

The Doomed Quest

A thought-provoking play based on *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

About the Story

Lexile® Measure 940L (captions only)
For qualitative complexity factors, go to
Scope Online.

Learning Objective: to determine
themes of a text and analyze their
development

Featured Skill: theme

**Additional skills covered in
this lesson plan:** character,
inference, text structure, tone, critical
thinking

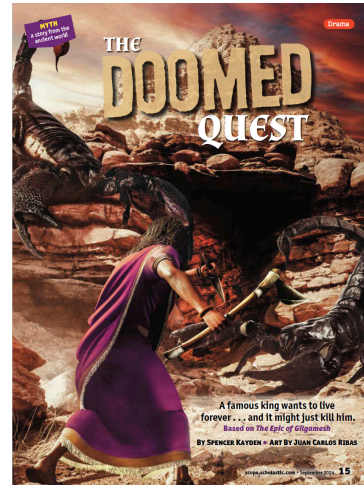
Essential Question:

- Should humans live forever?
- How can humans achieve
immortality?
- What responsibilities do leaders
have?

Standards:

The article and its suite of support
materials support these Common
Core Anchor Standards: R.1, R.2, R.3,
R.4, R.5, W.2, SL.1

For more standards information—
including TEKS—go to Scope Online.



Your Teaching Package

Find your full suite of support materials at scope.scholastic.com.

Audio:

- Text-to-speech
- Vocabulary
- Pronunciation Guide
- *Scope It Out!* Podcast: The
Search for Immortality

Video:

- Beyond the Story

Connected readings from the Scope archives:

- "Facing Forever"
- *The Experiment*
- "What Do These Creatures
Have in Common?"

Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Vocabulary: Definitions and
Practice
- Theme Anticipation Guide
- Discussion Questions
- **Core Skills Workout:**
Inference
- Featured Skill: Theme
- Choice Board
- Lesson Plan Slide Deck
- Quiz*

*Available on two levels

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

1. Prepare to Read (20 minutes)

Do Now: Agree or Disagree (10 minutes)

- Project the **Theme Anticipation Guide** on your whiteboard or share the Google Form version with students. Both are available in your Resources tab. Have students decide whether they agree or disagree with each statement, then discuss. (After reading the story, ask students how they think the characters would respond to the statements in the Theme Anticipation Guide.)

Preview Vocabulary (10 minutes)

- Project the Google Slides version of **Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice** on your whiteboard. Review the definitions and complete the activity as a class. Highlighted words: *bedraggled, benevolent, futile, gnarled, immortal, rejuvenation, relentless, resourcefulness*. Audio pronunciations of the words and a read-aloud of the definitions are embedded on the slides. Optionally, print the PDF version or share the slideshow link to your LMS and have students preview the words and complete the activity independently before class.

2. Read and Discuss (55 minutes)

- Invite a volunteer to read aloud the As You Read box on page 16 or at the top of the digital story page.
- Assign parts and read the play aloud as a class.
- Divide students into groups to discuss the following **Discussion Questions**, which are also located in the Resources tab.

Discussion Questions

(30 minutes)

The following questions can be shared in printable or interactive form.

- King Gilgamesh is introduced in Scene 1. What can you tell about his personality from this first scene?** (character, inference) *You can tell that Gilgamesh is a complex character who is both compassionate and demanding. He's unreasonable in his exchange with the Elders,*

demanding that they save Enkidu's life even though they cannot. Yet he shows compassion to Anisa and Amar and is quick to help them, and he cares deeply about Enkidu. He is neither all good nor all bad.

2. **How does Gilgamesh seem different in Scene 2 than in Scene 1? What has caused the change?** (character) *In Scene 2, Gilgamesh is violently angry, smashing everything in sight with his ax. He no longer seems to care about his people and has become fixated on achieving immortality. This change is caused by the death of his close friend Enkidu.*
3. **At the end of Scene 4, Gilgamesh says, "Thank you, gods, for giving me such resourcefulness." Where else in the play does he express a similar idea? What do these statements tell you about him?** (text structure, character) *After making it through the tunnel in Scene 3, Gilgamesh says, "Thank you, gods, for giving me such strength." These statements tell you that Gilgamesh not only feels gratitude for his good fortune, but that he also believes the gods are responsible for that good fortune.*
4. **What is the tone of Gilgamesh's line "Surely my people can manage without me" at the end of Scene 5?** (tone) *Gilgamesh's tone is dismissive. Gilgamesh is giving little thought to the needs of his people.*
5. **In Scene 8, why is Gilgamesh calm in the face of chaos?** (inference, character) *Gilgamesh is admiring the city he built and realizing how much he can achieve. He knows his true purpose now: not to live forever but to make sure his city lives on.*
6. **When Gilgamesh returns to Uruk, the citizens are quick to welcome him. Should they be more resentful about his absence?** (critical thinking) *Answers may vary. Some students might say yes: Gilgamesh behaved foolishly and selfishly and endangered his people by going on a pointless mission. Others might say no: The desire for immortality is universal and Gilgamesh is only human—and he might have even become a better leader because of his journey.*
7. **What would be the pros and cons of living forever? Would you want to live forever?** (critical thinking) *Answers will vary.*

3. Write About It: Theme (45 minutes)

- Have students complete the **Featured Skill Activity: Theme**. This activity will prepare them to respond to the writing prompt on page 20 in the printed magazine and at the bottom of the digital story page:

In Scene 3, Enkidu says to Gilgamesh, "Perhaps years are not the correct measure of a life." What does he mean? By the end of the play, what does Gilgamesh realize about how he should measure his life?

- Alternatively, have students choose a task from the **Choice Board**, a menu of culminating tasks. Our Choice Board options include the writing prompt from the magazine, differentiated versions of the writing prompt, and additional creative ways for students to demonstrate their understanding of a story or article.

Connected readings about immortality from the Scope archives:

- Fiction: [“Facing Forever”](#)
- Drama: [The Experiment](#)
- Short Read: [“What Do These Creatures Have in Common?”](#)