

ENGL 479D, University of Maryland
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Short Paper Assignments

Paper 1

Due: Oct 10 (Friday, electronic submission)

Length: 3-4 pages

Does Tolkien's view of *The Battle of Maldon* or *Beowulf* (expressed in his play *The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth*, the essay *Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics*, *Sellic Spel*, or his translation of and commentary on *Beowulf*) illuminate or inform your understanding of *The Hobbit* or *The Lord of the Rings*? If so, how? If not, why not?

Note: I am not asking you to compare *Beowulf* or *Maldon* with the others but to examine something Tolkien says or shows about one of these works and discuss how that idea shows up in or influences his own work.

Paper 2

Due: Nov 14 (Friday, electronic submission)

Length: 3-4 pages

Does *The Lord of the Rings (LOTR)* fulfill Tolkien's own criteria for being considered a "fairy story" as he sets forth in his essay "On Fairy Stories" (OFS)? If you say "yes," choose one important idea from OFS (e.g., Recover, Escape, *eucaastrophe*) and choose a scene, character, or other specific element from *LOTR* to illustrate and argue your view. If you think the book does not qualify, then explain why; tell me what criteria it does not meet, or in some other way argue that *LOTR* is not a fairy story.