear not this cowardly beast that strikes from the shadows. His ivory blades cannot pierce your holiest of flesh! Do not allow yourself to falter in the monster's gruesome presence,

*It's speeches like these that give us monsters a bad reputation.*

for even more treacherous is the source from which it spawned. This hideous beast far surpasses the grotesqueness of Grendel, and being the coward that it is, sends Grendel to do its bidding!

*That's enough! Insulting me is bad enough, but my mother?! That's a new low, you old hypocrite! Let's test the validity of this speech of yours . . .*

Again, I ask . . . Ahh, hell! Here comes Grendel!