Beowulf and Grendel are the protagonist of the scene which is the object of analysis of the present extract. Apparently they seem to be given the same level of importance, but that’s not true. You can see it even from the number of lines devoted to Grendel: the narrator is carefully showing to the listener all of the monster’s attitude, motions and behaviour. The language used to have the audience follow the threat of the story resorts to different stylistic choices. The first of one is the use of inversion in the ordinary word order. The intention is to put the word “creature” into a central focus so that the listener may well understand the real protagonist of the narration. Creature is an interesting semantic choice that is apparently contradictory with Grendel’s monstrous nature. The effect is paradoxically to involve a certain affection in the listener or reader in the it existence of which epic poetry is a narrative projection, does not simply consist of good but for good to be recognize it must be set against evil. This explain for the narrator to draw the attention mainly on the monster. The qualities or features the narrator focuses the attention on are the typical ones of the predator: the first element the listener comes across in the scene is Grendel’s ability in having immediately reflexes underline and highlighted by alliterative sound “s” in “struck” and “started”. In addition, it must be said that alliteration is a condition sine qua non for the survival of Anglo-Saxon epic poetry: the means through which it can be undid own orally. It goes without saying that alliteration bines words together thus allowing the composer to remember it.
Grendel’s great hesitation is visible and perceptible even from the word order that puts “nor” together with “keep him waiting”. The idea of the immediate instinctive predator voracity is suggested by line 3 where short verbs are used to convey the idea of Grendel’s speeded attack. Not only is the nature of a monster predator suggested on the rational level it is also recreated on the sound level. Alliteration is insisted along the whole extract to reinforce the idea of a faithful creature that has no pitting because he acts on an instinctive principle which is the one of selvage animal. You can see it clearly at line 4 where, once more, alliteration recreates the famelic actions of a monster whose pleasure and fullness depends on the slaughter of the prey. “Blood” and “bone” are symbolic just apposed to visually suggest the result of a human being reduce to pieces.
Punctuation plays a relevant function to a suggestion the typical motion of predator’s attack reinforced by the labial sound of “b” that imply short brakes in the telling. The result is dramatic and significantly . you can see it at line 743 where the differencing line length underlines “utterly lifeless”. Again alliteration of the liquid sound and elliptical sentences bring to surface all the results of Grendel’s violence. Sinedoct of ”hand and food” makes almost visible the result of Grendel’s energy and voracity.