

Discussion Questions for Groups on Gilgamesh part 1

- 1) Compare how Gilgamesh is characterized in the opening or Prologue of the story (lines 1-54) and how he is described as acting in the first scene where we see him (lines 55-80). What do you make of this contrast?

- 2) Look at the character of Gilgamesh and the character of Enkidu, especially early on in the story. What is Enkidu's function? How does he relate to Gilgamesh's character? Point to some lines that spell out this function.

- 3) What do "the forest of Cedars" and Humbaba symbolize or represent? Look particularly at the passages on page 110 and 111. Also, look at the first lines of Tablet V on the bottom of page 120. What is Gilgamesh's motivation in starting on this quest to cut a cedar and kill Humbaba?

- 4) Gilgamesh has a series of dreams before his battle with Humbaba. Look at dream #2 at the top of page 117, dream #3 on 117-118, and dream #4 on the top of page 119. What similarities do you see between the dreams? What might they represent?