UNIT 11

Epic Poetry

THE ODYSSEY
Is it the **JOURNEY** or the **DESTINATION**?

If attending high school is a journey, then the ultimate destination is graduation. As you strive to cross that finish line, you’ll face new experiences, build friendships, and even run into some frustrating roadblocks. As you consider this journey, what do you think is more important—reaching your goal and clutching that diploma in your hand, or taking time to appreciate the many moments (both good and bad) that will lead up to graduation day?

**ACTIVITY** With a classmate, think of books, movies, or TV shows that depict a journey of some sort—whether it’s a quest to find a long-lost family member, a struggle to make it safely back home, or a mission to fulfill an important dream. Which seems more important to the story, the destination the character strives to reach or the journey itself?
## Preview Unit Goals

### TEXT ANALYSIS
- Identify and evaluate characteristics of an epic, including the cultural perspective reflected by the work
- Identify and analyze epic hero and archetypes
- Identify and analyze epic similes, epithets, and allusions
- Identify and analyze plot, setting, and theme in an epic

### READING
- Use strategies for reading an epic
- Objectively summarize plot

### WRITING AND LANGUAGE
- Write a narrative script for a video
- Use figurative language to add descriptive detail

### SPEAKING AND LISTENING
- Evaluate a speaker’s presentation

### VOCABULARY
- Use prefixes and word roots to help determine or clarify the meanings of unfamiliar words

### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY
- demonstrate
- ideology
- undertake
- emphasis
- monitor

### MEDIA AND VIEWING
- Produce a video
- Analyze media techniques
- Evaluate media content
Examining the Homeric Epics

Composed in Greece around 750–725 B.C., the Iliad and the Odyssey are perhaps the greatest masterpieces of the epic form, narrative poetry about a hero’s adventures. Both stories were first told orally, perhaps even sung, and it may not have been until several generations later that these traditional stories were set down in writing. The poems are traditionally credited to a blind poet named Homer. Although there have been many translations of the poems into English, Robert Fitzgerald’s verse renderings are considered among the best at capturing the poems’ high drama and intense emotions. Three important elements of the plot of each epic are the Trojan War, the heroism of Odysseus, and the interference of the gods.

The Trojan War

This legendary war seems to have occurred sometime around 1200 B.C. The earliest literary accounts of it, found in the Iliad and the Odyssey, are elaborated in later classical literature.

According to legend, the Trojan War began after Paris, a Trojan prince, kidnapped the beautiful Helen from her husband, Menelaus (mɛnˈə-laʊs), the king of Sparta. Menelaus recruited kings and soldiers from all over Greece to help him avenge his honor and recover his wife. The Greeks held Troy under siege for ten years.

The Iliad takes place during the tenth year of this war. It tells the story of the Greek warrior Achilles and his quarrel with Menelaus’ brother Agamemnon, ending with the death and funeral of Paris’ brother Hector.

After Hector’s death, the Greeks brought the war to an end thanks to the cleverness of Odysseus, ruler of the island of Ithaca. To break the ten-year stalemate, Odysseus thought of a scheme to make the Trojans think that the Greeks had finally given up. He ordered a giant wooden horse to be built and left at the gates of Troy. The Trojans, waking to find it there—without a Greek in sight—assumed that the enemy had fled and left them a peace offering. They took the horse inside the city, only to discover, too late, that it was filled with Greek soldiers and that Troy was doomed.
The Heroic Story of Odysseus  The Odyssey deals with Odysseus’ adventures as he makes his way home from Troy and with events that take place on Ithaca just before and after his return. The first excerpts that you will read depict some of the wanderings of Odysseus after his departure from Troy with a fleet of 12 ships carrying about 720 men. This time his opponents are not military ones. Instead, he encounters various monsters who try to devour him and enchanting women who try to keep him from his wife, Penelope. The final excerpts describe Odysseus’ homecoming and his reunion with Penelope and his son, Telemachus. In addition to great strength and courage, what sets Odysseus apart from others is a special quality that has been called his craft or guile: the ingenious tricks he uses to get himself out of difficult situations.

The Intervention of the Gods and Goddesses  
Adding another dimension to the human struggles recounted in Homer’s epics are the mythic elements—the conflicts among the gods and goddesses on Mount Olympus (ɔ-lɪm’pəs). In Homer’s time, most Greeks believed that their gods not only took an active interest in human affairs but also behaved in recognizably human ways, often engaging in their own trivial quarrels and petty jealousies. For example, Athena, the goddess of war and practical wisdom, supported the Greek cause in the Trojan War and championed Odysseus, while Aphrodite (ə-frōd-it’ə), the goddess of love, sided with Paris and his fellow Trojans. The story of Odysseus’ return from Troy contains some notable instances of divine interference. Odysseus has Athena on his side, but he has displeased the gods who were on the side of Troy. Furthermore, as you will see, he angers another god during one of his first adventures and still another later on. As a result, he is forced to suffer many hardships before he manages to return home.

To Homer’s audience, the Odyssey, with its interfering gods and goddesses and its strange lands and creatures, must have seemed as full of mystery and danger as science fiction and fantasy adventures seem to people today. Just as we can imagine aliens in the next galaxy or creatures created in a laboratory, the ancient Greeks could imagine monsters living just beyond the boundaries of their known world. It was not necessary for them to believe that creatures such as one-eyed giants did exist, but only that they might.
Homer: The Epic Poet

Shadowy Figure  Although the ancient Greeks credited a man named Homer with composing the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, scholars have long debated whether Homer really existed. There are many theories about who Homer may have been and when and where he may have lived. According to ancient accounts, he lived sometime between 900 and 700 B.C., possibly on the island of Chios in the eastern Aegean Sea, and he was blind. Most modern scholars agree that the Homeric poems are the work of one or two exceptionally talented bards—singers who made up their verses as they sang.

Oral History  Homer’s epics are all that remains of a series of poems that told the whole story of the Trojan War. In later centuries, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were memorized by professional reciters, who performed them at religious festivals throughout Greece. They were also the first works read by Greek schoolchildren. By 300 B.C. many slightly different versions of the poems existed, and scholars began to work at restoring them to their original form.

Models for the Ages  Homer’s epics became models for many later writers, including the Roman poet Virgil, who wrote his own epic in Latin. Poets throughout English literature, from Chaucer in the Middle Ages to Shakespeare in the Renaissance to Keats in the Romantic era, have found inspiration in Homer’s epics. Moreover, by helping to shape classical Greek culture, the epics contributed to the development of many later Western ideas and values.

A Living Tradition  Artists of all kinds continue to draw on Homer’s work. In 1922, the Irish writer James Joyce published his groundbreaking novel *Ulysses* ("Ulysses" is a Latin form of Odysseus’ name), in which he turned a day in the life of an ordinary man into an Odyssean journey. In 2000, the Coen brothers’ film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* told the story of a Depression-era Ulysses, an escaped convict returning home to prevent his wife from marrying another man. The 2004 movie *Troy* is a more straightforward adaptation of Homer’s *Iliad*.

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People and Places of the Odyssey

You will find it helpful to become familiar with important people and places in the Odyssey before you begin reading. The map identifies real places mentioned in the poem, such as Troy, Sparta, and Ithaca. It also shows where later readers have thought that some of the imaginary lands visited by Odysseus could have been located, after applying Mediterranean geography to Homer's descriptions. Following is a list of important characters. All Greek names used in Robert Fitzgerald’s translation have been changed from their original spelling to a more familiar, Latinized spelling.

**IMPORTANT CHARACTERS IN THE ODYSSEY (in order of mention)**

**BOOK 1**
- Helios (hē’lē-ō’s)—the sun god, who raises his cattle on the island of Thrinacia (thrī-nā’sha)
- Zeus (zōōs)—the ruler of the Greek gods and goddesses; father of Athena and Apollo
- Telemachus (tē-lēm’ā-kās)—Odysseus’ son
- Penelope (pē-nēl’pē)—Odysseus’ wife

**BOOK 5**
- Hermes (hûr’mēz)—the god of invention, commerce, and cunning; messenger of the gods
- Calypso (ka-lēp’so)—a sea goddess who lives on the island of Ogygia (ō-gī’ya)
- Laertes (lā-ûr’tēz)—Odysseus’ father

**BOOK 9**
- Alcinous (āl-sīn’ō-ās)—the king of the Phaeacians (fē-ā’shōnz)
- Circe (sīr’se)—a goddess and enchantress who lives on the island of Aeaea (ā-e’ā)
- Cicones (sī-kō’néz)—allies of the Trojans, who live at Ismarus (īs-mār’ōs)
- Lotus Eaters—inhabitants of a land Odysseus visits
- Cyclopes (sī-klö’pēz)—a race of one-eyed giants; an individual member of the race is a Cyclops (sī-klöps)
- Apollo (a-pōl’ō)—the god of music, poetry, prophecy, and medicine
- Poseidon (pō-sīd’n)—the god of the seas, earthquakes, and horses; father of the Cyclops who battles Odysseus

**BOOK 10**
- Aeolus (ē’ō-lās)—the guardian of the winds
- Laestrygones (lēs’trī-gō’nēz)—cannibal inhabitants of a distant land
- Eurylochus (īrō-lō’kōs)—a trusted officer of Odysseus’
- Persephone (pĕr-sef’ō-nē)—the wife of Hades, ruler of the underworld
- Tiresias (tīrē’sē-ās)—of Thebes (thèbs)—a blind prophet whose spirit Odysseus visits in the underworld

**BOOK 11**
- Elpenor (ēl-pē’nōr)—one of Odysseus’ crew, killed in an accident
- Scylla (sīl’ā)—a six-headed sea monster who devours sailors
- Charybdis (kār’ēb’dēs)—a dangerous whirlpool personified as a female sea monster

**BOOK 12**
- Sirens (sīr’ēnz)—creatures, part woman and part bird, whose songs lure sailors to their death

**BOOK 16**
- Athena (a-thē’ōn)—the goddess of war, wisdom, and cleverness; goddess of crafts
- Eumaeus (yōō-mē’ōs)—a servant in Odysseus’ household

**BOOK 17**
- Argos (ār’gōs)—Odysseus’ dog

**BOOKS 21—23**
- Antinous (ān-tīn’ō-ās)—a suitor of Penelope’s
- Eurymachus (yōō-rīm’ō-kas)—a suitor of Penelope’s
- Philoctetes (fī-lēk’ōtēs)—a servant in Odysseus’ household
- Amphinomus (ām-fīn’ō-mōs)—a suitor of Penelope’s
- Eurynome (yōō-rīn’ō-mē)—a female servant in Odysseus’ household
- Eurycleia (yōō-rī-klī’ēa)—an old female servant, still loyal to Odysseus
The Odyssey in Art

Artists have been representing images and events from the Odyssey since the seventh century B.C., when Greek artists painted Odyssean images and scenes as decoration on ceramic urns and vases. Since then, artists have continued to tell Odysseus’ story in painting, sculpture, and other media.

Throughout the unit, you will see how numerous artists have interpreted this epic in a range of styles and forms. As you look at the art illustrating each episode, ask yourself what the artists were trying to show about each part of the story and what their own attitudes toward characters and events may have been.

Looking at Art You’ve seen how understanding a writer’s craft can help you appreciate the beauty and meaning of a literary text. In the same way, knowing about artists’ techniques can help you understand and appreciate their work. The following list of terms and related questions may help you identify and think about the choices each artist made. Consider how these choices have contributed to the meaning and beauty of each piece.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>composition</td>
<td>What shape or space is emphasized?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>material</td>
<td>Has the artist used paint, clay, pencil, ink, or some other material?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>function</td>
<td>Is the piece useful, decorative, or both?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>color</td>
<td>Does the piece have a broad palette (range of colors) or a limited one?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>line</td>
<td>Are the lines clean, simple, rough, ornate, or jagged?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shape</td>
<td>Does the piece have large, bold shapes or smaller, more complex ones?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are they geometric or organic (free-form)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>texture</td>
<td>In painting, are the brush strokes distinct or smooth looking?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In sculpture or ceramics, is the surface polished or rough?</td>
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<tr>
<td>scale</td>
<td>Does the piece show large things or small ones?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>representation</td>
<td>Are the images realistic, stylized, or abstract?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Landscapes When you look at a Homeric landscape, ask questions like the ones that follow. See if the answers help you understand each artist’s purpose.

- Which of the following two landscapes is more realistic? How so?
- What material has each artist used? Which do you prefer, and why?
- Look at the composition of each piece. What part of the scene is emphasized in the painting? What is emphasized in the collage?
- Describe the mood and tone of each piece. Which is more lush, and which is more spare? Consider the techniques that created these differences.


About 1650: Ulysses Returns Chryseis to Her Father, Claude Lorrain. Oil painting.
Portraiture  As you look at a portrait, ask yourself what the image suggests about the character or characters being depicted. Try to identify the techniques that helped the artist create that impression.

- What does the position of the characters tell you about the scene rendered in terra cotta?
- Consider the difference in dimension between the two pieces; one is flat, while the other is in relief. How does that difference affect the feel of each piece?
- The pastel drawing is a highly abstract figure, as opposed to a realistic one. What do you think of it? Why might an artist choose such an abstract style?

Narrative Art  Most of the artwork in this selection tells a story in one way or another. Consider how the artist’s choices of what to include and emphasize affect your sense of the events portrayed in each work. Compare and contrast how these events are presented in visual form with how they are presented in the text.

- One of the following pieces is a decorative scene painted on a useful object, and the other is a book illustration. How does each piece’s function affect its style?
- Compare the backgrounds on which the two scenes are painted. How does each background affect the way you view and understand the scene?
- Which scene makes more sense to you? Explain.
The Epic

Extraordinary heroes and hideous monsters. Brutal battles and dangerous voyages. Spectacular triumphs and crushing defeats. The epic tradition, still very much alive in today’s movies and novels, began thousands of years ago with the orally told epic poem. In ancient Greece, listeners crowded around poet-storytellers to hear about the daring exploits of a hero named Odysseus. With its storm-tossed seas, powerful evildoers, and narrow escapes, it’s no wonder that Homer’s *Odyssey* remains one of the most famous epics in Western literature. It captivates us because it is a compelling narrative and a window into a time and place different from our own.

Part 1: Characteristics of the Epic

In literature, an epic is a long narrative poem. It recounts the adventures of an epic hero, a larger-than-life figure who undertakes great journeys and performs deeds requiring remarkable strength and cunning. As you journey through many episodes from the *Odyssey*, expect to encounter the following elements.

**THE EPIC AT A GLANCE**

**Epic Hero**
- Possesses superhuman strength, craftiness, and confidence
- Is helped and harmed by interfering gods
- Embodies ideals and values that a culture considers admirable
- Emerges victorious from perilous situations

**Epic Plot**
- Involves a long journey, full of complications, such as
  - strange creatures
  - divine intervention
  - large-scale events
  - treacherous weather

**Epic Setting**
- Includes fantastic or exotic lands
- Involves more than one nation

**Archetypes**
- All epics include archetypes—characters, situations, and images that are recognizable in many times and cultures:
  - sea monster
  - buried treasure
  - epic hero
  - wicked temptress
  - suitors’ contest
  - loyal servant

**Epic Themes**
- Reflect such universal concerns as
  - courage
  - loyalty
  - a homecoming
  - beauty
  - the fate of a nation
  - life and death
**MODEL: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EPIC**

Here, the Greek (Achaean) king Menelaus is speaking to his wife, Helen. He recalls the moment when he and Odysseus hid with their fellow soldiers inside a giant wooden horse, waiting to attack the Trojans. Formerly a Trojan herself, Helen stood outside the horse and called to the soldiers inside, mimicking the voices of their wives. As you read, notice the characteristics of an epic that are revealed.

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**from BOOK 4: The Red-Haired King and His Lady**

“In my life I have met, in many countries, foresight and wit in many first rate men, but never have I seen one like Odysseus for steadiness and a stout heart. Here, for instance, is what he did—had the cold nerve to do—inside the hollow horse, where we were waiting, picked men all of us, for the Trojan slaughter, when all of a sudden, you came by—I dare say drawn by some superhuman power that planned an exploit for the Trojans; and Deiphobus, that handsome man, came with you. Three times you walked around it, patting it everywhere, and called by name the flower of our fighters, making your voice sound like their wives, calling. Diomedes and I crouched in the center along with Odysseus; we could hear you plainly; and listening, we two were swept by waves of longing—to reply, or go. Odysseus fought us down, despite our craving, and all the Achaeans kept their lips shut tight, all but Anticlus. Desire moved his throat to hail you, but Odysseus` great hands clamped over his jaws, and held. So he saved us all, till Pallas Athena led you away at last.”

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**Close Read**

1. King Menelaus mentions several heroic traits that Odysseus exhibited while carrying out his plan to defeat the Trojans. One trait has been boxed. Identify two more.

2. What archetype does Helen represent? Explain your answer.

3. Reread lines 8–10 and 23–24. Explain how the gods interfered in the episode that Menelaus is describing.
Part 2: The Language of Homer

Because the language of Homer was ancient Greek, what you will read is an English translation. The *Odyssey* has been translated many times, and each translator has interpreted it differently. Read these two versions of the opening of Book 2. The first is written in verse and has a more formal tone and diction—closer to the original—while the second is written in prose and is less formal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation 1</th>
<th>Translation 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When primal Dawn spread on the eastern sky her fingers of pink light, Odysseus’ true son stood up, drew on his tunic and his mantle, slung on a sword-belt and a new-edged sword, tied his smooth feet into good rawhide sandals, and left his room, a god’s brilliance upon him. —translated by Robert Fitzgerald (1961)</td>
<td>Dawn came, showing her rosy fingers through the early mists, and Telemachus leapt out of bed. He dressed himself, slung a sharp sword over his shoulder, strapt a stout pair of boots on his lissom feet, and came forth from his chamber like a young god. —translated by W. H. D. Rouse (1937)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Greeks who first experienced the *Odyssey* did not read a written version; they heard it as a live performance. Singing or reciting, a poet kept the audience enthralled with *epic similes*, *epithets*, and *allusions*.

- A **simile** is a comparison between two unlike things, using the word *like* or *as*. Homer often develops a simile at great length, so that it goes on for several lines. This is known as an **epic simile**. In this passage from Book 20, an angry Odysseus is compared to a sausage being roasted over a fire.

  His rage held hard in leash, submitted to his mind, while he himself rocked, rolling from side to side, as a cook turns a sausage, big with blood and fat, at a scorching blaze, without a pause; to broil it quick: so he rolled left and right, . . .

- An **epithet** is a brief descriptive phrase used to characterize a particular person or thing. When a poet needed to fill out a line, he'd add an epithet with the right meter and number of syllables. Odysseus is known by various epithets, including “son of Laertes” and “raider of cities.”

- An **allusion** is a reference to a famous person, place, or event. To help his audience picture what he described, a poet might have made an allusion to something they already knew. For instance, when Odysseus’ son first sees the palace of Menelaus, he says, “This is the way the court of Zeus must be.” Every Greek would have understood this allusion to the ruler of the gods.
MODEL 1: EPIC SIMILE

In this excerpt, Odysseus is watching the performance of a bard (a poet like Homer himself). Suddenly he finds himself listening to the story of the fall of Troy and of his own part in it. Notice the epic simile that is developed over this entire passage.

from BOOK 8: The Songs of the Harper

And Odysseus

let the bright molten tears run down his cheeks,
weeping [like] the way a wife mourns for her lord
on the lost field where he has gone down fighting
the day of wrath that came upon his children.

5 At sight of the man panting and dying there,
she slips down to enfold him, crying out;
then feels the spears, prodding her back and shoulders,
and goes bound into slavery and grief.

Piteous weeping wears away her cheeks:
but no more piteous than Odysseus’ tears,
cloaked as they were, now, from the company.

Close Read
1. What two things are being compared in this epic simile?
2. In the boxed lines, the wife cries first for her dying husband, then for herself. Consider what this might suggest about Odysseus’ feelings. What might the epic hero be crying about?

MODEL 2: EPITHET

Here, the goddess Athena speaks to her father, Zeus, on behalf of Odysseus. Reminding Zeus of sacrifices made to him during the Trojan War, she begs him to let Odysseus return home. Athena has told Zeus that Odysseus is so homesick that he “longs to die.”

from BOOK 1: A Goddess Intervenes

“Are you not moved by this, Lord of Olympus?
Had you no pleasure from Odysseus’ offerings
beside the Argive ships, on Troy’s wide seaboard?
O Zeus, what do you hold against him now?”

To this the summoner of cloud replied:

“My child, what strange remarks you let escape you.
Could I forget that kingly man, Odysseus?
There is no mortal half so wise; no mortal
gave so much to the lords of open sky.”

Close Read
1. One epithet of Zeus is boxed. Find another.
2. What epithet does Zeus use to refer to Odysseus?
Part 3: Reading the Epic

Reading the Odyssey is a complex experience. On one level, the poem is an action-packed, tension-filled narrative that makes readers eagerly anticipate the hero’s homecoming. On another level, it’s a work of art to be appreciated and analyzed. Use the following strategies to help you make the most of your journey through the epic.

READING THE EPIC AS NARRATIVE

• Note the changing narrators. Who is telling the story at any given point? Consider how the different narrators deepen your understanding of characters and events.

• Visualize the action and the settings by using details in the text.

• Track the events and conflicts and try to predict the outcomes.

• Use a chart like the one shown to keep track of the characters, including gods and goddesses and Odysseus’ friends and foes. What does each do to either help or harm him?

READING THE EPIC AS POETRY

• Try reading the lines aloud, as the epic was originally performed.

• Read the lines for their sense, just as you would read prose. Follow the punctuation, and remember that the end of a line does not always mean the end of a thought.

• Listen for sound devices such as alliteration, assonance, consonance, and rhyme and notice how they reinforce meaning. (Although the sound devices in English aren’t the same as those in the original Greek, they do reflect the translator’s attempt to capture the spirit and technique of Homer’s verse.)

• Consider how the imagery and figurative language—especially the epic similes—help you understand characters and events.

READING THE EPIC AS A REFLECTION OF ITS TIME

• Pay attention to the character traits of Odysseus, the epic hero, by looking closely at how he behaves and how he is described. What do these traits tell you about the values of the time?

• Think about what you’ve learned of Greek history and culture. What events may have influenced Homer?

• Remember that in Homer’s time most Greeks believed that the gods took an active interest in human affairs and themselves behaved much like humans. How are these religious beliefs apparent in the epic?
MODEL: READING THE EPIC

Odysseus has been gone from his homeland for years, and all except his family believe him dead. Young men make themselves at home in Odysseus’ castle while vying to marry his “widow,” Penelope. Odysseus’ son, Telemachus, calls an assembly to discuss the situation. The following excerpt is an exchange between Telemachus and one of Penelope’s suitors.

from BOOK 2: A Hero’s Son Awakens

Telemachus addresses the crowd, complaining of the suitors’ behavior.

“No; these men spend their days around our house killing our beeves and sheep and fatted goats, carousing, soaking up our good dark wine, not caring what they do. They squander everything. We have no strong Odysseus to defend us, and as to putting up a fight ourselves—we’d only show our incompetence in arms. Expel them, yes, if I only had the power; the whole thing’s out of hand, insufferable.”

A suitor responds to Telemachus’ heated accusation.

“You want to shame us, and humiliate us, but you should know the suitors are not to blame—it is your own dear, incomparably cunning mother. For three years now—and it will soon be four—she has been breaking the hearts of the Achaeans, holding out hope to all, and sending promises to each man privately—but thinking otherwise. Here is an instance of her trickery: she had her great loom standing in the hall and the fine warp of some vast fabric on it; we were attending her, and she said to us: ‘Young men, my suitors, now my lord is dead, let me finish my weaving before I marry, or else my thread will have been spun in vain. It is a shroud I weave for Lord Laertes, when cold death comes to lay him on his bier. The country wives would hold me in dishonor if he, with all his fortune, lay unshrouded.’ We have men’s hearts; she touched them; we agreed. So every day she wove on the great loom—but every night by torchlight she unwove it; and so for three years she deceived the Achaeans.”

Close Read

1. Try to visualize the suitors at Odysseus’ home by using details in lines 1–9. Describe the image that the lines conjured up in your mind.

2. Note the two speakers. What does Telemachus accuse the suitors of doing? How does one suitor defend his and the other suitors’ actions?

3. Identify two examples of sound devices in the boxed text.

4. What do the accusations made in this excerpt tell you about Greek values?

5. How would you describe Penelope? Cite details that help you to understand the traits Greeks prized in a woman.
Part 4: Analyze the Text

Here, Odysseus returns to his homeland at last, disguised as an old beggar. The first person he approaches is Eumaeus, his head swineherd. Welcoming the unknown beggar in the name of his missing lord, Eumaeus gives him a hot meal, a drink, and a place to sleep. To test the faithful swineherd and to try to keep warm in the frigid cold, the disguised Odysseus devises a story. Through the story, he hopes to encourage Eumaeus to give him—a supposed stranger—the cloak off his back. As you read this excerpt, use what you’ve learned to make sense of the episode.

“Listen,” he said,

“Eumaeus, and you others, here’s a wishful tale that I shall tell. The wine’s behind it, vaporing wine, that makes a serious man break down and sing, kick up his heels and clown, or tell some story that were best untold. But now I’m launched, I can’t stop now.

Would god I felt the hot blood in me that I had at Troy!

Laying an ambush near the walls one time, Odysseus and Menelaus were commanders and I ranked third. I went at their request. We worked in toward the bluffs and battlements and, circling the town, got into canebrakes, thick and high, a marsh where we took cover, hunched under arms.

The northwind dropped, and night came black and wintry. A fine sleet descending whitened the cane like hoarfrost, and clear ice grew dense upon our shields. The other men, all wrapt in blanket cloaks as well as tunics, rested well, in shields up to their shoulders, but I had left my cloak with friends in camp, foolhardy as I was. No chance of freezing hard, I thought, so I wore kilts and a shield only. But in the small hours of the third watch, when stars that rise at evening go down to their setting, I nudged Odysseus, who lay close beside me; he was alert then, listening, and I said:

‘Son of Laertes and the gods of old, Odysseus, master mariner and soldier,

I cannot hold on long among the living.

Close Read

1. Think about why Odysseus is telling Eumaeus this elaborate story. Through his plan of action, what traits does he display? Explain.

2. Reread the boxed text and visualize the imagery used to describe the setting. What does the imagery serve to emphasize?

3. What epithets does the soldier use to address Odysseus in the story?
The cold is making a corpse of me. Some god inveigled me to come without a cloak. No help for it now; too late.’

Next thing I knew he had a scheme all ready in his mind—and what a man he was for schemes and battles!

Speaking under his breath to me, he murmured:

‘Quiet; none of the rest should hear you.’

propping his head on his forearm, he said:

‘Listen, lads, I had an ominous dream, the point being how far forward from our ships and lines we’ve come. Someone should volunteer to tell the corps commander, Agamemnon; he may reinforce us from the base.’

Then, At this,

Thoas jumped up, the young son of Andraemon, put down his crimson cloak and headed off, running shoreward.

Wrapped in that man’s cloak

how gratefully I lay in the bitter dark until the dawn came stitched in gold! I wish I had that sap and fiber in me now!”

Then—O my swineherd!—you replied, Eumaeus:

“That was a fine story, and well told, not a word out of place, not a pointless word. No, you’ll not sleep cold for lack of cover, or any other comfort one should give to a needy guest. However, in the morning, you must go flapping in the same old clothes. Shirts and cloaks are few here; every man has one change only. When our prince arrives, the son of Odysseus, he will make you gifts—cloak, tunic, everything—and grant you passage wherever you care to go.”

On this he rose and placed the bed of balsam near the fire, strewing sheepskins on top, and skins of goats. Odysseus lay down. His host threw over him a heavy blanket cloak, his own reserve against the winter wind when it came wild.

Close Read

4. What quality does Odysseus attribute to himself in telling this tale? Cite specific details to support your answer.

5. Reread lines 31–33 and 39–46. What do you learn about how the ancient Greeks perceived their gods and ominous dreams?

6. Think about where else you have encountered a character like Eumaeus. What archetype does he represent? Explain.
Before Reading

The Wanderings of Odysseus
from the Odyssey
Epic Poem by Homer
Translated by Robert Fitzgerald

What is a **HERO**?

When you hear the word *hero*, who comes to mind? Do you think of someone with unusual physical strength? great courage? a rare talent? In Homer’s *Odyssey*, you’ll meet one of the classic heroes of Western literature—Odysseus, a man with many heroic traits as well as human faults.

**DISCUSS** Work with a small group to make a list of people—male and female—who are generally considered heroes. Discuss the heroic qualities of each person. Which qualities seem essential to every hero?
TEXT ANALYSIS: EPIC HERO

Common to myths, the epic hero is a larger-than-life character, traditionally a man, who pursues long and dangerous adventures. Alternately aided and blocked by the gods, he carries the fate of his people on his shoulders. The epic hero is an archetypal character—one found in works across time and cultures. Odysseus, one of the most famous heroes in Western culture, has shaped our ideas about the traits that a hero should have.

- extraordinary strength and courage
- cleverness and deceit, also known as guile
- extreme confidence and a tendency to dismiss warnings

Every epic hero embodies the values of his culture. As you read the Odyssey, consider how Odysseus faces various conflicts. What does this tell you about his character? What do his character traits tell you about what the ancient Greeks found admirable?

READING STRATEGY: READING AN EPIC POEM

The strategies for reading an epic are very similar to those for reading any narrative poem.

- Keep track of the events.
- Visualize the imagery.
- Notice how figurative language, including epic similes, makes the story vivid and interesting.
- Read difficult passages more than once. Use the side notes for help in comprehension.
- Read the poem aloud, as it was originally conveyed.

VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

Place each of the following words in the appropriate column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD LIST</th>
<th>abominably</th>
<th>assuage</th>
<th>meditation</th>
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<tr>
<td>adversary</td>
<td>beguiling</td>
<td>ponderous</td>
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<td>appalled</td>
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<td>ardor</td>
<td>harried</td>
<td>travail</td>
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Know Well | Think I Know | Don’t Know

Complete the activities in your Reader/Writer Notebook.
PART ONE: THE WANDERINGS OF ODYSSEUS

BOOK 1: A Goddess Intervenes

Sing in me, Muse, and through me tell the story of that man skilled in all ways of contending, the wanderer, harried for years on end, after he plundered the stronghold on the proud height of Troy.

He saw the townlands and learned the minds of many distant men, and weathered many bitter nights and days in his deep heart at sea, while he fought only to save his life, to bring his shipmates home. But not by will nor valor could he save them, for their own recklessness destroyed them all—children and fools, they killed and feasted on the cattle of Lord Helios, the Sun, and he who moves all day through heaven took from their eyes the dawn of their return.

Of these adventures, Muse, daughter of Zeus, tell us in our time, lift the great song again. . . .

The story of Odysseus begins with the goddess Athena’s appealing to Zeus to help Odysseus, who has been wandering for ten years on the seas, to find his way home to his family on Ithaca. While Odysseus has been gone, his son, Telemachus, has grown to manhood and his wife, Penelope, has been besieged by suitors wishing to marry her and gain Odysseus’ wealth. The suitors have taken up residence in her home and are constantly feasting on the family’s cattle, sheep, and goats. They dishonor Odysseus and his family. Taking Athena’s advice, Telemachus travels to Pylos for word of his father. Meanwhile, on Ithaca, the evil suitors plot to kill Telemachus when he returns.

1 Muse: a daughter of Zeus, credited with divine inspiration.

harried (här’ēd) adj. tormented; harassed harry v.

11–13 their own recklessness . . . the Sun: a reference to an event occurring later in the poem—an event that causes the death of Odysseus’ entire crew.

EPIC HERO
This invocation (lines 1–15) introduces us to Odysseus, “that man skilled in all ways of contending.” What traits is he shown to have?

Analyze Visuals

This 1930s print, The Ship of Odysseus, is part of an Odyssey series by Francois-Louis Schmied. What qualities of this ship has Schmied emphasized with his use of color and shape? Explain.
BOOK 5: Calypso, the Sweet Nymph

For seven of the ten years Odysseus has spent wandering the Mediterranean Sea, he has been held captive by the goddess Calypso on her island. As Book 5 begins, Zeus sends the god Hermes to tell Calypso to release Odysseus. However, she is only to help him build a raft. He must sail for 20 days before landing on the island of Scheria, where he will be helped in his effort to return home.

No words were lost on Hermes the Wayfinder, who bent to tie his beautiful sandals on, ambrosial, golden, that carry him over water or over endless land in a swish of the wind, and took the wand with which he charms asleep—or when he wills, awake—the eyes of men. So wand in hand he paced into the air, shot from Pieria down, down to sea level, and veered to skim the swell. A gull patrolling between the wave crests of the desolate sea will dip to catch a fish, and douse his wings; no higher above the whitecaps Hermes flew until the distant island lay ahead, then rising shoreward from the violet ocean he stepped up to the cave. Divine Calypso, the mistress of the isle, was now at home. Upon her hearthstone a great fire blazing scented the farthest shores with cedar smoke and smoke of thyme, and singing high and low in her sweet voice, before her loom a-weaving, she passed her golden shuttle to and fro. A deep wood grew outside, with summer leaves of alder and black poplar, pungent cypress. Ornate birds here rested their stretched wings—horned owls, falcons, cormorants—long-tongued beachcombing birds, and followers of the sea. Around the smoothwalled cave a crooking vine held purple clusters under ply of green; and four springs, bubbling up near one another shallow and clear, took channels here and there through beds of violets and tender parsley.

1–6 Hermes (hûr’mêz): the messenger of the gods, also known for his cleverness and trickery.

8 Pieria (pîr’ē-ə): an area next to Mount Olympus, home of the gods.

EPIC SIMILE
Identify the epic simile in lines 9–12. What does this comparison tell you about Hermes?

Analyze Visuals
How has the painter characterized Calypso in this 1906 portrait? Consider any relationship between her white dress and the white clouds.

28 purple clusters: grapes.
Even a god who found this place
would gaze, and feel his heart beat with delight:
so Hermes did; but when he had gazed his fill
he entered the wide cave. Now face to face
the magical Calypso recognized him,
as all immortal gods know one another
on sight—though seeming strangers, far from home.
But he saw nothing of the great Odysseus,
who sat apart, as a thousand times before,
and racked his own heart groaning, with eyes wet
scanning the bare horizon of the sea. . . .

Calypso invites Hermes to her table for food and drink, asking why he has come.
Hermes explains that he has brought with an order from Zeus that Calypso must
not detain Odysseus any longer but send him on his way home. She reluctantly
obeys, agreeing to offer Odysseus her advice about how to get home.

The strong god glittering left her as he spoke,
and now her ladyship, having given heed
to Zeus’s mandate, went to find Odysseus
in his stone seat to seaward—tear on tear
brimming in his eyes. The sweet days of his life time
were running out in anguish over his exile,
for long ago the nymph had ceased to please.
Though he fought shy of her and her desire,
he lay with her each night, for she compelled him.
But when day came he sat on the rocky shore
and broke his own heart groaning, with eyes wet
scanning the bare horizon of the sea. . . .

Now she stood near him in her beauty, saying:

“O forlorn man, be still.
Here you need grieve no more; you need not feel
your life consumed here; I have pondered it,
and I shall help you go. . . .”

Swiftly she turned and led him to her cave,
and they went in, the mortal and immortal.
He took the chair left empty now by Hermes,
where the divine Calypso placed before him
victuals and drink of men; then she sat down
facing Odysseus, while her serving maids
brought nectar and ambrosia to her side.
Then each one’s hands went out on each one’s feast
until they had their pleasure; and she said:
“Son of Laertes, versatile Odysseus,
after these years with me, you still desire
your old home? Even so, I wish you well.
If you could see it all, before you go—
all the adversity you face at sea—
you would stay here, and guard this house, and be
immortal—though you wanted her forever,
that bride for whom you pine each day.
Can I be less desirable than she is?
Less interesting? Less beautiful? Can mortals
compare with goddesses in grace and form?”

To this the strategist Odysseus answered:

“My lady goddess, here is no cause for anger.
My quiet Penelope—how well I know—
would seem a shade before your majesty,
death and old age being unknown to you,
while she must die. Yet, it is true, each day
I long for home, long for the sight of home. . . .”

With Calypso’s help, Odysseus builds a raft and sets out to sea. For 17 days he sails
until he is in sight of Scheria. For 3 more days he is pummeled by storms and finally
swims for the island. He makes it safely ashore and crawls to rest under some bushes.

A man in a distant field, no hearthfires near,
will hide a fresh brand in his bed of embers
to keep a spark alive for the next day;
so in the leaves Odysseus hid himself,
while over him Athena showered sleep
that his distress should end, and soon, soon.
In quiet sleep she sealed his cherished eyes.
In Books 6–8, Odysseus is welcomed by King Alcinous, who gives a banquet in his honor. That night the king begs Odysseus to tell who he is and what has happened to him. In Books 9–12, Odysseus relates to the king his adventures.

“I AM LAERTES’ SON”

say first? What shall I keep until the end?
The gods have tried me in a thousand ways.
But first my name: let that be known to you,
and if I pull away from pitiless death,
friendship will bind us, though my land lies far.

I am Laertes’ son, Odysseus.

Men hold me formidable for guile in peace and war:
this fame has gone abroad to the sky’s rim.

My home is on the peaked sea-mark of Ithaca
under Mount Neion’s wind-blown robe of leaves,
in sight of other islands—Dulichium,
Same, wooded Zacynthus—Ithaca
being most lofty in that coastal sea,
and northwest, while the rest lie east and south.

A rocky isle, but good for a boy’s training;
I shall not see on earth a place more dear,
though I have been detained long by Calypso,
loveliest among goddesses, who held me
in her smooth caves, to be her heart’s delight,
as Circe of Aeaea, the enchantress,
desired me, and detained me in her hall.

But in my heart I never gave consent.
Where shall a man find sweetness to surpass
his own home and his parents? In far lands
he shall not, though he find a house of gold.

“WHAT SHALL I

hold me formidable for guile:
consider me impressive for my cunning
and craftiness.

Mount Neion’s (mê’ônz’); Dulichium
dôô-kê’k’-e-am; Same (sâ’mê’); Zacynthus
za-sin’thas.

Odysseus refers to two beautiful
goddesses, Calypso and Circe, who have delayed him on their islands. (Details about Circe appear in Book 10.) At the same time, he seems nostalgic for his family and homeland, from which he has been separated for 18 years—10 of them spent fighting in Troy.

Epic Hero
Reread lines 24–26. What does Odysseus value most highly?
What of my sailing, then, from Troy? What of those years
of rough adventure, weathered under Zeus? . . .”

Odysseus explains that soon after leaving Troy, he and his crew land near Ismarus, the city
of the Cicones. The Cicones are allies of the Trojans and therefore enemies of Odysseus.
Odysseus and his crew raid the Cicones, robbing and killing them, until the Ciconian army
kills 72 of Odysseus’ men and drives the rest out to sea. Delayed by a storm for two days,
Odysseus and his remaining companions then continued their journey.

The Lotus Eaters
“I might have made it safely home, that time,
but as I came round Malea the current
took me out to sea, and from the north
a fresh gale drove me on, past Cythera.
Nine days I drifted on the teeming sea
before dangerous high winds. Upon the tenth
we came to the coastline of the Lotus Eaters,
who live upon that flower. We landed there
to take on water. All ships’ companies
mustered alongside for the mid-day meal.
Then I sent out two picked men and a runner
to learn what race of men that land sustained.
They fell in, soon enough, with Lotus Eaters,
who showed no will to do us harm, only
offering the sweet Lotus to our friends—but
those who ate this honeyed plant, the Lotus,
ever cared to report, nor to return:
they longed to stay forever, browsing on
that native bloom, forgetful of their homeland.
I drove them, all three wailing, to the ships,
tied them down under their rowing benches,
and called the rest: ‘All hands aboard;
come, clear the beach and no one taste
the Lotus, or you lose your hope of home.’
Filing in to their places by the rowlocks
my oarsmen dipped their long oars in the surf,
and we moved out again on our sea faring.

The Cyclops
In the next land we found were Cyclopes,
giants, louts, without a law to bless them.
In ignorance leaving the fruitage of the earth in mystery
to the immortal gods, they neither plow

30 Malea (mä-lō’ā).
32 Cythera (sĭ-thîr’ə).
38 mustered: assembled; gathered.

Language Coach
Synonyms Words with the same meaning are called synonyms.
Reread line 40. Another way to say this line is “to learn what race of people lived there.” What synonym could you substitute for sustained in line 40? Refer to a thesaurus if you need help.

44–52 those who ate . . . hope of home. How do the Lotus Eaters pose a threat to Odysseus and his men?

56 Cyclopes (sĭ-klō’pēz): refers to the creatures in plural; Cyclops is singular.
nor sow by hand, nor till the ground, though grain—
wild wheat and barley—grows untended, and
wine-grapes, in clusters, ripen in heaven’s rain.
Cyclopes have no muster and no meeting,
no consultation or old tribal ways,
but each one dwells in his own mountain cave
dealing out rough justice to wife and child,
indifferent to what the others do. . . .”

Across the bay from the land of the Cyclopes was a lush, deserted island. Odysseus and
his crew landed on the island in a dense fog and spent days feasting on wine and wild
goats and observing the mainland, where the Cyclopes lived. On the third day,
Odysseus and his company of men set out to learn if the Cyclopes were friends or foes.

“When the young Dawn with finger tips of rose came in the east, I called my men together
and made a speech to them:

‘Old shipmates, friends,
the rest of you stand by; I’ll make the crossing
in my own ship, with my own company,
and find out what the mainland natives are—for they may be wild savages, and lawless,
or hospitable and god fearing men.’

At this I went aboard, and gave the word
to cast off by the stern. My oarsmen followed,
filling in to their benches by the rowlocks,
and all in line dipped oars in the gray sea.

As we rowed on, and nearer to the mainland,
at one end of the bay, we saw a cavern
yawning above the water, screened with laurel,
and many rams and goats about the place
inside a sheepfold—made from slabs of stone
earthfast between tall trunks of pine and rugged
towering oak trees.

A prodigious man
slept in this cave alone, and took his flocks
to graze afield—remote from all companions,
knowing none but savage ways, a brute
so huge, he seemed no man at all of those
who eat good wheaten bread; but he seemed rather
a shaggy mountain reared in solitude.
We beached there, and I told the crew

58–67 Why doesn’t Odysseus respect the Cyclopes?

EPITHET
Notice the descriptive phrase used to characterize the dawn in line 68. What does this description tell you about the dawn?

stern: the rear end of a ship.

screened with laurel: partially hidden by laurel trees.

91–92 What does Odysseus’ metaphor imply about the Cyclops?
to stand by and keep watch over the ship;
as for myself I took my twelve best fighters
and went ahead. I had a goatskin full
of that sweet liquor that Euanthes’ son,
Maron, had given me. He kept Apollo’s
holy grove at Ismarus; for kindness
we showed him there, and showed his wife and child,
he gave me seven shining golden talents
perfectly formed, a solid silver winebowl,
and then this liquor—twelve two-handled jars
of brandy, pure and fiery. Not a slave
in Maron’s household knew this drink; only
he, his wife and the storeroom mistress knew;
and they would put one cupful—ruby-colored,
honey-smooth—in twenty more of water,
but still the sweet scent hovered like a fume
over the winebowl. No man turned away
when cups of this came round.

A wineskin full

I brought along, and victuals in a bag,
for in my bones I knew some towering brute
would be upon us soon—all outward power,
a wild man, ignorant of civility.

We climbed, then, briskly to the cave. But Cyclops
had gone afield, to pasture his fat sheep,
so we looked round at everything inside:
a drying rack that sagged with cheeses, pens
crowded with lambs and kids, each in its class:
firstlings apart from middlings, and the ‘dewdrops,’
or newborn lambkins, penned apart from both.
And vessels full of whey were brimming there—
bowls of earthenware and pails for milking.

My men came pressing round me, pleading:

‘Why not
take these cheeses, get them stowed, come back,
throw open all the pens, and make a run for it?
We’ll drive the kids and lambs aboard. We say
put out again on good salt water!’

Ah,

how sound that was! Yet I refused. I wished
to see the caveman, what he had to offer—
no pretty sight, it turned out, for my friends.
We lit a fire, burnt an offering, and took some cheese to eat; then sat in silence around the embers, waiting. When he came he had a load of dry boughs on his shoulder to stoke his fire at suppertime. He dumped it with a great crash into that hollow cave, and we all scattered fast to the far wall.

Then over the broad cavern floor he ushered the ewes he meant to milk. He left his rams and he-goats in the yard outside, and swung high overhead a slab of solid rock to close the cave. Two dozen four-wheeled wagons, with heaving wagon teams, could not have stirred the tonnage of that rock from where he wedged it over the doorsill. Next he took his seat and milked his bleating ewes. A practiced job he made of it, giving each ewe her suckling; thickened his milk, then, into curds and whey, sieved out the curds to drip in withy baskets, and poured the whey to stand in bowls cooling until he drank it for his supper. When all these chores were done, he poked the fire, heaping on brushwood. In the glare he saw us.

‘Strangers,’ he said, ‘who are you? And where from? What brings you here by sea ways—a fair traffic? Or are you wandering rogues, who cast your lives like dice, and ravage other folk by sea?’

We felt a pressure on our hearts, in dread of that deep rumble and that mighty man. But all the same I spoke up in reply:

‘We are from Troy, Achaeans, blown off course by shifting gales on the Great South Sea; homeward bound, but taking routes and ways uncommon; so the will of Zeus would have it. We served under Agamemnon, son of Atreus—the whole world knows what city he laid waste, what armies he destroyed. It was our luck to come here; here we stand, beholden for your help, or any gifts you give—as custom is to honor strangers. We would entreat you, great Sir, have a care for the gods’ courtesy; Zeus will avenge the unoffending guest.’

133 **burnt an offering:** burned a portion of the food as an offering to secure the gods’ goodwill. (Such offerings were frequently performed by Greek sailors during difficult journeys.)

151 **withy baskets:** baskets made from twigs.

157 **fair traffic:** honest trading.

**ALLUSION**
Reread lines 163–169. Agamemnon was the Greek king who led the war against the Trojans. Consider what Odysseus says about Agamemnon; what point is he making about himself by claiming this association?

172–175 It was a sacred Greek custom to honor strangers with food and gifts. Odysseus is reminding the Cyclops that Zeus will punish anyone who mistreats a guest.
He answered this from his brute chest, unmoved:

‘You are a ninny, or else you come from the other end of nowhere, telling me, mind the gods! We Cyclopes care not a whistle for your thundering Zeus or all the gods in bliss; we have more force by far. I would not let you go for fear of Zeus—you or your friends—unless I had a whim to. Tell me, where was it, now, you left your ship—around the point, or down the shore, I wonder?’

He thought he’d find out, but I saw through this, and answered with a ready lie:

‘My ship? Poseidon Lord, who sets the earth a-tremble, broke it up on the rocks at your land’s end. A wind from seaward served him, drove us there. We are survivors, these good men and I.’

Neither reply nor pity came from him, but in one stride he clutched at my companions and caught two in his hands like squirming puppies to beat their brains out, spattering the floor.

Then he dismembered them and made his meal, gaping and crunching like a mountain lion—everything: innards, flesh, and marrow bones. We cried aloud, lifting our hands to Zeus, powerless, looking on at this, appalled;

but Cyclops went on filling up his belly with manflesh and great gulps of whey, then lay down like a mast among his sheep. My heart beat high now at the chance of action, and drawing the sharp sword from my hip I went along his flank to stab him where the midriff holds the liver. I had touched the spot when sudden fear stayed me: if I killed him we perished there as well, for we could never move his ponderous doorway slab aside.

So we were left to groan and wait for morning.

When the young Dawn with fingertips of rose lit up the world, the Cyclops built a fire and milked his handsome ewes, all in due order,
putting the sucklings to the mothers. Then, his chores being all dispatched, he caught another brace of men to make his breakfast, and whisked away his great door slab to let his sheep go through—but he, behind, reset the stone as one would cap a quiver.

There was a din of whistling as the Cyclops rounded his flock to higher ground, then stillness. And now I pondered how to hurt him worst, if but Athena granted what I prayed for. Here are the means I thought would serve my turn:

a club, or staff, lay there along the fold—an olive tree, felled green and left to season for Cyclops’ hand. And it was like a mast a lugger of twenty oars, broad in the beam—a deep-sea-going craft—might carry:

so long, so big around, it seemed. Now I chopped out a six foot section of this pole and set it down before my men, who scraped it; and when they had it smooth, I hewed again to make a stake with pointed end. I held this in the fire’s heart and turned it, toughening it, then hid it, well back in the cavern, under one of the dung piles in profusion there.

Now came the time to toss for it: who ventured along with me? whose hand could bear to thrust and grind that spike in Cyclops’ eye, when mild sleep had mastered him? As luck would have it, the men I would have chosen won the toss—four strong men, and I made five as captain.

At evening came the shepherd with his flock, his woolly flock. The rams as well, this time, entered the cave: by some sheep-herding whim—or a god’s bidding—none were left outside. He hefted his great boulder into place and sat him down to milk the bleating ewes in proper order, put the lambs to suck, and swiftly ran through all his evening chores. Then he caught two more men and feasted on them. My moment was at hand, and I went forward holding an ivy bowl of my dark drink, looking up, saying:

215 brace: pair.

218–219 The Cyclops reseals the cave with the massive rock as easily as an ordinary human places the cap on a container of arrows.

226 left to season: left to dry out and harden.

228 lugger: a small, wide sailing ship.

profusion (prə-fyô’zhan) n. abundance

238–243 What does Odysseus plan to do to the Cyclops?

Language Coach
Word Definitions The use of words whose sounds echo their meanings, such as buzz and croak, is called onomatopoeia. What word in line 249 is an example of onomatopoeia?
'Cyclops, try some wine.
Here’s liquor to wash down your scraps of men.
Taste it, and see the kind of drink we carried
under our planks. I meant it for an offering
if you would help us home. But you are mad,
unbearable, a bloody monster! After this,
will any other traveller come to see you?’

He seized and drained the bowl, and it went down
so fiery and smooth he called for more:

‘Give me another, thank you kindly. Tell me,
how are you called? I’ll make a gift will please you.
Even Cyclopes know the wine-grapes grow
out of grassland and loam in heaven’s rain,
but here’s a bit of nectar and ambrosia’!

Three bowls I brought him, and he poured them down.
I saw the fuddle and flush come over him,
then I sang out in cordial tones:

‘Cyclops,
you ask my honorable name? Remember
the gift you promised me, and I shall tell you.
My name is Nohbdy: mother, father, and friends,
everyone calls me Nohbdy.’

And he said:

‘Nohbdy’s my meat, then, after I eat his friends.
Others come first. There’s a noble gift, now.’

Even as he spoke, he reeled and tumbled backward,
his great head lolling to one side: and sleep
took him like any creature. Drunk, hiccupping,
he dribbled streams of liquor and bits of men.

Now, by the gods, I drove my big hand spike
deep in the embers, charring it again,
and cheered my men along with battle talk
to keep their courage up: no quitting now.
The pike of olive, green though it had been,
reddened and glowed as if about to catch.
I drew it from the coals and my four fellows
gave me a hand, lugging it near the Cyclops
as more than natural force nerved them; straight
forward they sprinted, lifted it, and rammed it
deep in his crater eye, and I leaned on it
turning it as a shipwright turns a drill
in planking, having men below to swing
the two-handled strap that spins it in the groove.
So with our brand we bored that great eye socket
while blood ran out around the red hot bar.
Eyelid and lash were seared; the pierced ball
hissed broiling, and the roots popped.

In a smithy
one sees a white-hot axehead or an adze
plunged and wrung in a cold tub, screeching steam—
the way they make soft iron hale and hard—:
just so that eyeball hissed around the spike.  
The Cyclops bellowed and the rock roared round him,
and we fell back in fear. Clawing his face
he tugged the bloody spike out of his eye,
threw it away, and his wild hands went groping;
thens he set up a howl for Cyclopes
who lived in caves on windy peaks nearby.
Some heard him; and they came by divers ways
to clump around outside and call:

‘What ails you,
Polyphemus? Why do you cry so sore
in the starry night? You will not let us sleep.
Sure no man’s driving off your flock? No man
has tricked you, ruined you?’

Out of the cave
the mammoth Polyphemus roared in answer:

‘Nohbdy, Nohbdy’s tricked me, Nohbdy’s ruined me!’

To this rough shout they made a sage reply:

‘Ah well, if nobody has played you foul
there in your lonely bed, we are no use in pain
given by great Zeus. Let it be your father,
Poseidon Lord, to whom you pray.’

So saying
they trailed away. And I was filled with laughter
to see how like a charm the name deceived them.
Now Cyclops, wheezing as the pain came on him,
fumbled to wrench away the great doorstone
and squatted in the breach with arms thrown wide
for any silly beast or man who bolted—
hoping somehow I might be such a fool.

But I kept thinking how to win the game:
death sat there huge; how could we slip away?
I drew on all my wits, and ran through tactics,
reasoning as a man will for dear life,
until a trick came—and it pleased me well.

The Cyclops’ rams were handsome, fat, with heavy
fleeces, a dark violet.  

Three abreast

I tied them silently together, twining
cords of willow from the ogre’s bed;
then slung a man under each middle one
to ride there safely, shielded left and right.
So three sheep could convey each man. I took
the woolliest ram, the choicest of the flock,
and hung myself under his kinky belly,
pulled up tight, with fingers twisted deep
in sheepskin ringlets for an iron grip.
So, breathing hard, we waited until morning.

When Dawn spread out her finger tips of rose
the rams began to stir, moving for pasture,
and peals of bleating echoed round the pens
where dams with udders full called for a milking.
Blinded, and sick with pain from his head wound,
the master stroked each ram, then let it pass,
but my men riding on the pectoral fleece
the giant’s blind hands blundering never found.

Last of them all my ram, the leader, came,
weighted by wool and me with my meditations.
The Cyclops patted him, and then he said:

‘Sweet cousin ram, why lag behind the rest
in the night cave? You never linger so,
but graze before them all, and go afar
to crop sweet grass, and take your stately way
leading along the streams, until at evening
you run to be the first one in the fold.
Why, now, so far behind? Can you be grieving
over your Master’s eye? That carrion rogue
and his accurst companions burnt it out
when he had conquered all my wits with wine.
Nohbdy will not get out alive, I swear.

327 breach: opening.

EPIC HERO
Notice Odysseus’ great mental struggle in lines 330–336. As you
read on, note the clever plan he has managed to come up with on the spot.

353 pectoral fleece: the wool covering a sheep’s chest.

meditation (měd′ĭ-tā′shən)
n. the act of being in serious, reflective thought

This 1910 color print depicts Odysseus taunting Polyphemus as he and his men make their escape.
Oh, had you brain and voice to tell
where he may be now, dodging all my fury!
Bashed by this hand and bashed on this rock wall
his brains would strew the floor, and I should have
rest from the outrage Nohbdy worked upon me.’

He sent us into the open, then. Close by,
I dropped and rolled clear of the ram’s belly,
going this way and that to untie the men.
With many glances back, we rounded up
his fat, stiff-legged sheep to take aboard,
and drove them down to where the good ship lay.

We saw, as we came near, our fellows’ faces
shining; then we saw them turn to grief
tallying those who had not fled from death.
I hushed them, jerking head and eyebrows up,
and in a low voice told them: ‘Load this herd;
move fast, and put the ship’s head toward the breakers.’
They all pitched in at loading, then embarked
and struck their oars into the sea. Far out,
as far off shore as shouted words would carry,
I sent a few back to the adversary:

‘O Cyclops! Would you feast on my companions?
Puny, am I, in a Caveman’s hands?
How do you like the beating that we gave you,
you damned cannibal? Eater of guests
under your roof! Zeus and the gods have paid you!’

The blind thing in his doubled fury broke
a hilltop in his hands and heaved it after us.
Ahead of our black prow it struck and sank
whelmed in a spuming geyser, a giant wave
that washed the ship stern foremost back to shore.

I got the longest boathook out and stood
fending us off, with furious nods to all
to put their backs into a racing stroke—
row, row, or perish. So the long oars bent
kicking the foam sternward, making head
until we drew away, and twice as far.

Now when I cupped my hands I heard the crew
in low voices protesting:

‘Godsake, Captain!
Why bait the beast again? Let him alone!’

EPIC HERO
What character traits has Odysseus demonstrated in his dealings with Polyphemus?

385 put . . . the breakers: turn the ship around so that it is heading toward the open sea.

adversary (ād’var-sër’ē)
n. an opponent; enemy

390–394 Odysseus assumes that the gods are on his side.

395–403 The hilltop thrown by Polyphemus lands in front of the ship, causing a huge wave that carries the ship back to the shore. Odysseus uses a long pole to push the boat away from the land.

406 cupped my hands: put his hands on either side of his mouth in order to magnify his voice.
'That tidal wave he made on the first throw
all but beached us.'

‘All but stove us in!’

‘Give him our bearing with your trumpeting,
he’ll get the range and lob a boulder.’

‘Aye
He’ll smash our timbers and our heads together!’

I would not heed them in my glorying spirit,
but let my anger flare and yelled:

‘Cyclops,
if ever mortal man inquire
how you were put to shame and blinded, tell him
Odysseus, raider of cities, took your eye:
Laertes’ son, whose home’s on Ithaca!’

At this he gave a mighty sob and rumbled:

‘Now comes the weird upon me, spoken of old.
A wizard, grand and wondrous, lived here—Telemus,
a son of Eurymus; great length of days
he had in wizardry among the Cyclopes,
and these things he foretold for time to come:
my great eye lost, and at Odysseus’ hands.
Always I had in mind some giant, armed
in giant force, would come against me here.
But this, but you—small, pitiful and twiggy—
you put me down with wine, you blinded me.
Come back, Odysseus, and I’ll treat you well,
praying the god of earthquake to befriend you—
his son I am, for he by his avowal
fathered me, and, if he will, he may
heal me of this black wound—he and no other
of all the happy gods or mortal men.’

Few words I shouted in reply to him:
‘If I could take your life I would and take
your time away, and hurl you down to hell!
The god of earthquake could not heal you there!’

At this he stretched his hands out in his darkness
toward the sky of stars, and prayed Poseidon:
‘O hear me, lord, blue girdler of the islands, if I am thine indeed, and thou art father: grant that Odysseus, raider of cities, never see his home: Laertes’ son, I mean, who kept his hall on Ithaca. Should destiny intend that he shall see his roof again among his family in his father land, far be that day, and dark the years between. Let him lose all companions, and return under strange sail to bitter days at home.’

In these words he prayed, and the god heard him. Now he laid hands upon a bigger stone and wheeled around, titanic for the cast, to let it fly in the black-prowed vessel’s track. But it fell short, just aft the steering oar, and whelming seas rose giant above the stone to bear us onward toward the island. There as we ran in we saw the squadron waiting, the trim ships drawn up side by side, and all our troubled friends who waited, looking seaward. We beached her, grinding keel in the soft sand, and waded in, ourselves, on the sandy beach.

Then we unloaded all the Cyclops’ flock to make division, share and share alike, only my fighters voted that my ram, the prize of all, should go to me. I slew him by the sea side and burnt his long thighbones to Zeus beyond the stormcloud, Cronus’ son, who rules the world. But Zeus disdained my offering; destruction for my ships he had in store and death for those who sailed them, my companions.

Now all day long until the sun went down we made our feast on mutton and sweet wine, till after sunset in the gathering dark we went to sleep above the wash of ripples.

When the young Dawn with finger tips of rose touched the world, I roused the men, gave orders to man the ships, cast off the mooring lines; and filing in to sit beside the rowlocks oarsmen in line dipped oars in the gray sea. So we moved out, sad in the vast offing, having our precious lives, but not our friends.”

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**EPIC HERO**

Reread lines 437–452. Paraphrase Polyphemus’ curse. How has Odysseus brought this curse upon himself?

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455 *titanic for the cast*: drawing on all his enormous strength in preparing to throw.

457 *aft*: behind.

459 *the island*: the deserted island where most of Odysseus’ men had stayed behind.

470 *Cronus’ son*: Zeus’ father, Cronus, was a Titan, one of an earlier race of gods.

483 *offing*: the part of the deep sea visible from the shore.
Odysseus and his men next land on the island of Aeolus, the wind king, and stay with him a month. To extend his hospitality, Aeolus gives Odysseus two parting gifts: a fair west wind that will blow the fleet of ships toward Ithaca, and a great bag holding all the unfavorable, stormy winds. Within sight of home, and while Odysseus is sleeping, the men open the bag, thinking it contains gold and silver. The bad winds thus escape and blow the ships back to Aeolus’ island. The king refuses to help them again, believing now that their voyage has been cursed by the gods.

The discouraged mariners next stop briefly in the land of the Laestrygones, fierce cannibals who bombard the fleet of ships with boulders. Only Odysseus, his ship, and its crew of 45 survive the shower of boulders. The lone ship then sails to Aeaea, home of the goddess Circe, who is considered by many to be a witch. There, Odysseus divides his men into two groups. Eurylochus leads one platoon to explore the island, while Odysseus stays behind on the ship with the remaining crew.

“In the wild wood they found an open glade,
around a smooth stone house—the hall of Circe—and wolves and mountain lions lay there, mild in her soft spell, fed on her drug of evil.

5 None would attack—oh, it was strange, I tell you—but switching their long tails they faced our men like hounds, who look up when their master comes with tidbits for them—as he will—from table. Humbly those wolves and lions with mighty paws fawned on our men—who met their yellow eyes and feared them.

In the entrance way they stayed to listen there: inside her quiet house they heard the goddess Circe.

Low she sang in her beguiling voice, while on her loom she wove ambrosial fabric sheer and bright,
by that craft known to the goddesses of heaven.
No one would speak, until Polites—most
faithful and likable of my officers, said:

‘Dear friends, no need for stealth: here’s a young weaver
singing a pretty song to set the air
a-tingle on these lawns and paven courts.
Goddess she is, or lady. Shall we greet her?’

So reassured, they all cried out together,
and she came swiftly to the shining doors
to call them in. All but Eurylochus—
who feared a snare—the innocents went after her.
On thrones she seated them, and lounging chairs,
while she prepared a meal of cheese and barley
and amber honey mixed with Pramnian wine,
adding her own vile pinch, to make them lose
desire or thought of our dear father land.
Scarce had they drunk when she flew after them
with her long stick and shut them in a pigsty—
odies now, though minds were still unchanged.
So, squealing, in they went. And Circe tossed them
acorns, mast, and cornel berries—fodder
for hogs who rut and slumber on the earth.

Down to the ship Eurylochus came running
to cry alarm, foul magic doomed his men!
But working with dry lips to speak a word
he could not, being so shaken; blinding tears
welled in his eyes; **foreboding** filled his heart.
When we were frantic questioning him, at last
we heard the tale: our friends were gone. . . .”

Eurylochus tells Odysseus what has happened and begs him to sail away from
Circe’s island. Against this advice, however, Odysseus rushes to save his men from
the enchantress. On the way, he meets the god Hermes, who gives him a magical
plant called moly to protect him from Circe’s power. Still, Hermes warns Odysseus
that he must make the goddess swear she will play no “witches’ tricks.” Armed with
the moly and Hermes’ warning, Odysseus arrives at Circe’s palace.

Circe gives Odysseus a magic drink, but it does not affect him and he threatens
to kill her with his sword. Circe turns the pigs back into men but puts them all
into a trance. They stay for one year, until Odysseus finally begs her to let them
go home. She replies that they must first visit the land of the dead and hear a
prophecy from the ghost of Tiresias.
Odysseus and his crew set out for the land of the dead. They arrive and find the place to which Circe has directed them.

“Then I addressed the blurred and breathless dead, vowing to slaughter my best heifer for them before she calved, at home in Ithaca, and burn the choice bits on the altar fire; as for Tiresias, I swore to sacrifice a black lamb, handsomest of all our flock. Thus to assuage the nations of the dead I pledged these rites, then slashed the lamb and ewe, letting their black blood stream into the wellpit.

Now the souls gathered, stirring out of Erebus, brides and young men, and men grown old in pain, and tender girls whose hearts were new to grief; many were there, too, torn by brazen lanceheads, battle-slain, bearing still their bloody gear. From every side they came and sought the pit with rustling cries; and I grew sick with fear. But presently I gave command to my officers to flay those sheep the bronze cut down, and make burnt offerings of flesh to the gods below—to sovereign Death, to pale Persephone.

Meanwhile I crouched with my drawn sword to keep the surging phantoms from the bloody pit till I should know the presence of Tiresias.

One shade came first—Elpenor, of our company, who lay unburied still on the wide earth as we had left him—dead in Circe’s hall, untouched, unmourned, when other cares compelled us. Now when I saw him there I wept for pity and called out to him:

**ALLUSION**

In lines 17–20, Odysseus makes a sacrifice to “sovereign Death,” or Hades, and “pale Persephone” (par-sef’o-nē), his bride, who was kidnapped and forced to live with him for six months of every year. Her mother, goddess of the harvest, grieves during that time, causing winter to fall. What does this background information tell you about Hades? Consider how this information affects your impression of the underworld.
‘How is this, Elpenor,
how could you journey to the western gloom
swifter afoot than I in the black lugger?’

He sighed, and answered:

‘Son of great Laertes,
Odysseus, master mariner and soldier,
bad luck shadowed me, and no kindly power;
ignoble death I drank with so much wine.
I slept on Circe’s roof, then could not see
the long steep backward ladder, coming down,
and fell that height. My neck bone, buckled under,
snapped, and my spirit found this well of dark.
Now hear the grace I pray for, in the name
of those back in the world, not here—your wife
and father, he who gave you bread in childhood,
and your own child, your only son, Telemachus,
long ago left at home.

This 16th-century painting illustrates
the descent of Ulysses (Odysseus)
into the underworld. How has the
artist distinguished between Ulysses
and the dead, also known as shades?

Language Coach
Roots and Affixes  The prefix in-  
(“not”) changes form depending
on the first letter of the word to
which it affixes. (That is, the letter n
changes to a different letter.) What
word in line 35 contains a form of
the prefix in-? What does the word
mean?
When you make sail
and put these lodgings of dim Death behind,
you will moor ship, I know, upon Aeaea Island;
there, O my lord, remember me, I pray,
do not abandon me unwept, unburied,
to tempt the gods’ wrath, while you sail for home;
but fire my corpse, and all the gear I had,
and build a cairn for me above the breakers—
an unknown sailor’s mark for men to come.
Heap up the mound there, and implant upon it
the oar I pulled in life with my companions.’

He ceased, and I replied:

‘Unhappy spirit,
I promise you the barrow and the burial.’

So we conversed, and grimly, at a distance,
with my long sword between, guarding the blood,
while the faint image of the lad spoke on.
Now came the soul of Anticlea, dead,
my mother, daughter of Autolycus,
dead now, though living still when I took ship
for holy Troy. Seeing this ghost I grieved,
but held her off, through pang on pang of tears,
till I should know the presence of Tiresias.
Soon from the dark that prince of Thebes came forward
bearing a golden staff; and he addressed me:

‘Son of Laertes and the gods of old,
Odysseus, master of land ways and sea ways,
why leave the blazing sun, O man of woe,
to see the cold dead and the joyless region?
Stand clear, put up your sword;
let me but taste of blood, I shall speak true.’

At this I stepped aside, and in the scabbard
let my long sword ring home to the pommel silver,
as he bent down to the sombre blood. Then spoke
the prince of those with gift of speech:

‘Great captain,
a fair wind and the honey lights of home
are all you seek. But anguish lies ahead;
the god who thunders on the land prepares it,
not to be shaken from your track, implacable,
in rancor for the son whose eye you blinded. One narrow strait may take you through his blows: denial of yourself, restraint of shipmates.

85 When you make landfall on Thrinacia first and quit the violet sea, dark on the land you’ll find the grazing herds of Helios by whom all things are seen, all speech is known. Avoid those kine, hold fast to your intent, and hard seafaring brings you all to Ithaca. But if you raid the beeves, I see destruction for ship and crew. Though you survive alone, bereft of all companions, lost for years, under strange sail shall you come home, to find your own house filled with trouble: insolent men eating your livestock as they court your lady. Aye, you shall make those men atone in blood! But after you have dealt out death—in open combat or by stealth—to all the suitors, go overland on foot, and take an oar, until one day you come where men have lived with meat unsalted, never known the sea, nor seen seagoing ships, with crimson bows and oars that fledge light hulls for dipping flight.

The spot will soon be plain to you, and I can tell you how: some passerby will say, “What winnowing fan is that upon your shoulder?” Halt, and implant your smooth oar in the turf and make fair sacrifice to Lord Poseidon: a ram, a bull, a great buck boar; turn back, and carry out pure hekatombs at home to all wide heaven’s lords, the undying gods, to each in order. Then a seaborne death soft as this hand of mist will come upon you when you are wearied out with rich old age, your country folk in blessed peace around you. And all this shall be just as I foretell.’ . . .”

Odysseus speaks to the shade of his mother. She tells him that Penelope and Telemachus are still grieving for him and that his father, Laertes, has moved to the country, where he, too, mourns his son. Odysseus’ mother explains that she died from a broken heart. Odysseus also speaks with the spirits of many great ladies and men who died, as well as those who were being punished for their earthly sins. Filled with horror, Odysseus and his crew set sail.
Odysseus and his men return to Circe’s island. While the men sleep, Circe takes Odysseus aside to hear about the underworld and to offer advice.

“Then said the Lady Circe:

‘So: all those trials are over.

Listen with care
to this, now, and a god will arm your mind.
Square in your ship’s path are Sirens, crying
beauty to bewitch men coasting by;
woe to the innocent who hears that sound!
He will not see his lady nor his children
in joy, crowding about him, home from sea;
the Sirens will sing his mind away
on their sweet meadow lolling. There are bones
of dead men rotting in a pile beside them
and flayed skins shrivel around the spot.

Steer wide;

keep well to seaward; plug your oarsmen’s ears
with beeswax kneaded soft; none of the rest
should hear that song.

But if you wish to listen,

let the men tie you in the lugger, hand
and foot, back to the mast, lashed to the mast,
so you may hear those harpies’ thrilling voices;
shout as you will, begging to be untied,
your crew must only twist more line around you
and keep their stroke up, till the singers fade.
What then? One of two courses you may take,
and you yourself must weigh them. I shall not
plan the whole action for you now, but only
tell you of both.

In Circe, Odysseus has found a valuable ally. In the next hundred lines, she describes in detail each danger that he and his men will meet on their way home.
Ahead are beetling rocks and dark blue glancing Amphitrite, surging, roars around them. Prowling Rocks, or Drifters, the gods in bliss have named them—named them well. Not even birds can pass them by. . . .

A second course lies between headlands. One is a sharp mountain piercing the sky, with stormcloud round the peak dissolving never, not in the brightest summer, to show heaven’s azure there, nor in the fall.

No mortal man could scale it, nor so much as land there, not with twenty hands and feet, so sheer the cliffs are—as of polished stone. Midway that height, a cavern full of mist opens toward Erebus and evening. Skirting this in the lugger, great Odysseus, your master Bowman, shooting from the deck, would come short of the cavemouth with his shaft; but that is the den of Scylla, where she yaps abominably, a newborn whelp’s cry, though she is huge and monstrous. God or man, no one could look on her in joy. Her legs—and there are twelve—are like great tentacles, unjointed, and upon her serpent necks are borne six heads like nightmares of ferocity, with triple serried rows of fangs and deep gullets of black death. Half her length, she sways her heads in air, outside her horrid cleft, hunting the sea around that promontory for dolphins, dogfish, or what bigger game thundering Amphitrite feeds in thousands. And no ship’s company can claim to have passed her without loss and grief; she takes, from every ship, one man for every gullet.

The opposite point seems more a tongue of land you’d touch with a good bowshot, at the narrows. A great wild fig, a shaggy mass of leaves, grows on it, and Charybdis lurks below to swallow down the dark sea tide. Three times from dawn to dusk she spews it up and sucks it down again three times, a whirling maelstrom; if you come upon her then the god who makes earth tremble could not save you.
No, hug the cliff of Scylla, take your ship through on a racing stroke. Better to mourn six men than lose them all, and the ship, too.’

So her advice ran; but I faced her, saying:

‘Only instruct me, goddess, if you will, how, if possible, can I pass Charybdis, or fight off Scylla when she raids my crew?’

Swiftly that loveliest goddess answered me:

‘Must you have battle in your heart forever? The bloody toil of combat? Old contender, will you not yield to the immortal gods? That nightmare cannot die, being eternal evil itself—horror, and pain, and chaos; there is no fighting her, no power can fight her, all that avails is flight.

Lose headway there along that rockface while you break out arms, and she’ll swoop over you, I fear, once more, taking one man again for every gullet. No, no, put all your backs into it, row on; invoke Blind Force, that bore this scourge of men, to keep her from a second strike against you.

Then you will coast Thrinacia, the island where Helios’ cattle graze, fine herds, and flocks of goodly sheep. The herds and flocks are seven, with fifty beasts in each.

No lambs are dropped, or calves, and these fat cattle never die. Immortal, too, their cowherds are—their shepherds—Phaethusa and Lampetia, sweetly braided nymphs that divine Neaera bore to the overlord of high noon, Helios. These nymphs their gentle mother bred and placed upon Thrinacia, the distant land, in care of flocks and cattle for their father.

Now give those kine a wide berth, keep your thoughts intent upon your course for home, and hard seafaring brings you all to Ithaca. But if you raid the beeves, I see destruction for ship and crew.'
Rough years then lie between
you and your homecoming, alone and old,
the one survivor, all companions lost.’ . . .”

At dawn, Odysseus and his men continue their journey. Odysseus decides
to tell the men only of Circe’s warnings about the Sirens, whom they will
soon encounter. He is fairly sure that they can survive this peril if he keeps
their spirits up. Suddenly, the wind stops.

“The crew were on their feet
briskly, to furl the sail, and stow it; then,
each in place, they poised the smooth oar blades
and sent the white foam scudding by. I carved
a massive cake of beeswax into bits
and rolled them in my hands until they softened—
no long task, for a burning heat came down
from Helios, lord of high noon. Going forward
I carried wax along the line, and laid it
thick on their ears. They tied me up, then, plumb
amidships, back to the mast, lashed to the mast,
and took themselves again to rowing. Soon,
as we came smartly within hailing distance,
the two Sirens, noting our fast ship
off their point, made ready, and they sang. . . .

The lovely voices in ardor appealing over the water
made me crave to listen, and I tried to say
‘Untie me!’ to the crew, jerking my brows;
but they bent steady to the oars. Then Perimedes
got to his feet, he and Eurylochus,
and passed more line about, to hold me still.
So all rowed on, until the Sirens
dropped under the sea rim, and their singing
dwindled away.

My faithful company
rested on their oars now, peeling off
the wax that I had laid thick on their ears;
then set me free.

But scarcely had that island
faded in blue air than I saw smoke
and white water, with sound of waves in tumult—
a sound the men heard, and it terrified them.
Oars flew from their hands; the blades went knocking
wild alongside till the ship lost way,
with no oarblades to drive her through the water.
Well, I walked up and down from bow to stern, trying to put heart into them, standing over every oarsman, saying gently,

‘Friends, have we never been in danger before this? More fearsome, is it now, than when the Cyclops penned us in his cave? What power he had! Did I not keep my nerve, and use my wits to find a way out for us?

Now I say by hook or crook this peril too shall be something that we remember. Heads up, lads! We must obey the orders as I give them. Get the oarshafts in your hands, and lay back hard on your benches; hit these breaking seas. Zeus help us pull away before we founder.

You at the tiller, listen, and take in all that I say—the rudders are your duty; keep her out of the combers and the smoke; steer for that headland; watch the drift, or we fetch up in the smother, and you drown us.’

That was all, and it brought them round to action. But as I sent them on toward Scylla, I told them nothing, as they could do nothing. They would have dropped their oars again, in panic, to roll for cover under the decking. Circe’s bidding against arms had slipped my mind, so I tied on my cuirass and took up two heavy spears, then made my way along to the foredeck—thinking to see her first from there, the monster of the gray rock, harboring torment for my friends. I strained my eyes upon that cliffside veiled in cloud, but nowhere could I catch sight of her.

And all this time, in travail, sobbing, gaining on the current, we rowed into the strait—Scylla to port and on our starboard beam Charybdis, dire gorge of the salt sea tide. By heaven! when she vomited, all the sea was like a cauldron seething over intense fire, when the mixture suddenly heaves and rises.

Language Coach

Idioms The idiom, or stock phrase, “by hook or by crook” may have originally referred to the practice of gathering firewood from dead tree branches using hooks or crooks (shepherd’s sticks). What does it seem to mean in line 149?

154 founder: sink.

157 combers: breaking waves.

158–159 watch . . . smother: keep the ship on course, or it will be crushed in the rough water.

travail (trā-vāl”) n. painful effort

gorge: throat; gullet.

EPIC HERO

Consider Odysseus’ behavior in lines 108–179. Do you think he is a good leader? Explain your opinion.
The shot spume soared to the landside heights, and fell like rain.

But when she swallowed the sea water down we saw the funnel of the maelstrom, heard the rock bellowing all around, and dark sand raged on the bottom far below.

My men all blanched against the gloom, our eyes were fixed upon that yawning mouth in fear of being devoured.

Then Scylla made her strike, whisking six of my best men from the ship. I happened to glance aft at ship and oarsmen and caught sight of their arms and legs, dangling high overhead. Voices came down to me in anguish, calling my name for the last time.

A man surfcasting on a point of rock for bass or mackerel, whipping his long rod to drop the sinker and the bait far out, will hook a fish and rip it from the surface to dangle wriggling through the air:

so these were borne aloft in spasms toward the cliff.

She ate them as they shrieked there, in her den, in the dire grapple, reaching still for me—and deathly pity ran me through at that sight—far the worst I ever suffered, questing the passes of the strange sea.

We rowed on.

The Rocks were now behind; Charybdis, too, and Scylla dropped astern. . . .”

Odysseus tries to persuade his men to bypass Thrinacia, the island of the sun god, Helios, but they insist on landing. Driven by hunger, they ignore Odysseus’ warning not to feast on Helios’ cattle. This disobedience angers the sun god, who threatens to stop shining if payment is not made for the loss of his cattle. To appease Helios, Zeus sends down a thunderbolt to sink Odysseus’ ship. Odysseus alone survives. He eventually drifts to Ogygia, the home of Calypso, who keeps him on her island for seven years. With this episode, Odysseus ends the telling of his tale to King Alcinous.
Comprehension
1. Recall Why does Odysseus want to leave Calypso and her island?
2. Recall How does Odysseus escape from Polyphemus?
3. Recall What happens to Eurylochus’ men after they drink Circe’s wine?
4. Recall What does Tiresias predict will happen if Odysseus raids the herds of Helios?
5. Summarize How does Odysseus survive the dangers posed by the Sirens, Scylla, and Charybdis?

Text Analysis
6. Analyze Epic Hero Create a two-column chart to analyze Odysseus’ strengths and weaknesses. Considering the cultural values that Odysseus reflects, to what extent do the traits in each column seem fitting for an epic hero? Explain.

7. Analyze Epithets Identify at least five epithets used to describe Odysseus in Part 1. For each epithet, explain what it tells you about his character.

8. Understand Character Motivation After Odysseus escapes from Polyphemus, he makes sure that Polyphemus knows who outwitted him. Why does he care? What are the consequences of Odysseus’ behavior?

9. Interpret Epic Simile Reread the epic simile on page 1236, lines 193–198, which describes the men being caught by Scylla. Explain what two items are being compared. What does the comparison help to emphasize?

10. Interpret Allusions In the opening lines of Book 1, the poet calls upon Muse, a daughter of Zeus often credited with inspiration. Why would he open the epic in this way? What does this allusion tell you about him as a poet?

11. Examine Theme One theme in Part 1 is that a hero must rely on clever deceit, or guile, to survive. Explain how this theme is conveyed.

Text Criticism
12. Critical Interpretations In discussing Homer’s use of epic similes, the critic Eva Brann contends that “similes do much the same work in Homeric epic as do the gods, who also beautify and magnify human existence.” Think about how the gods interact with humans in the Odyssey. Do you agree that they “beautify and magnify” human existence? Then consider the epic similes you have encountered so far; how might they be seen to do the same? Explain.

What is a HERO?
What heroes like Odysseus have you encountered in modern texts?
Vocabulary in Context

**VOCABULARY PRACTICE**

Decide whether the words in each pair are synonyms or antonyms.

1. harried/calmed
2. appalled/dismayed
3. profusion/shortage
4. ardor/indifference
5. assuage/soothe
6. adversary/friend
7. ponderous/awkward
8. travail/relaxation
9. beguiling/entrancing
10. foreboding/prediction
11. abominably/atrociously
12. meditation/contemplation

**ACADEMIC VOCABULARY IN WRITING**

Why is it taking Odysseus so long to get back to Ithaca? Demonstrate your understanding by writing a short description of Odysseus’ journey so far. Explain Homer’s emphasis on the trials Odysseus faces. Use at least one Academic Vocabulary word in your response.

**VOCABULARY STRATEGY: WORDS WITH THE PREFIX fore-**

Recognizing prefixes can help you determine the meanings of unfamiliar words, whether in literature or nonfiction readings. The prefix *fore-*, which comes from Old English and means “earlier,” “in front of,” or “beforehand,” is used in forming numerous English words. In *foreboding*, it is combined with the verb *bode*, “to give signs of something.” *Fore-* is also combined with many common words, as in *forehead* and *foretell*.

**PRACTICE** Choose a word from the box to complete each sentence. Use a dictionary to check your answers.

1. Our _____ came to this land looking for freedom.
2. Diandra tried to ____ Jack before he walked right into the trap.
3. In the ______ of the painting was a large house; behind the house was a barn.
4. Casual comments early in a story often ______ coming events.
5. The tennis star’s strong ______ made her a formidable opponent.
6. To _____ a quick vote on the issue, the committee voted to study it further.
7. In what way was the horse and buggy the ______ of the automobile?

**WORD LIST**

- abominably
- adversary
- appalled
- ardor
- assuage
- beguiling
- foreboding
- harried
- meditation
- ponderous
- profusion
- travail

**COMMON CORE**

L 4d Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word.
Before Reading

The Homecoming
from the Odyssey
Epic Poem by Homer
Translated by Robert Fitzgerald

How does it feel to come HOME again?

If you spend enough time at any airport or bus station, you’re bound to witness an emotional scene. A long-awaited homecoming can touch us more deeply than almost anything. Imagine a traveler who’s been away for years, whose family thought he might never return. What kind of scene might you expect at his homecoming?

QUICKWRITE Recall a time when you or someone you know returned home after some time away. Write a brief description of the scene, and explain the emotions that went along with it.
TEXT ANALYSIS: CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EPIC
In the simplest terms, an epic is a long adventure story. An epic plot spans many years and involves a long journey. Often, the fate of an entire nation is at stake. An epic setting spans great distances and foreign lands. Epic themes—the underlying messages in an epic—reflect timeless concerns, such as courage, honor, life, and death.

Epics also contain archetypes, or patterns found in works across different cultures and time periods. As explained in Part 1, the epic hero is an archetype. So is the notion of a heroic journey. Other archetypes found in the Odyssey include intervention by gods, floods and storms, descent into the underworld, and heroic battles against monsters. As you read the second part of the epic, look for these and other archetypes. Consider where else you might have encountered them in literature, art, or film.

READING STRATEGY: SUMMARIZING
Writing a plot summary—a brief retelling of a story—is a good way to make sure you’re following the events of a narrative. An epic consists of many episodes, each with its own set of characters, conflicts, and resolution. As you read, record information that will help you summarize each episode. Remember that a summary should be objective. It should include only what happens in the text, not your personal opinions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Episode: Father and Son</th>
<th>Setting: Ithaca, Odysseus’ homeland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characters: Odysseus, Eumaeus</td>
<td>Resolution:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Conflict: |

VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT
Replace the words in bold with synonyms from the word list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD LIST</th>
<th>adversity</th>
<th>desolation</th>
<th>revulsion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aloof</td>
<td>accomplice</td>
<td>implacable</td>
<td>tremulous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commandeer</td>
<td>restitution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contemptible</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. It’s disgusting to be shaky in the face of hardship.
2. He felt an unforgiving hatred for his captors.
3. Don’t act distant; forget sorrow and join the celebration!
4. He could seize enemy ships as repayment for wrongs.

Complete the activities in your Reader/Writer Notebook.
In Books 13–15, King Alcinous and his friends send Odysseus on his way home. Odysseus sleeps while the rowers bring him to Ithaca. When he awakens, he fails to recognize his homeland until Athena appears and tells him that he is indeed home. She disguises him as an old man, so that he can surprise the suitors, and then urges him to visit his faithful swineherd, Eumaeus. The swineherd welcomes the disguised Odysseus and tells him about what has been happening in Odysseus' home. Athena goes to Telemachus and tells him to return home. She warns him of the suitors' plot to kill him and advises him to stay with the swineherd for a night. Telemachus does as she bids.

But there were two men in the mountain hut—Odysseus and the swineherd. At first light blowing their fire up, they cooked their breakfast and sent their lads out, driving herds to root in the tall timber.

When Telemachus came, the wolvish troop of watchdogs only fawned on him as he advanced. Odysseus heard them go and heard the light crunch of a man’s footfall—at which he turned quickly to say:

“Eumaeus,

here is one of your crew come back, or maybe another friend: the dogs are out there snuffling belly down; not one has even growled.

I can hear footsteps—”

But before he finished his tall son stood at the door.

Review the information given in the summary at the top of this page. What do you think Marc Chagall wanted to capture in this painting?

The swineherd

orose in surprise, letting a bowl and jug
tumble from his fingers. Going forward,
he kissed the young man’s head, his shining eyes
and both hands, while his own tears brimmed and fell.
Think of a man whose dear and only son,
born to him in exile, reared with labor,
has lived ten years abroad and now returns:
how would that man embrace his son! Just so
the herdsman clapped his arms around Telemachus and covered him with kisses—for he knew
the lad had got away from death. He said:

“Light of my days, Telemachus,
you made it back! When you took ship for Pylos
I never thought to see you here again.
Come in, dear child, and let me feast my eyes;
here you are, home from distant places! How rarely anyway, you visit us,
your own men, and your own woods and pastures!
Always in the town, a man would think
you loved the suitors’ company, those dogs!”

Telemachus with his clear candor said:

“I am with you, Uncle. See now, I have come
because I wanted to see you first, to hear from you
if Mother stayed at home—or is she married
off to someone and Odysseus’ bed
left empty for some gloomy spider’s weaving?”

Gently the forester replied to this:

“At home indeed your mother is, poor lady,
still in the women’s hall. Her nights and days
are wearied out with grieving.”

Stepping back
he took the bronze-shod lance, and the young prince
entered the cabin over the worn door stone.
Odysseus moved aside, yielding his couch,
but from across the room Telemachus checked him:

“Friend, sit down; we’ll find another chair
in our own hut. Here is the man to make one!”

A EPIC
Reread lines 19–23. What theme is being developed in this epic simile?

B EPIC
Reread lines 26–30. How do these lines indicate an epic setting?
The swineherd, when the quiet man sank down, built a new pile of evergreens and fleeces—a couch for the dear son of great Odysseus—then gave them trenchers of good meat, left over from the roast pork of yesterday, and heaped up willow baskets full of bread, and mixed an ivy bowl of honey-hearted wine. Then he in turn sat down, facing Odysseus, their hands went out upon the meat and drink as they fell to, ridding themselves of hunger. . . .

Telemachus sends the swineherd to let his mother know he has returned safely. Athena appears and urges Odysseus to let Telemachus know who he really is.

Saying no more,

she tipped her golden wand upon the man, making his cloak pure white and the knit tunic fresh around him. Lithe and young she made him, ruddy with sun, his jawline clean, the beard no longer grew upon his chin. And she withdrew when she had done.
Then Lord Odysseus c
reappeared—and his son was thunderstruck. Fear in his eyes, he looked down and away as though it were a god, and whispered:

“Stranger,
you are no longer what you were just now! Your cloak is new; even your skin! You are one of the gods who rule the sweep of heaven! Be kind to us, we’ll make you fair oblation and gifts of hammered gold. Have mercy on us!”

The noble and enduring man replied:

“No god. Why take me for a god? No, no. I am that father whom your boyhood lacked and suffered pain for lack of. I am he.”

Held back too long, the tears ran down his cheeks as he embraced his son.

EPIC
What supernatural event is described in lines 61–67?

74 oblation: sacrifice

Analyze Visuals
This detail of an ancient Roman mosaic shows Odysseus (Ulysses) and Telemachus. How does the technique of clustering colored tiles together affect the kind of image that can be created? Be specific.
Only Telemachus, uncomprehending, wild with incredulity, cried out:

“You cannot be my father Odysseus! Meddling spirits conceived this trick to twist the knife in me! No man of woman born could work these wonders by his own craft, unless a god came into it with ease to turn him young or old at will. I swear you were in rags and old, and here you stand like one of the immortals!”

Odysseus brought his ranging mind to bear and said:

“This is not princely, to be swept away by wonder at your father’s presence. No other Odysseus will ever come, for he and I are one, the same; his bitter fortune and his wanderings are mine. Twenty years gone, and I am back again on my own island. . . .”

Then, throwing his arms around this marvel of a father Telemachus began to weep. Salt tears rose from the wells of longing in both men, and cries burst from both as keen and fluttering as those of the great taloned hawk, whose nestlings farmers take before they fly. So helplessly they cried, pouring out tears, and might have gone on weeping so till sundown. . . .

Telemachus lets Odysseus know that they face more than 100 suitors. Odysseus tells Telemachus to return home. He will follow—still disguised as an old man—and Telemachus must pretend not to know him. He must also lock away Odysseus’ weapons and armor.
Telemachus returns home, and Odysseus and the swineherd soon follow. Odysseus is still disguised as a beggar.

While he spoke

an old hound, lying near, pricked up his ears
and lifted up his muzzle. This was Argos,
trained as a puppy by Odysseus,
but never taken on a hunt before
his master sailed for Troy. The young men, afterward,
hunted wild goats with him, and hare, and deer,
but he had grown old in his master’s absence.
Treated as rubbish now, he lay at last
upon a mass of dung before the gates—
manure of mules and cows, piled there until
fieldhands could spread it on the king’s estate.
Abandoned there, and half destroyed with flies,
old Argos lay.

But when he knew he heard

Odysseus’ voice nearby, he did his best
to wag his tail, nose down, with flattened ears,
having no strength to move nearer his master.
And the man looked away,
wiping a salt tear from his cheek; but he
hid this from Eumaeus. Then he said:

“I marvel that they leave this hound to lie
here on the dung pile;
he would have been a fine dog, from the look of him,
though I can’t say as to his power and speed
when he was young. You find the same good build
in house dogs, table dogs landowners keep
all for style.”

And you replied, Eumaeus:

“A hunter owned him—but the man is dead
in some far place. If this old hound could show
the form he had when Lord Odysseus left him,
going to Troy, you’d see him swift and strong.
He never shrank from any savage thing
he’d brought to bay in the deep woods; on the scent
no other dog kept up with him. Now misery
has him in leash. His owner died abroad,
and here the women slaves will take no care of him.
You know how servants are: without a master
they have no will to labor, or excel.
For Zeus who views the wide world takes away
half the manhood of a man, that day
he goes into captivity and slavery.”

Eumaeus crossed the court and went straight forward
into the mégaron among the suitors;
but death and darkness in that instant closed
the eyes of Argos, who had seen his master,
Odysseus, after twenty years. . . .

Odysseus enters his home as a beggar, and the suitors mock and abuse him.
Penelope asks to speak with the beggar, but Odysseus puts her off until nightfall.
In Books 18–20, Odysseus observes the suitors and finds that two in particular, Antinous and Eurymachus, are rude and demanding. Penelope asks Odysseus the beggar for news of her husband. He says he has heard that Odysseus is on his way home. Penelope, however, has given up hope for Odysseus’ return. She proposes an archery contest to the suitors, with marriage to her as the prize. She enters the storeroom and takes down the heavy bow that Odysseus left behind.

Now the queen reached the storeroom door and halted. Here was an oaken sill, cut long ago and sanded clean and bedded true. Foursquare the doorjambs and the shining doors were set by the careful builder. Penelope untied the strap around the curving handle, pushed her hook into the slit, aimed at the bolts inside and shot them back. Then came a rasping sound as those bright doors the key had sprung gave way—a bellow like a bull’s vaunt in a meadow—followed by her light footfall entering over the plank floor. Herb-scented robes lay there in chests, but the lady’s milkwhite arms went up to lift the bow down from a peg in its own polished bowcase.

Now Penelope sank down, holding the weapon on her knees, and drew her husband’s great bow out, and sobbed and bit her lip and let the salt tears flow. Then back she went to face the crowded hall, tremendous bow in hand, and on her shoulder hung the quiver spiked with coughing death. Behind her maids bore a basket full of axeheads, bronze and iron implements for the master’s game. Thus in her beauty she approached the suitors, and near a pillar of the solid roof

**Analyze Visuals**

This is a detail from an 18th-century portrait of Penelope. What qualities are emphasized in this portrait, and how do they compare with qualities emphasized in the text on this page? Explain.

**ARCHETYPE**

Reread lines 8–10. What archetypal image do you recognize in these lines? Explain how this image helps to build suspense.

15–18 Notice that Penelope still grieves for Odysseus, even after 20 years.

21 quiver (kwiv’ər): a case in which arrows are carried. What is meant by “the quiver spiked with coughing death”?

22–23 axeheads . . . game: metal heads of axes (without handles) that Odysseus employs in a display of archery skill.
she paused, her shining veil across her cheeks,
her maids on either hand and still,
then spoke to the banqueters:

“My lords, hear me:
suitors indeed, you **commandeer**ed this house
to feast and drink in, day and night, my husband
being long gone, long out of mind. You found
no justification for yourselves—none
except your lust to marry me. Stand up, then:
we now declare a contest for that prize.

Here is my lord Odysseus’ hunting bow.
Bend and string it if you can. Who sends an arrow
through iron axe-helve sockets, twelve in line?
I join my life with his, and leave this place, my home,
my rich and beautiful bridal house, forever
to be remembered, though I dream it only.” . . .

Despite heating and greasing the bow, the lesser suitors prove unable to string it.
The most able suitors, Antinous and Eurymachus, hold off. While the suitors are
busy with the bow, Odysseus—still disguised as an old beggar—goes to enlist
the aid of two of his trusted servants, Eumaeus, the swineherd, and Philoetius,
the cowherd.

Two men had meanwhile left the hall:
swineherd and cowherd, in companionship,
one downcast as the other. But Odysseus
followed them outdoors, outside the court,
and coming up said gently:

“You, herdsman,
and you, too, swineherd, I could say a thing to you,
or should I keep it dark?

No, no; speak,
my heart tells me. Would you be men enough
to stand by Odysseus if he came back?

Suppose he dropped out of a clear sky, as I did?
Suppose some god should bring him?
Would you bear arms for him, or for the suitors?”

The cowherd said:

“Ah, let the master come!

Father Zeus, grant our old wish! Some courier
guide him back! Then judge what stuff is in me
and how I manage arms!”

---

**commandeer** (kŏm’an-dîr’) **v.** to take
control of by force

35–37 Note that the contest has two parts: first the suitor must bend the heavy
bow and string it—a task that requires
immense strength and skill—and then he
must shoot an arrow straight through the
holes in 12 axe heads set up in a row.

**Etymology** A word’s **etymology** is
its history. You can usually guess the
etymology of compound words like
downcast (line 43): The word down
became attached to the word cast,
meaning “thrown.” Do you think
the two herders have literally been
“thrown down”? Explain.
Likewise Eumaeus
fell to praying all heaven for his return,
so that Odysseus, sure at least of these,
told them:

“I am at home, for I am he.

I bore adversities, but in the twentieth year
I am ashore in my own land. I find
the two of you, alone among my people,
longed for my coming. Prayers I never heard
except your own that I might come again.

So now what is in store for you I’ll tell you:
If Zeus brings down the suitors by my hand
I promise marriages to both, and cattle,
and houses built near mine. And you shall be
brothers-in-arms of my Telemachus.

Here, let me show you something else, a sign
that I am he, that you can trust me, look:
this old scar from the tusk wound that I got
boar hunting on Parnassus. . . .”

Shifting his rags
he bared the long gash. Both men looked, and knew,
and threw their arms around the old soldier, weeping,
kissing his head and shoulders. He as well
took each man’s head and hands to kiss, then said—
to cut it short, else they might weep till dark—

“Break off, no more of this.
Anyone at the door could see and tell them.
Drift back in, but separately at intervals
after me.

Now listen to your orders:

when the time comes, those gentlemen, to a man,
will be dead against giving me bow or quiver.
Defy them. Eumaeus, bring the bow
and put it in my hands there at the door.
Tell the women to lock their own door tight.
Tell them if someone hears the shock of arms
or groans of men, in hall or court, not one
must show her face, but keep still at her weaving.
Philoetius, run to the outer gate and lock it.
Throw the cross bar and lash it.” . . .

adversity (əd-vûr’sî-tē) n. hardship; misfortune

ARCHETYPE
Identify the trait that Odysseus values so highly in these two
servants. Where else in film or
literature have you encountered
these archetypal characters?

Parnassus (pär-näs’os): a mountain
in central Greece.

EPIC
Identify the plot stage in lines
84–93. What do you think is about
to happen?
Odysseus the beggar asks the suitors if he might try the bow. Worried that the old man may show them up, they refuse, but Penelope urges them to let Odysseus try. At Telemachus’ request, Penelope leaves the men to settle the question of the bow among themselves. Two trusted servants lock the doors of the room, and Telemachus orders the bow be given to Odysseus.

And Odysseus took his time,
turning the bow, tapping it, every inch,
for borings that termites might have made
while the master of the weapon was abroad.
The suitors were now watching him, and some jested among themselves:

“A bow lover!”

“Dealer in old bows!”

“Maybe he has one like it at home!”

“Or has an itch to make one for himself.”

“See how he handles it, the sly old buzzard!”

And one disdainful suitor added this:

“May his fortune grow an inch for every inch he bends it!”

How does 20th-century-artist N. C. Wyeth show suspense in this detail from the painting The Trial of the Bow? Be specific.
But the man skilled in all ways of contending,
satisfied by the great bow’s look and heft,
like a musician, like a harper, when
with quiet hand upon his instrument
he draws between his thumb and forefinger
a sweet new string upon a peg: so effortlessly
Odysseus in one motion strung the bow.
Then slid his right hand down the cord and plucked it,
so the taut gut vibrating hummed and sang
a swallow’s note.

In the hushed hall it smote the suitors
and all their faces changed. Then Zeus thundered
overhead, one loud crack for a sign.
And Odysseus laughed within him that the son
of crooked-minded Cronus had flung that omen down.
He picked one ready arrow from his table
where it lay bare: the rest were waiting still
in the quiver for the young men’s turn to come.
He nocked it, let it rest across the handgrip,
and drew the string and grooved butt of the arrow,
aiming from where he sat upon the stool.

Now flashed
arrow from twanging bow clean as a whistle
through every socket ring, and grazed not one,
to thud with heavy brazen head beyond.

Then quietly
Odysseus said:

“Telemachus, the stranger
you welcomed in your hall has not disgraced you.
I did not miss, neither did I take all day
stringing the bow. My hand and eye are sound,
not so contemptible as the young men say.
The hour has come to cook their lordships’ mutton—
supper by daylight. Other amusements later,
with song and harping that adorn a feast.”

He dropped his eyes and nodded, and the prince
Telemachus, true son of King Odysseus,
belted his sword on, clapped hand to his spear,
and with a clink and glitter of keen bronze
stood by his chair, in the forefront near his father.

heft: weight.

In this epic simile, Odysseus’ stringing of the bow is compared to the stringing of a harp. What qualities of Odysseus does this comparison emphasize?

smote: struck; affected sharply.
The thunder, a sign from Zeus, indicates that the gods are on Odysseus’ side.

Cronus (krō’nas): Zeus’ father.

nocked it: placed the arrow’s feathered end against the bowstring.

brazen: made of brass.

contemptible (kan-těmp’tə-bal) adj. deserving of scorn; despicable

EPIC
Book 21 ends with the image of father and son standing side by side facing more than 100 enemies. How can this be considered an epic moment?
Now shrugging off his rags the wiliest fighter of the islands leapt and stood on the broad door sill, his own bow in his hand. He poured out at his feet a rain of arrows from the quiver and spoke to the crowd:

“So much for that. Your clean-cut game is over. If I can make this shot. Help me, Apollo.”

He drew to his fist the cruel head of an arrow for Antinous just as the young man leaned to lift his beautiful drinking cup, embossed, two-handled, golden: the cup was in his fingers: the wine was even at his lips: and did he dream of death?

How could he? In that revelry amid his throng of friends who would imagine a single foe—though a strong foe indeed—could dare to bring death’s pain on him and darkness on his eyes?

Odysseus’ arrow hit him under the chin and punched up to the feathers through his throat. Backward and down he went, letting the winecup fall from his shocked hand. Like pipes his nostrils jetted crimson runnels, a river of mortal red, and one last kick upset his table knocking the bread and meat to soak in dusty blood.

Now as they craned to see their champion where he lay the suitors jostled in uproar down the hall, everyone on his feet. Wildly they turned and scanned the walls in the long room for arms; but not a shield, not a good ashen spear was there for a man to take and throw. All they could do was yell in outrage at Odysseus:

7–20 Why does Odysseus kill Antinous first? Why does he do it in such a sudden, terrible way?

23–25 Earlier, in preparation for this confrontation, Odysseus and Telemachus removed all the weapons and shields that were hanging on the walls.
“Foul! to shoot at a man! That was your last shot!”

“You own throat will be slit for this!”

“Our finest lad is down!
You killed the best on Ithaca.”

“Buzzards will tear your eyes out!”

For they imagined as they wished—that it was a wild shot, an unintended killing—fools, not to comprehend they were already in the grip of death.
But glaring under his brows Odysseus answered:

“You yellow dogs, you thought I’d never make it home from the land of Troy. You took my house to plunder, twisted my maids to serve your beds. You dared bid for my wife while I was still alive.
Contempt was all you had for the gods who rule wide heaven, contempt for what men say of you hereafter.
Your last hour has come. You die in blood.”

As they all took this in, sickly green fear pulled at their entrails, and their eyes flickered looking for some hatch or hideaway from death.
Eurymachus alone could speak. He said:

“If you are Odysseus of Ithaca come back, all that you say these men have done is true.
Rash actions, many here, more in the countryside.
But here he lies, the man who caused them all.
Antinous was the ringleader; he whipped us on to do these things. He cared less for a marriage than for the power Cronion has denied him as king of Ithaca. For that he tried to trap your son and would have killed him.
He is dead now and has his portion. Spare your own people. As for ourselves, we’ll make restitution of wine and meat consumed, and add, each one, a tithe of twenty oxen with gifts of bronze and gold to warm your heart.
Meanwhile we cannot blame you for your anger.”

Odysseus glowered under his black brows and said:
“Not for the whole treasure of your fathers, all you enjoy, lands, flocks, or any gold put up by others, would I hold my hand. There will be killing till the score is paid. You forced yourselves upon this house. Fight your way out, or run for it, if you think you’ll escape death. I doubt one man of you skins by.”

They felt their knees fail, and their hearts—but heard Eurymachus for the last time rallying them.

“Friends,” he said, “the man is implacable. Now that he’s got his hands on bow and quiver he’ll shoot from the big door stone there until he kills us to the last man. Fight, I say, let’s remember the joy of it. Swords out!

Hold up your tables to deflect his arrows. After me, everyone: rush him where he stands. If we can budge him from the door, if we can pass into the town, we’ll call out men to chase him. This fellow with his bow will shoot no more.”

He drew his own sword as he spoke, a broadsword of fine bronze, honed like a razor on either edge. Then crying hoarse and loud he hurled himself at Odysseus. But the kingly man let fly an arrow at that instant, and the quivering feathered butt sprang to the nipple of his breast as the barb stuck in his liver. The bright broadsword clanged down. He lurched and fell aside, pitching across his table. His cup, his bread and meat, were spilt and scattered far and wide, and his head slammed on the ground.

Revulsion, anguish in his heart, with both feet kicking out, he downed his chair, while the shrouding wave of mist closed on his eyes.

Amphinomus now came running at Odysseus, broadsword naked in his hand. He thought to make the great soldier give way at the door. But with a spear throw from behind Telemachus hit him between the shoulders, and the lancehead drove clear through his chest. He left his feet and fell forward, thudding, forehead against the ground.  

61–67 Why do you think Odysseus rejects Eurymachus’ explanation and offer of restitution?

67 skins by: sneaks away.

implacable (ĭm-plăk’ə-bal) adj. impossible to soothe; unforgiving

Language Coach

Roots and Affixes A word’s root often suggests its meaning. The Latin root flect (no relation to the Spanish flecha, “arrow”) means “to bend.” What do you think deflect means in line 75? What mental image can help you remember its meaning?

revulsion (rĕ-vŭl’shan) n. a sudden feeling of disgust or loathing

88–89 Eurymachus’ death is physically painful, but he also has “revulsion, anguish in his heart.” What do you think causes this emotional pain?

90 Amphinomus (ām-fĭn’a-mas): one of the suitors.

93–100 Telemachus proves to be a valuable help to his father.

EPIC

How has the battle with the suitors taken on epic proportions?
Telemachus swerved around him, leaving the long dark spear planted in Amphinomus. If he paused to yank it out someone might jump him from behind or cut him down with a sword at the moment he bent over. So he ran—ran from the tables to his father’s side and halted, panting, saying:

“Father let me bring you a shield and spear, a pair of spears, a helmet. I can arm on the run myself; I’ll give outfits to Eumaeus and this cowherd. Better to have equipment.”

Said Odysseus:

“Run then, while I hold them off with arrows as long as the arrows last. When all are gone if I’m alone they can dislodge me.”

Quick upon his father’s word Telemachus ran to the room where spears and armor lay. He caught up four light shields, four pairs of spears, four helms of war high-plumed with flowing manes, and ran back, loaded down, to his father’s side.

He was the first to pull a helmet on and slide his bare arm in a buckler strap. The servants armed themselves, and all three took their stand beside the master of battle.

While he had arrows he aimed and shot, and every shot brought down one of his huddling enemies. But when all barbs had flown from the bowman’s fist, he leaned his bow in the bright entry way beside the door, and armed: a four-ply shield hard on his shoulder, and a crested helm, horsetailed, nodding stormy upon his head, then took his tough and bronze-shod spears . . .

The suitors make various unsuccessful attempts to expel Odysseus from his post at the door. Athena urges Odysseus on to battle, yet holds back her fullest aid, waiting for Odysseus and Telemachus to prove themselves. Six of the suitors attempt an attack on Odysseus, but Athena deflects their arrows. Odysseus and his men seize this opportunity to launch their own attack, and the suitors begin to fall. At last Athena’s presence becomes known to all, as the shape of her shield becomes visible.
above the hall. The suitors, recognizing the intervention of the gods on Odysseus’ behalf, are frantic to escape but to no avail. Odysseus and his men are compared to falcons who show no mercy to the flocks of birds they pursue and capture. Soon the room is reeking with blood. Thus the battle with the suitors comes to an end, and Odysseus prepares himself to meet Penelope.
Greathearted Odysseus, home at last, was being bathed now by Eurynome and rubbed with golden oil, and clothed again in a fresh tunic and a cloak. Athena lent him beauty, head to foot. She made him taller, and massive, too, with crisping hair in curls like petals of wild hyacinth but all red-golden. Think of gold infused on silver by a craftsman, whose fine art Hephaestus taught him, or Athena: one whose work moves to delight: just so she lavished beauty over Odysseus’ head and shoulders. He sat then in the same chair by the pillar, facing his silent wife, and said:

“Strange woman,

the immortals of Olympus made you hard, harder than any. Who else in the world would keep aloof as you do from her husband if he returned to her from years of trouble, cast on his own land in the twentieth year?

Nurse, make up a bed for me to sleep on. Her heart is iron in her breast.”

Penelope spoke to Odysseus now. She said:

“Strange man,

if man you are . . . This is no pride on my part nor scorn for you—not even wonder, merely.

I know so well how you—how he—appeared boarding the ship for Troy. But all the same . . .

Make up his bed for him, Eurycleia.
Place it outside the bedchamber my lord
built with his own hands. Pile the big bed
with fleeces, rugs, and sheets of purest linen."

With this she tried him to the breaking point,
and he turned on her in a flash raging:

“Woman, by heaven you’ve stung me now!
Who dared to move my bed?
No builder had the skill for that—unless
a god came down to turn the trick. No mortal
in his best days could budge it with a crowbar.
There is our pact and pledge, our secret sign,
built into that bed—my handiwork
and no one else’s!

An old trunk of olive
grew like a pillar on the building plot,
and I laid out our bedroom round that tree,
lined up the stone walls, built the walls and roof,
gave it a doorway and smooth-fitting doors.
Then I lopped off the silvery leaves and branches,
hewed and shaped that stump from the roots up
into a bedpost, drilled it, let it serve
as model for the rest. I planed them all,
inlaid them all with silver, gold and ivory,
and stretched a bed between—a pliant web
of oxhide thongs dyed crimson.

There’s our sign!
I know no more. Could someone else’s hand
have seen that trunk and dragged the frame away?”

Their secret! as she heard it told, her knees
grew tremulous and weak, her heart failed her.
With eyes brimming tears she ran to him,
throwing her arms around his neck, and kissed him, murmuring:

“Do not rage at me, Odysseus!
No one ever matched your caution! Think
what difficulty the gods gave: they denied us
life together in our prime and flowering years,
kept us from crossing into age together.
Forgive me, don’t be angry. I could not
welcome you with love on sight! I armed myself

27–30 The bed, built from the trunk of
an olive tree still rooted in the ground,
is actually unmovable.

50–51 a pliant web . . . crimson: a network
of ox-hide straps, dyed red, stretched
between the sides of the bed to form
a springy base for the bedding.

tremulous (trém’yə-ləs) adj. marked
by trembling or shaking

5 ARCHETYPE
How has Penelope tricked Odysseus
into proving his identity? What
do her actions suggest about
archetypal characters?
long ago against the frauds of men,
impostors who might come—and all those many
whose underhanded ways bring evil on!
Helen of Argos, daughter of Zeus and Leda,
would she have joined the stranger, lain with him,
if she had known her destiny? known the Achaeans
in arms would bring her back to her own country?
Surely a goddess moved her to adultery,
her blood unchilled by war and evil coming,
the years, the desolation; ours, too.

But here and now, what sign could be so clear
as this of our own bed?
No other man has ever laid eyes on it—
only my own slave, Actoris, that my father
sent with me as a gift—she kept our door.

You make my stiff heart know that I am yours.”

Now from his breast into his eyes the ache
of longing mounted, and he wept at last,
his dear wife, clear and faithful, in his arms,
longed for
as the sunwarmed earth is longed for by a swimmer
spent in rough water where his ship went down
under Poseidon’s blows, gale winds and tons of sea.
Few men can keep alive through a big surf
to crawl, clotted with brine, on kindly beaches
in joy, in joy, knowing the abyss behind:
and so she too rejoiced, her gaze upon her husband,
her white arms round him pressed as though forever. . . .

Odysseus and Penelope tell each other about all that happened to them while Odysseus was away. Then Odysseus visits his father, Laertes, to give him the good news of his safe return. Meanwhile, the townspeople, angry about the deaths of the young suitors, gather to fight Odysseus. In the end, Athena steps in and makes peace among them all.
Dorothy Parker, an American writer of the early 20th century, wrote many poems offering a woman’s perspective on life. In “Penelope,” Parker imagines what Odysseus’ wife might have thought about his journeys.

**Penelope**

DOROTHY PARKER

In the pathway of the sun,
   In the footsteps of a breeze,
Where the world and sky are one,
   He shall ride the silver seas,
   He shall cut the glittering wave.

5     I shall sit at home, and rock;
Rise, to heed a neighbor’s knock;
Brew my tea, and snip my thread;
Bleach the linen for my bed.
     They will call him brave.
Comprehension

1. Recall Why is Telemachus fearful when his father first reveals his identity?
2. Recall How does Odysseus react when Argos recognizes him?
3. Recall Who helps Odysseus fight the suitors?
4. Clarify Why does Penelope test Odysseus?

Text Analysis

5. Summarize the Plot Review the chart you created as you read these episodes about Odysseus’ homecoming. Use the chart to write an objective plot summary of Part 2; feel free to use the overview on page 1241 as a starter.
6. Analyze Character Why do you think Penelope devises the contest with the bow? What does this contest reveal about her character?
7. Examine Archetypes Think about other contests you have encountered in literature or film. Would you say that the contest of the bow is archetypal? Explain why or why not.
8. Analyze Universal Theme The Odyssey has themes reflecting timeless and universal concerns, such as courage and honor, good and evil, life and death, and the importance of home. Choose one of these topics. What message about this topic does Homer convey? Give evidence from the text to support your answer.
9. Evaluate Epic Characteristics One thing that all epics have in common is tremendous scale. Everything about an epic is big: an extended and complicated plot, a long journey over great distances, powerful gods and horrible monsters, and major universal themes. Identify one aspect each of epic plot, setting, character, and theme in the Odyssey. Which do you consider most impressive? Give reasons for your choice.
10. Compare and Contrast Texts In Dorothy Parker’s poem “Penelope,” is the attitude toward Odysseus similar to or different from Penelope’s attitude in the Odyssey excerpts you have just read? Cite evidence to support your answer.

Text Criticism

11. Social Context Assume that Odysseus represents the ancient Greeks’ ideal of a man and that Penelope represents their ideal of a woman. In what ways are the characters similar to and different from the ideal man and woman of today?

How does it feel to come HOME again?
In what ways is home more than just a place?
Vocabulary in Context

▲ VOCABULARY PRACTICE

Decide whether each item is true or false. If you need to reread the definitions of the boldfaced vocabulary words, consult the Glossary of Vocabulary on page R123.

1. A person making restitution is trying to get revenge.
2. If I commandeer your boat, I have asked your permission before taking it.
3. A person who acts aloof often is unwilling to make friends.
4. One might feel desolation at the death of a close relative.
5. If I feel revulsion for you, I enjoy spending time with you.
6. Adversity is a serious skin condition.
7. A tremulous person tends to have very steady hands.
8. If my anger is implacable, I am not going to get over it soon.
9. New Year’s Eve is a common night for revelry.
10. Being kind to a pet is contemptible behavior.

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY IN SPEAKING

• demonstrate • emphasis • ideology • monitor • undertake

The goddess Athena monitors Odysseus’ journey and attempts to help him return home. With a partner, discuss why Athena undertakes this responsibility. What is her motivation? What does it tell us about the ancient Greeks and their religion? Use at least one Academic Vocabulary word in your discussion.

VOCABULARY STRATEGY: THE LATIN WORD ROOT solus

The vocabulary word desolation contains a form of the Latin root solus, which means “alone.” This root is found in numerous other English words used in everyday language as well as a variety of academic disciplines. To understand the meaning of words formed from solus, use context clues as well as your knowledge of the root.

PRACTICE Insert the word from the word web that best completes each sentence. Use context clues to help you or, if necessary, consult a dictionary.

1. After months of training with an instructor, he was ready for his first _____ flight.
2. Jeannette often plays a game of ____ on her computer.
3. Rupert lived on a desert island because he wanted ____.
4. The _____ requirement for joining the club is that you are 13 or older.
5. An actor delivering a _____ generally stands on the stage alone.
GRAMMAR AND STYLE: Add Descriptive Details

Review the Grammar and Style note on page 1256. In line 3, Homer uses an interesting metaphor to describe the image of a Greek warrior. Similes and metaphors are types of figurative language—they communicate ideas beyond their literal meaning. A simile is a comparison that uses the prepositions like or as. A metaphor directly compares two things by saying or suggesting that one thing is another. Using figurative language can make your readers see things in a new way. Here are two more examples.

“Like pipes his nostrils jetted crimson runnels, a river of mortal red. . . .” (simile, Book 22, lines 17–18)

“Her heart is iron in her breast.” (metaphor, Book 23, line 21)

Notice how the revisions in blue use figurative language to add interesting descriptive details to this first draft. Similarly, you can revise your response to the writing prompt below by incorporating different types of figurative language.

STUDENT MODEL

We have missed one another for many years.

Like two pieces of the same puzzle,
We have been separated
and then joined again.

READING-WRITING CONNECTION

Engage with the main characters in the Odyssey by responding to the prompt below. Then use the revising tip to improve your writing.

WRITING PROMPT

Short Constructed Response: Monologue
What do you think Penelope's hopes for the future might be after Odysseus' homecoming? Write a stanza (at least ten lines) in the style of the Odyssey in which Penelope expresses her dreams for her future years with Odysseus.

REVISING TIP

Review your response. Did you mimic the style of Homer's writing? Does your stanza include figurative language? Revise your response by adding another interesting simile or metaphor.
Video Script

Many popular movies tell the story of an odyssey or journey. The hero leaves the comforts of his or her home with a sidekick or two, battles through a series of obstacles, and returns home a wiser, more mature individual with something to share with the community. The visual medium lends itself to this plot structure because graphics, images, and sound combine to involve viewers in the journey. In this workshop, you will produce a video script to tell the story of your own journey.

Complete the workshop activities in your Reader/Writer Notebook.

PRODUCE WITH A PURPOSE

**TASK**
Produce a video script that uses graphics, images, and sound to tell the story of a journey that you have taken.

**Idea Starters**
- a journey from one place to another
- a journey toward a goal
- a journey of a change in understanding or thinking

**THE ESSENTIALS**
Here are some common purposes, audiences, and formats for video scripts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PURPOSES</th>
<th>AUDIENCES</th>
<th>FORMATS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to entertain</td>
<td>classmates and teacher</td>
<td>screening for classmates or younger students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to express a theme, observation, or point of view</td>
<td>audio/visual program members</td>
<td>online video or podcast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internet video viewers</td>
<td>presentation for a class, club, or business or community organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>community or business leaders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMMON CORE TRAITS**

1. **DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS**
   - conveys a real experience and develops it with well-chosen details
   - uses narrative techniques such as dialogue and pacing, and audio and visual elements to develop the experience
   - establishes and reflects on the significance of the experience

2. **ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS**
   - presents a smooth progression of events that build to create a coherent whole
   - uses effective pacing to advance the narrative

3. **LANGUAGE FACILITY AND CONVENTIONS**
   - establishes and maintains a consistent point of view
   - uses verb tenses correctly
   - employs correct grammar, mechanics, and spelling
Planning/Preproduction

Getting Started

**CHOOSE A JOURNEY**
Choose a significant personal journey for this project. It need not be a journey from place to place but may be a journey toward a goal.

**WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?**
- moving from Monterrey to Houston
- overcoming shyness by entering talent show
- becoming starting goalie

**GATHER STORY RESOURCES**
Consider the potential story resources you have on hand, including existing photographs and video footage. Decide whether these resources can tell your story in a credible and accurate way. Think about integrating other sources by listing people and places that are accessible for video or photography shoots.

**WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?**
- maps
- photographs of move from Monterrey, Mexico, to Houston, Texas
- photographs of friends/family members
- video footage of Abuela and other family members
- video footage of roadway, of car, and of Houston

**GATHER TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS**
Producing a video script depends on technological resources. Look for these resources at school and at home. Without access to video cameras, you will be limited to photos.

**ASK YOURSELF:**
Do I have access to the following equipment?
- digital camera and photo-editing software
- scanner
- video camera and video-editing software

**CHOOSE YOUR VISUAL FORMAT**
Think about which visual format best lends itself to your story line and available resources.

**TIP**
Use the chart below to choose an appropriate format.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual Format</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Choose If . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>documentary</td>
<td>film or video that analyzes or chronicles an event without fictional elements</td>
<td>you have photographs and video footage of the journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>docudrama</td>
<td>film or video of a fictional reenactment of an event</td>
<td>you have resources to reenact the journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>theatrical</td>
<td>film or video version of a stage production</td>
<td>you can use actors and imagined locations to convey the journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>production</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Planning/Preproduction continued

### Getting Started

#### Develop an Outline
Write a brief synopsis or summary of your journey. Consider the choices you can make to tell the story of your journey. Is there a detail you might reveal at the end to create mystery or a surprise? Then, create a story outline that shows a smooth progression of events that build on one another.

**WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?**

**Synopsis:** When my family moved from Monterrey, Mexico, to Houston, Texas, I felt as if I’d lost my home.

1. **Introduction**
   * News about move; feelings about move
2. **Journey**
   * Problems on the road; feelings and thoughts
3. **Conclusion**
   * Arrival in Houston

#### Create a Storyboard
Use the choices you made in your outline to create a storyboard—a visual script that includes descriptions of images, camera shots, sounds, and graphics. A well-done storyboard can provide a “snapshot” that will help you order events to improve the pacing of your story and keep the action moving. Refer to the Student Draft on pages 1275–1276 for examples of completed storyboard scenes.

**WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?**

**Images:** Map of route from Monterrey to Houston > Zoom in on map of Monterrey > Photos of neighborhood, street, home > Photo of happy narrator inside home with family

**Sounds:** Nostalgic background music; laughter; muted voices of happy family members

**Graphics:** Call to Texas

#### Write a Script
Use your storyboard to create a script. The script will contain the narration or dialogue that the audience will hear. If you use voiceover narration, convey a clear point of view. Is the narrator involved in the action or watching it from a distance?

**WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?**

**Voiceover Narration:** When I was 11, my parents told me we were moving from Monterrey, Mexico, to Houston, Texas. I was overwhelmed with feelings of worry and loss. In a way, my parents were going “home” to family, but I was leaving the only home I’d ever known.

#### Peer Review
Describe to a peer the purpose and audience of your video script. Then, ask: Do my images, graphics, and sounds complement my narration or dialogue effectively?

In your Reader/Writer Notebook, develop your production plan. Create an outline, storyboard, and script. Follow these tips:

- When writing narration, make sure to maintain a consistent point of view and a natural speaking style.
- If you use an interview, note in your script the person’s name and the topic.
- Insert hand-drawn sketches in your storyboard to show your plans for shots.
Production

The following chart explains the technological steps involved in producing a video script.

### Producing Your Video Script

#### Shoot, Scan, and Import Images
- If you plan to create new photographs or video, shoot in a **well-lit location**.
- Try to capture natural-looking **images**.
- Finally, **scan** or **import** all images—old and new—into your **editing software**.

#### Record Audio
- Choose a **quiet space** in which to record your narration or dialogue.
- To project sound via speakers, adjust the computer’s **input and output sound settings**.
- Follow **software instructions** for recording sound.
- Perform a **sound check** and adjust the volume as necessary.
- Record the **narration** or **dialogue** in parts. Then, stop, save, and play each part. Re-record if needed.
- Record the silent room for about 30 seconds. You will use this **“room tone”** to fill silent moments.

#### Edit Video
- Use the **time line** in your editing software to place images and sound.
- Put compatible **image** and **sound files** together on the time line as you work through the story.
- Don’t forget to insert the **“room tone”** file wherever there are gaps in sound.
- As you work, edit images and sound for **timing** and **pacing** by replaying segments.

#### Add Transitions and Effects
- The moment when one image ends and another begins is called a **cut**.
- Use **transitional techniques** between images such as a fade, a dissolve, a wipe, or a spin.
- Make sure that each **transition** continues the flow of the story without interrupting it.
- Experiment with other **visual effects** such as panning or zooming when using still images.

#### Add Music and Graphics
- Make strategic use of digital media by adding **music** to create **mood**. You can collect music files through Web sites that offer royalty-free music or by recording an original live performance.
- Add on-screen **graphics** such as **titles**, **headings**, **captions**, or **credits** to provide clarity.

#### Export Your Video
- When this process is complete, save your video **file**.

Use the movie-making program available to you to produce a rough cut (similar to a rough draft) of your video following the steps above. As you work, follow the instructions of a media specialist or tech-savvy friend to solve any production problems you might encounter.
Revising

As you edit your rough cut, consider how successfully you have combined words, images, sound, and graphics to convey your story. The goal is to determine whether you’ve achieved your purpose and effectively communicated your ideas to the intended audience. Take notes as you consider the questions in the following chart. Then, use these notes to help you edit your rough cut.

**VIDEO SCRIPT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask Yourself</th>
<th>Revision Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is the narrative point of view clear and consistent throughout?</td>
<td>Revise language to convey a distinct perspective. Check that verb tenses are used correctly throughout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Analyze how the choices you have made affect the pacing of your story. Do your choices create mystery or surprise? Does the narration or dialogue help create a smooth progression of events?</td>
<td>Delete narration that is irrelevant or unnecessarily slows the pace. Add narration that provides needed background information to orient viewers or creates an element of mystery or surprise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do the images make clear the events and emotions of the journey?</td>
<td>Replace static images with images that better develop characters or convey action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Does the sound support the story without creating distractions?</td>
<td>Delete sounds that might draw viewer attention away from the main point or story. Add sound files that support the main point or story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do the graphics support the story without creating distractions?</td>
<td>Delete graphics that might draw viewer attention away from the main point or story. Add graphics that support the main point or story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Does the video hold the attention of the audience?</td>
<td>Delete any content that does not build effectively toward your conclusion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PEER REVIEW** View your rough cut with a partner. As you view and discuss each other’s videos, make sure to focus on images, sound, and graphics. Address how well each producer makes strategic use of these digital elements to complement narration or dialogue. If your video is not clear or easy to follow, use the revision strategies in the chart to clarify your script or try a new approach.
ANALYZE A STUDENT DRAFT

Read this excerpt from a draft of a storyboard; notice the comments on its strengths as well as suggestions for improvement.

Documentary Storyboard

Title: Crossing the Border: A Hero’s Journey
Producer: Daniel Marquez, Calhoun High School
Media Resources: School audio and video equipment; maps; family photographs; family interviews/video clips; sound clips from family members; scene titles

SCENE 1

Description:
• Images: Map of route from Monterrey to Houston > Zoom in on map of Monterrey > Photos of neighborhood, street, home > Photo of happy narrator inside home with family
• Graphics: Call to Texas
• Sounds: Background music; laughter; happy family members’ voices
• Purpose: Set up theme of leaving home, moving

Scene 1 Narration: Call to Texas
When I was 11, my parents told me we were moving from Monterrey, Mexico, to Houston, Texas. I was overwhelmed with feelings of worry and loss. In a way, my parents were going “home” to family, but I was leaving the only home I’d ever known.

LEARN HOW Provide Sufficient Background Information Background information includes details to help the audience understand a story. The audience should know how or why a situation began and who is involved. However, too much background information can distract viewers.

DANIEL’S REVISION TO THE NARRATION

When I was 11, my parents told me we were moving from Monterrey, Mexico, to Houston, Texas. I was overwhelmed with feelings of worry and loss. . . .

where we had family living. My parents said they would find good jobs, and said that my siblings and I would attend good schools. However,
ANALYZE A STUDENT DRAFT continued

SCENE 6

Description:

- **Images:** Footage of new home; interviews with Texas family; photos of new school, coaches, teachers fading to photos of family, home, school, coaches, teachers in Monterrey
- **Graphics:** The End of the Road
- **Sounds:** Background music that suggests theme of home; muted voices of family/friends
- **Purpose:** Establish narrator’s return “home” as a wiser individual with a message to share

Narration: The End of the Road

Finally, we arrived in Houston, where I met and got to know my new family members. I also met new friends, coaches, and teachers. I stayed in touch with my Monterrey “family” through telephone calls, letters, and e-mails.

Daniel ensures that each scene fulfills a purpose in telling the story of his journey. This step helps Daniel maintain appropriate pacing.

First person pronouns such as we, I, and my establish a first-person narrative point of view.

The arrival in Houston signals the end of Daniel's journey. However, the concluding section will be more effective if Daniel explains the significance of his journey.

**LEARN HOW** Explain the Significance Out of all the journeys Daniel has experienced, he chose to tell about one in particular. Perhaps he learned something about himself or about life in general. Telling why this journey was significant to him will leave the audience with something to reflect on and perhaps apply to their own lives.

**DANIEL’S REVISION TO THE NARRATION**

Finally, we arrived in Houston, where I met and got to know my new family members. I also met new friends, coaches, and teachers. I stayed in touch with my Monterrey “family” through telephone calls, letters, and e-mails.

I came to understand that home can be more than one place. Home exists anywhere one feels connected. Me? I now had two homes.

Use the feedback from your peers and teacher as well as the two “Learn How” lessons to revise the rough cut of your video. Evaluate how well you have used narration, images, sounds, graphics, and point of view to communicate your journey to a specific audience.
Editing and Publishing

In the editing stage, you check your narration to make sure that it is free of grammar and usage errors. These kinds of mistakes distract your audience from focusing on the meaningful experience of your journey.

**Grammar in Context: Consistent Verb Tense**

Close your eyes and listen carefully to your narration. You may have slipped into present tense when talking about specific images (“Here I am saying goodbye to my grandmother.”). Make sure to use past tense for the main part of the narrative and past perfect tense for events that happened before the events of the narrative. You may choose to end your journey in the present tense: “Home exists anywhere one feels connected.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Tense</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td>Home exists anywhere one feels connected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past</td>
<td>Finally, we arrived in Houston, where I met and got to know my new family members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past perfect</td>
<td>We had discussed moving for years, but I never thought it would really happen.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Publish Your Video**

It’s time to hold a screening. Consider one of these ideas:

- Host a classroom screening of your video and evaluate it during a small-group discussion.
- Host a home screening of your video for family and friends.
- Upload your video to the Internet.

Correct any errors in your narration. Pay particular attention to any shifts of verb tense that might confuse your viewers about what happened when. Then, publish your video script for your audience.
Scoring Rubric

Use the rubric below to evaluate and revise your video script.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORE</th>
<th>COMMON CORE TRAITS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Development</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Development</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Development</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Development</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
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<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Development</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
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<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Development</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Preparing for Timed Writing

1. ANALYZE THE TASK

Read the task carefully. Then, read it again, noting the words that tell the type of writing, the topic, the audience, and the purpose.

**WRITING TASK**

Think about a place that holds special meaning for you. What sights, sounds, smells, and other sensations make this place live in your memory? Write a description using figurative language and sensory details. Your description will be published in a review guide at a local travel agency intended to entertain people who like to travel.

2. PLAN YOUR RESPONSE

First, choose the place you want to describe. Make sure to select a place you know well and focus on a specific experience there. Then, use a graphic organizer to list sensory details. Think about how you might describe some of these details figuratively, using metaphor, simile, personification, or onomatopoeia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sense</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taste</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. RESPOND TO THE TASK

Begin drafting your description. Start with a description of prominent sights, sounds, or smells to introduce the place to review readers. Then, move on to a detailed description using sensory language. Organize your information according to space (top to bottom, side to side) or importance. As you write, keep the following points in mind.

- In the introduction, use sensory language to present your dominant impression of the place.
- In the body, use transitions to help readers visualize the place you are describing.
- In the concluding section, make clear why the place is significant to you.

4. IMPROVE YOUR RESPONSE

**Revising** Compare your draft with the task. Does your draft provide sensory language to describe the place? Does your description make clear why the place matters to you?

**Proofreading** Find and correct any errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics. Make sure that your description and any edits are neatly written and legible.

**Checking Your Final Copy** Before you submit your description, examine it once more to make sure that you are presenting your best work.
Evaluating a Video

“How was the movie?” a parent asks. “The story was good, but the acting was terrible!” you reply. When you evaluate a video in a conversation like this, you combine comprehension with sensory observation. In this workshop, you’ll prepare to discuss and evaluate a video by analyzing it to determine its effectiveness.

Complete the workshop activities in your Reader/Writer Notebook.

**VIEW WITH A PURPOSE**

**TASK**
Analyze the content, organization, and delivery of a video. Then, draw on your analysis to discuss and evaluate the effectiveness of the video.

**COMMON CORE TRAITS**

**A STRONG EVALUATION . . .**
- notes main ideas and themes
- analyzes organization and assesses its effectiveness
- analyzes the delivery, including narration or dialogue, images, sounds, and graphics

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**Analyze Content and Organization**

Choose one video that engages you. Then, prepare to discuss it by analyzing its content and organization. Complete a graphic organizer such as the one below to note evidence you can present during a thoughtful exchange of ideas. Think about the effectiveness of the video, and plan to give instructions that might help the producer solve any problems you notice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements for Analysis</th>
<th>Notes for Discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Main Ideas and the Video’s Theme</td>
<td>The speaker moves to Texas. He feels as if he is losing his home. The theme is that home can be anyplace. A broader theme might be that home is more a feeling than a place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions that I Have</td>
<td>How does the idea of having two homes change the narrator’s view?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence of Events or Information</td>
<td>chronological sequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background Information</td>
<td>explains history behind the move; describes differences between Monterrey and Houston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitions Between Events or Ideas</td>
<td>narrator uses sequence transitions to connect scenes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluding Section</td>
<td>narrator reflects on the significance of the move</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Analyze Delivery

The delivery of a video helps to convey the story by combining verbal and sensory elements. Producers use narration, dialogue, images, sounds, and graphics to communicate basic ideas as well as broader themes. Use a graphic organizer such as the one below to take notes in preparation for a discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of Delivery</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **NARRATION/DIALOGUE** | Rate: not too fast or too slow  
Volume: too low at times  
Enunciation: a few words not clear  
Point of View: first-person  
Tone/Mood: shifts from anger and sadness to acceptance |
| **IMAGES** | combination of still photographs and action footage maintains viewer interest in story and engages emotions |
| **SOUNDS** | background music adds to a sad tone early on and then a happier tone at end |
| **GRAPHICS** | titles clarify each scene change |
| **EDITING** | flashback interrupts sequence for added impact |
| **TONE/PURPOSE** | sudden shift to informal, comic tone breaks tension of story; narrator successfully conveys theme of journey |

### Discuss Your Evaluation

Discuss the content, organization, and delivery of the video with a small group. Try to bring everyone into the discussion by posing and responding to questions related to your analysis. Be willing to challenge the ideas and conclusions of others, supporting your ideas with evidence from the video. Then, write a short evaluation describing the effectiveness and quality of the video.
Assessment Practice

**DIRECTIONS** Read the following excerpt, and then answer the questions.

*from the* **Odyssey**  
*by Homer*

Blinded, and sick with pain from his head wound,  
the master stroked each ram, then let it pass,  
but my men riding on the pectoral fleece  
the giant’s blind hands blundering never found.  

5   Last of them all my ram, the leader, came,  
weighted by wool and me with my meditations.  
The Cyclops patted him, and then he said:

‘Sweet cousin ram, why lag behind the rest  
in the night cave? You never linger so,  
but graze before them all, and go afar  
to crop sweet grass, and take your stately way  
leading along the streams, until at evening  
you run to be the first one in the fold.  

Why, now, so far behind? Can you be grieving  
over your Master’s eye? That carrion rogue  
and his accurst companions burnt it out  
when he had conquered all my wits with wine.  
Nohbdy will not get out alive, I swear.  
Oh, had you brain and voice to tell  
where he may be now, dodging all my fury!  
Bashed by this hand and bashed on this rock wall  
his brains would strew the floor, and I should have  
rest from the outrage Nohbdy worked upon me.’

He sent us into the open, then. Close by,  
I dropped and rolled clear of the ram’s belly,  
going this way and that to untie the men.  
With many glances back, we rounded up  
his fat, stiff-legged sheep to take aboard,  
and drove them down to where the good ship lay.  

We saw, as we came near, our fellows’ faces  
shining; then we saw them turn to grief  
tallying those who had not fled from death.  
I hushed them, jerking head and eyebrows up,  
and in a low voice told them: ‘Load this herd;
move fast, and put the ship’s head toward the breakers.’ They all pitched in at loading, then embarked and struck their oars into the sea. Far out, as far off shore as shouted words would carry, I sent a few back to the adversary:

‘O Cyclops! Would you feast on my companions? Puny, am I, in a Caveman’s hands? How do you like the beating that we gave you, you damned cannibal? Eater of guests under your roof! Zeus and the gods have paid you!’

The blind thing in his doubled fury broke a hilltop in his hands and heaved it after us. Ahead of our black prow it struck and sankwhelmed in a spuming geyser, a giant wave that washed the ship stern foremost back to shore.

I got the longest boathook out and stoodfending us off, with furious nods to all to put their backs into a racing stroke—row, row, or perish. So the long oars bentkicking the foam sternward, making head until we drew away, and twice as far.

Now when I cupped my hands I heard the crew in low voices protesting:

‘Godsake, Captain! Why bait the beast again? Let him alone!’

‘That tidal wave he made on the first throw all but beached us.’

‘All but stove us in!’

‘Give him our bearing with your trumpeting, he’ll get the range and lob a boulder.’

‘Aye He’ll smash our timbers and our heads together!’

I would not heed them in my glorying spirit, but let my anger flare and yelled:

‘Cyclops, if ever mortal man inquire how you were put to shame and blinded, tell him...’
Odyssceus, raider of cities, took your eye:  
Laertes' son, whose home's on Ithaca!'  

At this he gave a mighty sob and rumbled:  

'Now comes the weird upon me, spoken of old.  
A wizard, grand and wondrous, lived here—Telemus,  
a son of Eurymus; great length of days  
he had in wizardry among the Cyclopes,  
and these things he foretold for time to come:  
my great eye lost, and at Odyssceus' hands.  
Always I had in mind some giant, armed  
in giant force, would come against me here.  
But this, but you—small, pitiful and twiggy—  
you put me down with wine, you blinded me.  
Come back, Odyssceus, and I'll treat you well,  
praying the god of earthquake to befriend you—  
his son I am, for he by his avowal  
fathered me, and, if he will, he may  
heal me of this black wound—he and no other  
of all the happy gods or mortal men.'  

Few words I shouted in reply to him:  
'If I could take your life I would and take  
your time away, and hurl you down to hell!  

The god of earthquake could not heal you there!'  

At this he stretched his hands out in his darkness  
toward the sky of stars, and prayed Poseidon:  

'O hear me, lord, blue girdler of the islands,  
if I am thine indeed, and thou art father:  
grant that Odyssceus, raider of cities, never  
see his home: Laertes' son, I mean,  
who kept his hall on Ithaca. Should destiny  
intend that he shall see his roof again  
among his family in his father land,  
far be that day, and dark the years between.  

Let him lose all companions, and return  
under strange sail to bitter days at home.'
Reading Comprehension

Use the excerpt from the *Odyssey* (pp. 1282–1284) to answer questions 1–9.

1. The cave mentioned in line 9 is an epic setting because it is —
   A. home to a fantastic, archetypal creature
   B. a beautiful, hidden location
   C. a rugged, barren land formation
   D. an imaginary but believable place

2. Which statement best summarizes the escape plan for Odysseus and his men?
   A. They beg Poseidon to make the Cyclops free them.
   B. They blind the Cyclops and then sneak away during the night.
   C. They hide in the rams’ wool and let the rams carry them past the Cyclops.
   D. They roll boulders down a hill to distract the Cyclops, and then run.

3. The quality of an epic hero Odysseus displays in lines 24–35 is —
   A. strength in pursuit of adventure
   B. honesty in the face of conflict
   C. dependence on the gods
   D. cleverness in the face of danger

4. Which statement summarizes Odysseus’ heroic actions in lines 45–55?
   A. He blinds the Cyclops with a boathook.
   B. He throws a boulder that causes a wave to flood the ship.
   C. He single-handedly pushes the ship out to sea while urging his men to row.
   D. He taunts the Cyclops from the shore.

5. What conflict develops between Odysseus and his men in lines 56–69?
   A. They disagree about where to hide from the Cyclops.
   B. The men beg Odysseus to stop taunting the Cyclops, but he continues.
   C. They disagree about whether or not to kill the Cyclops.
   D. The men want to steal the Cyclops’ sheep without telling Odysseus.

6. Which character trait causes Odysseus to reveal his name to the Cyclops in lines 66–69?
   A. Cowardice
   B. Dishonesty
   C. Pride
   D. Vengefulness

7. The Cyclops’ speech in lines 75–80 expresses the theme of —
   A. the rescue of a nation from invaders
   B. a hero’s loyalty to his friends
   C. the victorious homecoming of a hero
   D. a hero’s triumph over a powerful opponent

SHORT CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE

Write three or four sentences to answer this question.

8. Briefly summarize the conflict between Odysseus and the Cyclops. Support your answer with details from the excerpt.

Write two to three paragraphs to answer this question.

9. In what ways are the sea and the role of Poseidon important in this excerpt? Support your answer with details from the excerpt.
Vocabulary

Use context clues and your knowledge of prefixes to answer the following questions.

1. The prefix un- in the word untie in line 26 most likely means —
   A. performs an action over again
   B. reverses a specified action
   C. removes a specific thing
   D. goes against something

2. The prefix em- means “to put onto.” In line 36 the word embarked means —
   A. stayed on shore
   B. rowed toward land
   C. made a loud noise
   D. got onto a ship

3. The prefix be- means “to make.” The word befriend in line 82 means to —
   A. form a rivalry
   B. beg for companionship
   C. look for friendship
   D. become friends with

4. The prefix re- in the word return in line 101 most likely means —
   A. back
   B. different
   C. more
   D. regarding

5. The Latin word spuma means “foam.” In line 48 the word spuming means —
   A. bubbling
   B. raging
   C. rising
   D. shooting

6. Mortal comes from the Latin root -mors-, which means “to die.” In line 86 the word mortal means —
   A. short-lived
   B. subject to death
   C. morbid
   D. deadly

7. The Latin root -civ- means “citizen.” Which word most likely comes from that root?
   A. Carrion (line 15)
   B. Cities (line 95)
   C. Companions (line 16)
   D. Crew (line 56)

8. The Latin word destinare means “to determine.” In line 97 the word destiny means —
   A. fate
   B. misfortune
   C. privilege
   D. shame
Revising and Editing

DIRECTIONS Read this passage, and answer the questions that follow.

(1) Ithaca, an island west of the Greek mainland was the home of Odysseus.
(2) Today, the island’s rugged terrain and other physical features still mirror those described in the *Odyssey*. (3) Ancient ruins lie south of the narrow isthmus that gives Ithaca its distinctive shape. (4) On a hilltop in Pilikáta, you may view the three seas and mountains that Odysseus saw from his palace. (5) The Fountain of Arethusa, mentioned in the *Odyssey*, is a spring located beneath a towering sea cliff. (6) You may visit this spring by hiking along steep mountain paths. (7) The word “spring” has several meanings, including a small stream. (8) Visiting these sites allows a person to trace the ancient travels of Odysseus.

1. What change, if any, should be made to sentence 1?
   A. Change *west* to *West*
   B. Delete the comma after *Ithaca*
   C. Insert a comma after *mainland*
   D. Make no change

2. What change, if any, should be made to sentence 2?
   A. Change *rugged* to *ruged*
   B. Change *phisical* to *physical*
   C. Change *mirror* to *miror*
   D. Make no change

3. What is the best way to revise sentence 3 to include a simile?
   A. Ancient ruins lie south of the isthmus that gives Ithaca an hourglass shape.
   B. Ancient ruins lie south of the narrow isthmus that separates Ithaca in two.
   C. Ancient ruins lie south of the narrow isthmus that divides Ithaca like the neck of an hourglass.
   D. Ancient ruins lie south of the narrow isthmus that separates Ithaca into north and south.

4. What is the best way to revise sentence 4 to include a metaphor?
   A. A Pilikáta hilltop view offers a scenic landscape of the three seas and mountains that Odysseus saw from his palace.
   B. On a hilltop in Pilikáta, the view is a landscape painting of the three seas and mountains that Odysseus saw from his palace.
   C. In Pilikáta, the hilltop view is like the view of the three seas and mountains that Odysseus saw from his palace.
   D. On a hilltop in Pilikáta, the view features the three raging seas and towering mountains that Odysseus saw from his palace.

5. What is the most effective way to improve the organization of this paragraph?
   A. Delete sentence 7
   B. Switch sentences 6 and 7
   C. Delete sentence 8
   D. Switch sentences 7 and 8
Great Reads

Go to thinkcentral.com.
KEYWORD: HML9-1288

The Iliad
by Homer
In the Iliad, Homer writes of the events that preceded the Odyssey—the actual battles and conflicts during the Trojan War. Menelaus and his brother, Agamemnon, struggle for power; Agamemnon fights with his greatest warrior, Achilles; Achilles shows loyalty to his closest friend, Patroclus; Odysseus commands his powerful army. The Iliad shows what the men in the Odyssey have left behind them, depicting the greater and smaller aspects of ancient war.

The Aeneid
by Virgil
Odysseus had tremendous difficulty returning home. What was the experience of the Trojans, who no longer had a home? Defeated in the Trojan War, Aeneas and his companions set sail at the instruction of the gods on Mount Olympus. The goddess Venus, Aeneas’ mother, has told them they must find a new city. That city will eventually become the center of a new and majestic power—the Roman Empire. However, they are waylaid by storms, the wrath and vengefulness of the goddess Juno, and Aeneas’ affection for Dido, the queen of Carthage in northern Africa.

The Epic of Gilgamesh
translated by Stephen Mitchell
The Epic of Gilgamesh is the oldest known piece of writing in the world. Experts believe it preceded the Odyssey by at least a thousand years; it was found written on broken clay tablets in the ruined city of Nineveh. Gilgamesh, the great but selfish king of Uruk (modern-day Iraq), has his life transformed by his friendship with Enkidu. Together, the two bring peace to his city, battle monsters similar to those encountered in Homer’s work, and go on a quest for immortality.

Omeros
by Derek Walcott
Walcott, a Caribbean-American poet and playwright, resets the Odyssey in contemporary St. Lucia. This book-length poem follows contemporary characters—fishermen, a household servant, a seer—who share traits and names with those in Homer’s work, as they travel through the Caribbean Islands, Europe, and the United States. Throughout the book, the poet himself addresses Omeros (Greek for “Homer”) as a source of inspiration. Like Odysseus’ traveling companions, all the characters are, in one way or another, searching for a home.

Cold Mountain
by Charles Frazier
This novel has been called “an American Odyssey.” Inman, a Confederate soldier in the Civil War, has been severely wounded and leaves the army, walking home to Ada, whom he loved before going to war. The journey is difficult, and Inman is consistently waylaid by others in the South who have been affected by the war. Like Odysseus, Inman must use all the cunning and determination he has to make it home. Like Penelope, Ada must figure out how to live without the love she had relied upon, knowing he might never return to her.

The Hero with a Thousand Faces
by Joseph Campbell
What makes a hero? Do all heroes embody the same ideals, even in different social contexts? Joseph Campbell examines heroes, looking at sources that range from Greek mythology to fairy tales and Eastern philosophy, and claims that the hero is timeless. No matter how the story changes, Campbell says the hero is a constant figure; his attributes are similar and equally significant through time.

Ideas for Independent Reading
Read more epic tales, and see how Homer’s masterpiece has inspired contemporary writers.