

from **Beowulf**, translated by Burton Raffel  
**Vocabulary Warm-up Word Lists**

Study these words from the selection. Then, complete the activities.

### Word List A

**mail** [MAYL] *n.* armor made of connected metal rings, or loops of chain

The museum displayed chain mail that was designed to protect a horse.

**fleeing** [FLEE ing] *adj.* running away; vanishing

When it rained on the baseball field, the fleeing players ran to the dugouts.

**boast** [BOHST] *v.* speak with excessive pride; brag

The team captain told his players not to boast even though they were undefeated.

**inherited** [in HER i tid] *v.* received property from a person by a will

Mary inherited an antique silver tea service from her grandmother.

**feud** [FYOOD] *n.* a long, bitter quarrel, especially between families

The man refused to enter the store because his family was in a feud with the owner's family.

**protector** [proh TEK ter] *n.* someone or something who guards others from harm

Joe never got into any fights at school because his older brother was his protector.

**truce** [TROOS] *n.* an agreement to stop fighting

The two countries signed a truce agreeing not to fight during the holiday.

**swayed** [SWAYD] *v.* shifted from side to side; rocked back and forth

The dancers swayed with the music, moving back and forth.

### Word List B

**deserted** [de SURT id] *v.* abandoned; empty of people

After the guests all left the party, the house felt deserted.

**threshold** [THRESH ohld] *n.* an entranceway

The guide welcomed the visitors from the threshold of the restored Victorian house.

**relished** [REL ishd] *v.* enjoyed; found pleasure in

The restaurant critic relished the opportunity to write a favorable review.

**groped** [GROHPD] *v.* reached or felt around uncertainly, as in a search

After the lights went out, they groped around in the dark trying to find a candle.

**comrades** [KAHM radz] *n.* companions; friends

Soldiers sometimes refer to each other as "comrades in arms."

**sought** [SAWT] *v.* looked for

The librarian sought an out-of-print book by a local author.

**dissolved** [di Z AHLVD] *v.* melted away; transformed into liquid

The lemonade mix dissolved quickly when water was added to it.

**uttered** [UHT terd] *v.* spoke; expressed verbally

No one in the group uttered a word as they recorded the music tracks for their demo.

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**Vocabulary Warm-up Exercises**

**Exercise A** Fill in each blank in the paragraph with the appropriate word from Word List A.

Many illustrations depict dragons as green, scaly reptiles with wings and claws. Typically, they are shown battling medieval knights that are dressed in chain [1] \_\_\_\_\_. Sometimes these mythological creatures perched on top of a priceless, stolen treasure, acting as its [2] \_\_\_\_\_. According to legend, attacking the dragon was tricky, since it moved quickly. You can imagine its hypnotic movements as it [3] \_\_\_\_\_ from side to side. Dragons liked to [4] \_\_\_\_\_ about their incredible strength, hoping to frighten the hero. Once angered, the creature sought revenge, breathing fire and chasing after [5] \_\_\_\_\_ villagers. If the dragon could not be overpowered, it had to be outsmarted. However, negotiating a [6] \_\_\_\_\_ with the dragon was almost impossible. Defeating the dragon could be part of a larger battle or an ongoing [7] \_\_\_\_\_ that has raged for centuries. Often, the hero had [8] \_\_\_\_\_ his mission from previous generations.

**Exercise B** Decide whether each statement below is true or false. Circle T or F, and explain your answers.

**Example:** T / F The actor relished the role, so he did not mind the pay cut.  
*T If the actor relished the role, then he might not mind a pay cut.*

1. After all visitors left the museum, it was no longer deserted.  
 T /  F \_\_\_\_\_
2. The chlorine dissolved quickly when added to the water in the pool.  
 T / F \_\_\_\_\_
3. It was easy to see the exit, so they groped their way out of the theater.  
 T / F \_\_\_\_\_
4. Traditionally, the groom carries his bride over the threshold of their new home.  
 T / F \_\_\_\_\_
5. The students uttered their thoughts while they kept silent.  
 T / F \_\_\_\_\_
6. The decorator sought brand-new furniture at antique shops.  
 T / F \_\_\_\_\_
7. The recruit's comrades were all much older and more experienced than he was.  
 T / F \_\_\_\_\_

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## Reading Warm-up A

Read the following passage. Pay special attention to the underlined words. Then, read it again, and complete the activities. Use a separate sheet of paper for your written answers.

Mail is body armor made from chain links woven together to form a metal fabric. It is then fashioned into gloves, hoods, shirts, and leggings that cover the entire body from head to toe. From the time of the Roman conquest until the mid-fourteenth century, mail was the best available defense against the sword and lance that dominated hand-to-hand combat.

The metal mesh allowed the warrior flexibility as he lifted his weapon or swayed to avoid an enemy's blade. However, mail was not a protector from the piecing power of a crossbow bolt or a bullet. By the end of the 1600s, mail was no longer used for protection.

Because it was so expensive, mail was worn only by the wealthiest warriors. The cost did not come from the material, but from the time required to assemble it. Tiny rings made from short lengths of iron or steel wire were fastened together with a small rivet. Next, the clusters of rings were attached together to form a seamless garment. The typical knight also wore a solid helmet and a breastplate, and carried a shield.

Knights would boast about ornate armor since it indicated wealth and position. Mail might be something a knight inherited from his father and then passed on to his own offspring. However, armor was also taken as bounty or offered as part of a truce when a battle or feud ended.

The knights of the Crusades wore chain mail armor. Although it wasn't as heavy as plate armor, it still weighed more than the leather armor worn by the Moors. The lighter leather gave the Moors and their horses much greater mobility on the battlefield. Even when fleeing, they had an advantage.

1. Circle the words that describe what mail is made of. Then, explain why mail offered a good defense.
2. Rewrite the sentence using a phrase that means the same as swayed. Then, tell what swayed means.
3. What is a likely reason mail did not serve as a protector from a bullet? Explain what protector means.
4. Circle the words that tell why knights would boast about their ornate armor. Then, tell what boast means.
5. Circle the words that tell from whom a knight inherited mail. Why might it be helpful to have inherited mail?
6. Underline the phrase that is a clue to the meaning of truce. Why might some battles end with a truce instead of a victory?
7. Circle the word that is a clue to the meaning of feud. Explain how a feud might differ from a war.
8. Rewrite the sentence using a synonym for fleeing. Describe something you have seen fleeing.