1. The Fight with Grendel

Close reading: 1-735
1-52 Scyld, the founder of the Scylding dynasty. His glorious reign and sea-burial.
58-85 His descendents down to Hroðgar. The building of Heorot.
86-188 The ravages of Grendel.
189-448 Beowulf’s voyage and reception in Denmark.
499-610. Unferð and the Breca episode.
611-661 Wealhþeow and Beowulf speak.
662-709. The watch for Grendel.
710-836. Grendel attacks, and Beowulf wrestles with him, tearing off his hand. Grendel flees back to his lake to die.
837-866. In the morning many of the warriors follow the tracks of Grendel and ride to see the blood-stained pool into which he had plunged.
867-924 A singer recites lays about Sigemund and Heremod.
925-978. Hroðgar’s speech of thanks and Beowulf’s reply.
979-989 Unferð again.
991-1062 A feast is prepared in the hall, and rich presents are bestowed on Beowulf and his retainers.
1063-1163 The scop sings the Finnsburg tale.
1162-1168 Wealhþeow enters; Unferð is mentioned.
1169-1191 Wealhþeow speaks and bestows gifts on Beowulf.
1192-1214 References to Hama, Eormanric and the Brosings’ necklace.(Brisingamen), and to Hygelac’s last raid.
1215-1231 Wealhþeow speaks more to Beowulf.
1232-1250 They settle down for the night, oblivious of their fate.

2. The Fight with Grendel’s Mother

1321-1398. Conversation between Hroðgar and Beowulf.
Close reading: 1383-1650
1389-1491. The expedition to Grendel’s lake. (1457 Unferð lends Beowulf Hrunting)
1492-1590. Beowulf’s battle with Grendel’s mother at the bottom of the lake.
1591-1650. Triumphant return to Heorot.
1651-1784. Speeches by Beowulf and Hroðgar.
1785-1887. The Geats set off back to Geatland.

3. Beowulf’s Home-Coming and Report to Hygelac

1963-2151. Beowulf recounts the story to Hygelac. Foresees the tragedy of Freawaru and Ingeld.
2152-2199. Beowulf shares his presents with Hygelac and Hygd.

4. The Fight with the Dragon

2200-2323. Fifty years have passed, and Beowulf is King of the Geats. The robbing of the hoard and the ravages of the dragon.
2324-2537. Preparation for the fight. Beowulf with eleven men set out for the cave of the dragon.

Close reading: 2417-2541
2417-2537 Beowulf’s speech
2538-2711. The fight.
2711-2820 Beowulf’s death.
2821-3030 Wiglaf’s speech. The disaster that will follow.
3030-3136 At Wiglaf’s command the Geats carry out the remaining treasure, push the dragon into the sea, and bear the king’s body to the headland.

Close reading: 3114-end
3137-3182 The funeral of Beowulf.

DIGRESSIONS ACCORDING TO KLÆBER (p. liii)

1-52 The origin of the Scylding line and Scyld’s burial
82b-85 Fate of Heorot
90b-98 The song of creation
107b-114 Cain’s punishment and his offspring (1)
419-424a Youthful adventures of Beowulf
459-472 Settling of Ecgþeow’s feud.
499-589 Unferð and the Breca Episode
874b-915 Stories of Sigemud and Heremod
1069-1159a The Finnsburg Tale
1197-1201 Allusions to Þormund and Þormund
1202-1214a The fall of Hygelac
1261b-1266a. Cain’s punishment and his offspring (2)
1689b-1693 Beowulf mentions th destruction of the gigantas
1709b-1722a Hróðgar mentions Heremod’s tragedy
1724b-1757 Hróðgar’s sermon against pride and avarice
1931b-1962 Story of Þryð, the wife of Offa
2032-2066 Feud between the Danes and the Heaðo-Bards
2183b-2189 Beowulf’s inglorious youth
2247-2266 Elegy of the lone survivor
2354b-2396 Geatish history: Hygelac’s death in Friesland, Beowulf’s return by swimming, his guardianship of Heardred, the second series of Swedish wars.
2428-2508a Geatish history: King Hreðel, the end of Herebeald [2444-2462a The Lament of the Father], the earlier war with the Swedes, Beowulf’s slaying of Dæghrefn in Friesland
2611-2625a Weohstan’s slaying of Eanmund in the later Swedish war
2910b-2098 Geatish history: Hygelac’s fall, the battle at Ravenswood in the earlier Swedish war