



## Do heroes have responsibilities?

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# Introducing the Big Question



## Do heroes have responsibilities?

Heroes are all around us. We find them in literature, film and TV, and in the real world. Some heroes show great strength of character or unusual depth of wisdom and knowledge. They may make selfless choices, serving others and fighting for justice. Often, they exhibit courage, honesty, and leadership. However, some heroes display none of these qualities—or not in obvious ways. They may be ordinary people who, in a moment of crisis, stand up when no one else does. Think about the qualities or circumstances that spur a hero to action. Is it simply a question of character? Is it a sense of responsibility?



## Exploring the Big Question

**Collaboration: One-on-One Discussion** Start thinking about the Big Question by listing heroes you have encountered in media or in real life. They might be people you know personally, have read about in works of nonfiction, have watched on TV shows or in movies, or have discovered in works of fiction. Describe a hero from each of these categories:

- a person whose courageous act saves or protects those who are in danger
- someone who chooses honesty or integrity over self-interest
- a leader who guides others to success
- a person who sacrifices himself or herself to help others
- someone who acts to help others without a desire for reward or recognition

After you have completed your list, share it with a partner. As you describe each person on your list, provide details that show why he or she is a hero. As your partner reads from his or her list, listen carefully and ask questions to clarify details. Then, use the vocabulary listed on the page at right as you discuss whether a sense of responsibility motivated the heroes on your lists. Work to clarify, challenge, and enrich each other's ideas. Finally, come to an agreement on the qualities that make a hero. Select one or two examples to share with the class.

**Connecting to the Literature** Each reading in this unit will give you additional insight into the Big Question. After reading each selection, pause to consider the heroic qualities of the characters.

## Vocabulary

**Acquire and Use Academic Vocabulary** The term “academic vocabulary” refers to words you typically encounter in scholarly and literary texts and in technical and business writing. It is language that helps to express complex ideas. Review the definitions of these academic vocabulary words.

**choices** (choɪˈsɛz) *n.* alternatives, a variety of possibilities from which a person can make a selection

**hero** (hɪrˈo) *n.* person who is admired for brave or noble actions

**identify** (ɪˈdenˈtəfɪ) *v.* recognize as being a particular person or thing

**intentions** (ɪnˈtɛnˈʃənz) *n.* aims, ends, or purposes of someone’s actions or behavior

**serve** (sɜrv) *v.* perform duties or take on responsibilities for the benefit of others or for a higher purpose

Use these words as you complete Big Question activities in this unit that involve reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

**Gather Vocabulary Knowledge** Additional words related to heroes and responsibility are listed below. Categorize the words by deciding whether you know each one well, know it a little bit, or do not know it at all.

**character**

**honesty**

**imitate**

**involvement**

**justice**

**morality**

**obligation**

**responsibility**

**standard**

**wisdom**

Then, complete the following steps:

1. Work with a partner to write each word on one side of an index card and its definition on the other side.
2. Verify each definition by looking the word up in a print or an online dictionary. Revise your definitions as needed.
3. Place the cards with the words facing up in a pile.
4. Take turns drawing a word card, pronouncing the word, and making a true or false statement that uses the word and is related to ideas of heroism and responsibility. Here is an example: *Thoughtlessness is typical of a heroic character.* Invite your partner to determine whether the statement is usually true or usually false.

# Close Reading Workshop

In this workshop, you will learn an approach to reading that will deepen your understanding of literature and will help you better appreciate the author's craft. The workshop includes models for the close reading, discussion, research, and writing activities you will complete as you study literature in this unit. After you have reviewed the strategies and models, practice your skills with the Independent Practice selection.

## CLOSE READING: THE ORAL TRADITION

In Part 2 of this unit, you will focus on reading various types of literature influenced by the oral tradition. Use these strategies as you read the texts:

### Comprehension: Key Ideas and Details

- Read first for basic meaning.
- Use context clues to help you determine the meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Identify unfamiliar details, such as place names or cultural references, that you might need to clarify through research.
- Distinguish between information a narrator or characters state directly and ideas readers must infer.

#### Ask yourself questions such as these:

- Who are the main characters, and what are their relationships to one another?
- When and where does the action take place?
- What conflicts do characters face, and how do they respond to those conflicts?

### Text Analysis: Craft and Structure

- Think about the relationship between the genre, or type of work, and the story it tells.
- Analyze the features that contribute to the style of the work. Notice the use of regional speech or cultural content.
- Note the presence of unusual figures of speech and other literary elements that create memorable characters and situations.
- Consider the story's narrative structure, including the use of flashbacks and foreshadowing.

#### Ask yourself questions such as these:

- How does the story's setting (both time and place) contribute to the conflict?
- Are characters realistic or exaggerated? Do they have a single dominant trait, or do they display complex qualities? Do they remain the same, or do they change?
- Why do the characters behave as they do? How do their actions advance the plot?

### Connections: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- Look for connections among ideas. Identify causes and effects, and comparisons and contrasts.
- Look for symbols and archetypes, and evaluate their effect on the meaning of the story.
- Compare this work with similar works you have read.

#### Ask yourself questions such as these:

- How has this work increased my knowledge of a subject, culture, or type of traditional tale?
- In what ways is this work unique or worthy of reading?

## Read

As you read this tall tale, take note of the annotations that model ways to closely read the text.

### Reading Model

#### “Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett”

Retold by Caron Lee Cohen

Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett lived long ago near the Mississippi River. Her husband was Davy Crockett.<sup>1</sup> Now that lady was made of thunder with a little dash of whirlwind. She wore a beehive for a bonnet and a bearskin for a dress. Her toothpick was a Bowie knife. She could stomp a litter of wildcats and smash a band of starving wolves. She could outscreech an eagle and outclaw a mountain lion. She could skin a bear faster than an alligator swallows a fish. She walked like an ox and ran like a fox. She could wade the wide Mississippi without getting wet. And she could jump over the Grand Canyon with both eyes shut. She could do just about anything. And nothing on earth scared her. Nothing! But she never bragged. And she never fought a man, woman, or critter for no good reason.<sup>2</sup>

Now Mike Fink lived along the Mississippi, too. He was a bad man, always looking for a fight. He could beat any man except his enemy Davy Crockett. Their fights ended in a draw. And when Mike Fink wasn't fighting, he was bragging!

One day, Mike walked into a tavern. He jumped on a table and roared, “Half of me is wild horse and half is alligator. And the rest is crooked nails and red-hot snapping turtles. I can outrun, outshoot, outfight any man! If any man says that's not true, let him step up and fight.”<sup>3</sup>

No man dared to fight bad man Mike Fink. But Davy Crockett was in that tavern. And he was sick of hearing Mike Fink brag. “You don't scare me,” Davy said. “And you couldn't even scare my sweet little wife, Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett.”<sup>4</sup> Mike roared, “I'll bet you a dozen wildcats I can SCARE HER TEETH LOOSE!” And the bet was made.

So one evening, by the river, Mike found an alligator. He skinned it and crept inside the skin. Then he crawled along the river. And there was Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett out for her nightly walk. Mike crawled toward Sally Ann. He poked the alligator's head here and there. He opened its jaws big and wide. He let out a horrible cry. He nearly scared himself out of the alligator's skin. But Sally Ann wasn't scared. Not one little bit. She just stepped aside as if that alligator were a dead stump.

### Key Ideas and Details

**1** Although the Mississippi River is a real place, the fictional character of Sally Ann lived in the nonspecific time of “long ago.” In stories, she is married to Davy Crockett, a real-life American frontiersman whose adventures became the basis for dozens of tales.

### Craft and Structure

**2** Sally Ann has all the qualities of a classic American tall tale hero. She is a fearless force of nature who can vanquish fierce animals and tame the wilderness. She also happens to be female—a trait less common in tall tale heroes.

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

**3** Bad bragging Mike Fink is a stock (or common) character type in folk literature. This character type may be strong or smart, but never equals the hero. Mike's challenge introduces a classic story pattern that gives the hero—whom the reader knows cannot be defeated—another chance to shine.

### Craft and Structure

**4** Sally Ann is many things, but “sweet” and “little” she is not. This play on gender stereotypes shows that the Crocketts know how to manipulate Mike Fink. The verbal irony also adds humor.

So Mike crawled closer and stood up on his hind legs. Then he threw his front paws around Sally Ann. Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett didn't let just any critter hug her. Her rage rose higher than a Mississippi flood. Her eyes flashed lightning. The night sky lit up like day.<sup>5</sup> Mike was scareder<sup>6</sup> than a raccoon looking down a rifle barrel. But he thought of his bet with Davy Crockett. He kept circling Sally Ann and wagging his tail.

"That's enough, you worm!" said Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett. And she pulled out her toothpick. With one swing, she cut off the head of that alligator. It flew fifty feet into the Mississippi River. Then she could see it was just bad man Mike Fink playing a trick.

"You lowly skunk!" she said. "Trying to scare a lady out on her nightly walk.<sup>7</sup> Now stand up and fight like a man." She threw down her toothpick and rolled up her sleeves. She battered poor Mike till he fainted. She was still in a rage, but she wouldn't touch a man who was down. So she just walked off.

Mike didn't wake up till the next day. He couldn't tell his friends he had been beaten by a woman. Instead he bragged! "I got swallowed by an alligator. But I was chock full of fight and cut my way out. And here I am." Still a bet was a bet. So he caught a dozen wildcats and gave them to Davy Crockett.

But that wasn't the end of it. One night by the river, Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett met bad man Mike Fink. Her rage rose higher than a Mississippi flood. She lit the sky with lightning from her eye. And this time it scared Mike Fink's teeth loose. From then on bad man Mike Fink had a mouth full of loose teeth. And every time he bragged, those teeth rattled!<sup>8</sup>

### Craft and Structure

**5** Sally Ann's reactions to the fake alligator are examples of understatement (deliberate minimizing of something) and hyperbole (deliberate exaggeration). These literary elements often appear in tall tales. They help to portray characters and situations and add humor.

### Craft and Structure

**6** *Scareder* for "more scared" is an example of dialect, or regional speech (*critter*, earlier in the passage, is another example). This type of diction lends authenticity to the characters and vividness to the tale.

### Key Ideas and Details

**7** Sally Ann's absurd description of herself extends Davy Crockett's earlier joke: his reference to "my sweet little wife."

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

**8** In this tall tale, as in most, characters do not really change. At the end of this story, Sally Ann is still the strongest and angriest person alive and Mike Fink will never stop bragging.

## Discuss

Sharing your own ideas and listening to the ideas of others can deepen your understanding of a text and help you look at a topic in a whole new way. As you participate in collaborative discussions, work to have a genuine exchange in which classmates build upon one another's ideas. Support your points with evidence and ask meaningful questions.

### Discussion Model

**Student 1:** Sally Ann is a different sort of hero in some ways. Even though she is tougher than everyone else, she still insists on being treated politely. She won't "let just any critter hug her." She gets furious when Mike Fink interrupts "a lady out on her nightly walk."

**Student 2:** I agree that Sally Ann is interesting. She has the same exaggerated physical and emotional traits as a traditional tall tale hero, but she's female. The story plays with that, especially in those references to Sally Ann's being sweet and little and a lady. The story is funny partly for that reason.

**Student 3:** I wonder about Sally Ann's husband, too. Sally Ann may be fictional, but I know Davy Crockett was a real person. He served in Congress and died in Texas at the battle of the Alamo. Why did the Americans of his time turn this real man into a tall-tale hero?

## Research

Targeted research can clarify unfamiliar details and shed light on various aspects of a text. Consider questions that arise in your mind as you read, and use those questions as the basis for research.

### Research Model

**Question:** *How did the historical David Crockett become Davy Crockett, the legendary hero?*

**Key Words for Internet Search:** David Crockett AND Texas

**Result:** Handbook of Texas Online, "David Crockett"

**What I Learned:** The real David Crockett gained a widespread reputation as a sharpshooter, hunter, and storyteller. As a result, playwright James Kirke Paulding used him as a model for a frontier hero in an 1831 play entitled *The Lion of the West*. After that, the fictional Davy Crockett became a featured character in many other works, including "almanacs" of outrageous tall tales.



## Write

Writing about a text will deepen your understanding of it and will also allow you to share your ideas more formally with others. The following model essay draws conclusions about frontier values from tall tales and cites text evidence to support these claims.

### Writing Model: Argument

#### Frontier Values in “Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett”

A society's heroes display the values of its people. For example, American tall-tale heroes display the values of pioneers struggling to create a life for themselves in the wilderness. “Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett” celebrates strength, courage, hunting skill, big talk, rough humor—and even good manners.

Building a town or homestead in unfamiliar territory takes purpose and nerve. Tall-tale heroes often represented this determination. They are described as being similar to forces of nature, such as storms or floods. Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett “was made of thunder with a little dash of whirlwind.” When she got mad, “her rage rose higher than a Mississippi flood.” Along with strength, American pioneers needed a lot of courage. Sally Ann was certainly brave—“nothing on earth scared her.”

Americans who lived on the frontier used wild animals as sources of both food and clothing. Surviving in the wilderness required pioneers to be skilled hunters. Real-life frontiersman David Crockett gained a national reputation in the United States of the 1820s as a sharpshooter. In tall-tale America, Davy Crockett's wife Sally Ann wore “a bearskin for a dress. Her toothpick was a bowie knife.” Sally Ann could “skin a bear faster than an alligator swallows a fish.”

Some Americans who told tall tales must have loved big talk and rough humor. Such tastes would be natural for people who provided their own entertainment. Mike Fink's brag in the tavern that he is half-horse and half-alligator is crude stand-up comedy. Finding good manners in a tall tale, however, might seem more of a stretch. Yet Sally Ann, who “didn't let just any critter hug her,” clearly values politeness.

The Americans who told and retold tall tales needed strength, courage, and a sense of humor to survive in the wilderness. So they made up larger-than-life characters who “could wade the wide Mississippi without getting wet.” The exaggerated feats of tall-tale heroes helped pioneers face the huge challenges of making the frontier into a home.

Many effective essays state the claim in the first paragraph, which is a good strategy for a short response.

The writer supports claims with specific details from the story.

The writer incorporates research to provide context for a point.

By focusing on the tellers of the tales, the writer shows an understanding of the author's craft.

The writer anticipates that the reader might question a claim and directly addresses it.

As you read the following tall tale, apply the close reading strategies you have learned. You may need to read the tale multiple times to fully appreciate its characters, events, and humor.

## Pecos Bill: The Cyclone

by Harold W. Felton

One of Bill's greatest feats, if not the greatest feat of all time, occurred unexpectedly one Fourth of July. He had invented the Fourth of July some years before. It was a great day for the cowpunchers.<sup>1</sup> They had taken to it right off like the real Americans they were. But the celebration had always ended on a dismal note. Somehow it seemed to be spoiled by a cyclone.

Bill had never minded the cyclone much. The truth is he rather liked it. But the other celebrants ran into caves for safety. He invented cyclone cellars for them. He even named the cellars. He called them "fraid holes." Pecos wouldn't even say the word "afraid." The cyclone was something like he was. It was big and strong too. He always stood by musing pleasantly as he watched it.

The cyclone caused Bill some trouble, though. Usually it would destroy a few hundred miles of fence by blowing the postholes away. But it wasn't much trouble for him to fix it. All he had to do was to go and get the postholes and then take them back and put the fence posts in them. The holes were rarely ever blown more than twenty or thirty miles.

In one respect Bill even welcomed the cyclone, for it blew so hard it blew the earth away from his wells. The first time this happened, he thought the wells would be a total loss. There they were, sticking up several hundred feet out of the ground. As wells they were useless. But he found he could cut them up into lengths and sell them for postholes to farmers in Iowa and Nebraska. It was very profitable, especially after he invented a special posthole saw to cut them with. He didn't use that type of posthole himself.

1. **cowpunchers** (kou' pun' churz) *n.* cowboys.

### Meet the Author

#### Harold W. Felton

(1902–1991) practiced law and worked for the Internal Revenue Service, but over the years he became interested in the legends and folklore of the United States. In particular, he collected and retold stories about folk heroes and cowboys of the West.

#### CLOSE READING TOOL



Read and respond to this selection online using the [Close Reading Tool](#).

He got the prairie dogs to dig his for him. He simply caught a few gross<sup>2</sup> of prairie dogs and set them down at proper intervals. The prairie dog would dig a hole. Then Bill would put a post in it. The prairie dog would get disgusted and go down the row ahead of the others and dig another hole. Bill fenced all of Texas and parts of New Mexico and Arizona in this manner. He took a few contracts and fenced most of the Southern Pacific right of way too. That's the reason it is so crooked. He had trouble getting the prairie dogs to run a straight fence.

As for his wells, the badgers dug them. The system was the same as with the prairie dogs. The labor was cheap so it didn't make much difference if the cyclone did spoil some of the wells. The badgers were digging all of the time anyway. They didn't seem to care whether they dug wells or just badger holes.

One year he tried shipping the prairie dog holes up north, too, for postholes. It was not successful. They didn't keep in storage and they couldn't stand the handling in shipping. After they were installed they seemed to wear out quickly. Bill always thought the difference in climate had something to do with it.

It should be said that in those days there was only one cyclone. It was the first and original cyclone, bigger and more terrible by far than the small cyclones of today. It usually stayed by itself up north around Kansas and Oklahoma and didn't bother anyone much. But it was attracted by the noise of the Fourth of July celebration and without fail managed to put in an appearance before the close of the day.

On this particular Fourth of July, the celebration had gone off fine. The speeches were loud and long. The contests and games were hard fought. The high point of the day was Bill's exhibition with Widow Maker, which came right after he showed off Scat and Rat.<sup>3</sup> People seemed never to tire of seeing them in action. The mountain lion was almost useless as a work animal after his accident, and the snake had grown old and somewhat infirm, and was troubled with rheumatism in his rattles. But they too enjoyed the Fourth of July and liked to make a public appearance. They relived the old days.

Widow Maker had put on a good show, bucking as no ordinary horse could ever buck. Then Bill undertook to show the gaits<sup>4</sup> he had taught the palomino.<sup>5</sup> Other mustangs at that time had only two gaits. Walking and running. Only Widow Maker could pace. But now Bill had developed and taught him other gaits. Twenty-seven in all. Twenty-three forward and three reverse. He was very proud of the achievement. He showed off the slow gaits and the crowd was eager for more.

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2. **gross** (grōs) *n.* twelve dozen.

3. **Widow Maker . . . Scat and Rat.** Widow Maker is a mustang, a type of wild horse. Scat is Bill's mountain lion, and Rat is Bill's pet rattlesnake.

4. **gaits** (gāts) *n.* foot movements of a horse.

5. **palomino** (pal' ə mē' nō) *n.* golden-tan or cream-colored horse that has a white, silver, or ivory tail and, often, white spots on the face and legs.

He showed the walk, trot, canter, lope, jog, slow rack, fast rack, single foot, pace, stepping pace, fox trot, running walk and the others now known. Both men and horses confuse the various gaits nowadays. Some of the gaits are now thought to be the same, such as the rack and the single foot. But with Widow Maker and Pecos Bill, each one was different. Each was precise and to be distinguished from the others. No one had ever imagined such a thing.

Then the cyclone came! All of the people except Bill ran into the 'fraid holes. Bill was annoyed. He stopped the performance. The remaining gaits were not shown. From that day to this horses have used no more than the gaits Widow Maker exhibited that day. It is unfortunate that the really fast gaits were not shown. If they were, horses might be much faster today than they are.

Bill glanced up at the cyclone and the quiet smile on his face faded into a frown. He saw the cyclone was angry. Very, very angry indeed.

The cyclone had always been the center of attention. Everywhere it went people would look up in wonder, fear and amazement. It had been the undisputed master of the country. It had observed Bill's rapid climb to fame and had seen the Fourth of July celebration grow. It had been keeping an eye on things all right.

In the beginning, the Fourth of July crowd had aroused its curiosity. It liked nothing more than to show its superiority and power by breaking the crowd up sometime during the day. But every year the crowd was larger. This preyed on the cyclone's mind. This year it did not come to watch. It deliberately came to spoil the celebration. Jealous of Bill and of his success, it resolved to do away with the whole institution of the Fourth of July once and for all. So much havoc and destruction would be wrought that there would never be another Independence Day Celebration. On that day, in future years, it would circle around the horizon leering and gloating. At least, so it thought.

The cyclone was resolved, also, to do away with this bold fellow who did not hold it in awe and run for the 'fraid hole at its approach. For untold years it had been the most powerful thing in the land. And now, here was a mere man who threatened its position. More! Who had **usurped** its position!

When Bill looked at the horizon and saw the cyclone coming, he recognized the anger and rage. While a cyclone does not often smile, Bill had felt from the beginning that it was just a grouchy fellow who never had a pleasant word for anyone. But now, instead of merely an unpleasant character, Bill saw all the viciousness of which an angry cyclone is capable. He had no way of knowing that the cyclone saw its kingship tottering and was determined to stop this man who threatened its supremacy.

◀ Vocabulary

**usurped** (yoo surpt') v.  
took power without right

But Bill understood the violence of the onslaught even as the monster came into view. He knew he must meet it. The center of the cyclone was larger than ever before. The fact is, the cyclone had been training for this fight all winter and spring. It was in best form and at top weight. It headed straight for Bill intent on his destruction. In an instant it was upon him. Bill had sat quietly and silently on the great pacing mustang. But his mind was working rapidly. In the split second between his first sight of the monster and the time for action he had made his plans. Pecos Bill was ready! Ready and waiting!

Green clouds were dripping from the cyclone's jaws. Lightning flashed from its eyes as it swept down upon him. Its plan was to envelop Bill in one mighty grasp. Just as it was upon him, Bill turned Widow Maker to its left. This was a clever move for the cyclone was right-handed, and while it had been training hard to get its left in shape, that was not its best side. Bill gave rein to his mount. Widow Maker wheeled and turned on a dime which Pecos had, with great foresight and accuracy, thrown to the ground to mark the exact spot for this maneuver. It was the first time that anyone had thought of turning on a dime. Then he urged the great horse forward. The cyclone, filled with surprise, lost its balance and rushed forward at an increased speed. It went so fast that it met itself coming back. This confused the cyclone, but it did not confuse Pecos Bill. He had expected that to happen. Widow Maker went into his twenty-first gait and edged up close to the whirlwind. Soon they were running neck and neck.

At the proper instant Bill grabbed the cyclone's ears, kicked himself free of the stirrups and pulled himself lightly on its back. Bill never used spurs on Widow Maker. Sometimes he wore them for show and because he liked the jingling sound they made. They made a nice accompaniment for his cowboy songs. But he had not been singing, so he had no spurs. He did not have his rattlesnake for a quirt.<sup>6</sup> Of course there was no bridle. It was man against monster! There he was! Pecos Bill astride a raging cyclone, slick heeled and without a saddle!

The cyclone was taken by surprise at this sudden turn of events. But it was undaunted. It was sure of itself. Months of training had given it a conviction that it was invincible. With a mighty heave, it twisted to its full height. Then it fell back suddenly, twisting and turning violently, so that before it came back to earth, it had turned around a thousand times. Surely no rider could ever withstand such an attack. No rider ever had. Little wonder. No one had ever ridden a cyclone before. But Pecos Bill did! He fanned the tornado's ears with his hat and dug his heels into the demon's flanks and yelled, "Yipee-ee!"

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6. **quirt** (*kwɜrt*) *n.* riding whip with a braided lash and a short handle.

The people who had run for shelter began to come out. The audience further enraged the cyclone. It was bad enough to be disgraced by having a man astride it. It was unbearable not to have thrown him. To have all the people see the failure was too much! It got down flat on the ground and rolled over and over. Bill retained his seat throughout this ruse. Evidence of this desperate but futile stratagem<sup>7</sup> remains today. The great Staked Plains, or as the Mexicans call it, *Llano Estacado*, is the result. Its small, rugged mountains were covered with trees at the time. The rolling of the cyclone destroyed the mountains, the trees, and almost everything else in the area. The destruction was so complete, that part of the country is flat and treeless to this day. When the settlers came, there were no landmarks to guide them across the vast unmarked space, so they drove stakes in the ground to mark the trails. That is the reason it is called “Staked Plains.” Here is an example of the proof of the events of history by careful and painstaking research. It is also an example of how seemingly inexplicable geographical facts can be explained.

It was far more dangerous for the rider when the cyclone shot straight up to the sky. Once there, the twister tried the same thing it had tried on the ground. It rolled on the sky. It was no use. Bill could not be unseated. He kept his place, and he didn't have a sky hook with him either.

As for Bill, he was having the time of his life, shouting at the top of his voice, kicking his opponent in the ribs and jabbing his thumb in its flanks. It responded and went on a wild bucking rampage over the entire West. It used all the bucking tricks known to the wildest broncos as well as those known only to cyclones. The wind howled furiously and beat against the fearless rider. The rain poured. The lightning flashed around his ears. The fight went on and on. Bill enjoyed himself immensely. In spite of the elements he easily kept his place. . . .

The raging cyclone saw this out of the corner of its eye. It knew then who the victor was. It was twisting far above the Rocky Mountains when the awful truth came to it. In a horrible heave it disintegrated! Small pieces of cyclone flew in all directions. Bill still kept his seat on the main central portion until that rained out from under him. Then he jumped to a nearby streak of lightning and slid down it toward earth. But it was raining so hard that the rain put out the lightning. When it fizzled out from under him, Bill dropped the rest of the way. He lit in what is now called Death Valley. He hit quite hard, as is apparent from the fact that he so compressed the place that it is still two hundred and seventy-six feet below sea level. The Grand

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7. **futile** (fyōōt'ī) **stratagem** (strat' ə jəm) useless or hopeless plan.

**Vocabulary** ▶

**skeptics** (skep' tiks)

*n.* people who doubt  
accepted ideas

Canyon was washed out by the rain, though it must be understood that this happened after Paul Bunyan had given it a good start by carelessly dragging his ax behind him when he went west a short time before.

The cyclones and the hurricanes and the tornadoes nowadays are the small pieces that broke off of the big cyclone Pecos Bill rode. In fact, the rainstorms of the present day came into being in the same way. There are always **skeptics**, but even they will recognize the logic of the proof of this event. They will recall that even now it almost always rains on the Fourth of July. That is because the rainstorms of today still retain some of the characteristics of the giant cyclone that met its comeuppance at the hands of Pecos Bill.

Bill lay where he landed and looked up at the sky, but he could see no sign of the cyclone. Then he laughed softly as he felt the warm sand of Death Valley on his back. . . .

It was a rough ride though, and Bill had resisted unusual tensions and pressures. When he got on the cyclone he had a twenty-dollar gold piece and a bowie knife in his pocket. The tremendous force of the cyclone was such that when he finished the ride he found that his pocket contained a plugged nickel<sup>8</sup> and a little pearl-handled penknife. His two giant six-shooters were compressed and transformed into a small water pistol and a popgun.

It is a strange circumstance that lesser men have monuments raised in their honor. Death Valley is Bill's monument. Sort of a monument in reverse. Sunk in his honor, you might say. Perhaps that is as it should be. After all, Bill was different. He made his own monument. He made it with his hips, as is evident from the great depth of the valley. That is the hard way.

---

8. **plugged nickel** fake nickel.

## Read

## Comprehension: Key Ideas and Details

- (a)** What term does Pecos Bill use to refer to the cyclone cellars? **(b) Interpret:** What does this term show about Bill's character?
- (a) Analyze:** Identify three human emotions that the cyclone displays. **(b)** What other human qualities does the cyclone display? Explain. **(c) Compare:** In what ways are Bill and the cyclone similar? Explain, citing details from the tale.
- (a)** What happens to the cyclone after Bill defeats it? **(b) Connect:** In what ways does the cyclone's behavior after its defeat both express the character's human-like traits and match the pattern of an actual storm?
- Summarize:** Write a brief, objective summary of the story. Cite story details in your writing. Explain.

## Text Analysis: Craft and Structure

- (a)** What word is Bill unwilling to say out loud? **(b) Draw Conclusions:** How does Bill's resolve never to say this word explain, in part, why he is a hero? Explain.
- Contrast:** How does the narrator distinguish Bill's cyclone from today's cyclones? Cite specific details from the text that support this distinction.
- (a) Analyze Cause and Effect:** How does the narrator support the claim that modern rainstorms are pieces of the original cyclone? **(b) Evaluate:** How does this detail represent the author's tone? Explain.
- (a)** What does the author identify as Bill's "monument"? **(b) Contrast:** In what ways is Bill's monument different from those of "lesser men"?

## Connections: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

## Discuss

Literature from the oral tradition often explains the origins of natural phenomena or cultural practices. With a small group, conduct a **discussion** about the ways in which "Pecos Bill: The Cyclone" fits the definition of an origin story.

## Research

Tall tales often include *archetypes*, or elements common to stories from all cultures. Briefly research archetypal characters, settings, and events and assess their possible influence on this tall tale. In particular, consider the following:

- Bill's horse, Widow Maker
- Bill's combat with the cyclone
- Bill's "monument"

Take notes as you perform your research. Then, write a brief **explanation** of the archetypal elements you find in this tall tale.

## Write

Nearly all tall tale heroes and their counterparts in epics, myths, and legends display superhuman abilities. Modern forms of entertainment, such as comic books and action movies, also feature heroes with superpowers. In an **essay**, discuss how Pecos Bill's abilities are similar to or different from those of another heroic character with which you are familiar. Cite details from the tale to support your ideas.



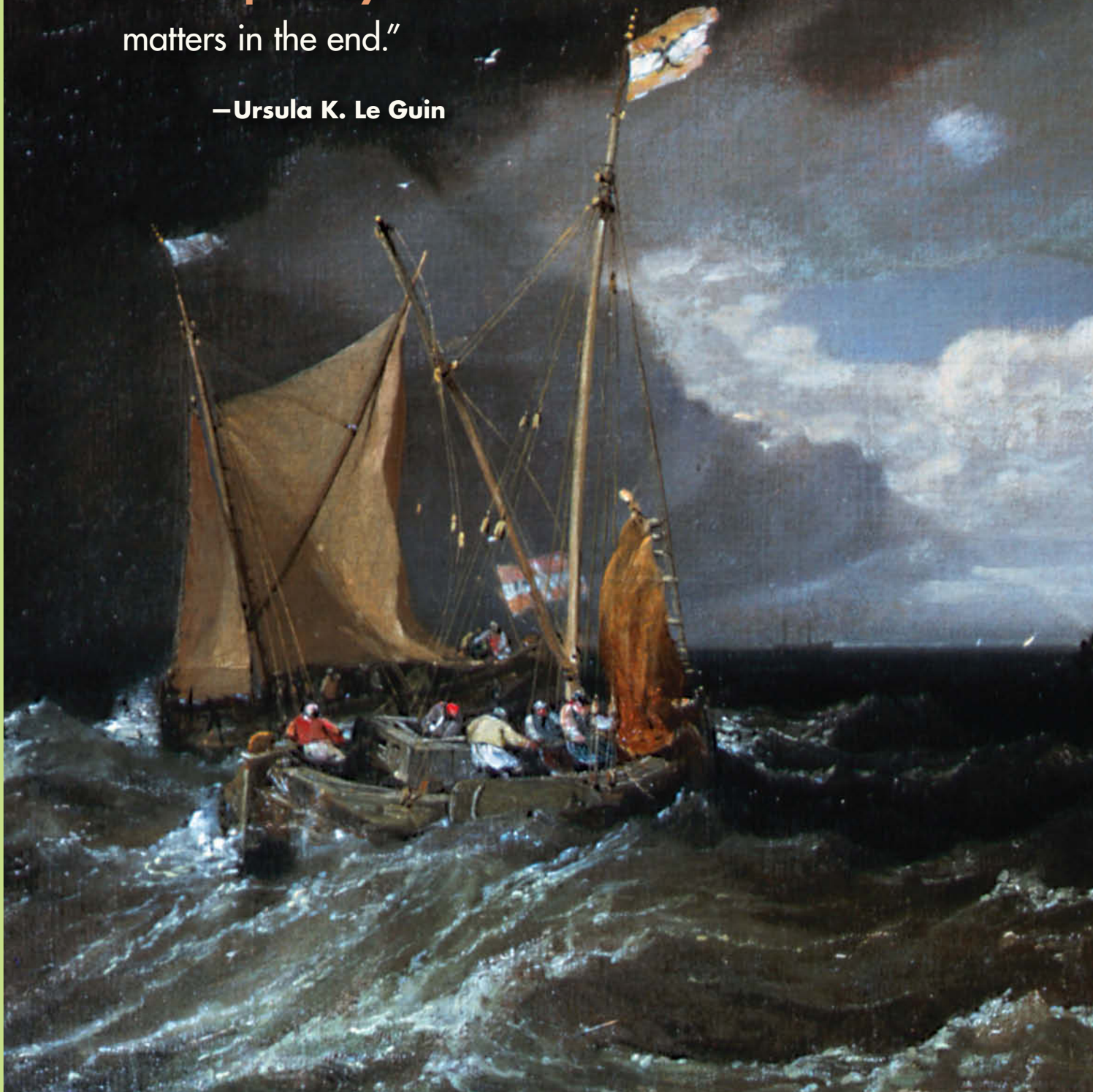
## Do heroes have responsibilities?

In what ways does Pecos Bill show responsibility to his community? Do you think Bill has an obligation to use his abilities to serve his community, or can he, in good conscience, choose not to do so? Explain.



"It is good to have an  
**end** to journey toward,  
but it is the **journey** that  
matters in the end."

—Ursula K. Le Guin



## PART 2

# TEXT ANALYSIS GUIDED EXPLORATION

# PERILOUS JOURNEYS

The texts in this section tell the story of Odysseus, the ancient Greek hero whose adventures make up one of the first perilous journeys in literature. In fact, the word *odyssey* means a long journey, full of dangers, surprises, twists, and turns. As you read the texts in this section, think about the obstacles that Odysseus confronts, how he overcomes them, and what his responses say about his character. Then, think about how these texts speak to the Big Question for this unit: **Do heroes have responsibilities?** Consider what type of hero Odysseus is and how he views his responsibilities toward his men, the gods, characters he meets, and his family.

◀ **CRITICAL VIEWING** Which details in the painting suggest the ship is in the midst of a dangerous journey?

## READINGS IN PART 2



**EPIC** EXEMPLAR TEXT  
**from the Odyssey,**  
**Part 1: The Adventures**  
**of Odysseus**

Homer (p. 756)

- Sailing from Troy
- The Lotus-Eaters
- The Cyclops
- The Land of the Dead
- The Sirens
- Scylla and Charybdis
- The Cattle of the Sun God



**EPIC** EXEMPLAR TEXT  
**from the Odyssey,**  
**Part 2: The Return**  
**of Odysseus**

Homer (p. 800)

- Argus
- The Suitors
- Penelope
- The Challenge
- Odysseus' Revenge
- Penelope's Test

### CLOSE READING TOOL



Use the **Close Reading Tool** to practice the strategies you learn in this unit.

# Focus on Craft and Structure

## Theme and the Oral Tradition

Stories from the oral tradition teach a culture's central **values** and **beliefs**. They also convey **universal themes**.

**Oral Tradition** Storytellers and poets of long ago did not write down the tales they told. Instead, they learned the stories and poems of their culture from others and recited them from memory. The term **oral tradition** refers to the literature they passed down through the ages by word of mouth. Eventually, these spoken stories and poems were retold in writing.

The tales of love, ambition, and friendship in the oral tradition do more than entertain. They record the history, customs, beliefs, and values of the cultures from which they sprang. The **points of view**, or perspectives on life, expressed in this literature reflect the **cultural experiences** of the tellers—the basic experiences that shaped life in their society. For example, the stories of a warrior culture tell of battle and adventure, heroism and sacrifice. Experiences of war along with the emphasis placed on bravery and loyalty form the **social and cultural context** for such tales—the values, beliefs, and experiences the tales reflect and affirm.

**Themes** Like much literature, works in the oral tradition convey **themes**—deeper meanings or insights. A **universal theme** is an insight into life and human nature that appears in the literature of many different times and cultures. Universal themes concern fundamental ideas

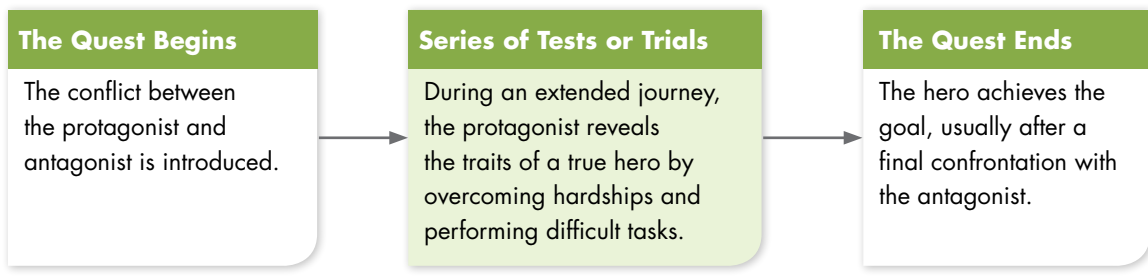
such as the importance of heroism, the strength of loyalty, the power of love, the responsibilities of leadership, the struggle between good and evil, and the dangers of greed.

Storytellers in the oral tradition often explore universal themes, and they frequently do so using archetypes. An **archetype** is an element that recurs throughout the literature of different cultures. Character types, plot patterns, images, and symbols all may be archetypes, as in the examples shown below.

### Examples: Archetypes

- The **trickster** is a clever person or animal that can fool others but often gets into trouble through curiosity.
- In the **hero's quest**, a clever or brave person undergoes a series of tests or trials while on a search for something of great importance.
- The character of the hero is often called the **protagonist**, and the **antagonist** is the character or force that stands in opposition. Often, the opposing force is a **monster**, a nonhuman or semi-human figure that menaces society and must be destroyed by the hero.

The **hero's quest** follows an archetypal plot pattern similar to the one shown here.



## Forms From the Oral Tradition

Across cultures, storytellers in the oral tradition developed specific narrative forms. Among these forms are myths, folk tales, legends, and epics. Narratives in each of these forms express the values, ideals, and behaviors held important by the culture from which they came. They

also reflect the oral nature of the tradition. For example, epics may feature *epithets*, or descriptive phrases that are repeated when a character is named. These epithets may have helped storytellers memorize the story. They might also have helped listeners recognize and remember the characters.

## Literary Forms in the Oral Tradition

Form	Characteristics	Example
<b>Myth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>describes the actions of gods or heroes or explains the origins of elements of nature</li><li>is present in the literature of every culture (Ancient Greek and Roman myths are known as <b>classical mythology</b>.)</li></ul>	Prometheus, son of the Greek god Zeus, defies his father and the other gods by giving fire to humanity.
<b>Folk Tale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>follows a simple formula</li><li>deals with heroics, adventure, magic, or romance</li><li>frequently features animal characters with human traits, such as the trickster Coyote</li><li>includes fables and fairy tales</li></ul>	A poor fisherman catches a golden fish. The fish and the man strike a deal: In exchange for its freedom, the fish will grant the man a wish. The man agrees, but he and his wife become greedy and demand more wishes. The fish vanishes, leaving the fisherman in poverty once more.
<b>Legend</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>recounts the adventures of a hero from the past</li><li>often relates events that are based on historical truth</li><li>includes tall tales, which feature exaggeration</li></ul>	Stories of Davy Crockett portray this real-life man as a superhero who frees the sun, uses lightning to fly, and defeats the entire British navy single-handedly.
<b>Epic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>is a long narrative poem</li><li>combines features of myths and legends</li><li>depicts a larger-than-life hero who usually goes on a dangerous journey; the hero is helped or hindered by supernatural creatures or gods</li><li>gives a detailed portrait of a culture</li></ul>	The ancient Mesopotamian king Gilgamesh, who is part human and part god, displays wisdom and strength as he struggles against the gods, nature, and his own human weaknesses.

## Analyzing Theme and Cultural Experience

A literary work conveys a **theme**—an insight about life. Authors’ **cultural backgrounds** influence their **points of view** and the themes they express.

The **theme**, or central insight or message of a literary work, may be stated directly. For example, a fable ends with a statement of the moral of the story, such as “He who hesitates is lost.” Frequently, however, the theme of a work is **implied**, or suggested, by story details. Readers can determine an implied theme by analyzing the way storytellers pattern details.

**Development of Themes** To introduce and develop a theme, writers create patterns of events and actions or of contrasts between characters and their fates. As the story unfolds, new events may reinforce these patterns or alter them, suggesting new ideas to readers.

By identifying such patterns as you read, you will gain clues to the implied theme. Restating the patterns in general terms will help you reach a conclusion about an implied theme, as shown in the following example:

<b>Title</b>	“Midas and the Golden Touch”
<b>Pattern</b>	Everything King Midas touches turns to gold, including his beloved daughter.
<b>Generalized Restatement</b>	Driven by greed, a person destroys what he loves.
<b>Theme</b>	Greed can destroy all that is good in a person’s life.

**Determining Universal Themes** In the oral tradition, universal themes—themes found in the literature of many cultures—are often conveyed through the use of **archetypes**, or recurring elements common to many stories.

Your ability to recognize these archetypes as the story develops and to interpret their meanings can help you determine a story’s universal themes, as in the following example:

<b>Story</b>	<b>The Tortoise and the Hare</b> A tortoise and a hare compete in a race. The hare assumes he will win and stops for a nap. The tortoise keeps going and wins.
<b>Archetypes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overconfident, boastful character (hare)</li> <li>• Quiet, confident character (tortoise)</li> <li>• Plot pattern: Competition in which a weaker character succeeds because of the pride of a stronger character</li> </ul>
<b>Universal Themes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slow and steady wins the race.</li> <li>• Too much pride can have bad results.</li> </ul>

**Culturally Specific Themes** Not all themes in the oral tradition are universal. Some are specific to the time and the culture in which the story originated. These themes reflect the specific social or cultural concerns of their tellers and do not apply more generally to people in modern cultures. Still, they provide an interesting window into the values, beliefs, and customs of bygone eras.

**Point of View** An author’s **point of view**, or perspective, consists of his or her attitudes toward, and beliefs about, a subject. Point of view determines how the writer approaches a subject. An author’s point of view is influenced in part by his or her cultural experiences—the basic experiences, beliefs, and values that shape life in his or her society.

Literature in the oral tradition usually expresses a cultural—rather than an individual—point of view. By contrast, works of modern literature usually express an author’s unique and individual point of view. This point of view may even be critical of the author’s own culture. In both cases, it is important for readers to recognize the point of view and cultural experiences that shape a literary text.

#### Cultural Point of View

The history, beliefs, ideals, and behaviors shared or valued by an entire society or group



#### Individual Author’s Point of View

The author’s subjective, or personal, attitudes, feelings, values, and ideas; his or her distinct view of the world

**Cultural Experience and Purpose** The author’s **purpose** is his or her main reason for writing. Writers usually write **to entertain, to inform or explain, or to persuade**. Although entertainment was a means for getting the attention of listeners, storytellers in the oral tradition also felt responsible for preserving the identity of their cultures. Through stories and poems, they reminded people of their history; they communicated values to younger members of their group; and they shared religious beliefs. Storytellers were more than

just entertainers; they served as historians, teachers, and advisors.

Modern writers may also create literature with more than one purpose in mind. For example, an author might write a story that includes information about a serious problem in the world and at the same time provide readers with a satisfying narrative that entertains.

**Changing Points of View** As stories were passed among generations and cultures, details changed to reflect different values and attitudes. Consider this example of a story that has been retold in numerous cultures:

#### Example: Cinderella

After Cinderella’s mother dies, her father remarries and leaves Cinderella with his new wife and her two daughters. Cinderella is enslaved by the unreasonable demands of her cruel stepmother and stepsisters. She attends the King’s ball and meets the Prince. Eventually, Cinderella and the Prince marry and live happily ever after.

Culture/ Version	Cultural Viewpoint	Specific Details
German tale retold by the Brothers Grimm in 1812	Medieval view: Cruelty and violence are part of the world.	At the end, birds peck out the eyes of the stepsisters.
American version, based on a retelling by the French writer Charles Perrault in 1697	Modern view: Violence and cruelty should be hidden from children’s view.	At the end, Cinderella forgives her stepsisters and invites them to live in the castle.

# Preparing to Read the *Odyssey*

Homer's epic poems celebrate the legendary heroes and heritage of a great culture.

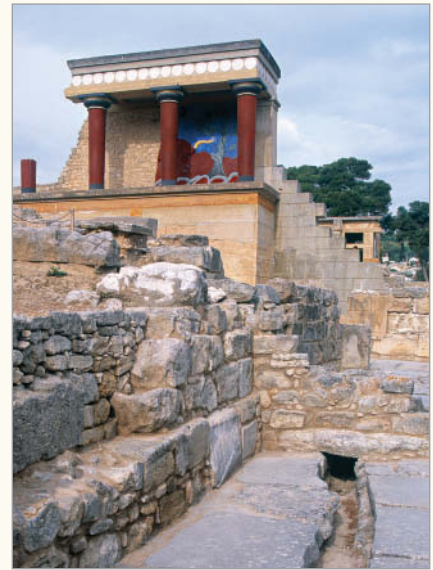
## Historical Background: Ancient Greece

The world of ancient Greece included the Greek mainland, dipping down from continental Europe, and western Asia Minor, the Asian part of present-day Turkey. It also included hundreds of islands in the Aegean (ē jē əŋ) Sea, the arm of the Mediterranean Sea between mainland Greece and Asia Minor, and in the Ionian (ī ō nē əŋ) Sea, the arm of the Mediterranean to the west of mainland Greece. Odysseus, the legendary hero of Homer's *Odyssey*, was said to be the ruler of Ithaca, one of the western islands.

**The Minoans and Mycenaeans** Nearly a thousand years before Odysseus would have lived, Greek civilization rose to greatness on Crete, another island south of the mainland. By about 2000 B.C., a sophisticated society called the Minoan (mī nō əŋ) civilization had developed on Crete. Judging by the archaeological evidence, the Minoans produced elegant stone palaces and fine carvings and metalwork. They also developed a writing system, preserved on a few hundred of the clay tablets on which they wrote. Scholars call that writing system Linear A and have yet to decipher it.

For several centuries, Minoan civilization dominated the Greek world. Then, in about 1450 B.C., it collapsed rather suddenly, perhaps due to earthquakes and invasion. With the weakening of Minoan culture, the Mycenaeans (mī sē nē ənz) became the dominant force in the Greek world. Originating on mainland Greece, the Mycenaeans had swept south and into Crete. Strongly influenced by Minoan civilization, the Mycenaeans too had a palace culture, an economy based on trade, and a writing system that mostly used clay tablets. Evidence of their writing is found in Knossos and Chania on Crete as well as in Mycenae, Pylos, and Thebes, three of their mainland strongholds. Because the Mycenaeans spoke an archaic, or older, form of Greek, scholars have been able to decipher their writing, known as Linear B. It was used primarily to keep palace records.

- ▶ The photo on the right shows a fresco, or wall painting, from the palace's interior.



- ▲ The photograph above shows a reconstruction of one wall of The Palace of Minos at Knossos, Crete.

Sir Arthur Evans, the British archaeologist who worked extensively on Crete, named Minoan civilization for King Minos (mī nās), a ruler of Crete in Greek mythology.





◀ Ancient Greece included mainland territories and hundreds of islands clustered in the the Aegean and Ionian Seas. Odysseus' kingdom of Ithaca is a small island in the Ionian Sea.

**Legendary Conflicts** The writing and archaeological remains suggest early cities with large central palaces and thick protective walls, each ruled by a wanax, or king. Others in society included priests, slaves, workers in trades or crafts, administrative officials, and a warrior class. The Mycenaens wore armor in battle, in which they engaged with apparent frequency. Their warfare with Troy, on the northwest coast of Asia Minor, has become one of the most famous military ventures of all time—the Trojan War. If there really was a King Odysseus, he would have been a key player in that conflict.

Scholars date the Trojan War to somewhere around 1200 B.C. Shortly thereafter, Mycenaean civilization collapsed as the Greek world fell into chaos and confusion. For some three hundred years, writing seems to have disappeared in what is often called the Greek Dark Ages. Then, in about 850 B.C., Greece began emerging from this darkness, spurred by flourishing trade throughout the Mediterranean region. Along with the economic boom came a resurgence of the arts and learning that peaked with the epic poems of Homer. These poems—the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—chronicle the Trojan War and the subsequent adventures of the hero Odysseus.

**The Rise of City-States** After Homer's time, Greek civilization grew more organized and sophisticated. Smaller communities organized as city-states—cities that functioned independently, as countries do. Among them were Sparta, known for its military prowess, and Athens, the birthplace of democracy. Though rivalries sometimes led to warfare among city-states, the Greeks still recognized their common heritage as Hellenes, as they usually called themselves by that time. They coordinated efforts to fight common enemies, such as the Persians. They participated in the Olympic games, which records indicate began in 776 B.C. Together, too, they saw the works of Homer as pillars of their heritage, two great epics that celebrated their common past and its heroes.

The Greek word for "city-state" is *polis*, the origin of our words *metropolis* and *politics*.



# Greek Mythology and Customs

All aspects of Greek culture reflected belief in the Olympian gods.

Ancient Greek religion was based on a belief in many gods. Zeus was king of the gods; Hera, his beautiful and powerful wife. Other gods and goddesses were associated with different aspects of nature or human behavior. The most important ones were said to dwell on Mount Olympus, the tallest mountain in Greece, where Zeus sat on a throne of gold. These Olympians, however, were not the first gods.

**The Titans Are Overthrown** The early poet Hesiod (hḗ sē əd) wrote a mythic account of the origin of the gods in *Theogony*, a work the Greeks revered almost as much as Homer's epics. According to that origin myth, first there was Chaos, a dark, empty void. Out of Chaos came the Earth, personified as the goddess Gaea. The Earth generated the skies, personified as the god Uranus, who with Gaea produced the giant gods known as Titans. Cronus, the chief Titan, ruled the universe until he was displaced by his three sons, who split the universe among them. Zeus, the most powerful of these sons, became ruler of the heavens. His brother Poseidon became ruler of the seas. The third brother, Hades, became ruler of the underworld, a dark region also called Hades, which was inhabited by shades of the dead.

The Greek gods were powerful, but they were not all-powerful: even Zeus had to bow to fate. The gods displayed many human qualities and were often vengeful and quarrelsome. They were also quick to punish human beings guilty of hubris (hyṓ or hṓ bris), or excessive pride. To appease the gods, human beings performed sacrifices, which often involved the killing of animals. In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus makes several sacrifices to plead for divine aid on his journey home.

**Celebrating the Gods** The Greeks worshipped the gods in temples dedicated to many gods or just one. The Parthenon in Athens, for instance, was a temple dedicated to the goddess Athena. The Greeks also celebrated their gods at great festivals such as the Olympic games, which were dedicated to Zeus.

The Greeks believed in prophecy, which they associated with the god Apollo. In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus journeys all the way to the underworld to consult the blind prophet Tiresias (tī rḗ sē əs), who continues to have the gift of prophecy even though he has died. The Greeks also believed in myths, stories about gods and heroes that they used to explain the world around them. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* drew on these myths; however, for future generations of ancient Greeks, Homer's two epics—like Hesiod's *Theogony*—took on the aura of myths themselves.

▼ Apollo, the god of light and music (among many other things), is often shown with a lyre, the stringed instrument from which the English word *lyric* derives.

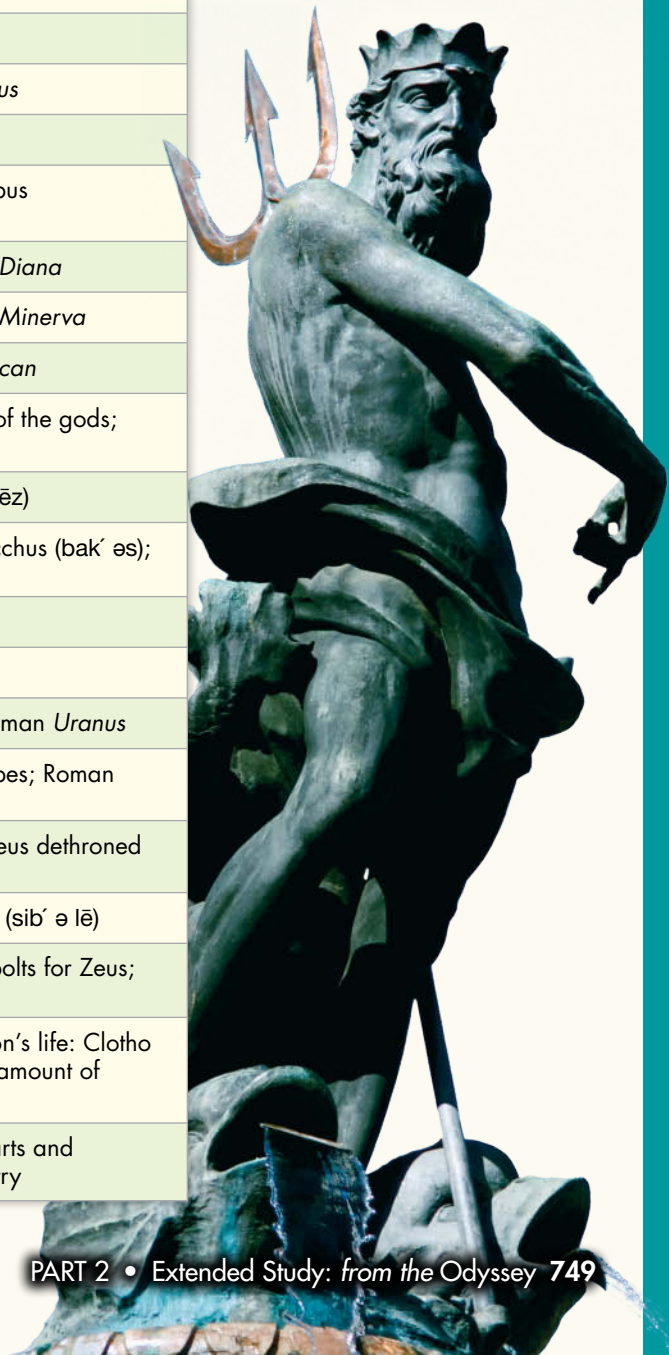


# Gods in Greek Mythology

You may be more familiar with the Roman names for the Greek gods. The ancient Romans accepted Greek mythology, but they had their own names for its gods and heroes. For example, they called Odysseus *Ulysses*. For each Greek god listed below, the Roman equivalent is also given.

<b>Zeus</b> (zōōs) king of the gods and ruler of the heavens; Roman <i>Jupiter</i> , sometimes called <i>Jove</i>
<b>Hera</b> (her' ə) wife of Zeus and goddess of married women; Roman <i>Juno</i>
<b>Poseidon</b> (pō sī'dən) god of the seas; Roman <i>Neptune</i>
<b>Hades</b> (hā'dēz) god of the underworld; Roman <i>Pluto</i>
<b>Aphrodite</b> (af' rə dītē) goddess of love and beauty; Roman <i>Venus</i>
<b>Ares</b> (er' ēz) god of war; Roman <i>Mars</i>
<b>Apollo</b> (əp' ol' ō) god of prophecy and music; also called Phoebus (fē' bəs); Roman <i>Apollo</i>
<b>Artemis</b> (är' tə mis) goddess of the hunt and the moon; Roman <i>Diana</i>
<b>Athena</b> (ə thē' nə) goddess of wisdom, skills, and war; Roman <i>Minerva</i>
<b>Hephaestus</b> (hē fes' təs) god of fire and metalwork; Roman <i>Vulcan</i>
<b>Hermes</b> (hər' mēz) god of commerce and cunning; messenger of the gods; Roman <i>Mercury</i>
<b>Demeter</b> (di mē' tər) goddess of the harvest; Roman <i>Ceres</i> (sir' ēz)
<b>Dionysus</b> (dī' ən' īsəs) god of wine and revelry, also called Bacchus (bak' əs); Roman <i>Dionysus</i> or <i>Bacchus</i>
<b>Hestia</b> (hes' tē ə) goddess of home and hearth; Roman <i>Vesta</i>
<b>Helios</b> (hē' lē os') sun god; Roman <i>Sol</i>
<b>Uranus</b> (yōō rē' nəs) sky god supplanted by his son Cronus; Roman <i>Uranus</i>
<b>Gaea</b> (jē' ə) earth goddess and mother of the Titans and Cyclopes; Roman <i>Tellus</i> or <i>Terra</i>
<b>Cronus</b> (krō' nəs) Titan who ruled the universe before his son Zeus dethroned him; Roman <i>Saturn</i>
<b>Rhea</b> (rē' ə) wife of Cronus and mother of Zeus; Roman <i>Cybele</i> (sib' ə lē)
<b>Cyclops</b> (sī' klops) any one of three Titans who forged thunderbolts for Zeus; plural, Cyclopes (sī' klō pēs)
<b>The Fates</b> three goddesses who wove the threads of each person's life: Clotho (klō' thō) spun the thread; Lachesis (lak' i sis) measured out the amount of thread; Atropos (ə' trə pis) snipped the thread
<b>The Muses</b> (myōō' ziz) nine goddesses who presided over the arts and sciences, including Calliope (kə lī' ə pē'), the Muse of epic poetry

- ▼ Poseidon, god of the sea, was also the god of earthquakes and horses. His symbols include the trident, a three-pronged spear.



## Meet the Author

# Homer

EPIC POET

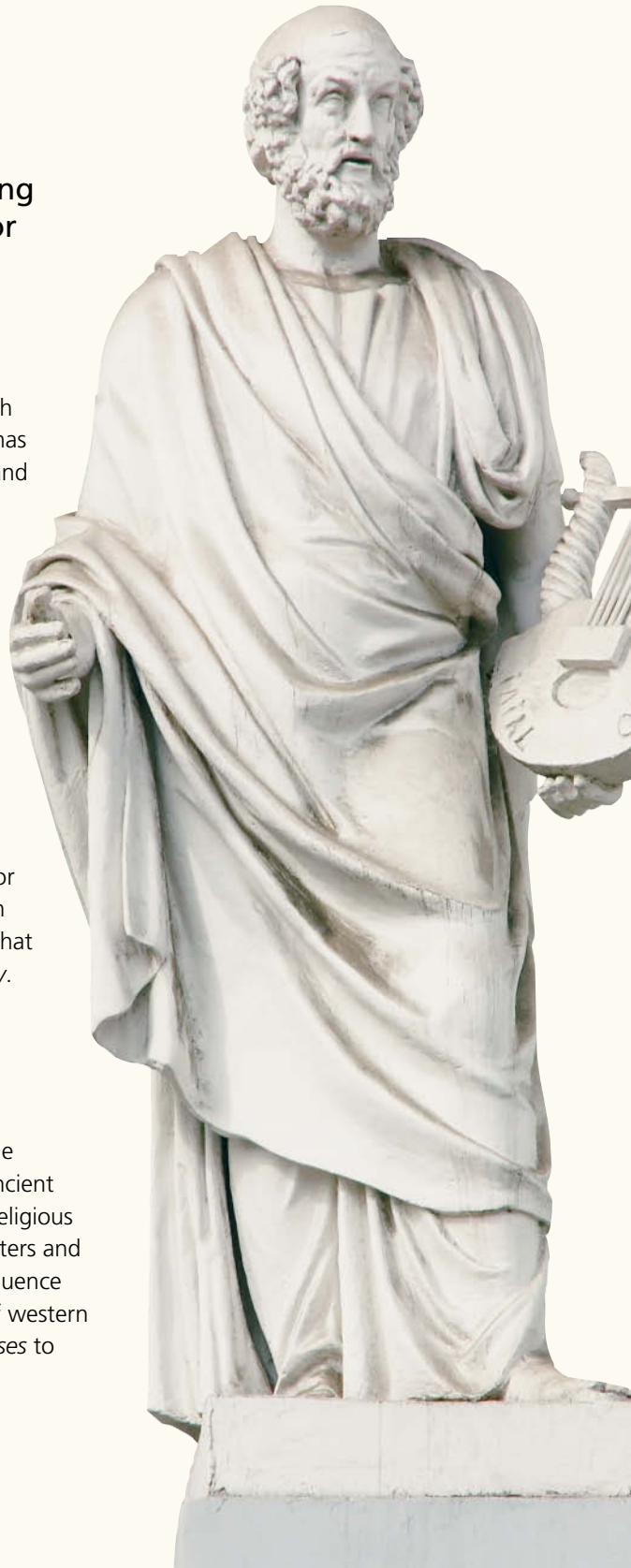
The poems attributed to Homer still influence literature and culture today.

Homer is the legendary poet credited with writing the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. These epics, known for their sweeping scope, gripping stories, and vivid style, have captured readers' imaginations for almost 3,000 years.

**Was there really a Homer?** No one can prove his existence with any certainty, for no authentic record of Homer's life exists. Tradition has it that he was born in Ionia in western Asia Minor, perhaps on the island of Chios, and that he was blind. The location is not unreasonable, for Ionia was a center of poetry and learning, where eastern and western cultures met and new intellectual currents were born. Descriptions of Asia Minor in the *Iliad* show in-depth knowledge of the landscape; moreover, both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* contain plot elements found in the world's first known epic, *Gilgamesh*, which by Homer's era had traveled from Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq) to become familiar in Asia Minor. For example, the hero Gilgamesh visits the underworld, just like the hero of the *Odyssey*; he also has a very good friend who is killed, just like Achilles has in the *Iliad*.

Most efforts to date Homer's life place him somewhere between 850 and 750 B.C. As a Greek oral poet, it is unlikely he lived much later, for by then writing had been reintroduced to Greek culture. The details in Homer's epics make clear that the poems were orally composed and that the *Iliad* was written first and probably some years before the *Odyssey*. The two epics differ in style: the *Iliad* is a single long, highly dramatic narrative, while the *Odyssey* is episodic and reads more like an adventure novel than a drama. For these reasons, some scholars even speculate that the epics were composed by two different poets.

**Inspiring Poems** Whatever the truth about Homer may be, no one disputes the quality of the two epics with which he is credited. The ancient Greeks revered the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. They recited the poems at religious festivals and had children memorize them in school. All the Greek writers and philosophers who came after Homer drew on the two epics. Their influence spread to Rome and beyond, and they became foundational works of western literature. Even in modern times, great works from James Joyce's *Ulysses* to Derek Walcott's *Omeros* have been directly inspired by Homer's verse.



## The Epic Form

An **epic** is a long narrative poem that relates important events in the history or folklore of the culture that produced it. Its central character, or **epic hero**, is a larger-than-life figure who embodies traits that the culture values. Typical among those characteristics are physical strength, bravery, high birth, fame, and effective skills as a leader and in battle.

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* influenced virtually all the great western epics that followed them. From the *Aeneid*, the great epic of ancient Rome, to *Beowulf*, the foundational epic of Old English; from *The Divine Comedy*, the masterful epic by the Italian poet Dante, to *Paradise Lost*, the brilliant epic by Britain's John Milton—all had Homer's epics as models. Literary devices in Homer's epics are often imitated in these later works, even though many of the later epics were not orally composed. Influential literary devices found in Homer's epics include the following:

- **Opening invocation to the Muse:** The speaker of the poem asks the Muse for inspiration.
- **Starting the story in medias res**, or “in the middle of things”: Beginning (after the invocation) with action instead of background information helps capture audience attention.
- **Lofty style:** Elegant language stresses the nobility of the subject.
- **Objective tone:** By keeping an emotional distance, the poet focuses attention on the story.
- **Meter**, or a fixed rhythmic pattern: A strong meter helps the oral poet remember the lines. In the original Greek, the *Odyssey* uses hexameter, or six beats to a line, which helps create a fast pace.
- **Epithet**, a characterizing phrase for a person, place, or thing: Recurring epithets are easy to remember and can help fill out the meter. Some examples of Homer's epithets include “rosy-fingered dawn” and “son of Laertes” for Odysseus.
- **Epic simile**, a long comparison over many lines: Such similes were another way to fill out the meter and aid the poet's memory.

Ionia, Homer's possible birthplace, was on the west coast of Asia Minor. The Ionian Sea, where Odysseus' island of Ithaca lies, is off the west coast of Greece. The duplicated names are likely no coincidence; Greek speakers from Ionia probably migrated to the west of Greece and brought the name with them (just as British settlers often brought British place names to America).

▼ The island of Ionia, Homer's possible birthplace, as it appears today



## Background for the Story

# THE TROJAN WAR

In the *Iliad*, Homer focuses on the final year of the Trojan War; in the *Odyssey*, he tells what happened to one of the key warriors afterward.

**It Begins With Strife** According to legend, the Trojan War began when Eris, goddess of strife, brought among the gods a golden apple inscribed “To the fairest.” Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite all wanted that apple. They asked Paris, son of the king of Troy, to decide which of them deserved it. Each tried to bribe him: Hera offered power; Athena, wisdom; and Aphrodite, the world’s most beautiful woman. The famous Judgment of Paris was that Aphrodite was the fairest. Soon, on a diplomatic mission to Sparta, Paris met Helen, the world’s most beautiful woman and Sparta’s queen. With Aphrodite’s help, the two fell in love and eloped. When Menelaus (məˈnɛ ə lā əs), king of Sparta, could not persuade the Trojans to send his wife, Helen, back, he went to his brother Agamemnon (əˈɡɛ ə məm ˈnɒn), king of Mycenae and the most powerful Greek leader. Agamemnon called on all the Greek rulers to honor a pact and go to Troy to fight to bring Helen home. The Greeks agreed and sailed to Troy. They laid siege to the city, but for ten long years could not breach its impregnable walls.

**War Crimes and Punishment** Agamemnon might have been a more powerful king and Achilles (ə kil ˈɛz) a superior warrior, but Odysseus, king of Ithaca, was cleverest of them all. He devised a scheme in which the Greeks left a great wooden horse outside the walls of Troy and tricked the Trojans into taking it inside. That night, the Greeks hiding inside the horse—Odysseus among them—slipped out, unlocked the gates of the city, and allowed their fellow warriors to come swarming in to defeat the Trojans and sack the city. The fighting was brutal and destructive. King Priam (praɪ əm), Paris’ father, for example, was killed while he was praying. The Greeks’ behavior angered many of the gods, who made their voyages home very difficult.

Odysseus was no exception. Following the Greek victory, he set sail for Ithaca but encountered a series of perilous misadventures that made his journey last ten years. It is this difficult, adventure-filled journey that Homer’s *Odyssey* recounts.

“Trojan” is the adjective form of the ancient city of Troy. It is also the name for a person from Troy.

Named for Odysseus, the *Odyssey* gave rise to our English word *odyssey*, meaning “an extended journey.”





## Do heroes have responsibilities?

Explore the Big Question as you read the *Odyssey*, Part 1. Consider whether the hero, Odysseus, demonstrates a sense of responsibility toward his men.

### CLOSE READING FOCUS

#### Key Ideas and Details: **Historical and Cultural Context**

The **historical and cultural context** of a work is the collection of details that reflect the time and place in which it is set or written. When you read a work from another culture, apply knowledge you gain from reading biographies, footnotes, and other sources to analyze how the cultural context influences the characters, conflicts, and themes.

#### Craft and Structure: **Epic Hero**

An **epic hero** is the larger-than-life character in an **epic**—a long narrative poem that is central to a culture’s national identity. The epic hero possesses traits that his society values most highly. Here, Odysseus speaks about his own courage and leadership:

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.

Traditional epics like the *Odyssey* use certain plot devices, or structures, that both provide information and allow the story to unfold in an exciting way. For example, many epics begin *in medias res* (“in the middle of things”), meaning that major events occurred before the action of the poem begins. The audience is, thus, thrust into the middle of the story. In addition, the hero’s adventures are often recounted in a **flashback**, a scene that interrupts a narrative to relate earlier events.

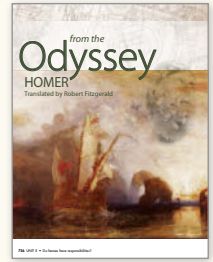
### Vocabulary

The words below are critical to understanding the text that follows. Decide whether you know the word well, know it a little bit, or do not know it at all. After you read, see how your knowledge of each word has increased.

plundered  
bereft

dispatched  
ardor

assuage  
insidious



## CLOSE READING MODEL

The passages below are from the *Odyssey*, Part 1. The annotations to the right of the passages show ways in which you can use close reading skills to analyze the cultural context and the qualities of an epic hero.

### from the *Odyssey*, Part I

...We served under Agamemnon, son of Atreus—  
the whole world knows what city  
he laid waste, what armies he destroyed.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

.....

The storms continued.

So one day<sup>3</sup> I withdrew to the interior  
to pray the gods in solitude, for hope  
that one might show me some way of salvation.  
Slipping away, I struck across the island  
to a sheltered spot, out of the driving gale.  
I washed my hands there, and made supplication  
to the gods who own Olympus, all the gods—  
but they, for answer, only closed my eyes  
under slow drops of sleep.<sup>4</sup>

#### Epic Hero

**1** Odysseus, who is telling his own story, refers to Agamemnon, the leader of the Greek forces during the Trojan War. Odysseus was one of the great heroes of that war. His success as a warrior is part of what makes him an epic hero.

#### Historical and Cultural Context

**2** Use your background knowledge to recall that Zeus is king of the gods in Greek mythology. This statement also alludes to a cultural code of conduct that includes the rule: Honor strangers and do not offend a guest.

#### Epic Hero

**3** These words are a reminder that the story Odysseus is telling is a memory, or flashback.

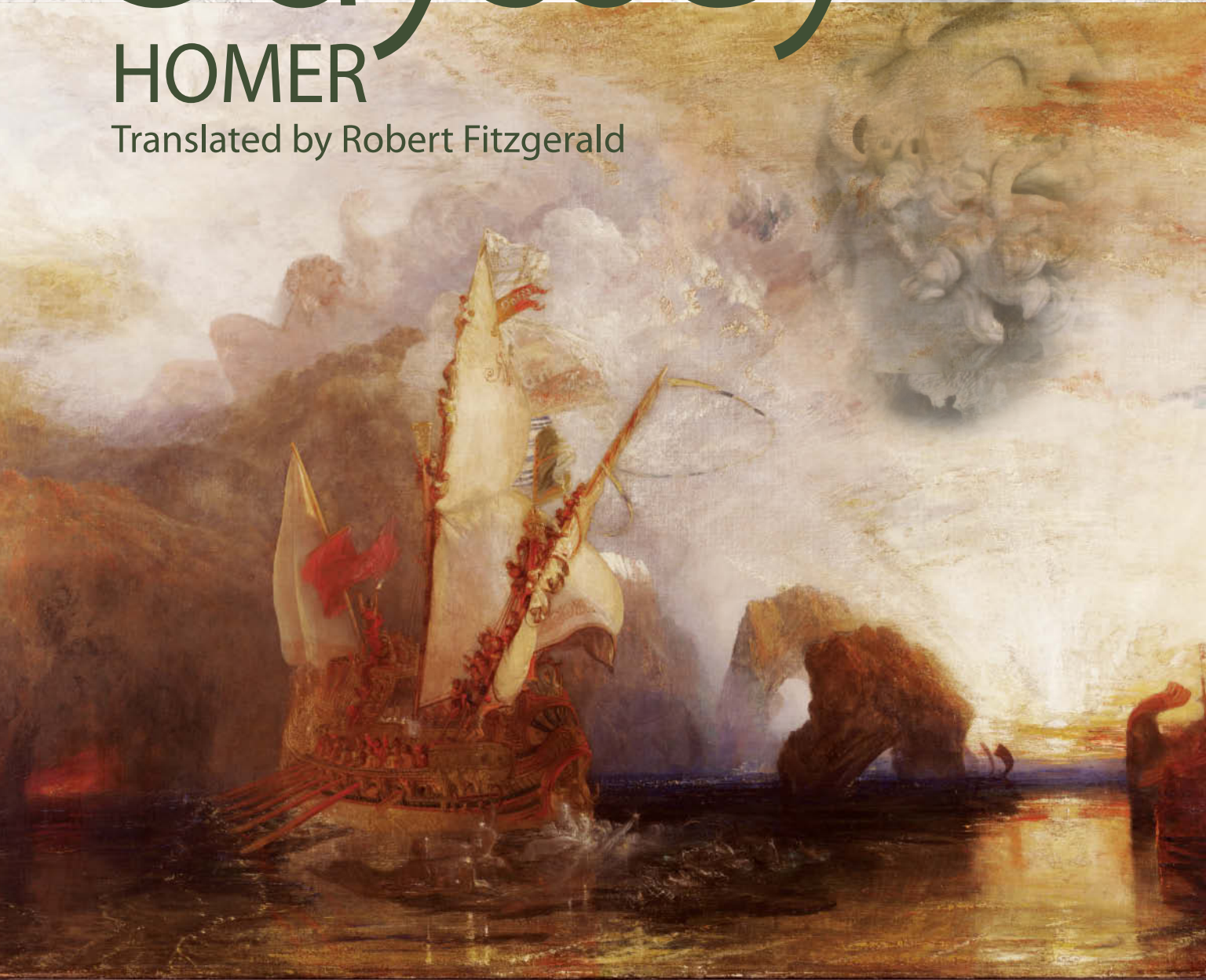
#### Historical and Cultural Context

**4** The epic reflects the Greek belief in many gods who participate actively in the lives of mortals, sometimes for good and sometimes for ill. Here, Odysseus blames the gods for letting him fall asleep.



*from the*  
**Odyssey**  
**HOMER**

Translated by Robert Fitzgerald



## Part 1

# THE ADVENTURES OF ODYSSEUS

*In the opening verses, Homer addresses the muse of epic poetry. He asks her help in telling the tale of Odysseus.*

Sing in me, Muse,<sup>1</sup> 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  
5 on the proud height of Troy.<sup>2</sup>

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.  
10 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,<sup>3</sup> the Sun,  
and he who moves all day through heaven  
15 took from their eyes the dawn of their return.  
Of these adventures, Muse, daughter of Zeus,<sup>4</sup>  
tell us in our time, lift the great song again.

Note: In translating the *Odyssey*, Fitzgerald spelled Greek names to suggest the sound of the original Greek. In these excerpts, more familiar spellings have been used. For example, Fitzgerald's "Kirkê," "Kyklops," and "Seirênês" are spelled here as "Circe," "Cyclops," and "Sirens."

1. **Muse** (myōōz) any one of the nine goddesses of the arts, literature, and sciences; the spirit that is thought to inspire a poet or other artist.
2. **Troy** (trōi) city in northwest Asia Minor; site of the Trojan War.

### ◀ Vocabulary

**plundered** (plun' dərɪd)  
v. took goods by force; looted

3. **Helios** (hē' lē ās') sun god.
4. **Zeus** (zōōs) king of the gods.

# CHARACTERS

**Alcinous** (al sin' ō əs)—king of the Phaeacians, to whom Odysseus tells his story

**Odysseus** (ō dis' ē əs)—king of Ithaca

**Calypso** (kə lip' sō)—sea goddess who loved Odysseus

**Circe** (sɜr' sē)—enchantress who helped Odysseus

**Zeus** (zōōs)—king of the gods

**Apollo** (ə pāl' ō)—god of music, poetry, prophecy, and medicine

**Agamemnon** (ag' ə mem' nən')—king and leader of Greek forces

**Poseidon** (pō sī dən)—god of sea, earthquakes, horses, and storms at sea

**Athena** (ə thē' nə)—goddess of wisdom, skills, and warfare

**Polyphemus** (pāl' i fē' məs)—the Cyclops who imprisoned Odysseus

**Laertes** (lā ɛr' tēz')—Odysseus' father

**Cronus** (krō' nəs)—Titan ruler of the universe; father of Zeus

**Perimedes** (per' ə mē' dēz)—member of Odysseus' crew

**Eurylochus** (yōō rīl' ə kəs)—another member of the crew

**Tiresias** (tī rē' sē əs)—blind prophet who advised Odysseus

**Persephone** (pər sef' ə nē)—wife of Hades

**Telemachus** (tē lem' ə kəs)—Odysseus and Penelope's son

**Sirens** sī rənz)—creatures whose songs lure sailors to their deaths

**Scylla** (sil' ə)—sea monster of gray rock

**Charybdis** (kə rib' dis)—enormous and dangerous whirlpool

**Lampetia** (lam pē' shə)—nymph

**Hermes** (hɜr' mēz')—herald and messenger of the gods

**Eumaeus** (yōō mē' əs)—old swineherd and friend of Odysseus

**Antinous** (an tin' ō əs)—leader among the suitors

**Eurynome** (yōō rin' ə mē)—housekeeper for Penelope

**Penelope** (pə nel' ə pē)—Odysseus' wife

**Eurymachus** (yōō rī mē kəs)—suitor

**Amphinomus** (am fin' ə məs)—suitor

## SAILING FROM TROY

Ten years after the Trojan War, Odysseus departs from the goddess Calypso's island. He arrives in Phaeacia, ruled by Alcinous. Alcinous offers a ship to Odysseus and asks him to tell of his adventures.

"I am Laertes<sup>5</sup> son, Odysseus.

Men hold me

formidable for guile<sup>6</sup> in peace and war:

20 this fame has gone abroad to the sky's rim.

My home is on the peaked sea-mark of Ithaca<sup>7</sup>  
under Mount Neion's wind-blown robe of leaves,  
in sight of other islands—Dulichium,  
Same, wooded Zacynthus—Ithaca

25 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,<sup>8</sup>

30 loveliest among goddesses, who held me  
in her smooth caves, to be her heart's delight,  
as Circe of Aeaea,<sup>9</sup> the enchantress,  
desired me, and detained me in her hall.

But in my heart I never gave consent.

35 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 of my sailing, then, from Troy?

What of those years

of rough adventure, weathered under Zeus?

40 The wind that carried west from Ilium<sup>10</sup>  
brought me to Ismarus, on the far shore,  
a strongpoint on the coast of Cicones.<sup>11</sup>

I stormed that place and killed the men who fought.

Plunder we took, and we enslaved the women,

45 to make division, equal shares to all—  
but on the spot I told them: 'Back, and quickly!

Out to sea again!' My men were mutinous,<sup>12</sup>  
fools, on stores of wine. Sheep after sheep

5. **Laertes** (lā ər' tēz')

6. **guile** (gil) *n.* craftiness; cunning.

7. **Ithaca** (ith' ə kə) island off the west coast of Greece.

### Epic Hero

For what quality does Odysseus say he is famous?

8. **Calypso** (kə lip' sō) sea goddess who loved Odysseus.

9. **Circe** (sɪr' sē) of Aeaea (ē ē ə)

10. **Ilium** (il' ē əm) Troy.

11. **Cicones** (si kō' nēz)

12. **mutinous** (myōōt' n əs) *adj.* rebellious.

### Comprehension

Who has asked Odysseus to tell his tale?



**13. Achaeans** (ə kē' ənz) *n.*  
Greeks; here, Odysseus' men.

**Historical and Cultural Context**

What beliefs and values are reflected in lines 65–69?

**14. lee** (lē) *n.* area sheltered from the wind.

**Epic Hero**

What words in line 82 remind you that this part is a flashback?

they butchered by the surf, and shambling cattle,  
 50 feasting,—while fugitives went inland, running  
 to call to arms the main force of Cicones.  
 This was an army, trained to fight on horseback  
 or, where the ground required, on foot. They came  
 with dawn over that terrain like the leaves  
 55 and blades of spring. So doom appeared to us,  
 dark word of Zeus for us, our evil days.  
 My men stood up and made a fight of it—  
 backed on the ships, with lances kept in play,  
 from bright morning through the blaze of noon  
 60 holding our beach, although so far outnumbered;  
 but when the sun passed toward unyoking time,  
 then the Achaeans,<sup>13</sup> one by one, gave way.  
 Six benches were left empty in every ship  
 that evening when we pulled away from death.  
 65 And this new grief we bore with us to sea:  
 our precious lives we had, but not our friends.  
 No ship made sail next day until some shipmate  
 had raised a cry, three times, for each poor ghost  
 unfleshed by the Cicones on that field.

**The Lotus-Eaters**

70 Now Zeus the lord of cloud roused in the north  
 a storm against the ships, and driving veils  
 of squall moved down like night on land and sea.  
 The bows went plunging at the gust; sails  
 cracked and lashed out strips in the big wind.  
 75 We saw death in that fury, dropped the yards,  
 unshipped the oars, and pulled for the nearest lee:<sup>14</sup>  
 then two long days and nights we lay offshore  
 worn out and sick at heart, tasting our grief,  
 until a third Dawn came with ringlets shining.  
 80 Then we put up our masts, hauled sail, and rested,  
 letting the steersmen and the breeze take over.  
 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  
 85 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  
90 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,  
95 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,  
never cared to report, nor to return:  
they longed to stay forever, browsing on  
100 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  
105 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.

### Epic Hero

Which characteristics of an epic hero does Odysseus show in this episode?

## Critical Thinking

- 1. Key Ideas and Details:** (a) While on Ismarus, in what ways do Odysseus' men disobey orders? (b) **Analyze Cause and Effect:** What is the result of this disobedience? (c) **Speculate:** What lesson might Odysseus take away from this experience? Explain your answer and cite details from the text to support your speculation.
- 2. Key Ideas and Details:** (a) What happens to the men who eat the Lotus? (b) **Infer:** What does this episode suggest about the main problem that Odysseus has with his men? (c) **Evaluate:** Do you think Odysseus responds appropriately to the three men who long to stay with the Lotus-Eaters? Why or why not?
- 3. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** (a) Note two points at which Odysseus mentions a longing for home. (b) **Infer:** What significant role might his longing for home play in Odysseus' epic journey? (c) **Connect:** What does this aspect of the story suggest about ancient Greek values? Explain.
- 4. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** (a) In this episode, does Odysseus prove himself to be a hero? (b) What responsibilities does he demonstrate, if any? [*Connect to the Big Question: Do heroes have responsibilities?*]



**15. Cyclopes** (sī klō' pēz') *n.*  
plural form of Cyclops (sī klāps'), race of giants with one eye in the middle of the forehead.

**Historical and Cultural Context**

Based on Odysseus' criticism of the Cyclopes, what kind of society do you think the Greeks valued?

**16. prodigious** (prō dij' əs) *adj.* enormous.

**Historical and Cultural Context**

What does this passage reveal about ancient Greek attitudes toward the importance of community?

**17. Apollo** (ə pāl' ō) god of music, poetry, prophecy, and medicine.

**18. talents** units of money in ancient Greece.

**The Cyclops**

In the next land we found were Cyclopes,<sup>15</sup>  
 110 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  
 nor sow by hand, nor till the ground, though grain—  
 wild wheat and barley—grows untended, and  
 115 wine-grapes, in clusters, ripen in heaven's rains.  
 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,  
 120 indifferent to what the others do. . . .

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  
 125 inside a sheepfold—made from slabs of stone  
 earthfast between tall trunks of pine and rugged  
 towering oak trees.

A prodigious<sup>16</sup> man

slept in this cave alone, and took his flocks  
 to graze afield—remote from all companions,  
 130 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  
 135 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<sup>17</sup>  
 140 holy grove at Ismarus; for kindness  
 we showed him there, and showed his wife and child,  
 he gave me seven shining golden talents<sup>18</sup>  
 perfectly formed, a solid silver winebowl,  
 and then this liquor—twelve two-handled jars  
 145 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,  
150 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<sup>19</sup> in a bag,  
for in my bones I knew some towering brute  
155 would be upon us soon—all outward power,  
a wild man, ignorant of civility.

19. **victuals** (vit' əlz) *n.* food or other provisions.

We climbed, then, briskly to the cave. But Cyclops  
had gone afield, to pasture his fat sheep,  
so we looked round at everything inside:  
160 a drying rack that sagged with cheeses, pens  
crowded with lambs and kids,<sup>20</sup> each in its class:  
firstlings apart from middlings, and the 'dewdrops,'  
or newborn lambkins, penned apart from both.  
And vessels full of whey<sup>21</sup> were brimming there—  
165 bowls of earthenware and pails for milking.  
My men came pressing round me, pleading:

20. **kids** young goats.

21. **whey** (hwā) *n.* thin, watery part of milk separated from the thicker curds.

'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  
170 put out again on good salt water!'

Ah,

how sound that was! Yet I refused. I wished  
to see the cave man, what he had to offer—  
no pretty sight, it turned out, for my friends.  
We lit a fire, burnt an offering,  
175 and took some cheese to eat; then sat in silence  
around the embers, waiting. When he came  
he had a load of dry boughs<sup>22</sup> on his shoulder  
to stoke his fire at suppertime. He dumped it  
with a great crash into that hollow cave,  
180 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

**Epic Hero**

What character flaw does the hero Odysseus reveal by refusing to leave the cave?

22. **boughs** (bouz) *n.* tree branches.

**Comprehension**

Where is Cyclops when Odysseus and his men enter the cave?





23. **withy** (*with' ē*) *adj.* made from tough, flexible twigs.

24. **Agamemnon** (*ag' ə mem' nən*) king who led the Greek army during the Trojan War.

**Historical and Cultural Context**

What ancient Greek beliefs regarding the gods, military might, and respect for strangers does Odysseus express in his words to the Cyclops?

185 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  
190 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<sup>23</sup> baskets,  
and poured the whey to stand in bowls  
cooling until he drank it for his supper.  
195 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 seaways—a fair traffic?  
Or are you wandering rogues, who cast your lives  
200 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  
205 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,<sup>24</sup> son of Atreus—  
the whole world knows what city  
210 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  
215 for the gods’ courtesy; Zeus will avenge  
the unoffending 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  
220 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<sup>25</sup> to.  
Tell me, where was it, now, you left your ship—  
225 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<sup>26</sup> Lord, who sets the earth a-tremble,  
broke it up on the rocks at your land’s end.  
230 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  
235 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,  
240 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,  
245 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  
250 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,  
255 putting the sucklings to the mothers. Then,  
his chores being all **dispatched**, he caught  
another brace<sup>27</sup> of men to make his breakfast,  
and whisked away his great door slab

25. **whim** (hwim) *n.* sudden thought or wish to do something.

26. **Poseidon** (pō sī dən) god of the sea, earthquakes, horses, and storms at sea.

### Epic Hero

In what way does Odysseus’ response show that he is “formidable for guile”?

### Epic Hero

How do lines 244–250 show Odysseus’ ability to think ahead?

### ◀ Vocabulary

**dispatched** (di spacht’) *v.* finished quickly

27. **brace** (brās) *n.* pair.

### Comprehension

What does Odysseus tell the Cyclops happened to his ship?

28. **cap a quiver** (kwiv' ər) close a case holding arrows.
29. **din** (din) *n.* loud, continuous noise; uproar.
30. **Athena** (ə thē' nə) goddess of wisdom, skills, and warfare.
31. **felled green and left to season** chopped down and exposed to the weather to age the wood.
32. **lugger** (lug' ər) *n.* small sailing vessel.

### Epic Hero

What heroic qualities does Odysseus reveal as he plots against the Cyclops?

### Epic Hero

What plan do you think Odysseus has in mind by offering the Cyclops the wine?

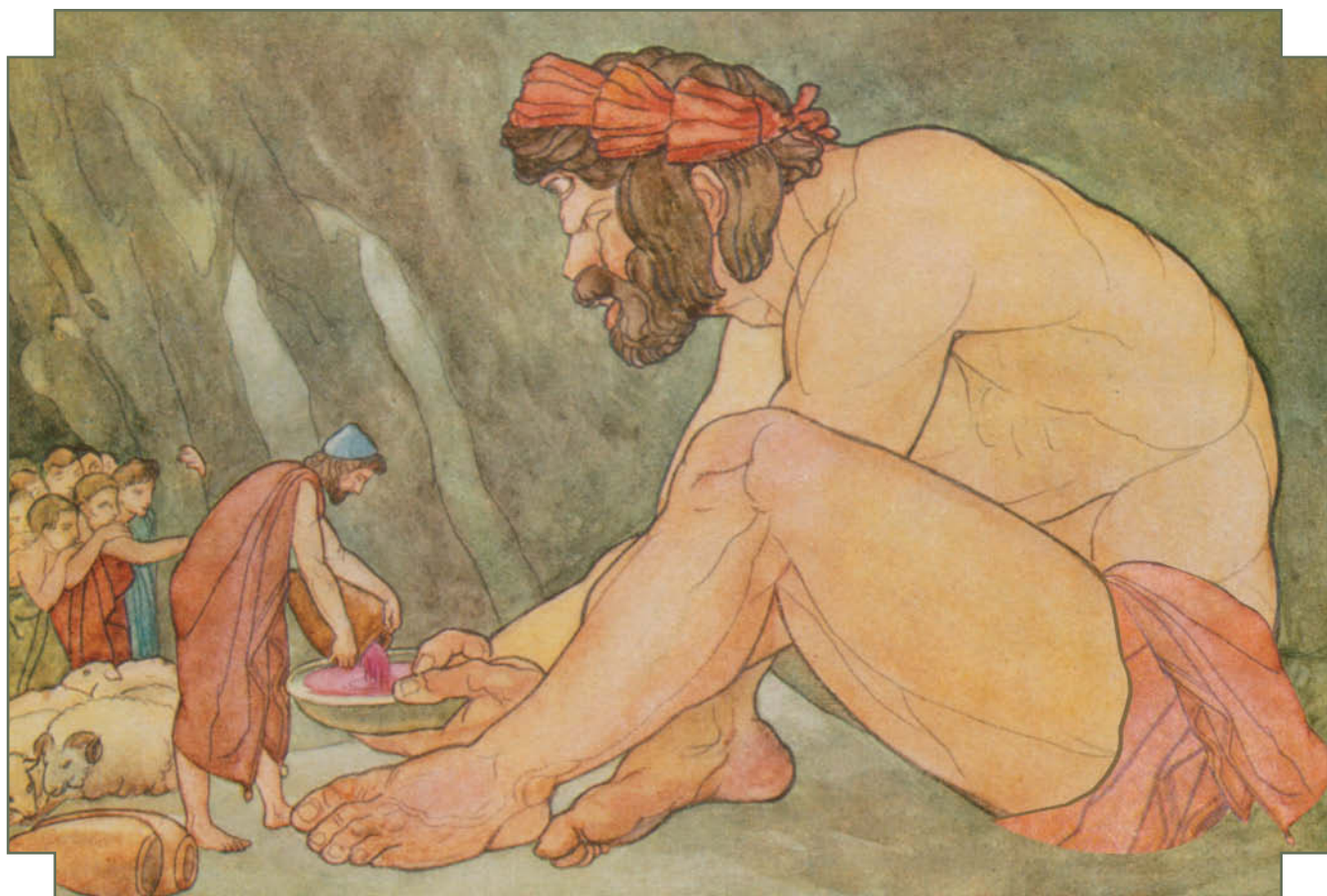
to let his sheep go through—but he, behind,  
 260 reset the stone as one would cap a quiver.<sup>28</sup>  
 There was a din<sup>29</sup> of whistling as the Cyclops  
 rounded his flock to higher ground, then stillness.  
 And now I pondered how to hurt him worst,  
 if but Athena<sup>30</sup> granted what I prayed for.  
 265 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<sup>31</sup>  
 for Cyclops' hand. And it was like a mast  
 a lugger<sup>32</sup> of twenty oars, broad in the beam—  
 270 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  
 275 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  
 280 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.

285 At evening came the shepherd with his flock,  
 his woolly flock. The rams as well, this time,  
 entered the cave: by some sheepherding whim—  
 or a god's bidding—none were left outside.  
 He hefted his great boulder into place  
 290 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  
 295 holding an ivy bowl of my dark drink,  
 looking up, saying:

'Cyclops, try some wine.

Here's liquor to wash down your scraps of men.  
 Taste it, and see the kind of drink we carried



300 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 traveler come to see you?’

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

305 ‘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!’<sup>33</sup>

310 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:

### ▲ Critical Viewing

What traits does this image of the Cyclops illustrate?

33. **nectar** (nek’ tər) and **ambrosia** (am brō’ zhə) drink and food of the gods.

### Comprehension

What does Odysseus plan to do with the stake that he and his men make?



‘Cyclops,

you ask my honorable name? Remember  
the gift you promised me, and I shall tell you.

315 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,  
320 his great head lolling to one side; and sleep  
took him like any creature. Drunk, hiccuping,  
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,  
325 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  
330 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 leaned on it  
turning it as a shipwright turns a drill

335 in planking, having men below to swing  
the two-handled strap that spins it in the groove.  
So with our brand we bored<sup>34</sup> that great eye socket  
while blood ran out around the red-hot bar.

Eyelid and lash were seared; the pierced ball  
340 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.

345 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;

### Historical and Cultural Context

What cultural values are represented in Odysseus’ reference to “the gods” in line 323?

34. **bored** (bôrd) *v.* made a hole in.

then he set up a howl for Cyclopes  
350 who lived in caves on windy peaks nearby.  
Some heard him; and they came by divers<sup>35</sup> ways  
to clump around outside and call:

‘What ails you,

Polyphemus?<sup>36</sup> Why do you cry so sore  
in the starry night? You will not let us sleep.  
355 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<sup>37</sup> reply:

360 ‘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  
365 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—  
370 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,  
375 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;  
380 then slung a man under each middle one  
to ride there safely, shielded left and right.

**35. divers** (dī' verz) *adj.*  
several; various.

**36. Polyphemus**  
(pāl' i fē' mēs)

**37. sage** (sāj) *adj.* wise.

### Epic Hero

What does Odysseus’  
gleeful response to his  
successful trick reveal  
about his character?

### Comprehension

What do the other  
Cyclopes think  
Polyphemus is saying  
when he says, “Nohbdy’s  
tricked me”?



So three sheep could convey each man. I took  
the woolliest ram, the choicest of the flock,  
and hung myself under his kinky belly,  
385 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 fingertips of rose  
the rams began to stir, moving for pasture,  
390 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<sup>38</sup> fleece  
395 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  
400 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.  
405 Why, now, so far behind? Can you be grieving  
over your Master's eye? That carrion rogue<sup>39</sup>  
and his accurst companions burnt it out  
when he had conquered all my wits with wine.  
Nohbdy will not get out alive, I swear.  
410 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.'

415 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,  
420 and drove them down to where the good ship lay.

**38. pectoral** (pek' tə rəl) *adj.*  
located in or on the chest.

### Epic Hero

What details of this speech show that Polyphemus is far less clever than Odysseus?

**39. carrion** (kar' ē ən) **rogue**  
(rōg) repulsive scoundrel.

### ◀ Critical Viewing

How does this image compare with your mental picture of the Cyclops?

### Comprehension

How do the men escape from the Cyclops' cave?



### ► Critical Viewing

Odysseus and his surviving men escape in their ship as the blinded Cyclops hurls boulders and curses. How does this illustration compare to your mental image of the scene?

### Spiral Review

#### UNIVERSAL THEME

What universal theme does the fight between Odysseus and the Cyclops suggest?

#### Epic Hero

Despite his heroism, what human weaknesses does Odysseus reveal as he sails away?

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,  
425 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,  
430 I sent a few back to the adversary:  
'O Cyclops! Would you feast on my companions?  
Puny, am I, in a cave man's hands?  
How do you like the beating that we gave you,  
you damned cannibal? Eater of guests  
435 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  
440 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  
445 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:

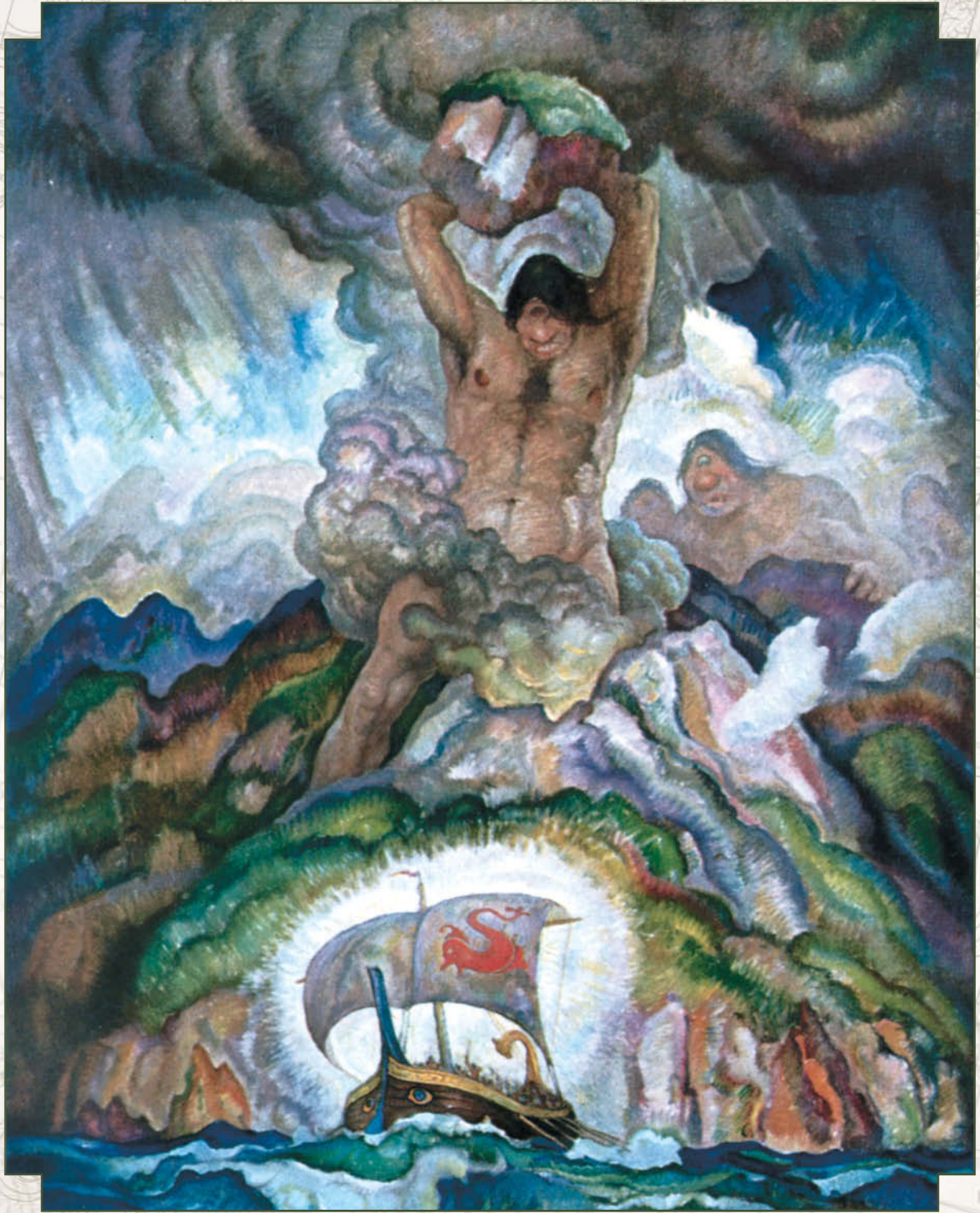
'Godsake, Captain!  
Why bait the beast again? Let him alone!'

450 '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!'  
455 I would not heed them in my glorying spirit,

Polyphemus, The Cyclops from Homer's *The Odyssey*, N.C. Wyeth, Brandywine River Museum.





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:

460 Laertes’ son, whose home’s on Ithaca!’

At this he gave a mighty sob and rumbled:

‘Now comes the weird<sup>40</sup> upon me, spoken of old.  
A wizard, grand and wondrous, lived here—Telemus,<sup>41</sup>

465 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.

470 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<sup>43</sup> to befriend you—

his son I am, for he by his avowal

475 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  
480 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,  
485 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

490 among his family in his father land,

far be that day, and dark the years between.

40. **weird** (wird) *n.* fate or destiny.

41. **Telemus** (tel e’ mäs)

42. **Eurymus** (yoo’ rim’ əs)

43. **god of earthquake**  
Poseidon.

### Historical and Cultural Context

What do lines 472–493 suggest about ancient Greek beliefs about the gods’ involvement in the mortal world?

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.  
495 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  
500 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,  
505 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  
510 by the seaside and burnt his long thighbones  
to Zeus beyond the stormcloud, Cronus<sup>44</sup> 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.  
515 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 fingertips of rose  
520 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,<sup>45</sup>  
525 having our precious lives, but not our friends.

### Epic Hero

What admirable quality does Odysseus show by dividing the sheep among his men?

**44. Cronus** (krōˈ nēs)  
Titan who was ruler of the universe until he was overthrown by his son Zeus.

**45. offing** (ôfˈ in) *n.* distant part of the sea visible from the shore.

### Comprehension

What does the Cyclops ask for in his prayer to Poseidon?

## The Land of the Dead

46. **Aeolia** (ē ō' lē ə) . . .  
**Aeolus** (ē' ə ləs)

47. **Laestrygonians**  
(les tri gō' nē ənz)

48. **singing nymph . . . hair**  
Circe.

### Historical and Cultural Context

What details here suggest that the source of wind was mysterious to ancient Greeks?

*Odysseus and his men sail to Aeolia, where Aeolus,<sup>46</sup> king of the winds, sends Odysseus on his way with a gift: a sack containing all the winds except the favorable west wind. When they are near home, Odysseus' men open the sack, letting loose a storm that drives them back to Aeolia. Aeolus casts them out, having decided that they are detested by the gods. They sail for seven days and arrive in the land of the Laestrygonians,<sup>47</sup> a race of cannibals. These creatures destroy all of Odysseus' ships except the one he is sailing in. Odysseus and his reduced crew escape and reach Aeaëa, the island ruled by the sorceress-goddess Circe. She transforms half of the men into swine. Protected by a magic herb, Odysseus demands that Circe change his men back into human form. Before Odysseus departs from the island a year later, Circe informs him that in order to reach home he must journey to the land of the dead, Hades, and consult the blind prophet Tiresias.*

We bore down on the ship at the sea's edge  
and launched her on the salt immortal sea,  
stepping our mast and spar in the black ship;  
embarked the ram and ewe and went aboard  
530 in tears, with bitter and sore dread upon us.  
But now a breeze came up for us astern—  
a canvas-bellying landbreeze, hale shipmate  
sent by the singing nymph with sunbright hair;<sup>48</sup>  
so we made fast the braces, took our thwarts,  
535 and let the wind and steersman work the ship  
with full sail spread all day above our coursing,  
till the sun dipped, and all the ways grew dark  
upon the fathomless unresting sea.

By night

our ship ran onward toward the Ocean's bourne,  
540 the realm and region of the Men of Winter,  
hidden in mist and cloud. Never the flaming  
eye of Helios lights on those men  
at morning, when he climbs the sky of stars,  
nor in descending earthward out of heaven;  
545 ruinous night being rove over those wretches.  
We made the land, put ram and ewe ashore,

and took our way along the Ocean stream  
to find the place foretold for us by Circe.  
There Perimedes and Eurylochus<sup>49</sup>  
550 pinioned<sup>50</sup> the sacred beasts. With my drawn blade  
I spaded up the votive<sup>51</sup> pit, and poured  
libations<sup>52</sup> round it to the unnumbered dead:  
sweet milk and honey, then sweet wine, and last  
clear water; and I scattered barley down.  
555 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,<sup>53</sup> I swore to sacrifice  
560 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,<sup>54</sup>  
565 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  
570 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.<sup>55</sup>  
575 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  
580 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:

‘How is this, Elpenor,  
how could you journey to the western gloom  
585 swifter afoot than I in the black lugger?’  
He sighed, and answered:

- 49. **Perimedes** (per’ ə mē’ dēz) **and Eurylochus** (yŭō ril’ ə kəs)
- 50. **pinioned** (pin’ yənd) *v.* confined or shackled.
- 51. **votive** (vōt’ iv) *adj.* done to fulfill a vow or express thanks.
- 52. **libations** (lī bā’ shənz) *n.* wine or other liquids poured upon the ground as a sacrifice or offering.

53. **Tiresias** (tī rē’ sē əs)

### ◀ Vocabulary

**assuage** (ə swāj’)

*v.* calm; pacify

54. **Erebus** (er’ ə bəs) dark region under the earth through which the dead pass before entering the realm of Hades.

55. **Persephone** (pər səf’ ə nē) wife of Hades.

### Comprehension

What does Circe say that Odysseus must do in order to reach home?



Odysseus in the Land of the Dead from Homer's *The Odyssey*, N.C. Wyeth, Brandywine River Museum

‘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.  
590 I slept on Circe’s roof, then could not see  
the long steep backward ladder, coming down,  
and fell that height. My neckbone, buckled under,  
snapped, and my spirit found this well of dark.  
Now hear the grace I pray for, in the name  
595 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,<sup>56</sup>  
long ago left at home.

When you make sail  
and put these lodgings of dim Death behind,  
600 you will moor ship, I know, upon Aeaëa 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,  
605 and build a cairn<sup>57</sup> 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,  
610 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,  
615 my mother, daughter of Autolycus,<sup>58</sup>  
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.  
620 Soon from the dark that prince of Thebes<sup>59</sup> came forward  
bearing a golden staff; and he addressed me:

### ◀ Critical Viewing

What can you infer about ancient Greek beliefs concerning death and the afterlife from lines 555–577 on page 777 and from this illustration?

56. **Telemachus** (tə lem’ ə kəs)

57. **cairn** (kern) *n.* conical heap of stones built as a monument.

### Historical and Cultural Context

What ancient Greek values and beliefs are suggested by Elpenor’s requests?

58. **Autolycus** (ô täl’ i kəs)

59. **Thebes** (thēbz)

### Comprehension

What does Elpenor’s spirit ask of Odysseus?





### Historical and Cultural Context

What ancient Greek value is reflected in the “narrow strait” that Tiresias describes (lines 637–638)?

60. **kine** (kin) *n.* cattle.

### Vocabulary ▶

**bereft** (bē reft')

*adj.* deprived

‘Son of Laertes and the gods of old,  
Odysseus, master of landways and seaways,  
why leave the blazing sun, O man of woe,  
625 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,  
630 as he bent down to the somber 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,  
635 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.  
When you make landfall on Thrinacia first  
640 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,<sup>60</sup> hold fast to your intent,  
and hard seafaring brings you all to Ithaca.  
645 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  
650 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,  
655 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  
660 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,  
665 and carry out pure hecatombs<sup>61</sup> 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,  
670 your country folk in blessed peace around you.  
And all this shall be just as I foretell.’

61. **hecatombs** (hek' ə tōmz') *n.* large-scale sacrifices to the gods in ancient Greece; often, the slaughter of 100 cattle at one time.

## Critical Thinking

- 1. Key Ideas and Details:** (a) Before the meeting with the Cyclops, what had Odysseus received from Maron at Ismarus? (b) **Generalize:** What does the encounter with Maron reveal about ancient Greek attitudes regarding hospitality? Explain.
- 2. Key Ideas and Details:** (a) How do Odysseus and his companions expect to be treated by the Cyclops? (b) **Infer:** What “laws” of behavior and attitude does Polyphemus violate? Explain.
- 3. Key Ideas and Details:** (a) How do Odysseus and his crew escape from the Cyclops? (b) **Evaluate:** What positive and negative character traits does Odysseus demonstrate in his adventure with the Cyclops? Explain, citing specific examples from the text.
- 4. Key Ideas and Details:** (a) What difficulty does Tiresias predict for the journey to come? (b) **Speculate:** Why would Odysseus continue, despite Tiresias’ grim prophecies? Explain, citing details from the text to support your answer.
- 5. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** Judging from Tiresias’ prediction, which heroic qualities will Odysseus need to rely upon as he continues his journey? Explain.
- 6. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** (a) What are Odysseus’ responsibilities as he reaches the land of the Cyclopes? (b) How well does he fulfill these responsibilities? Support your answer with details from the epic. [*Connect to the Big Question: Do heroes have responsibilities?*]



Circe Meantime Had Gone Her Ways . . . , 1924, William Russell Flint Collection of the New York Public Library, Special Collections/ Art Resources

## The Sirens

*Odysseus returns to Circe's island. The goddess reveals his course to him and gives advice on how to avoid the dangers he will face: the Sirens, who lure sailors to their destruction; the Wandering Rocks, sea rocks that destroy even birds in flight; the perils of the sea monster Scylla and, nearby, the whirlpool Charybdis;<sup>62</sup> and the cattle of the sun god, which Tiresias has warned Odysseus not to harm.*

62. **Charybdis** (kə rib' dis)

As Circe spoke, Dawn mounted her golden throne,  
and on the first rays Circe left me, taking  
her way like a great goddess up the island.  
675 I made straight for the ship, roused up the men  
to get aboard and cast off at the stern.  
They scrambled to their places by the rowlocks  
and all in line dipped oars in the gray sea.  
But soon an offshore breeze blew to our liking—  
680 a canvas-bellying breeze, a lusty shipmate  
sent by the singing nymph with sunbright hair.  
So we made fast the braces, and we rested,  
letting the wind and steersman work the ship.  
The crew being now silent before me, I  
685 addressed them, sore at heart:

‘Dear friends,  
more than one man, or two, should know those things  
Circe foresaw for us and shared with me,  
so let me tell her forecast: then we die  
with our eyes open, if we are going to die,  
690 or know what death we baffle if we can. Sirens  
weaving a haunting song over the sea  
we are to shun, she said, and their green shore  
all sweet with clover; yet she urged that I  
alone should listen to their song. Therefore  
695 you are to tie me up, tight as a splint,  
erect along the mast, lashed to the mast,  
and if I shout and beg to be untied,  
take more turns of the rope to muffle me.’

I rather dwelt on this part of the forecast,  
700 while our good ship made time, bound outward down  
the wind for the strange island of Sirens.

### ◀ Critical Viewing

The sorceress Circe both helps and hinders Odysseus on his journey home. What can you tell about Circe from this illustration?

### Epic Hero

What does Odysseus reveal about his character by sharing information with his men?

### Comprehension

What instructions does Odysseus give his shipmates as they prepare to deal with the Sirens?



Then all at once the wind fell, and a calm  
 came over all the sea, as though some power  
 lulled the swell.

The crew were on their feet

705 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—  
 710 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,  
 715 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:

*This way, oh turn your bows,  
 720 Achaea's glory,  
 As all the world allows—  
 Moor and be merry.*

*Sweet coupled airs we sing.  
 No lonely seafarer  
 725 Holds clear of entering  
 Our green mirror.*

*Pleased by each purling note  
 Like honey twining  
 From her throat and my throat,  
 730 Who lies a-pining?*

*Sea rovers here take joy  
 Voyaging onward,  
 As from our song of Troy  
 Graybeard and rower-boy  
 735 Goeth more learnèd.*

*All feats on that great field  
 In the long warfare,  
 Dark days the bright gods willed,  
 Wounds you bore there,*

**Historical and Cultural Context**

What does Odysseus' mention of Helios reveal about ancient Greek beliefs regarding astronomical events?

**Epic Hero**

Which details in the Sirens' song are designed to flatter the epic hero?

740

*Argos' old soldiery*<sup>63</sup>  
*On Troy beach teeming,*  
*Charmed out of time we see.*  
*No life on earth can be*  
*Hid from our dreaming.*

745

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,  
 750 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

755

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

## Scylla and Charybdis

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.

760

Oars flew from their hands; the blades went knocking  
 wild alongside till the ship lost way,  
 with no oar blades to drive her through the water.  
 Well, I walked up and down from bow to stern,  
 trying to put heart into them, standing over

765

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

770

to find a way out for us?

**63. Argos' old soldiery**  
 soldiers from Argos, a city  
 in ancient Greece.

### ◀ Vocabulary

**ardor** (är' dər) *n.*  
 passion; enthusiasm

### Spiral Review

#### Universal Theme

What details in this scene  
 suggest the importance  
 of having loyal friends  
 and companions?

### Comprehension

How does Odysseus  
 keep his shipmates from  
 hearing the Sirens sing?

## Epic Hero

What parts of Odysseus' speech demonstrate his strength as a leader?

64. **the combers** (kōm' ərs) **and the smoke** the large waves that break on the beach and the ocean spray.

65. **Scylla** (sil' ə)

66. **cuirass** (kwi ras') *n.* armor for the upper body.

67. **travail** (trə vāl') *n.* very hard work.

68. **gorge** (gōrij) *n.* throat or gullet.

69. **maelstrom** (māl' strəm) *n.* large, violent whirlpool.

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 oar shafts in your hands, and lay back  
775 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;<sup>64</sup>  
780 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,<sup>65</sup> I  
told them nothing, as they could do nothing.

785 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<sup>66</sup> and took up  
two heavy spears, then made my way along  
790 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 the cliffside veiled in cloud, but nowhere  
could I catch sight of her.

And all this time,

795 in travail,<sup>67</sup> sobbing, gaining on the current,  
we rowed into the strait—Scylla to port  
and on our starboard beam Charybdis, dire  
gorge<sup>68</sup> of the salt seatide. By heaven! when she  
vomited, all the sea was like a cauldron  
800 seething over intense fire, when the mixture  
suddenly heaves and rises.

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,<sup>69</sup> heard  
805 the rock bellowing all around, and dark  
sand raged on the bottom far below.  
My men all blanched against the gloom, our eyes



◀ **Critical Viewing**  
How does this image compare with the description of Scylla in the scene?

were fixed upon that yawning mouth in fear  
of being devoured.

Then Scylla made her strike,  
810 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.

815 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,

**Comprehension**  
What demand does  
Odysseus make of his  
men as they approach  
the rough waters?





**Epic Hero**

What quality of heroic leadership does Odysseus show in lines 823–825?

**Historical and Cultural Context**

Which details here suggest that ancient Greeks believed the gods controlled the weather?

**Historical and Cultural Context**

How does this passage show that ancient Greeks believed their gods had human-like emotions?

will hook a fish and rip it from the surface  
to dangle wriggling through the air:

so these

820 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,

825 questing the passes of the strange sea.

We rowed on.

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

**The Cattle of the Sun God**

In the small hours of the third watch, when stars  
that shone out in the first dusk of evening

830 had gone down to their setting, a giant wind  
blew from heaven, and clouds driven by Zeus  
shrouded land and sea in a night of storm;  
so, just as Dawn with fingertips of rose  
touched the windy world, we dragged our ship

835 to cover in a grotto, a sea cave  
where nymphs had chairs of rock and sanded floors.  
I mustered all the crew and said:

‘Old shipmates,

our stores are in the ship’s hold, food and drink;  
the cattle here are not for our provision,

840 or we pay dearly for it.

Fierce the god is

who cherishes these heifers and these sheep:  
Helios; and no man avoids his eye.’

To this my fighters nodded. Yes. But now  
we had a month of onshore gales, blowing  
845 day in, day out—south winds, or south by east.  
As long as bread and good red wine remained  
to keep the men up, and appease their craving,  
they would not touch the cattle. But in the end,  
when all the barley in the ship was gone,

850 hunger drove them to scour the wild shore  
with angling hooks, for fishes and sea fowl,  
whatever fell into their hands; and lean days  
wore their bellies thin.

The storms continued.

So one day I withdrew to the interior  
855 to pray the gods in solitude, for hope  
that one might show me some way of salvation.  
Slipping away, I struck across the island  
to a sheltered spot, out of the driving gale.  
I washed my hands there, and made supplication  
860 to the gods who own Olympus,<sup>70</sup> all the gods—  
but they, for answer, only closed my eyes  
under slow drops of sleep.

Now on the shore Eurylochus  
made his **insidious** plea:

‘Comrades,’ he said,  
‘You’ve gone through everything; listen to what I say.  
865 All deaths are hateful to us, mortal wretches,  
but famine is the most pitiful, the worst  
end that a man can come to.

Will you fight it?

Come, we’ll cut out the noblest of these cattle  
for sacrifice to the gods who own the sky;  
870 and once at home, in the old country of Ithaca,  
if ever that day comes—  
we’ll build a costly temple and adorn it  
with every beauty for the Lord of Noon.<sup>71</sup>  
But if he flares up over his heifers lost,  
875 wishing our ship destroyed, and if the gods  
make cause with him, why, then I say: Better  
open your lungs to a big sea once for all  
than waste to skin and bones on a lonely island!’

Thus Eurylochus; and they murmured ‘Aye!’  
880 trooping away at once to round up heifers.  
Now, that day tranquil cattle with broad brows  
were grazing near, and soon the men drew up  
around their chosen beasts in ceremony.  
They plucked the leaves that shone on a tall oak—  
885 having no barley meal—to strew the victims,  
performed the prayers and ritual, knifed the kine

**70. Olympus** (ō lim’ pēs)  
Mount Olympus, home of  
the gods.

#### ◀ Vocabulary

**insidious** (in sid’ ē əs)  
*adj.* characterized by  
craftiness and betrayal

**71. Lord of Noon** Helios.

#### Epic Hero

How are the values of  
Eurylochus different from  
those of Odysseus?

#### Comprehension

Who owns the heifers  
and sheep on the island?

## LITERATURE IN CONTEXT

### Geography Connection

#### Real Places and Imaginary Events in the *Odyssey*

Odysseus' journey carries him to real places, including Troy, Sparta, and the Strait of Gibraltar. However, in the story, many of these real places are populated by imaginary creatures, such as the Cyclops and the Sirens. The combination of real places and fantastic events is part of the story's appeal.



### Connect to the Literature

How does the inclusion of real places make the story's imaginary events more believable?

and flayed each carcass, cutting thighbones free  
to wrap in double folds of fat. These offerings,  
with strips of meat, were laid upon the fire.

890 Then, as they had no wine, they made libation  
with clear spring water, broiling the entrails first;  
and when the bones were burnt and tripes shared,  
they spitted the carved meat.

Just then my slumber

left me in a rush, my eyes opened,  
895 and I went down the seaward path. No sooner  
had I caught sight of our black hull, than savory  
odors of burnt fat eddied around me;  
grief took hold of me, and I cried aloud:

'O Father Zeus and gods in bliss forever,  
900 you made me sleep away this day of mischief!

O cruel drowsing, in the evil hour!

Here they sat, and a great work they contrived.'<sup>72</sup>

72. **contrived** (kən trɪvd') v.  
thought up; devised.

Lampetia<sup>73</sup> in her long gown meanwhile  
had borne swift word to the Overlord of Noon:  
905 ‘They have killed your kine.’

And the Lord Helios  
burst into angry speech amid the immortals:

‘O Father Zeus and gods in bliss forever,  
punish Odysseus’ men! So overweening,  
now they have killed my peaceful kine, my joy  
910 at morning when I climbed the sky of stars,  
and evening, when I bore westward from heaven.  
Restitution or penalty they shall pay—  
and pay in full—or I go down forever  
to light the dead men in the underworld.’

915 Then Zeus who drives the stormcloud made reply:  
‘Peace, Helios: shine on among the gods,  
shine over mortals in the fields of grain.  
Let me throw down one white-hot bolt, and make  
splinters of their ship in the winedark sea.’

920 —Calypso later told me of this exchange,  
as she declared that Hermes<sup>74</sup> had told her.  
Well, when I reached the sea cave and the ship,  
I faced each man, and had it out; but where  
could any remedy be found? There was none.  
925 The silken beeves<sup>75</sup> of Helios were dead.  
The gods, moreover, made queer signs appear:  
cowhides began to crawl, and beef, both raw  
and roasted, lowed like kine upon the spits.

Now six full days my gallant crew could feast  
930 upon the prime beef they had marked for slaughter  
from Helios’ herd; and Zeus, the son of Cronus,  
added one fine morning.

All the gales  
had ceased, blown out, and with an offshore breeze  
we launched again, stepping the mast and sail,  
935 to make for the open sea. Astern of us  
the island coastline faded, and no land  
showed anywhere, but only sea and heaven,  
when Zeus Cronion piled a thunderhead  
above the ship, while gloom spread on the ocean.

**73. Lampetia** (lam pē' shə)  
a nymph.

**74. Hermes** (hur' mēz') *n.* god  
who serves as herald and  
messenger of the other  
gods.

**75. beeves** (bēvz) *n.* alternate  
plural form of “beef.”

### Epic Hero

What details in lines 920–  
921 clarify the flashback  
presented here?

### Comprehension

What do Odysseus’  
shipmates do while  
he is sleeping?



La Ner de Telemachus (The Ship of Telemachus), New York Public Library Picture Collection

940 We held our course, but briefly. Then the squall  
struck whining from the west, with gale force, breaking  
both forestays, and the mast came toppling aft  
along the ship's length, so the running rigging  
showered into the bilge.

On the afterdeck

945 the mast had hit the steersman a slant blow  
bashing the skull in, knocking him overside,  
as the brave soul fled the body, like a diver.  
With crack on crack of thunder, Zeus let fly  
a bolt against the ship, a direct hit,  
950 so that she bucked, in reeking fumes of sulphur,  
and all the men were flung into the sea.  
They came up 'round the wreck, bobbing awhile  
like petrels<sup>76</sup> on the waves.

No more seafaring

homeward for these, no sweet day of return;  
955 the god had turned his face from them.

I clambered

fore and aft my hulk until a comber  
split her, keel from ribs, and the big timber  
floated free; the mast, too, broke away.  
A backstay floated dangling from it, stout  
960 rawhide rope, and I used this for lashing  
mast and keel together. These I straddled,  
riding the frightful storm.

Nor had I yet

seen the worst of it: for now the west wind  
dropped, and a southeast gale came on—one more  
965 twist of the knife—taking me north again,  
straight for Charybdis. All that night I drifted,  
and in the sunrise, sure enough, I lay  
off Scylla mountain and Charybdis deep.  
There, as the whirlpool drank the tide, a billow  
970 tossed me, and I sprang for the great fig tree,  
catching on like a bat under a bough.  
Nowhere had I to stand, no way of climbing,  
the root and bole<sup>77</sup> being far below, and far  
above my head the branches and their leaves,  
975 massed, overshadowing Charybdis pool.  
But I clung grimly, thinking my mast and keel  
would come back to the surface when she spouted.

### ◀ Critical Viewing

In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus' son Telemachus searches for his father in a ship like this one. From what you observe in the painting, how does this ship compare with modern ships?

76. **petrels** (pe' trəlz) *n.* small, dark sea birds.

### Epic Hero

Which of Odysseus' heroic qualities does he demonstrate in this passage?

77. **bole** (bōl) *n.* tree trunk.

### Comprehension

How is Odysseus' ship destroyed?



78. **Father . . . men** Zeus.

79. **Ogygia** (o jji' i ə)

### Epic Hero

In what way do lines 994–997 remind you that Odysseus is telling his story to an audience?

And ah! how long, with what desire, I waited!  
till, at the twilight hour, when one who hears  
980 and judges pleas in the marketplace all day  
between contentious men, goes home to supper,  
the long poles at last reared from the sea.

Now I let go with hands and feet, plunging  
straight into the foam beside the timbers,  
985 pulled astride, and rowed hard with my hands  
to pass by Scylla. Never could I have passed her  
had not the Father of gods and men,<sup>78</sup> this time,  
kept me from her eyes. Once through the strait,  
nine days I drifted in the open sea  
990 before I made shore, buoyed up by the gods,  
upon Ogygia<sup>79</sup> Isle. The dangerous nymph  
Calypso lives and sings there, in her beauty,  
and she received me, loved me.

But why tell

the same tale that I told last night in hall  
995 to you and to your lady? Those adventures  
made a long evening, and I do not hold  
with tiresome repetition of a story."

## Language Study

**Vocabulary** The italicized words in each numbered item appear in the *Odyssey*, Part 1. Using your knowledge of these words, identify the word in each group that does not belong. Then, explain your response.

1. *plundered*, robbed, donated
2. *dispatched*, hesitated, completed
3. *assuage*, soothe, increase
4. *ardor*, spirit, fear
5. *insidious*, traitorous, friendly

### Word Study

**Part A** Explain how the **Old English prefix *be-*** contributes to the meanings of *bemuse*, *belittle*, and *befriend*. Consult a dictionary if necessary.

**Part B** Use the context of the sentences and what you know about the Old English prefix *be-* to explain your answer to each question.

1. If people *begrudge* your success, are they happy for you?
2. What happens if a sailing ship is *becalmed*?

### WORD STUDY

The **Old English prefix *be-*** means "around," "make," or "covered with." In this selection, Tiresias warns Odysseus that he will be **bereft** of his companions. Tiresias means that Odysseus will lose his companions. *Bereft* is a form of *bereave*, which means "made to suffer a loss."

## Literary Analysis

### Key Ideas and Details

- (a)** In the episode of the Lotus-Eaters, how does Odysseus handle the men who eat the lotus? **(b) Interpret:** What does Odysseus understand that his men do not? **(c) Infer:** What does this episode suggest about the main problem that Odysseus has with his men?
- (a)** In the episode of the Cattle of the Sun God, why does the crew kill the cattle? **(b) Interpret:** How does Odysseus react to this action? **(c) Analyze:** What does Odysseus' reaction show about his attitudes toward the gods? Explain.
- Historical and Cultural Context** Consider the historical and cultural context of Homer's *Odyssey*. What role do ancient Greek religious beliefs play in the epic? Cite specific examples from the epic in your answer.

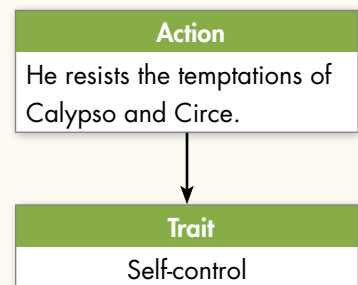
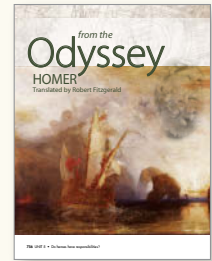
### Craft and Structure

- Epic Hero (a)** Using a chart like the one shown, identify three other actions that Odysseus performs. **(b)** For each action, identify the character trait that it reveals. **(c)** Using the results of your analysis, explain which character traits the ancient Greeks admired most.
- Epic Hero** Odysseus recounts most of the action in Part 1 in the form of a flashback. List the events of Part 1 in chronological sequence, beginning with the end of the Trojan War.
- Epic Hero** In this epic, the hero Odysseus recounts his own adventures. In what way does this affect your reaction to the events he describes? Cite an example from the text to support your response.

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- (a) Compare and Contrast:** Compare and contrast Odysseus' reactions to the three ghosts he meets in the Land of the Dead—Elpenor, Anticlea, and Tiresias. **(b) Analyze:** What character trait does Odysseus display in the Land of the Dead that he did not reveal earlier? **(c) Connect:** Does he show similar traits during any other episode in Part 1? Explain, supporting your answer with details from the text.

- THE BIG ?** **Do heroes have responsibilities?** **(a)** Is Odysseus' sense of responsibility for his men unlimited, or are there boundaries? Answer this question by explaining how Odysseus sees and executes his responsibilities during three of the events described in Part 1. **(b)** On the island of Helios, could Odysseus have prevented his men from eating the cattle and so saved their lives? Explain.

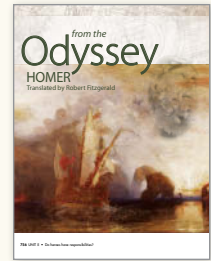


### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

As you write and speak about the *Odyssey*, use the words related to heroism and responsibility that you explored on page 727 of this textbook.



## Conventions: Simple and Compound Sentences



A **simple sentence** consists of a single independent clause.

Although a simple sentence is just one independent clause with one subject and one verb, the subject, verb, or both may be compound.

A **compound sentence** consists of two or more independent clauses.

The clauses can be joined by a comma and a coordinating conjunction or by a semicolon. The coordinating conjunctions are *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *for*, *yet*, and *so*.

<b>Simple Sentence</b>	He remembered an old story.
<b>Simple Sentence with Compound Subject</b>	He and she remembered an old story.
<b>Compound Sentence (joined with a comma and a coordinating conjunction)</b>	They laughed together, and they remembered an old story.
<b>Compound Sentence (joined by a semicolon)</b>	They laughed together for hours that day; their friendship was never stronger.

### Practice A

Identify each of the following sentences as simple or compound. For compound sentences, identify the coordinating conjunction, if there is one.

1. Odysseus led his ship through the perils of Scylla and Charybdis.
2. The Cyclops captured the Greeks, and he ate some of them.
3. The men were starving, but Odysseus commanded them not to eat Helios' cattle.
4. Calypso and Circe both helped and hindered Odysseus.

**Reading Application** In the *Odyssey*, find one simple sentence and one compound sentence.

### Practice B

Combine each pair of simple sentences to form a compound sentence. Use a comma and coordinating conjunction or a semicolon to separate the independent clauses.

1. Odysseus yelled insults at Polyphemus. The Cyclops hurled a rock at the ship.
2. The Sirens sang. The ship sailed on.
3. Scylla swooped down on the ship. She grabbed six men.
4. The men screamed for help. Odysseus stood by helplessly.

**Writing Application** Write four sentences about your response to the *Odyssey*. Use two simple sentences and two compound sentences.

## Writing to Sources

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**Narrative** Write a **retelling** of the *Odyssey* set in modern times.

- Before drafting, look through the poem and make a list of characters, monsters, and actions by the gods that interfere with Odysseus' journey. Decide how you will represent these ancient ideas using modern-day equivalents.
- Outline the plot of your retelling, adding points in the action where you can demonstrate your hero's traits, such as generosity and bravery.
- Decide how your modern-day Odysseus will travel.
- Review the *Odyssey* for examples of figurative language. Use these as models for figurative language you will incorporate into your retelling.
- Reveal the emotions of your characters through dialogue.

**Grammar Application** Make sure to use both simple and compound sentences as you draft your retelling.

## Speaking and Listening

---

**Presentation of Ideas** With two classmates, write and deliver a **conversation** among ordinary Greeks discussing Odysseus' exploits. Each character's statements should reflect ancient Greek values shown in the *Odyssey*.

- Decide each character's position toward Odysseus. For example, one character may be a fan while another may be a cynic. One may know Odysseus well while another may have barely heard of him.
- Plan your conversation for an audience of contemporaries—imagine that they, like your characters, also live in Greece during the time the *Odyssey* takes place.
- As a group, agree on an overall plan for the conversation, but leave room for improvisation.
- As you speak, use verbal techniques—such as varied tone, volume, and pace—to convey different emotions and add realism.
- In addition, use nonverbal techniques—such as gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact—to help convey your ideas.

Practice your conversation, including both the verbal and nonverbal techniques. Then, present the conversation to your class, using the techniques you rehearsed with your group.



## Do heroes have responsibilities?

Explore the Big Question as you read this epic poem. Note whether the hero's decisions reflect a sense of responsibility.

### CLOSE READING FOCUS

#### Key Ideas and Details: **Historical and Cultural Context**

The **historical and cultural context** of a work is the time and place in which it is set or was written. Details in a work reflect the beliefs and customs of that time and place. When you read, keep your own beliefs and customs in mind, and notice how your reactions to ideas and situations in the work differ from those of the characters. These differences will help you better understand the values and attitudes that are part of the work's historical and cultural context.

#### Craft and Structure: **Epic Simile**

An **epic simile** is an elaborate comparison that may extend for several lines and that may use the words *like*, *as*, *just as*, or *so*. Unlike a regular simile, which draws a relatively limited comparison and creates a single image, an epic simile might recall an entire place or story. In Part 1, lines 268–271, Odysseus uses an epic simile to describe the size of the tree from which he creates a weapon.

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.

As you read, notice how Homer uses epic similes—sometimes called Homeric similes—to bring descriptions to life.

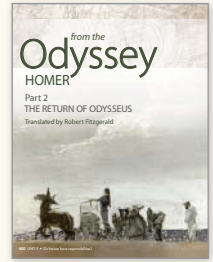
### Vocabulary

The words below are critical to understanding the text that follows. Copy the words into your notebook. Which words share the same suffix? What part of speech is created by using this suffix?

dissemble  
incredulity

bemusing  
equity

maudlin  
contempt



## CLOSE READING MODEL

The passages below are from Homer's *Odyssey*. The annotations to the right of the passages show ways in which you can use close reading skills to understand the historical and cultural context and to analyze epic similes.

### from the *Odyssey*, Part 2

Then Lord Odysseus  
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!<sup>1</sup>  
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.<sup>2</sup>

.....  
But the man skilled in all ways of contending,  
satisfied by the great bow's look and heft,<sup>3</sup>  
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.<sup>4</sup>

#### Historical and Cultural Context

**1** The cultural context of the poem includes belief in a group of gods, who often disguise themselves to interact with mortals on Earth. Odysseus' son assumes the altered man before him is a god. This response accurately reflects the poem's context.

#### Historical and Cultural Context

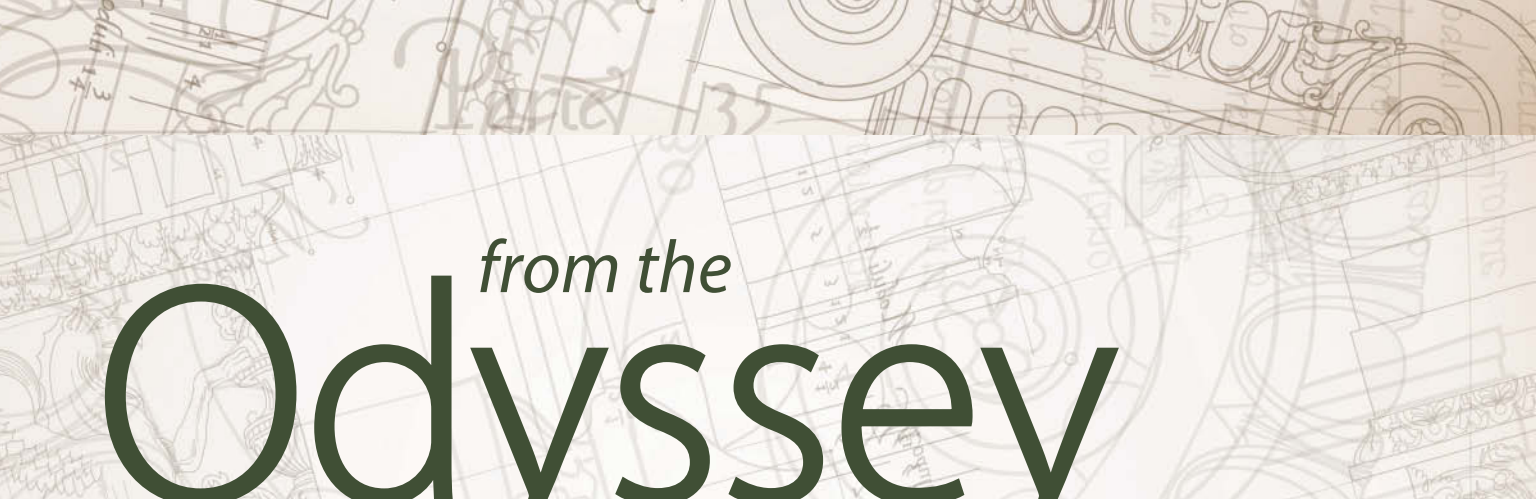
**2** Odysseus is overcome with emotion when he reveals his identity to his son. A modern reunion between a long-lost father and child might look much the same. This suggests that the ancient Greeks shared some of the values—specifically, attitudes toward parents and children—that we hold in the modern world.

#### Epic Simile

**3** This text contains the first part of an epic simile. The man, Odysseus, and the bow are the subject of the simile.

#### Epic Simile

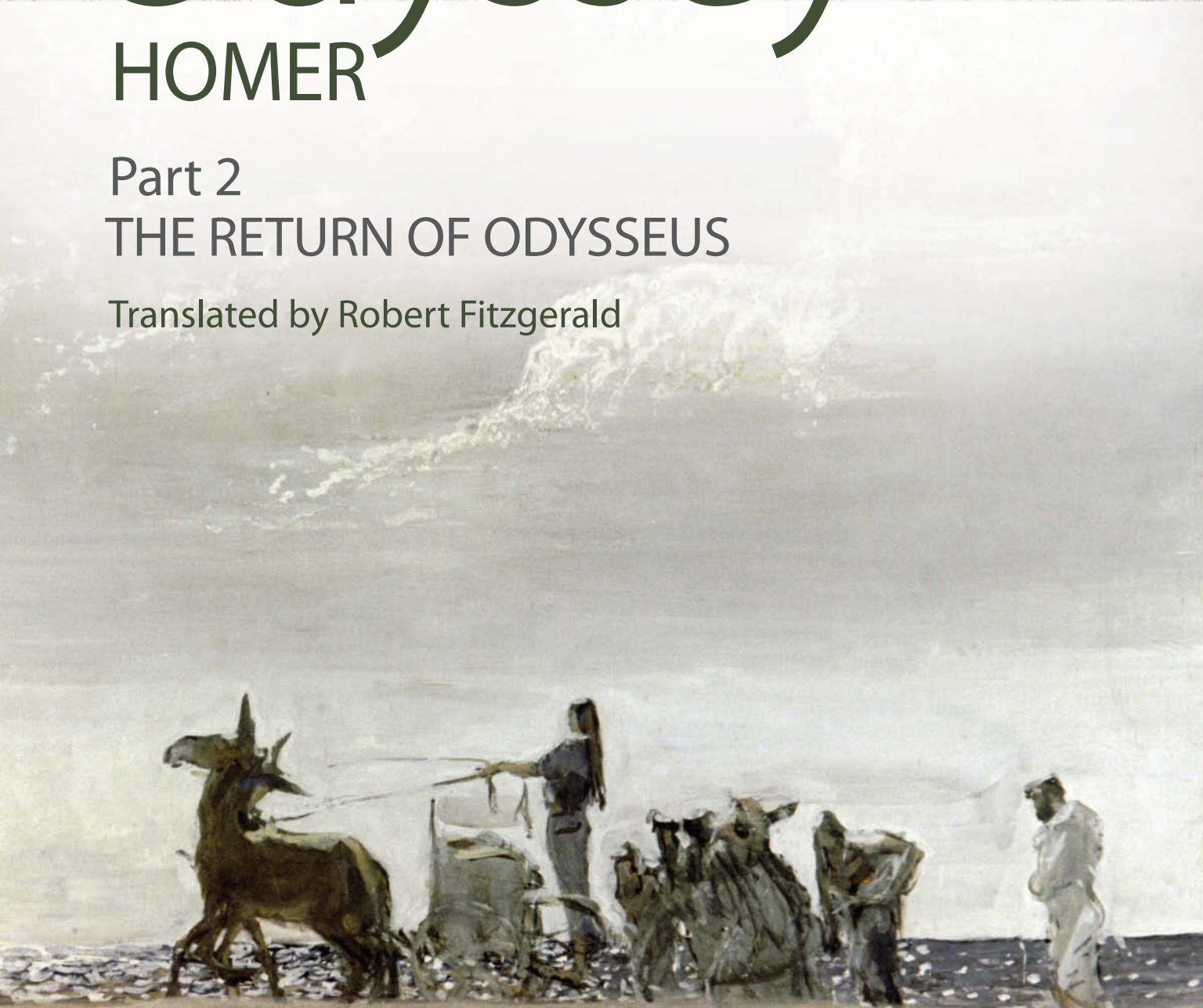
**4** This text contains the second part of the simile, which is introduced with the word *like*. The simile suggests that Odysseus strings the heavy weapon with the same ease that a master musician strings a harp.

The top portion of the cover features a background of intricate, light-colored architectural drawings and sketches, including columns, arches, and various geometric patterns, overlaid on a light beige background.

*from the*  
**Odyssey**  
**HOMER**

Part 2  
**THE RETURN OF ODYSSEUS**

Translated by Robert Fitzgerald



“Twenty years gone, and I am back again . . .”

*Odysseus has finished telling his story to the Phaeacians. The next day, young Phaeacian noblemen conduct him home by ship. He arrives in Ithaca after an absence of twenty years. The goddess Athena appears and informs him of the situation at home. Numerous suitors, believing Odysseus to be dead, have been continually seeking the hand of his wife, Penelope, in marriage, while overrunning Odysseus’ palace and enjoying themselves at Penelope’s expense. Moreover, they are plotting to murder Odysseus’ son, Telemachus, before he can inherit his father’s lands. Telemachus, who, like Penelope, still hopes for his father’s return, has journeyed to Pylos and Sparta to learn what he can about his father’s fate. Athena disguises Odysseus as a beggar and directs him to the hut of Eumaeus,<sup>1</sup> his old and faithful swineherd. While Odysseus and Eumaeus are eating breakfast, Telemachus arrives. Athena then appears to Odysseus.*

1. **Eumaeus** (yōō mē’ əs)

. . . From the air  
she walked, taking the form of a tall woman,  
handsome and clever at her craft, and stood  
1000 beyond the gate in plain sight of Odysseus,  
unseen, though, by Telemachus, unguessed,  
for not to everyone will gods appear.  
Odysseus noticed her; so did the dogs,  
who cowered whimpering away from her. She only  
1005 nodded, signing to him with her brows,  
a sign he recognized. Crossing the yard,  
he passed out through the gate in the stockade  
to face the goddess. There she said to him:  
“Son of Laertes and the gods of old,  
1010 Odysseus, master of landways and seaways,  
**dissemble** to your son no longer now.  
The time has come: tell him how you together  
will bring doom on the suitors in the town.  
I shall not be far distant then, for I  
1015 myself desire battle.”

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

◀ **Critical Viewing**

Which details in this image suggest that Odysseus, the figure at the far right, is returning home from a long journey?

◀ **Vocabulary**

**dissemble** (di sem’ bəl)  
v. conceal under a false appearance; disguise

## Historical and Cultural Context

What do lines 1021–1029 suggest about ancient Greek attitudes toward the gods?

2. **oblation** (äb lä' shən) *n.*  
offering to a god.

## Spiral Review

**ARCHETYPES** Is the encounter described in lines 1034–1035 an example of an archetype? Why or why not?

## Vocabulary ▶

**incredulity** (in' krə döō' lə tē) *n.* unwillingness or inability to believe

1020 no longer gray upon his chin. And she  
withdrew when she had done.

Then Lord Odysseus  
reappeared—and his son was thunderstruck.  
Fear in his eyes, he looked down and away  
as though it were a god, and whispered:

“Stranger,  
1025 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<sup>2</sup>  
and gifts of hammered gold. Have mercy on us!”

1030 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  
1035 as he embraced his son.

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!  
1040 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!”

1045 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  
1050 fortune and his wanderings are mine.  
Twenty years gone, and I am back again  
on my own island.

As for my change of skin,  
that is a charm Athena, Hope of Soldiers,  
uses as she will; she has the knack  
1055 to make me seem a beggar man sometimes  
and sometimes young, with finer clothes about me.  
It is no hard thing for the gods of heaven  
to glorify a man or bring him low.”

When he had spoken, down he sat.

Then, throwing  
1060 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,  
1065 whose nestlings farmers take before they fly.  
So helplessly they cried, pouring out tears,  
and might have gone on weeping so till sundown,  
had not Telemachus said:

“Dear father! Tell me  
what kind of vessel put you here ashore  
1070 on Ithaca? Your sailors, who were they?  
I doubt you made it, walking on the sea!”

Then said Odysseus, who had borne the barren sea:

“Only plain truth shall I tell you, child.  
Great seafarers, the Phaeacians, gave me passage  
1075 as they give other wanderers. By night  
over the open ocean, while I slept,  
they brought me in their cutter,<sup>3</sup> set me down  
on Ithaca, with gifts of bronze and gold  
and stores of woven things. By the gods’ will  
1080 these lie all hidden in a cave. I came  
to this wild place, directed by Athena,  
so that we might lay plans to kill our enemies.  
Count up the suitors for me, let me know  
what men at arms are there, how many men.  
1085 I must put all my mind to it, to see  
if we two by ourselves can take them on  
or if we should look round for help.”

### Epic Simile

To what are Odysseus’ and Telemachus’ cries compared in the epic simile in lines 1063–1065?

**3. cutter** (kut’ər) *n.* small, swift ship or boat carried aboard a large ship to transport personnel or supplies.

### Comprehension

Why is Telemachus initially doubtful that the man before him is Odysseus, his father?





Telemachus

replied:

“O Father, all my life your fame

as a fighting man has echoed in my ears—

1090 your skill with weapons and the tricks of war—

but what you speak of is a staggering thing,  
beyond imagining, for me. How can two men

do battle with a houseful in their prime?<sup>4</sup>

For I must tell you this is no affair

1095 of ten or even twice ten men, but scores,  
throng of them. You shall see, here and now.

The number from Dulichium alone  
is fifty-two picked men, with armorers,  
a half dozen; twenty-four came from Same,

1100 twenty from Zacynthus; our own island  
accounts for twelve, high-ranked, and their retainers,  
Medon the crier, and the Master Harper,  
besides a pair of handymen at feasts.

If we go in against all these

1105 I fear we pay in salt blood for your vengeance.  
You must think hard if you would conjure up  
the fighting strength to take us through.”

Odysseus

who had endured the long war and the sea  
answered:

“I’ll tell you now.

1110 Suppose Athena’s arm is over us, and Zeus  
her father’s, must I rack my brains for more?”

Clearheaded Telemachus looked hard and said:

“Those two are great defenders, no one doubts it,  
but throned in the serene clouds overhead;

1115 other affairs of men and gods they have  
to rule over.”

And the hero answered:

“Before long they will stand to right and left of us  
in combat, in the shouting, when the test comes—  
our nerve against the suitors’ in my hall.

1120 Here is your part: at break of day tomorrow  
home with you, go mingle with our princes.  
The swineherd later on will take me down

4. **in their prime** in the best or most vigorous stage of their lives.

### Historical and Cultural Context

What does Odysseus’ statement in lines 1109–1111 suggest about ancient Greek beliefs about the gods’ interest in human affairs?

## Cultural Connection

## Athena

Athena was the goddess of wisdom, skills, and warfare.

When she helps Odysseus in this epic, it is not the first time that she offers assistance to a Greek hero.

In Homer's *Iliad*, Athena helps the Greek hero Achilles defeat the Trojan warrior Hector. Athena favored Achilles for his unmatched skill in battle, but Odysseus was her favorite among the Greeks. He displayed not only skill in warfare, but also ingenuity and cunning.



the port-side trail—a beggar, by my looks,  
hangdog and old. If they make fun of me  
1125 in my own courtyard, let your ribs cage up  
your springing heart, no matter what I suffer,  
no matter if they pull me by the heels  
or practice shots at me, to drive me out.  
Look on, hold down your anger. You may even  
1130 plead with them, by heaven! in gentle terms  
to quit their horseplay—not that they will heed you,  
rash as they are, facing their day of wrath.  
Now fix the next step in your mind.

Athena,

counseling me, will give me word, and I  
1135 shall signal to you, nodding: at that point  
round up all armor, lances, gear of war  
left in our hall, and stow the lot away  
back in the vaulted storeroom. When the suitors  
miss those arms and question you, be soft  
1140 in what you say: answer:

‘I thought I’d move them  
out of the smoke. They seemed no longer those  
bright arms Odysseus left us years ago  
when he went off to Troy. Here where the fire’s  
hot breath came, they had grown black and drear.  
1145 One better reason, too, I had from Zeus:  
suppose a brawl starts up when you are drunk,  
you might be crazed and bloody one another,  
and that would stain your feast, your courtship.

Tempered  
iron can magnetize a man.’

Say that.

1150 But put aside two broadswords and two spears  
for our own use, two oxhide shields nearby  
when we go into action. Pallas Athena  
and Zeus All-Provident will see you through,  
**bemusing** our young friends.

Now one thing more.

1155 If son of mine you are and blood of mine,  
let no one hear Odysseus is about.  
Neither Laertes, nor the swineherd here,  
nor any slave, nor even Penelope.

## Connect to the Literature

Which of Odysseus’ deeds in the *Odyssey* might have helped him to earn Athena’s favor? Explain.

## ◀ Vocabulary

**bemusing** (bē myōōz’ in)

v. stupefying; muddling

## Comprehension

How does Odysseus tell his son to respond if the suitors “practice shots” on Odysseus?

5. **shirkers** (shɜrk' ərz) *n.*  
people who get out of  
doing what needs to be  
done.

▼ **Critical Viewing**

What can you infer about the ancient Greeks based on the fact that they depicted their gods on everyday objects like this urn?



1160 But you and I alone must learn how far  
the women are corrupted; we should know  
how to locate good men among our hands,  
the loyal and respectful, and the shirkers<sup>5</sup>  
who take you lightly, as alone and young.”

## Argus

*Odysseus heads for town with Eumaeus. Outside the palace, Odysseus' old dog, Argus, is lying at rest as his long-absent master approaches.*

While he spoke  
an old hound, lying near, pricked up his ears  
and lifted up his muzzle. This was Argus,  
1165 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,  
1170 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.  
1175 Abandoned there, and half destroyed with flies,  
old Argus 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.  
1180 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;  
1185 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:

1190 “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  
1195 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  
1200 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  
1205 into the megaron<sup>6</sup> among the suitors:  
but death and darkness in that instant closed  
the eyes of Argus, who had seen his master,  
Odysseus, after twenty years.

## The Suitors

*Still disguised as a beggar, Odysseus enters his home.  
He is confronted by the haughty<sup>7</sup> suitor Antinous.<sup>8</sup>*

But here Antinous broke in, shouting:

“God!  
1210 What evil wind blew in this pest?  
Get over,  
stand in the passage! Nudge my table, will you?  
Egyptian whips are sweet  
to what you’ll come to here, you nosing rat,  
making your pitch to everyone!  
1215 These men have bread to throw away on you  
because it is not theirs. Who cares? Who spares  
another’s food, when he has more than plenty?”

### Historical and Cultural Context

How do Eumaeus’ beliefs about servitude and slavery compare with those of your own culture?

**6. megaron** (meg’ ə rŏn) *n.*  
great, central hall of the house, usually containing a center hearth.

**7. haughty** (hôt’ ē) *adj.*  
arrogant.

**8. Antinous** (an tin’ ō əs)

### Comprehension

How does Antinous react to Odysseus, who is disguised as a beggar?



### Historical and Cultural Context

What conflicting values does this exchange between Antinous and Odysseus reveal?

9. **impudence** (im' pyoo dens) *n.* quality of being shamelessly bold; disrespectful.

### Historical and Cultural Context

What values regarding the use of physical force are evident in this speech?

10. **Furies** (fyoor' eez) *n.* three terrible female spirits who punish the doers of unavenged crimes.

With guile Odysseus drew away, then said:

1220 “A pity that you have more looks than heart.  
You’d grudge a pinch of salt from your own larder  
to your own handyman. You sit here, fat  
on others’ meat, and cannot bring yourself  
to rummage out a crust of bread for me!”

1225 Then anger made Antinous’ heart beat hard,  
and, glowering under his brows, he answered:

“Now!

You think you’ll shuffle off and get away  
after that impudence?<sup>9</sup> Oh, no you don’t!”

1230 The stool he let fly hit the man’s right shoulder  
on the packed muscle under the shoulder blade—  
like solid rock, for all the effect one saw.  
Odysseus only shook his head, containing  
thoughts of bloody work, as he walked on,  
then sat, and dropped his loaded bag again  
upon the door sill. Facing the whole crowd  
1235 he said, and eyed them all:

“One word only,  
my lords, and suitors of the famous queen.  
One thing I have to say.  
There is no pain, no burden for the heart  
when blows come to a man, and he defending  
1240 his own cattle—his own cows and lambs.  
Here it was otherwise. Antinous  
hit me for being driven on by hunger—  
how many bitter seas men cross for hunger!  
If beggars interest the gods, if there are Furies<sup>10</sup>  
1245 pent in the dark to avenge a poor man’s wrong, then may  
Antinous meet his death before his wedding day!”

Then said Eupheithes’ son, Antinous:

“Enough.  
Eat and be quiet where you are, or shamle elsewhere,  
unless you want these lads to stop your mouth  
1250 pulling you by the heels, or hands and feet,  
over the whole floor, till your back is peeled!”

But now the rest were mortified, and someone spoke from the crowd of young bucks to rebuke him:

1255 “A poor show, that—hitting this famished tramp—  
bad business, if he happened to be a god.  
You know they go in foreign guise, the gods do,  
looking like strangers, turning up  
in towns and settlements to keep an eye  
on manners, good or bad.”

But at this notion

1260 Antinous only shrugged.

Telemachus,

after the blow his father bore, sat still  
without a tear, though his heart felt the blow.  
Slowly he shook his head from side to side,  
containing murderous thoughts.

Penelope

1265 on the higher level of her room had heard  
the blow, and knew who gave it. Now she murmured:

“Would god you could be hit yourself, Antinous—  
hit by Apollo’s bowshot!”

### Historical and Cultural Context

What ancient Greek belief is conveyed in this suitor’s speech?

### Comprehension

How does Penelope regard Antinous?





11. Eurynome (yōō rin' əm ē)

**Spiral Review**

**ARCHETYPE** Odysseus hides his true identity from Penelope. How does this behavior suggest the trickster archetype?

**Vocabulary** ►

**equity** (ek' wit ē) *n.*  
fairness; justice

And Eurynome<sup>11</sup>

her housekeeper, put in:

“He and no other?

1270 If all we pray for came to pass, not one  
would live till dawn!”

Her gentle mistress said:

“Oh, Nan, they are a bad lot; they intend  
ruin for all of us; but Antinous  
appears a blacker-hearted hound than any.

1275 Here is a poor man come, a wanderer,  
driven by want to beg his bread, and everyone  
in hall gave bits, to cram his bag—only  
Antinous threw a stool, and banged his shoulder!”

So she described it, sitting in her chamber  
among her maids—while her true lord was eating.  
Then she called in the forester and said:

1280  
“Go to that man on my behalf, Eumaeus,  
and send him here, so I can greet and question him.  
Abroad in the great world, he may have heard  
1285 rumors about Odysseus—may have known him!”

## Penelope

*In the evening, Penelope interrogates the old beggar.*

“Friend, let me ask you first of all:  
who are you, where do you come from, of what nation  
and parents were you born?”

And he replied:

1290 “My lady, never a man in the wide world  
should have a fault to find with you. Your name  
has gone out under heaven like the sweet  
honor of some god-fearing king, who rules  
in **equity** over the strong: his black lands bear  
both wheat and barley, fruit trees laden bright,  
1295 new lambs at lambing time—and the deep sea  
gives great hauls of fish by his good strategy,  
so that his folk fare well.

O my dear lady,

this being so, let it suffice to ask me  
of other matters—not my blood, my homeland.

1300 Do not enforce me to recall my pain.  
My heart is sore; but I must not be found  
sitting in tears here, in another's house:  
it is not well forever to be grieving.  
One of the maids might say—or you might think—  
1305 I had got **maudlin** over cups of wine.”

And Penelope replied:

“Stranger, my looks,  
my face, my carriage,<sup>12</sup> were soon lost or faded  
when the Achaeans crossed the sea to Troy,  
Odysseus my lord among the rest.  
1310 If he returned, if he were here to care for me,  
I might be happily renowned!  
But grief instead heaven sent me—years of pain.  
Sons of the noblest families on the islands,  
Dulichium, Same, wooded Zacynthus,<sup>13</sup>  
1315 with native Ithacans, are here to court me,  
against my wish; and they consume this house.  
Can I give proper heed to guest or suppliant  
or herald on the realm's affairs?

How could I?  
wasted with longing for Odysseus, while here  
1320 they press for marriage.

Ruses<sup>14</sup> served my turn  
to draw the time out—first a close-grained web  
I had the happy thought to set up weaving  
on my big loom in hall. I said, that day:  
‘Young men—my suitors, now my lord is dead,  
1325 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  
1330 if he, with all his fortune, lay unshrouded.’  
I reached their hearts that way, and they agreed.  
So every day I wove on the great loom,  
but every night by torchlight I unwove it;  
and so for three years I deceived the Achaeans.

#### ◀ Vocabulary

**maudlin** (môd' lin)

*adj.* tearfully and  
foolishly sentimental

**12. carriage** (kar' ij) *n.*  
posture.

**13. Zacynthus** (za sin' thus)

**14. Ruses** (rōōz' iz) *n.* tricks.

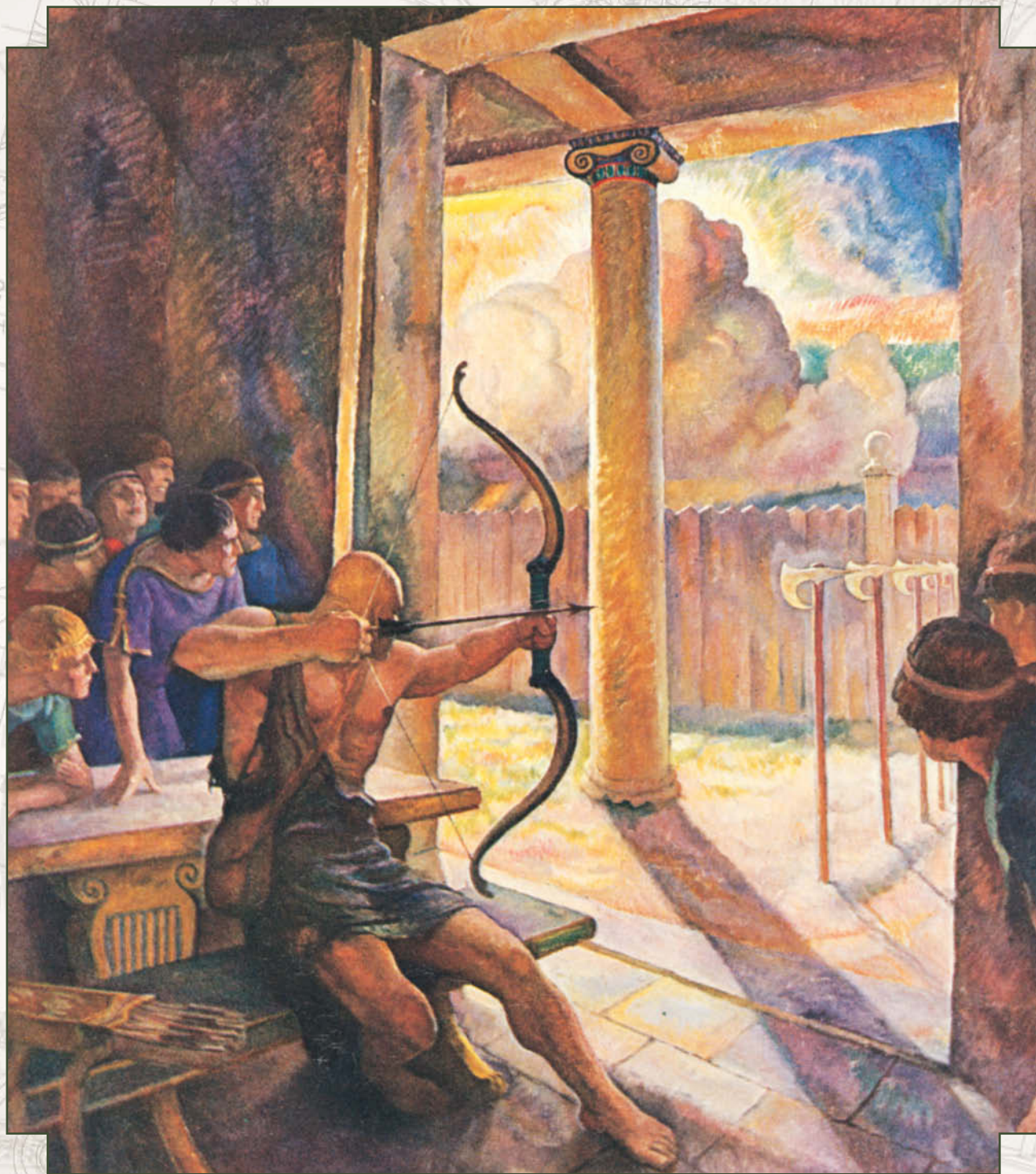
#### Historical and Cultural Context

How do the ancient  
Greek ideas in Penelope's  
speech about honoring  
the dead compare to  
modern ideas?

#### Comprehension

How was Penelope able  
to delay marriage for  
three years?





The Trial of the Bow from Homer's *The Odyssey*, N.C. Wyeth, Brandywine River Museum.

1335 But when the seasons brought a fourth year on,  
as long months waned, and the long days were spent,  
through impudent folly in the slinking maids  
they caught me—clamored up to me at night;  
I had no choice then but to finish it.  
1340 And now, as matters stand at last,  
I have no strength left to evade a marriage,  
cannot find any further way; my parents  
urge it upon me, and my son  
will not stand by while they eat up his property.  
1345 He comprehends it, being a man full-grown,  
able to oversee the kind of house  
Zeus would endow with honor.

But you too  
confide in me, tell me your ancestry.  
You were not born of mythic oak or stone.”

*Penelope again asks the beggar to tell about himself. He makes up a tale in which Odysseus is mentioned and declares that Penelope’s husband will soon be home.*

1350 “You see, then, he is alive and well, and headed  
homeward now, no more to be abroad  
far from his island, his dear wife and son.  
Here is my sworn word for it. Witness this,  
god of the zenith, noblest of the gods,<sup>15</sup>  
1355 and Lord Odysseus’ hearthfire, now before me:  
I swear these things shall turn out as I say.  
Between this present dark and one day’s ebb,  
after the wane, before the crescent moon,  
Odysseus will come.”

## The Challenge

*Pressed by the suitors to choose a husband from among them, Penelope says she will marry the man who can string Odysseus’ bow and shoot an arrow through twelve ax handle sockets. The suitors try and fail. Still in disguise, Odysseus asks for a turn and gets it.*

And Odysseus took his time,  
1360 turning the bow, tapping it, every inch,  
for borings that termites might have made

### ◀ Critical Viewing

The winner of the archery contest will win Penelope’s hand in marriage. What details or artistic techniques capture the tension in this scene?

15. **god of the zenith, noblest of the gods** Zeus.

### Comprehension

What means does Penelope decide she will use to choose a husband?



while the master of the weapon was abroad.  
The suitors were now watching him, and some  
jested among themselves:

“A bow lover!”

1365 “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!”

1370 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  
1375 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  
1380 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  
1385 where it lay bare: the rest were waiting still  
in the quiver for the young men’s turn to come.  
He nocked<sup>16</sup> 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.



▲ **Critical Viewing**

Does the hunter pictured here show the same grace as does Odysseus in lines 1370–1392? Explain.

16. **nocked** (näkt) set an arrow into the bowstring.

Now flashed  
1390 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.  
1395 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,  
1400 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  
1405 stood by his chair, in the forefront near his father.

## Critical Thinking

- 1. Key Ideas and Details:** (a) Who does Telemachus think Odysseus is when they first reunite? (b) **Compare and Contrast:** Compare Odysseus’ emotions with those of Telemachus at their reunion.
- 2. Key Ideas and Details:** (a) Describe Antinous’ treatment of Odysseus. (b) **Analyze Cause and Effect:** Why do you think Antinous treats Odysseus as he does?
- 3. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** (a) What does Odysseus tell Penelope about himself? (b) **Infer:** Why do you think Odysseus chooses not to reveal his identity to his wife? (c) **Take a Position:** Is it wrong for Odysseus to deceive Penelope? Explain your response.
- 4. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** (a) Which of Odysseus’ responsibilities are revealed in this section? (b) Do you think he manages them heroically? Explain your response. [*Connect to the Big Question: Do heroes have responsibilities?*]



## Odysseus' Revenge

Now shrugging off his rags the wiliest<sup>17</sup> fighter of the islands leapt and stood on the broad doorsill, 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.

1410 Now watch me hit a target that no man has hit before, 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,

1415 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<sup>18</sup> 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?

1420 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

1425 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,

1430 not a good ashen spear was there for a man to take and throw.

All they could do was yell in outrage at Odysseus:

“Foul! to shoot at a man! That was your last shot!”

“Your own throat will be slit for this!”

“Our finest lad is down!

You killed the best on Ithaca.”

“Buzzards will tear your eyes out!”

17. **wiliest** (wīl' ē əst) *adj.*  
craftiest; slyest.

### ◀ Critical Viewing

Do you think this illustration presents the slaughter of the suitors accurately? Explain.

18. **revelry** (rev' əl rē) *n.* noisy festivity.

### Historical and Cultural Context

Does the manner in which Odysseus kills Antinous agree with your idea of a “fair fight”? Explain.

### Comprehension

Whom does Odysseus kill first?

## Historical and Cultural Context

What cultural values are revealed by Odysseus' explanation for his anger in lines 1439–1444?

## Vocabulary ►

**contempt** (kən tempt)  
*n.* disdain; scorn

## 19. Eurymachus (yŭŕi mə kəs)

1435 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:

1440 “You yellow dogs, you thought I’d never make it  
home from the land of Troy. You took my house to  
plunder. . .  
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.”

1445 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<sup>19</sup> alone could speak. He said:

1450 “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  
1455 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  
1460 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  
1465 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,  
1470 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.

1475 Now that he’s got his hands on bow and quiver  
he’ll shoot from the big doorstone 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.

1480 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,

1485 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,

1490 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,

1495 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

1500 forward, thudding, forehead against the ground.  
Telemachus swerved around him, leaving the long dark  
spear

planted in Amphinomus. If he paused to yank it out

### Epic Simile

Why is the comparison of Eurymachus’ sharp sword to a razor only a simile and not an epic simile?

### Comprehension

What does Eurymachus offer Odysseus to try to calm his anger?





someone might jump him from behind or cut him down with  
a sword

1505 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.

1510 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

1515 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.

1520 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.

1525 But when all barbs had flown from the bowman’s fist,  
he leaned his bow in the bright entryway  
beside the door, and armed: a four-ply shield  
hard on his shoulder, and a crested helm,  
horsetailed, nodding stormy upon his head,  
1530 then took his tough and bronze-shod spears. . . .

*Aided by Athena, Odysseus, Telemachus, Eumaeus, and other faithful herdsmen kill all the suitors.*

And Odysseus looked around him, narrow-eyed,  
for any others who had lain hidden  
while death’s black fury passed.

### Historical and Cultural Context

What cultural values are reflected in Telemachus’ behavior toward his father?

In blood and dust  
he saw that crowd all fallen, many and many slain.

1535 Think of a catch that fishermen haul in to a half-moon bay  
in a fine-meshed net from the whitecaps of the sea:  
how all are poured out on the sand, in throes for the salt sea,  
twitching their cold lives away in Helios' fiery air:  
so lay the suitors heaped on one another.

## Penelope's Test

*Penelope tests Odysseus to prove he really is her husband.*

1540 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  
1545 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<sup>20</sup> taught him, or Athena: one  
1550 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,  
1555 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.  
1560 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

### Epic Simile

Which aspects of the slain suitors' appearance does the epic simile in lines 1535–1539 emphasize?

### Epic Simile

Which details in the epic simile in lines 1547–1551 compare Odysseus' hair to a work of art?

**20. Hephaestus** (hē fes' tēs)  
god of fire and metalworking.

### Comprehension

Who helps Odysseus defeat the suitors?



nor scorn for you—not even wonder, merely.  
I know so well how you—how he—appeared  
1565 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.”

1570 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  
1575 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

1580 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,  
1585 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  
1590 of oxhide thongs dyed crimson.

There’s our sign!

I know no more. Could someone else’s hand  
have sawn that trunk and dragged the frame away?”

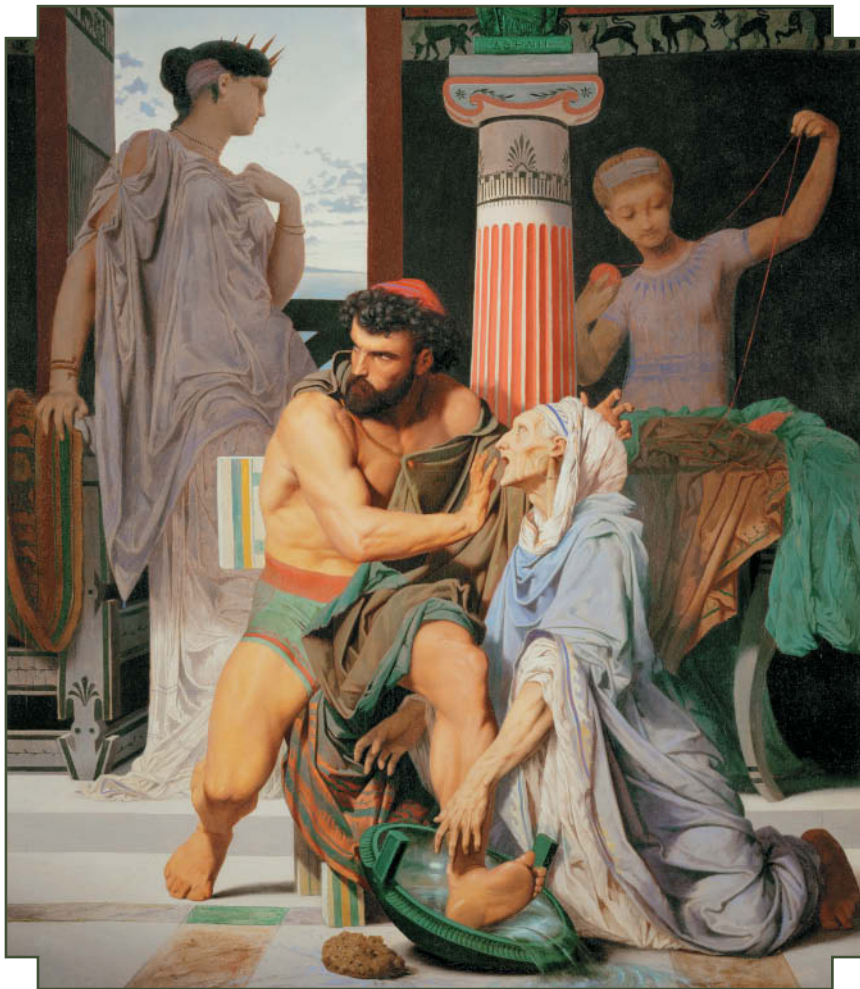
Their secret! as she heard it told, her knees  
grew tremulous and weak, her heart failed her.

1595 With eyes brimming tears she ran to him,  
throwing her arms around his neck, and kissed him,  
murmuring:

“Do not rage at me, Odysseus!

### Epic Simile

Explain why the simile comparing the olive trunk to a pillar is not an epic simile.



### ◀ Critical Viewing

Which aspects of the scene shown in this painting are similar to those Homer describes in *Odysseus' return home*?

No one ever matched your caution! Think  
what difficulty the gods gave: they denied us  
1600 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  
long ago against the frauds of men,  
1605 impostors who might come—and all those many  
whose underhanded ways bring evil on! . . .  
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—  
1610 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.”

### Comprehension

How does Odysseus react to Penelope's attitude toward him?

### Epic Simile

In what way does this epic simile recall the dangers Odysseus faced on his journey home?

21. **abyss** (ə bis') *n.* ocean depths.

Now from his breast into his eyes the ache  
of longing mounted, and he wept at last,  
1615 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  
1620 to crawl, clotted with brine, on kindly beaches  
in joy, in joy, knowing the abyss<sup>21</sup> behind:  
and so she too rejoiced, her gaze upon her husband,  
her white arms round him pressed as though forever.

### The Ending

*Odysseus is reunited with his father. Athena commands that peace prevail between Odysseus and the relatives of the slain suitors. Odysseus has regained his family and his kingdom.*

## Language Study

**Vocabulary** The italicized word in each sentence appears in the excerpt from the *Odyssey*, Part 2. Indicate whether each statement is usually true or usually false. Explain your answers. Then, revise false sentences to make them true.

1. An event that is common and predictable evokes *incredulity*.
2. If road signs are *bemusing* drivers, the signs are working perfectly.
3. A good judge is one with a strong sense of *equity*.
4. A marching band should play *maudlin* songs if it wants to excite fans.
5. Successful salespeople always show *contempt* for customers.

### WORD STUDY

The **Latin prefix *dis-*** means "away," "apart," or "not." In this selection, the goddess Athena tells Odysseus not to **dissemble**, or disguise himself, before his son Telemachus.

### Word Study

**Part A** Explain how the **Latin prefix *dis-*** contributes to the meanings of *dispute*, *dishevel*, and *disembark*. Consult a dictionary if necessary.

**Part B** Use the context of the sentences and what you know about the Latin prefix *dis-* to explain your answer to each question.

1. If a reporter *discloses* the source of information, does she tell where she got the story?
2. If you are *disheartened* by some news, do you feel happy?

## Literary Analysis

### Key Ideas and Details

- (a)** When Odysseus returns to his home, who helps him? **(b) Interpret:** What does the varying social status of Odysseus' helpers suggest about his character? Explain.
- (a)** What reasons does Odysseus give for his taking revenge on the suitors? **(b) Analyze Cause and Effect:** Why do you think Odysseus reacts so intensely? Support your answer with details from the epic.
- (a)** What is Penelope's test, and how does Odysseus pass it? **(b) Infer:** Why does Penelope feel the need to test Odysseus even though he has abandoned his disguise? **(c) Interpret:** Is the mood after the test altogether happy? Cite details from the epic in your answers.
- Historical and Cultural Context (a)** What attitudes and values are reflected in Odysseus' actions toward the suitors? Explain. **(b)** What do his actions suggest about the attitudes and values of ancient Greeks? Use details from the text to support your response.
- Historical and Cultural Context (a)** Name one of Odysseus' cultural beliefs, attitudes, or practices that is similar to an idea or a tradition in your own culture. Explain the similarities. **(b)** Name one that is significantly different. Explain the contrasts. Cite details from the epic in your responses.

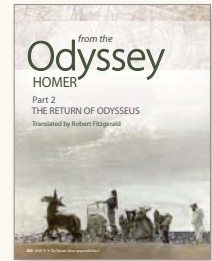
### Craft and Structure

- Epic Simile (a)** Reread the epic simile in lines 1535–1539. Identify the two things being compared. **(b)** Explain how Homer uses this simile to bring the descriptions to life.
- Epic Simile (a)** Using a chart like the one shown, analyze the epic simile in lines 1613–1624. **(b)** How does this simile connect to other episodes in the story to make it a powerful and fitting image for the conclusion of the *Odyssey*? Explain.

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- Connect:** Are Odysseus' actions in dealing with the suitors consistent with his actions in earlier episodes of the epic? Explain, supporting your response with examples from the text.

- THE BIG ?** **Do heroes have responsibilities? (a)** Do you think Odysseus kills the suitors to fulfill his responsibilities? Explain. **(b)** In the historical and cultural context of ancient Greece, is Odysseus' revenge justified? Why or why not?



#### Things Being Compared

#### Details of Epic Simile

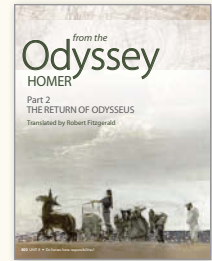
#### Purpose

#### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

As you write and speak about the *Odyssey*, use the words related to heroism and responsibility that you explored on page 727 of this book.

## Conventions: Complex and Compound-Complex Sentences

Sentences can be classified by the number of dependent and independent clauses they contain. An *independent clause* contains a subject and a verb and can stand alone as a sentence. A *dependent clause* contains a subject and a verb but cannot stand alone as a sentence. A dependent clause begins with a subordinating conjunction such as *when*, *although*, *because*, *before*, *since*, or *while*, or a relative pronoun, such as *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *which*, and *that*.



A **complex sentence** consists of one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses.

A **compound-complex sentence** consists of two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses.

Independent clauses in both compound and compound-complex sentences are connected by a comma and a coordinating conjunction.

Complex Sentence	Compound-Complex Sentence
When the lights came on, he saw the audience.	When the lights came on, he saw the audience, and he waved to his parents.

### Practice A

State whether each sentence below is complex or compound-complex. Then, identify the independent clauses and the dependent clauses.

1. Because Odysseus was disguised, Penelope did not recognize her husband.
2. When Odysseus strung the bow, the suitors were amazed, and they stopped laughing.
3. Telemachus grabbed a sword, and he stood by his father while they fought.
4. Although there were many suitors, Odysseus killed every one of them.

**Reading Application** In the *Odyssey*, find one complex sentence and one compound-complex sentence.

### Practice B

Combine the simple sentences below to form one new sentence of the type indicated in parentheses.

1. Argus recognized Odysseus. He died. (complex)
2. Odysseus strung the bow. Telemachus looked on. (complex)
3. Odysseus tested the bow. The suitors mocked him. They called him names. (compound-complex)
4. He shot the arrow. It passed through each ring. The suitors were awed. (compound-complex)

**Writing Application** Write six simple sentences about the *Odyssey*. Choose from among these sentences to build two complex and two compound-complex sentences.

## Writing to Sources

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**Informative Text** Write a short **biography** of Odysseus based on details presented in the *Odyssey*. Include the basic facts of the hero's life and adventures, including his important relationships, and hold your reader's attention by describing dramatic situations in detail.

- List events from the *Odyssey* that are suitable for your biography. Focus on events that reveal the character of Odysseus.
- Include quotations from the epic to add detail and depth.
- Share your biography with classmates, and compare the events you each chose to include. In your discussion, consider what makes some events more significant than others.
- Based on your discussion with classmates, consider whether your version of Odysseus' life is complete, accurate, and interesting to readers. Revise your work as needed.

**Grammar Application** As you write your biography, use a variety of sentence types, including complex and compound-complex sentences.

## Speaking and Listening

---

**Comprehension and Collaboration** Conduct a **debate** to decide whether Odysseus should be prosecuted for the murders of Penelope's suitors. Follow these steps to effectively practice the art of persuasion and debate:

- Within a small group, divide into two opposing teams. One team should argue the affirmative—that Odysseus should be prosecuted—and the other should argue the negative.
- Both affirmative and negative teams should prepare a rational argument expressing its position. Each team should also prepare an argument against the opposing team's position. Be sure to identify evidence from the *Odyssey* to support all arguments.
- Plan an introduction to your remarks, a body that includes your arguments, and a conclusion that summarizes your position.
- Use presentation techniques to enhance your arguments. Speak clearly and make eye contact with listeners.
- During the debate, listen carefully and evaluate the opposing team's facts and reasoning so you can respond effectively.

Conduct the debate for the class, and ask your audience to judge which team was more persuasive.



# Comparing Texts



## Do heroes have responsibilities?

Explore the Big Question as you read these poems. Take notes about the heroic characters, both obvious and less so, and consider the attitudes they express toward duty and responsibility.

### READING TO COMPARE CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATIONS

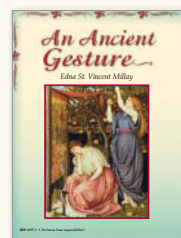
All the poems in this section are retellings of segments of the *Odyssey*. As you read each poem, consider how it both reflects and transforms the original characters and story.



#### “An Ancient Gesture”

**Edna St. Vincent Millay** (1892–1950)

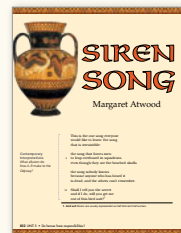
American poet Edna St. Vincent Millay lived a bohemian, unconventional life and wrote experimental, often passionate poems. Her poetry collection *The Harp Weaver and Other Poems* (1923) earned her a Pulitzer Prize.



#### “Siren Song”

**Margaret Atwood** (b. 1930)

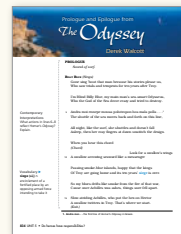
Novelist and poet Margaret Atwood has received extensive critical acclaim, literary honors, and popular success—a feat few writers achieve. Her work has been translated into numerous languages and published in more than twenty-five countries.



#### from *The Odyssey*

**Derek Walcott** (b. 1930)

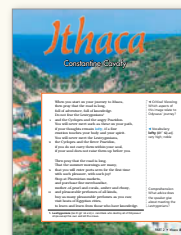
Derek Walcott was born in St. Lucia, West Indies, and his work reflects his Caribbean heritage. A master poet, he has won numerous awards for his work, including the 1992 Nobel Prize in Literature.



#### “Ithaca”

**Constantine Cavafy** (1860–1933)

Constantine Cavafy was born to Greek parents in Alexandria, Egypt. He is considered by many to be the most influential and important Greek poet of the twentieth century.



## Comparing Contemporary Interpretations

A **contemporary interpretation** of a literary work is a new piece of writing that a modern-day author bases on an older text. Even when they are based on the same text, contemporary interpretations can differ widely in purpose and theme. Each writer's cultural and historical background, attitudes, and beliefs profoundly affect his or her perceptions of the older work and influence the creation of the new work.

Writers draw from classical, traditional, or simply well-known source material for a variety of reasons, such as the following:

- The work presents timeless or universal themes that are relevant to modern-day life.
- The work offers recognizable characters that the writer recasts in a modern setting.
- The work, or some part of it, bears similarities to a modern-day conflict. The original work functions as a metaphor for the modern conflict the author wishes to explore.
- The writer wants to bring to the forefront characters who might have played minor or supporting roles in the original text.
- The work simply provides a rich basis for additional interpretations and new layers of meaning.

The characters and events of Homer's *Odyssey* are timeless and universal in their appeal. They have inspired many contemporary interpretations, including the poems you are about to read. By reinventing and transforming Homer's tales, modern-day writers shed new light on Homer's ancient words.

Contemporary interpretations of literature from ages past can be viewed as extended allusions to the ancient or traditional texts. An **allusion** is a reference to a well-known person, place, event, or work of literature or art. As you read, use a chart like the one shown to note the extended allusion each poet makes to Homer's *Odyssey*. Then, think about the ways in which the allusion helps each poet express a new, modern meaning.

Poem	Allusion to the <i>Odyssey</i>	Meaning

# *An Ancient Gesture*

*Edna St. Vincent Millay*



- I thought, as I wiped my eyes on the corner of my apron:  
 Penelope did this too.  
 And more than once: you can't keep weaving all day  
 And undoing it all through the night;  
 5 Your arms get tired, and the back of your neck gets tight;  
 And along towards morning, when you think it will never  
 be light,  
 And your husband has been gone, and you don't know  
 where, for years,  
 Suddenly you burst into tears;  
 There is simply nothing else to do.
- 10 And I thought, as I wiped my eyes on the corner of my apron:  
 This is an ancient gesture, **authentic**, antique,  
 In the very best tradition, classic, Greek;  
 Ulysses<sup>1</sup> did this too.  
 But only as a gesture,—a gesture which implied  
 15 To the assembled throng that he was much too moved  
 to speak.  
 He learned it from Penelope . . .  
 Penelope, who really cried.

1. **Ulysses** Latin name for Odysseus.

### Contemporary Interpretations

What connection does the speaker make between herself and Penelope?

◀ **Vocabulary**  
**authentic** (ô then´ tik) *adj.* genuine

◀ **Analyze Representations**  
 How does the representation of Penelope in this painting compare to her portrayal in the poem?

## Critical Thinking

- 1. Key Ideas and Details: (a)** What is the “ancient gesture”?  
**(b) Summarize:** According to the speaker, what caused Penelope to employ this gesture? **(c) Infer:** Why might the speaker have made a similar gesture? Explain.
- 2. Key Ideas and Details: (a)** According to the speaker, in addition to Penelope who else made this ancient gesture? **(b) Compare and Contrast:** How did this other gesture differ from Penelope’s? **(c) Analyze:** What do the different qualities of their gestures show about these characters? Use details from the poem to support your answer.
- 3. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: (a)** What questions about the speaker are left unanswered? Explain. **(b) Analyze Cause and Effect:** What effect do these unanswered questions create? Explain.
- 4. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: (a)** According to this interpretation, does Odysseus live up to his responsibility as a husband? Explain. **(b)** Who do you think the poet feels is the hero of the *Odyssey*—Penelope or Odysseus? [*Connect to the Big Question: Do heroes have responsibilities?*]



# SIREN SONG

Margaret Atwood

## Contemporary Interpretations

What allusion do lines 4–9 make to the *Odyssey*?

This is the one song everyone would like to learn: the song that is irresistible:

5 the song that forces men  
to leap overboard in squadrons  
even though they see the beached skulls

the song nobody knows  
because anyone who has heard it  
is dead, and the others can't remember.

10 Shall I tell you the secret  
and if I do, will you get me  
out of this bird suit?<sup>1</sup>

---

1. **bird suit** Sirens are usually represented as half bird and half woman.

I don't enjoy it here  
squatting on this island  
15 looking **picturesque** and mythical

with these two feathery maniacs,  
I don't enjoy singing  
this trio, fatal and valuable.

I will tell the secret to you,  
20 to you, only to you.  
Come closer. This song

is a cry for help: Help me!  
Only you, only you can,  
you are unique

25 at last. Alas  
it is a boring song  
but it works every time.

#### ◀ Vocabulary

**picturesque** (pik' chər esk') *adj.* attractive and interesting

#### Contemporary Interpretations

What does the contemporary Siren say to flatter and lure the listener?

## Critical Thinking

- 1. Key Ideas and Details: (a)** In the first stanza, what song does the speaker say everyone wants to learn? **(b) Analyze Cause and Effect:** What does this song have the power to do?
- 2. Key Ideas and Details: (a)** What does the speaker want in exchange for revealing the song's secret? **(b) Interpret:** Why does the speaker want to make this deal? Explain.
- 3. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: (a)** Why do you think the speaker's compliment in lines 23 and 24 is so effective? **(b) Make Generalizations:** What might the speaker be saying about the relationships between men and women? Cite details from the poem in your answer.
- 4. Key Ideas and Details: (a)** How does the speaker feel about her song and its secret? **(b) Support:** Which details in the poem support your answer?
- 5. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: (a)** How does the Siren affect heroes? Explain. **(b)** Do you think the Siren should be held responsible for her effect on heroes? Why or why not? [*Connect to the Big Question: Do heroes have responsibilities?*]



Prologue and Epilogue from  
*The Odyssey*

Derek Walcott

**PROLOGUE**

*Sound of surf.*

**BILLY BLUE** (*Sings*)

Gone sing 'bout that man because his stories please us,  
Who saw trials and tempests for ten years after Troy.

I'm Blind Billy Blue, my main man's sea-smart Odysseus,  
Who the God of the Sea drove crazy and tried to destroy.

5 Andra moi ennepe mousa polutropon hos mala polla . . .<sup>1</sup>  
The shuttle of the sea moves back and forth on this line,

All night, like the surf, she shuttles and doesn't fall  
Asleep, then her rosy fingers at dawn unstitch the design.

When you hear this chord  
(*Chord*)

10 A swallow arrowing seaward like a messenger  
Look for a swallow's wings

Passing smoke-blue islands, happy that the kings  
Of Troy are going home and its ten years' **siege** is over.

So my blues drifts like smoke from the fire of that war,  
Cause once Achilles was ashes, things sure fell apart.

15 Slow-striding Achilles, who put the hex on Hector  
A swallow twitters in Troy. That's where we start.  
(*Exit.*)

**Contemporary Interpretations**

What actions in lines 6–8 reflect Homer's *Odyssey*? Explain.

**Vocabulary** ►  
**siege** (sēj) *n.*

encirclement of a fortified place by an opposing armed force intending to take it

---

1. **Andra moi** . . . the first line of Homer's *Odyssey* in Greek.

## EPILOGUE

**BILLY BLUE** (*Sings*)

I sang of that man against whom the sea still rages,  
Who escaped its terrors, that despair could not destroy,

20 Since that first blind singer, others will sing down the ages  
Of the heart in its harbour, then long years after Troy,  
after Troy.

And a house, happy for good, from a swallow's omen,  
Let the trees clap their hands, and the surf whisper amen.

For a rock, a rock, a rock, a rock-steady woman  
Let the waves clap their hands and the surf whisper amen.

25 For that peace which, in their mercy, the gods allow men.  
(*Fade. Sound of surf.*)

### Contemporary Interpretations

Which words suggest that the story of Homer's *Odyssey* will always be meaningful?

### Spiral Review

#### CULTURAL

**CONTEXT** What aspect of Derek Walcott's Caribbean background might these lines suggest?

## Critical Thinking

- 1. Key Ideas and Details:** (a) Who is the speaker's "main man"? (b) **Interpret:** What is the speaker's attitude toward this "main man"?
- 2. Key Ideas and Details:** (a) What type of music does the speaker sing? (b) **Analyze:** Considering the loneliness, death, and defeat that occur in Homer's *Odyssey*, why is the speaker's musical style appropriate? Explain.
- 3. Key Ideas and Details:** (a) How is Penelope described in the Epilogue? (b) **Infer:** What seems to be the speaker's attitude toward Penelope?
- 4. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** Overall, which elements from Homer's *Odyssey* seem most interesting to Walcott? Use details from the poem in your answer.
- 5. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** (a) Which details suggest that the poet felt a responsibility to show respect for Homer's *Odyssey*? (b) Do you think Billy Blue feels responsible for sharing Odysseus' story? Why or why not? [*Connect to the Big Question: Do heroes have responsibilities?*]





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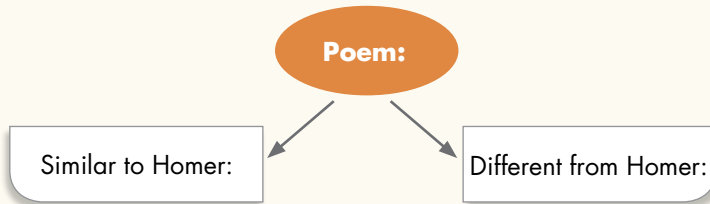
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## Comparing Contemporary Interpretations

**1. Craft and Structure** The author of each contemporary interpretation in this section uses Homer’s work as inspiration for new ideas. Use a chart like the one shown to explain how each poem is like and unlike Homer’s *Odyssey*.



- 2. Key Ideas and Details** Select one poem in this section, and identify the comment the poet is making about modern life. Support your explanation with details from your completed chart.
- 3. Craft and Structure (a)** Identify an allusion in at least two of the poems. **(b)** Explain what the reference adds to the meaning of the poem. **(c)** Tell which allusion you think is more (or most) effective, and why.



## Timed Writing

### Explanatory Text: Essay

Each writer in this section draws on Homer’s epic to communicate a message suited to today’s world. In an essay, compare how each poet uses classical allusions in combination with his or her own perspective. Support your ideas with evidence from the texts. **(40 minutes)**

### 5-Minute Planner

1. Read the prompt carefully and completely.
2. Think about these questions, and jot down ideas for your essay:
  - What is each poet’s main message?
  - What makes each poet’s allusion appropriate for his or her message?
  - In what ways does each poem shed new light on the events or characters of Homer’s *Odyssey*?
3. Choose and plan an organizational strategy for your essay.
4. Reread the prompt. Then, refer to your notes as you draft your essay.

### USE ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

As you write, use academic language, including the following words or their related forms:

**circumstance**

**discuss**

**interpret**

**perspective**

For more information about academic vocabulary, see page xlvi.

## Idioms, Technical Terms, and Jargon

An **idiom** is an expression that is characteristic of a language, region, community, or class of people. It cannot be understood literally. For example, *throw in the towel* has nothing to do with a towel; instead, it refers to a boxer's act of forfeiting a match. Now, the phrase has reached past sports to become an idiom that means "give up." Often, dictionaries list idioms at the end of the entry for the main word in the idiom.

Many fields of study, work, and play have **technical terms**. These are words that may be familiar in general use but also have specialized meanings in a particular field. Examples from the field of computers include *software*, *hard drive*, *the Web*, and *USB port*. Technical terms help people who share knowledge of the field communicate more effectively.

Like technical language, **jargon** refers to the specialized words and phrases used in a specific field. Jargon is useful and practical for those working in a particular profession because it makes communications efficient and precise. However, jargon can also make simple things sound complex or mask what a speaker really means.

Jargon	Meaning
The vehicle's internal combustion engine became depleted of its distilled mixture of hydrocarbons.	The car ran out of gas.
This cleansing bar is hot off the shelf.	This soap is brand new.
Stakeholders in our educational setting need new informational resources.	Students in our school need new textbooks.

### Practice A

Match the definition in the box with the underlined technical term or jargon in each sentence. Use context clues to figure out the meanings.

screen      clarinet      new sidewalks  
car-washer      black eye

- When the ball hit me in the face, I ended up with a periorbital hematoma.
- On the large monitor, I can see more of the document at once.
- The jazz musician put his licorice stick to his lips and played.
- The vehicle appearance operative washed and dried the car.
- Public infrastructure upgrades are needed so people can walk safely.

### Practice B

Identify the idiom in each sentence. Then, write a definition for each one. If you are unsure of the meaning of the word or phrase, check your definition in a print or online dictionary.

1. She let us down by not showing up for the game.
2. I am up to my ears in homework.
3. Marvin, please cool it and sit down over there.
4. It's been a long day, so I'm going to turn in.
5. Jurors must try to keep an open mind during the trial.
6. Let's just nip this problem in the bud.
7. What are you driving at?
8. Your question has put the salesperson on the spot.
9. If you cheat in that game, I will blow the whistle on you.
10. I'm going to whip this team into shape.

**Activity** Prepare five notecards like the one shown below for each of the following words: *mouse*, *spare*, *snake*, *key*, and *single*. Write the word on a card. Look the word up in a dictionary, and write down its main meaning. Then, identify the field or profession in which the word is used technically, and write the technical meaning on the card.

<b>Word:</b>
<b>Common Definition:</b>
<b>Field:</b>
<b>Technical Definition:</b>

### Comprehension and Collaboration

Education is a specialized field. Work with several classmates to create a glossary of technical terms that apply to a school setting. You might begin with words like *computer lab*, *activity bus*, and *hall pass*. Discuss how these terms may not be familiar to people outside of a school environment.

## Comparing Media Coverage

Most forms of news media, including TV, newspapers, magazines, and documentaries use combinations of verbal, visual, and even audio texts to convey information. It is important to understand how media makers shape readers' and viewers' understanding of events through the presentation choices they make.

### Learn the Skills

Analyze and then compare and contrast the ways in which different types of media convey similar news stories.

**Comparing and Contrasting Presentations** As you look at different types of media coverage, compare and contrast the ways in which text, graphics, video, audio, and photographs portray people and events.

- *When examining verbal texts, ask:* In what order are the events described? What event, if any, is identified as most important? What words or phrases indicate that importance? How much context for a story is provided? How much detail is included?
- *When viewing visual images, ask:* Why was this image chosen? What attitude toward the story does the image reveal?

**Comparing and Contrasting Communication** Once you have analyzed the presentation of events, compare and contrast the ways in which information is communicated. Ask these questions:

- How is the information in the verbal text and in the visual images similar and different?
- Are any statements or images unflattering or negative? If so, how?
- Which treatment, the verbal text or the visual image, gives more detailed information or is more powerful? Why?

### Twin Pandas Reach Critical Milestone

Veterinarians at the Beijing Zoo have announced that twin pandas born in September are now expected to survive. Their mother, Yong Yong, was unable to nurse them from birth. The zoo staff quickly intervened, but the future of the young pandas was uncertain. Now that the pandas have survived their first seven weeks, veterinarians are optimistic that the pandas will survive.

When asked how long the pandas will require care



- ▲ 2. This photograph shows a scene that is part of the event the text describes. Compare and contrast how the photograph and the text communicate information.

- ▲ 1. This article describes an event. Compare and contrast how this article and the photograph present the same event.

## Practice the Skills

Apply what you have learned and use the discussion guide below to complete the activity.

### ACTIVITY: Compare and Contrast Text and Visuals

With a partner, analyze two pairings of image and text that report on the same subject. Use the encyclopedia entry shown below as your first pairing. Then, research print and online sources to locate another example of text and images that address the same subject. Take notes on both pairings as you analyze how the visual and the verbal texts present events and communicate information. Use the discussion guide below to organize your observations about similarities and differences between the verbal texts and the visuals. Then, write and present a summary of your findings to your class.

### San Francisco Earthquake



### Damage from the San Francisco Earthquake

The San Francisco earthquake of 1906 had its epicenter near San Francisco, but the effects of the quake reached from southern Oregon to Los Angeles. Those who experienced the quake described it as about a minute of forceful shaking and powerful shocks.

The conditions of the earthquake challenged the views of contemporary scientists and resulted in extensive studies by scientists of the time. The insights that resulted from their research are the basis for

Use a **discussion guide** like this to compare and contrast how events are presented and information is communicated in visual and non-visual texts.

- 1. Compare:** What event is depicted in both the visual and verbal texts?
- 2. Contrast:** What aspect of the event does the verbal text describe that the visual does not? What aspect of the event does the visual bring to life that the verbal text does not?
- 3. Compare and contrast:** What overall information, or main idea, is communicated by the visual text alone? What overall information is communicated by the verbal text alone?
- 4. Evaluate:** Would the encyclopedia entry be as effective if it contained words only? Would your second example be as effective as verbal text only? Why or why not?
- 5. Generalize:** What generalizations might you make about the kinds of information that are best conveyed with visual texts and the kinds of information that seem better suited to verbal text?



## Write a Narrative

### Autobiographical Narrative

**Defining the Form** An **autobiographical narrative** describes real events in the writer's life and shares the lessons or wisdom the writer gained from the experiences. You might use elements of autobiographical narration in letters, journals, reflective essays, or persuasive essays.

**Assignment** Write an autobiographical narrative about an event that taught you a valuable lesson. Include the following elements:

- ✓ a *sequence of events* involving you, the writer
- ✓ a *problem, or conflict*, and a lesson you learned from it
- ✓ *precise sensory language* and *informative details* that convey a vivid picture of events and characters
- ✓ effective story elements such as *dialogue*, *pacing*, *description*, *reflection*, and *multiple plot lines*
- ✓ a structure that *introduces* an event and point of view, has a *smooth progression* of events, and a *strong, reflective conclusion*
- ✓ your thoughts, feelings, or views about the *significance* of events
- ✓ error-free grammar, including *varied sentence structure*

To preview the criteria on which your autobiographical narrative may be judged, see the rubric on page 851.

### FOCUS ON RESEARCH

When you write narrative texts, you might perform research to

- gather authentic details about the setting of your story.
- find out how others who participated in the events perceived or were affected by them.
- gather background information, such as historical data, that provides a context for the events you describe.

Incorporate direct quotes from others smoothly into your story, noting who spoke and under what circumstances. If you use quotations from other writers, cite them accurately.

### READING-WRITING CONNECTION

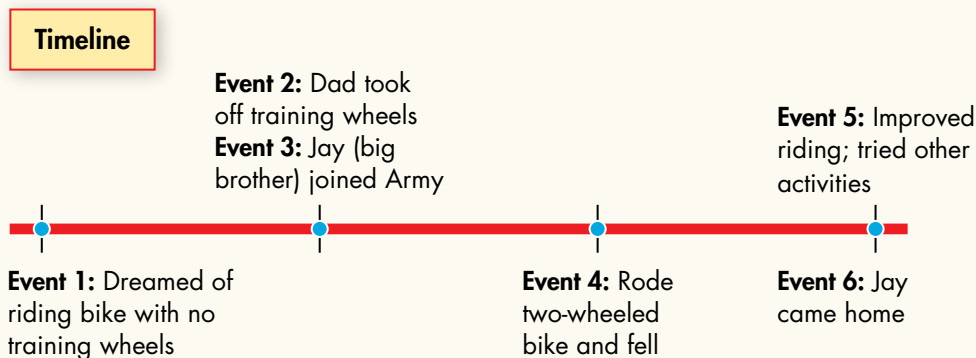
To get a feel for autobiographical narratives, read "My English" by Julia Alvarez on page 146.

## Prewriting/Planning Strategies

**Choose an event to explore.** Your purpose for writing is to relate a meaningful experience and to share your insights with readers. It may be an experience in which you learned something about yourself, solved a problem, or understood a situation in a new way. To find a topic, try either of these strategies:

- **Consider the moment.** Make a chart with the following column headings: *Funny, Exciting, Interesting, Puzzling*. Then, recall moments in your life that fit each of these categories. Choose one of those moments as the basis for your narrative.
- **Make a map.** Draw the map or floor plan of a place that is important to you. Label the areas and draw in details. Then, list words, phrases, activities, and people that you associate with this place. Review your ideas and choose one on which to focus your narrative.

**Structure the sequence.** Create a detailed record of events by making a timeline like the one shown. Write down the first incident related to your subject, and record subsequent incidents in the order and place in which they occurred. Take into account that different events in your story might happen at or around the same time. Weave these multiple aspects of your plot into your timeline. Note the significance of each event so that you will be able to communicate it to your audience in your narrative.



**Create a details bank.** Before you draft, gather details about your characters and settings that will bring them to life for readers. Quickly jot down words and phrases that describe how different characters look, speak, and behave. Likewise, note sensory details—words that appeal to the senses of sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing—about key places in your story. As you draft, draw on these details to add interest and precision to your writing.

## Drafting Strategies

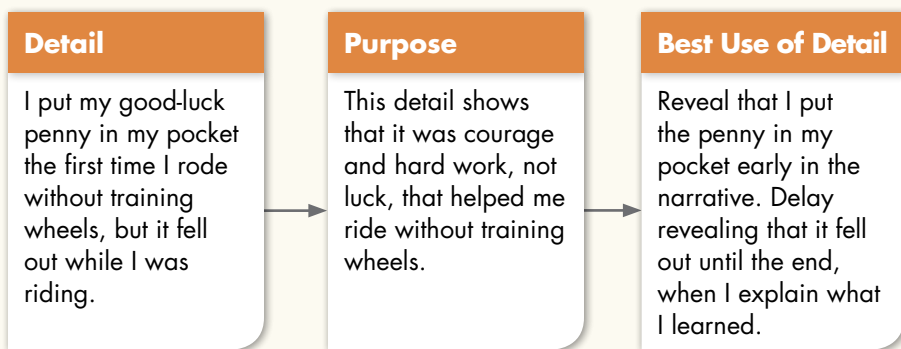
**Identify your main point.** As you draft, think about why this experience matters to you. To convey that importance to readers, clearly state the main problem you faced and what you learned from it. Then, organize your details to highlight the significance of that main point.

**Show, don't tell.** Use descriptions, dialogue, movements, gestures, and characters' thoughts to make events vivid for your readers. For example, do not simply report that a street was noisy—provide details that help readers hear the commotion. Additionally, add sensory details from the details bank you made earlier. Appeal to as many senses as possible to bring scenes to life for readers.

**Pace the action.** Details and description add substance to your essay, but too much can slow the pace, or flow, of the story. Be sure that every detail you include has a clear purpose and keeps the reader engaged.

- Emphasize the central conflict that sets the story in motion.
- Create suspense by withholding some details until later in the narrative.
- Conclude by reflecting on the experience and telling what you learned from it.

Use a flow chart like the one shown below to help you decide which details to include in your narrative and the most effective time to reveal them.



**Create realistic dialogue.** Dialogue can help move your story along, reveal what your characters are like, and break up long passages of prose. Work to write dialogue that sounds authentic rather than stiff or unnatural. As you write, pause occasionally to read the dialogue aloud. Listen to make sure the dialogue sounds as if real people are speaking to one another.

## Revising to Combine Sentences Using Adverb Clauses

**Adverb clauses** can be used to combine information from two sentences into one sentence. Often, the revised sentence will make the intended meaning more obvious.

**Two sentences:** I joined the panel. Jay is the leader.

**Combined:** I joined the panel because Jay is the leader.

**Identifying Adverb Clauses** A clause is any group of words with a subject and a verb. An *independent* clause can stand by itself as a complete sentence; a *dependent*, or *subordinate*, clause cannot. An *adverb clause* is a dependent clause that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. It begins with a subordinating conjunction such as *when* or *because* and tells *where*, *when*, *in what way*, *to what extent*, *under what condition*, or *why*.

**When:** *After I read the report*, I agreed with the mayor.

**Condition:** Dan will ask for a refund *if you will go with him*.

**In what way:** The bulldog yawned *as if he were utterly bored*.

**Why:** I drew a map *so that they would not get lost*.

**Combining Sentences** When combining two short sentences using adverb clauses, follow these steps:

1. Look for a relationship between the ideas of the two clauses.
2. Select the appropriate subordinating conjunction to show that relationship. Place the adverb clause at the beginning or end of the combined sentence—wherever it conveys your intent more clearly.
3. Use a comma to separate a subordinate clause when it begins a sentence.

### Common Subordinating Conjunctions

after	because	since	when
although	before	so that	whenever
as	even though	unless	whether
as soon as	if	until	while

### Grammar in Your Writing

Review several paragraphs of your narrative and highlight any consecutive short sentences that you find. Look for a possible adverbial relationship (*where*, *when*, *in what way*, and so on) in two of the sentences. Following the steps outlined here, combine the sentences using an appropriate subordinating conjunction.

## Revising Strategies

**Maintain an effective sequence of events.** In planning your narrative, you created a timeline to sequence the events. Revisit that timeline and compare it to your draft. Consider any differences between your plan and your execution, and make sure those changes are warranted. In addition, identify any passages that interrupt the flow of your story or stray off point. Consider modifying or deleting those passages to strengthen your overall narrative.

**Explode a moment.** Reread your draft and identify the most important moments, such as passages that capture the conflict or show a realization. For each moment, answer *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, and *how* questions, and jot down any new details your answers reveal. Consider whether additional details will help make the moment more precise and memorable. If so, incorporate them into your draft.

**Choose vivid words.** Your narrative will be more interesting for your reader if you use precise words and phrases that supply appealing details and engage the audience's senses. Doing so will create a vivid picture of the people, places, and experiences you describe.

**Vague:** Mia *sat* on the porch as her brother *drove* away.

**Vivid:** Mia *slumped* on the porch as her brother *sped* away.

If necessary, consult a thesaurus to find vivid word choices like the examples in this chart.

Vague	Vivid
Walk	Pace, trudge, scramble, shuffle
Like	Be fond of, enjoy, appreciate, adore
Nice	Pleasant, kind, gentle, thoughtful
Boring	Uninteresting, tedious, dreary, dull, mind-numbing

### Peer Review

Exchange drafts with a partner. Review each other's work, highlighting weak words that could be replaced by stronger ones. Then, revise your draft, replacing vague language with vivid words that will capture your reader's interest. After you have made your revisions, exchange drafts with your partner again. Discuss whether the new word choices are more effective.

## Varying Sentence Structure and Length

A sequence of sentences of the same length and structural pattern can have a tedious effect on readers. You can make your paragraphs more interesting and readable by varying sentence length, introducing new sentence beginnings, and inverting subject-verb order.

**Vary Sentence Length** If you find an unbroken series of long sentences, look for an opportunity to include a short sentence. Since the short sentence will draw the reader's attention, use it to emphasize an important detail or idea. Be sure that it is a complete thought and not a fragment.

**Original:** Memories of long hours of practice, the brutal weather, the aches and bruises of an endless season were erased by the single fact that we had won the championship.

**Revised:** Memories of long hours of practice, the brutal weather, the aches and bruises of an endless season were erased by a single fact. We had won the championship.

**Vary Sentence Beginnings** If you have written a series of sentences beginning with a noun or pronoun, look for opportunities to start sentences with different parts of speech. Look at these techniques:

**Adverb clause:** *Anywhere you go, you will still find most people care about others.*

**Prepositional phrase:** *After a long Saturday of work, Sarah did not feel like going out.*

**Complement:** *Most interesting to me was an electronic display of the battlefield. (complement of the verb was)*

**Direct object:** *Our report I gave to the editor; my opinion I kept to myself. (object of the verb gave)*

**Vary Subject-Verb Order** You can vary sentence beginnings by reversing the usual subject-verb order.

**Original:** The mystery guest is here at last.

**Inverted:** Here at last is the mystery guest.

### Grammar in Your Writing

As you review the three longest paragraphs in your draft, examine the length and pattern of each sentence to look for ways to improve variety. Change sentence lengths, alter sentence beginnings, and invert subject-verb order to add interest to your writing.

## STUDENT MODEL: Jonathan Chan, Royersford, PA

### True Friend

Late one Thursday night in July, my sister and I were packing for our upcoming trip to youth camp. This was my first time attending the camp, but it would be my older sister Phoebe's third experience. Everything was running smoothly until my mother called from downstairs, "Don't forget to grab a sleeping bag from my closet!" Our mother never dreamed such a simple statement would start a desperate dash by both of us to seize the most coveted sleeping bag in our household.

Jonathan's use of dialogue helps to make this opening scene more real and vivid.

The night-sky blue, extra long, brand new, one hundred percent fleece sleeping bag with a built-in pillow was one-of-a-kind. By comparison, the old sleeping bag, with a broken zipper and a small hole forming at the bottom, looked even worse. Phoebe and I reached for the beautiful new bag at the exact same moment. Insulting remarks sailed from our lips as we each grabbed it. Our stomps and yells attracted our parents to the fight scene. I began to argue that I had reached the bag first, when my sister simply let go, returned to her room, and slammed the door. She was so thoroughly angry we did not speak again that night.

The detailed description of the sleeping bag helps to establish the conflict.

As the weekend progressed, our relationship did not improve. Even worse, she had shared the story with her friends. Phoebe's words were so moving, they convinced her friends to embark on a personal voyage to "get me." As a result, I spent the getaway with a target on my back.

Here, the conflict intensifies.

As the skinny new kid at the camp, terror struck my heart when I heard a rumor about the plot against me. By Sunday morning, the plan, "Operation Little Brother," was all set. My sister's friends were on a mission.

Jonathan uses specific details to paint a picture of the problem he faces.

I was shooting hoops in the gym that morning when my sister's friends appeared. I looked frantically for an escape but was quickly surrounded. The assailants closed to within inches of me when a familiar voice echoed through the emptiness of the open gymnasium. My sister walked calmly between her friends and me and said, "Do not bother him or you will feel the wrath of Phoebe." I was in awe. With this statement, "Operation Little Brother" came to an abrupt end. The sister I was feuding with had just saved me. Her friends never bothered me again.

The dialogue and description help to convey the drama of the moment and make it seem real.

On the trip home I asked her to explain her unlikely action. She simply replied, "I still don't like you, but I would dislike myself even more if I ever abandoned a friend in trouble." Since then, I have often modeled my actions to emulate my sister's behavior that day. I have learned that even when I am angry, I must stand up for my friends. My sister has taught me many things, but the most important lesson is how to be a true friend.

Jonathan concludes by drawing an important lesson from his experience.

## Editing and Proofreading

Check your draft for errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

**Focus on dates and facts.** Review your manuscript to make sure you have provided accurate factual information. Capitalize the proper names of people or places, and use correct punctuation when including dates.

## Publishing and Presenting

Consider one of the following ways to share your writing:

**Present an oral narrative.** Mark up a copy of your autobiographical narrative, underlining any thoughts or conversations that you believe your audience would enjoy. As you present your narrative to your class, emphasize those passages. Be sure to pace the presentation of actions to accommodate changes in time or mood. When you are done, gracefully accept your classmates' applause and praise.

**Post your essay.** With your classmates, create a bulletin board display of the narratives. Have each writer supply a short comment about the event or idea that inspired his or her writing.

## Reflecting on Your Writing

**Writer's Journal** Jot down your answers to this question:

*How did writing about events help you to understand them better?*

### Spiral Review

Earlier in the unit, you learned about **simple and compound sentences** (p. 796) and **complex and compound-complex sentences** (p. 826). Check your narrative to be sure you have used these grammatical forms correctly.

### Rubric for Self-Assessment

Use the following criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of your essay.

Criteria	Rating Scale
<b>PURPOSE/FOCUS</b> Clearly presents a narrative that develops real experiences and events; engages and orients the reader by setting out a problem, a situation, or an observation	<i>not very</i> ..... <i>very</i> 1    2    3    4
<b>ORGANIZATION</b> Creates a smooth progression of experiences or events; sequences events so they build to create a coherent whole; presents a strong conclusion that follows from and reflects on events in the narrative	1    2    3    4
<b>DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS/ELABORATION</b> Establishes one or more clear points of view; clearly introduces a narrator and characters; effectively uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines	1    2    3    4
<b>LANGUAGE</b> Uses precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of experiences, events, settings, and characters	1    2    3    4
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> Demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English in writing	1    2    3    4



## SELECTED RESPONSE

### I. Reading Literature

**Directions:** *This excerpt from Bullfinch's Mythology tells part of the tale of Jason and the Golden Fleece. King Pelias has ordered Jason to obtain the Golden Fleece. In the land of Colchis, Jason marries Medea, a sorceress and daughter of the king, Aeetes. Aeetes owns the Golden Fleece and promises it to Jason if he plows a field with fire-breathing oxen, sows a field with dragon teeth, and defeats the sleepless dragon that guards the Golden Fleece. Read the excerpt, and then answer the questions that follow.*

The brazen-footed bulls rushed in, breathing fire from their nostrils that burned up the herbage as they passed. The sound was like the roar of a furnace, and the smoke like that of water upon quick-lime. Jason advanced boldly to meet them. His friends, the chosen heroes of Greece, trembled to behold him. Regardless of the burning breath, he soothed their rage with his voice, patted their necks with fearless hand, and adroitly slipped over them the yoke, and compelled them to drag the plough. The Colchians were amazed; the Greeks shouted for joy. Jason next proceeded to sow the dragon's teeth and plough them in. And soon the crop of armed men sprang up, and, wonderful to relate! no sooner had they reached the surface than they began to brandish their weapons and rush upon Jason. The Greeks trembled for their hero, and even she who had provided him a way of safety and taught him how to use it, Medea herself, grew pale with fear. Jason for a time kept his assailants at bay with his sword and shield, till, finding their numbers overwhelming, he resorted to the charm which Medea had taught him, seized a stone and threw it in the midst of his foes. They immediately turned their arms against one another, and soon there was not one of the dragon's brood left alive. The Greeks embraced their hero, and Medea, if she dared, would have embraced him too.

It remained to lull to sleep the dragon that guarded the fleece, and this was done by scattering over him a few drops of a preparation which Medea had supplied. At the smell he relaxed his rage, stood for a moment motionless, then shut those great round eyes, that had never been known to shut before, and turned over on his side, fast asleep. Jason seized the fleece and with his friends and Medea accompanying, hastened to their vessel before Aeetes the king could arrest their departure, and made the best of their way back to Thessaly, where they arrived safe, and Jason delivered the fleece to Pelias, and dedicated the *Argo* to Neptune.

1. **Part A** The story of Jason, as shown in this excerpt, contains which of the following **archetypal plot patterns**?

- A. magical transformation
- B. trickster prank
- C. heroic quest
- D. disguised identity

**Part B** Which detail from the excerpt best demonstrates this plot pattern?

- A. Jason marries Medea.
- B. Jason faces a series of difficult tasks.
- C. Jason tames the bulls.
- D. Jason uses a magical potion.

2. Which aspect of the **historical and cultural context** of ancient Greece does this excerpt most clearly reveal?

- A. Magical potions were frequently used by ordinary people.
- B. Agriculture was important and most ancient Greeks were familiar with farm tools and activities.
- C. The ancient Greeks condemned the taking of life, whether human or animal.
- D. The ancient Greeks did not undertake long journeys.

3. **Part A** Which **epic hero** character trait does Jason most clearly display in this excerpt?

- A. bravery
- B. obedience
- C. charm
- D. pride

**Part B** Which detail from the excerpt best shows this trait?

- A. "Jason delivered the fleece to Pelias, and dedicated the *Argo* to Neptune."
- B. "They immediately turned their arms against one another"
- C. "Jason advanced boldly to meet them"
- D. "before Aeetes the king could arrest their departure"

4. In what key way does an **epic simile** differ from a regular simile?

- A. Epic similes do not describe sounds, but regular similes do.
- B. Epic similes use *as*, and regular similes use *like*.
- C. Epic similes are shorter and less elaborate than regular similes.
- D. Epic similes are longer and more elaborate than regular similes.

5. What does it mean to start a story ***in medias res***?

- A. The story begins with a prologue that provides background information.
- B. The story begins without background information and with the action already underway.
- C. The story begins at the end of the action and then goes back in time to show how events unfolded.
- D. The story begins entirely with dialogue.

6. If this excerpt contained a **flashback**, what information would it most likely provide?

- A. stories of Jason's earlier feats
- B. the meaning of symbols in Greek mythology
- C. a timeline of Greek history
- D. details from Medea's childhood

7. What is the meaning of the underlined word *assailants* as it is used in the excerpt?

- A. friends
- B. bulls
- C. sailors
- D. attackers



### Timed Writing

8. Write a **contemporary interpretation** of this excerpt. Your interpretation should be a retelling of the story that either uses modern settings and details or describes events from the point of view of a minor character. Be sure to reread the passage before you write your contemporary interpretation.

GO ON 

## II. Reading Informational Text

**Directions:** Read the passages. Then, answer each question that follows.

### Encyclopedia Entry

**Bill of Rights** The Bill of Rights is the name for the first ten amendments to the Constitution of the United States of America. Some delegates to the Constitutional Convention believed that certain individual rights had to be protected from government interference. The Bill of Rights defines those protections. James Madison played a crucial role in the creation and ratification, or confirmation, of the document, which was officially adopted in 1791.

### Biography

James Madison (1751–1836) was born in Port Conway, Virginia. He attended the College of New Jersey, which is now Princeton University. After he graduated in 1771, he began his political career. Madison eventually went on to become the fourth president of the United States. However, his major contribution to the country came before his presidency. He served as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1787, drafting much of the document of the Constitution. In addition, he was a proponent and author of the Bill of Rights, which eventually tipped the scale for ratification of the Constitution.

### Public Document

#### Bill of Rights

**Amendment I:** Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

- Part A** Which of the following is true of James Madison?
  - He single-handedly wrote the entire Constitution and Bill of Rights.
  - He began his political career while attending Princeton University.
  - His major contribution to the country came before his presidency.
  - He was president from 1751–1836.
- Part B** Which sentence from the passage best indicates this accomplishment?
  - “He served as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1787.... In addition, he was a proponent and author of the Bill of Rights.”
  - “After he graduated in 1771, he began his political career.”
  - “Madison eventually went on to become the fourth president of the United States.”
  - “Some delegates...believed that certain individual rights had to be protected from government interference.”
- What is the best synonym for the underlined word *proponent*?
  - antagonist
  - advocate
  - critic
  - creator
- What rights are protected by Amendment I of the Bill of Rights?
  - freedom to bear arms
  - freedom of dress
  - protection from unnecessary search
  - freedom of speech and the press

### III. Writing and Language Conventions

**Directions:** Read the passage. Then, answer each question that follows.

(1) I had been looking forward to Nana's visit for months. (2) She came all the way to California from Ohio every August, and we always had so much fun together. (3) Each time I saw Nana, I learned something new. (4) She taught me to fish, to cook, and to sew. (5) A week before she was expected, my cousin invited me to come with his family to Yellowstone National Park. (6) I had never been there before, and I couldn't believe I had the chance to go. (7) Only after the phone call did I realize that the trip was the exact same week Nana was coming. (8) I had to make a decision. (9) In the end, I weighed the pros and cons, and I told my cousin that I couldn't go. (10) I saw Nana only twice a year. (11) Besides, Yellowstone will always be there for me to visit. (12) I saw Nana. (13) I knew I had made the right decision.

- Which of the following is a **compound sentence**?
  - sentence 1
  - sentence 2
  - sentence 3
  - sentence 4
- What is the **sentence structure** of sentence 5?
  - simple
  - compound
  - complex
  - compound-complex
- What is the **sentence structure** of sentence 8?
  - simple
  - compound
  - complex
  - compound-complex
- Which of these sentences is a **compound-complex sentence**?
  - sentence 9
  - sentence 10
  - sentence 11
  - sentence 12
- Which revision correctly combines sentences 12 and 13 with an identifying **adverb clause**?
  - I saw Nana; I knew I had made the right decision.
  - The right decision to see Nana had been made.
  - I saw Nana, and I knew I had made the right decision.
  - As soon as I saw Nana, I knew I had made the right decision.



# CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE

**Directions:** Follow the instructions to complete the tasks below as required by your teacher.

As you work on each task, incorporate both general academic vocabulary and literary terms you learned in Parts 1 and 2 of this unit.

## Writing

### TASK 1 Literature

#### Analyze a Literary Form

Write an essay in which you explain how the *Odyssey* exemplifies the epic form.

- Introduce the *Odyssey* and briefly summarize the story it tells.
- Set up a clear organization in which you explain the literary elements that are common to the epic form. Consider the form's structures, character types, plot patterns, and types of language, including figures of speech.
- Cite passages and details from the *Odyssey* to illustrate each epic element you discuss.
- Write a conclusion that follows logically from the ideas you share in the body of your essay.

### TASK 2 Literature

#### Analyze an Author's Interpretation of Source Material

Write an essay in which you analyze how an author from Part 2 of this unit draws on and transforms a theme or topic from an older work.

- Select a work from Part 2 of this unit that interprets, draws upon, or makes an allusion to an older work of literature.
- Organize your ideas in an outline that compares the two works.
- Begin your essay by introducing the selection you chose and briefly summarizing its content. Then, explain the source work, summarizing its content and explaining how it is used in the later work.
- Explain how the source material enriches the modern selection. In particular, analyze how the

material influences the plot, characters, meaning, or tone of the work you chose.

- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence from both works to support your ideas.
- Provide a strong conclusion that summarizes how references to the older work make your chosen selection more understandable and enjoyable.
- Use a variety of simple, complex, and compound sentences.

### TASK 3 Literature

#### Analyze Cultural Perspective

Write an essay in which you analyze the cultural perspective conveyed in a literary work from Part 2 of this unit. The work must have been written outside the United States.

##### Part 1

- Choose a work and reread it. Take notes as you review.
- Use your notes to write a summary of the work and to explain the cultural perspective it expresses.
- Answer the following question: How does the cultural experience or perspective influence the selection's content and contribute to the overall meaning and tone of the work?

##### Part 2

- Write an essay in which you explain the theme or message of the work and show with specific examples how that message is influenced by the author's cultural perspective.
- Establish and maintain a formal style and an objective tone.
- Provide a concluding statement that follows from and supports the explanation you have presented.

## Speaking and Listening

### TASK 4 Literature

#### Analyze a Complex Hero

Deliver an oral report in which you analyze a heroic character in a work of literature from Part 2 of this unit.

- Introduce the character and explain how the character's actions, dialogue, and interactions with other characters convey heroic qualities.
- Show how the character develops over the course of the work, analyzing how events and relationships with other characters reinforce the character's heroism.
- Cite specific examples from the work to show whether the character's actions suggest a hero's quest or a universal theme.
- Present your information and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically so that your audience can understand your ideas.
- Employ correct grammar and an appropriate speaking style.

## Research

### TASK 6 Literature



#### Do heroes have responsibilities?

In Part 2 of this unit, you have read about heroes. Now you will conduct a short research project on a local hero. Your hero might be a classmate, a neighbor, or even a family member or friend. Use both the texts you have read in Part 2 and your research to reflect on and write about this unit's Big Question. Review the following guidelines before you begin your research:

- Focus your research on one local hero.
- Gather information from at least two reliable sources. If possible, conduct an interview with your hero or with someone who can speak reliably about his or her achievements.
- Take notes as you gather information.
- Cite your sources accurately and thoroughly.

### TASK 5 Literature

#### Analyze Theme

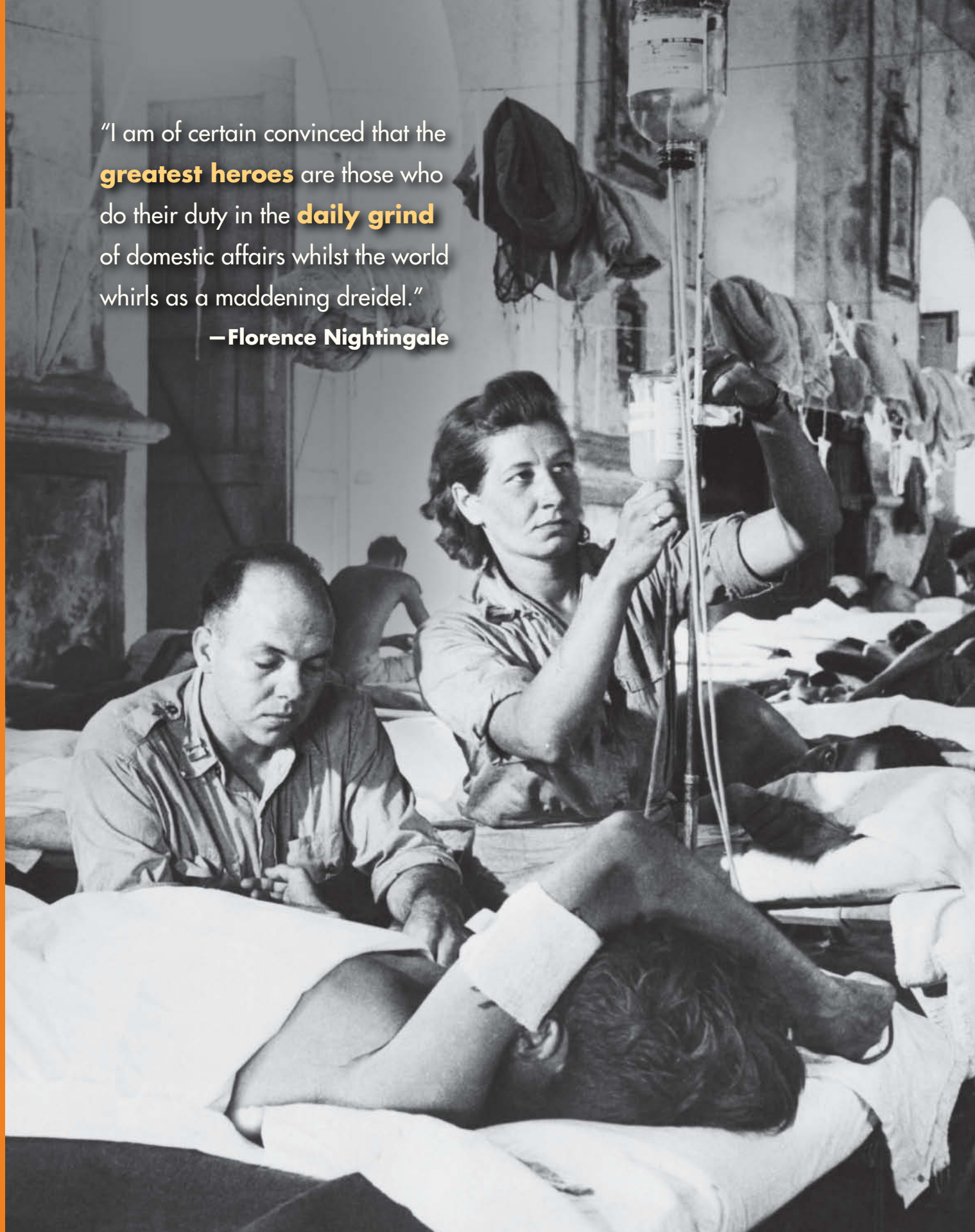
Deliver a presentation in which you analyze the theme in a literary work from Part 2 of this unit and consider whether it is universal.

- Explain which work you chose, and provide at least two interesting facts about its author or the culture it represents.
- Briefly summarize the work, and state the theme it expresses. Cite specific details from the work that support your interpretation.
- Discuss whether the theme the work expresses is universal—one shared by people across time and from different cultures. Cite specific details.
- Add interest to your presentation by including visuals, such as photographs or drawings.
- Explain or define terms with which your audience may not be familiar. Present information clearly, concisely, and logically so that listeners can follow your reasoning.
- Conclude with a summarizing statement.

When you have completed your research, write an essay in response to the Big Question. Discuss how your initial ideas have changed or been reinforced. Support your response with examples from the literature you have read and the research you have conducted.

"I am of certain convinced that the **greatest heroes** are those who do their duty in the **daily grind** of domestic affairs whilst the world whirls as a maddening dreidel."

—**Florence Nightingale**



## PART 3

### TEXT SET DEVELOPING INSIGHT

# DEFINING HEROISM

How do we define a hero? Is he or she someone who is stronger and braver than others? Is he or she someone we admire and want to emulate? Is the hero simply the person who does the right thing consistently or when no one else will? The selections that follow explore heroes of different kinds and examine the roles they play in our individual lives and in our culture. As you read each text, consider how it speaks to the Big Question for this unit: **Do heroes have responsibilities?**

◀ **CRITICAL VIEWING** Which, if any, of the people in this photograph is a hero? Explain your position.

#### CLOSE READING TOOL



Use the **Close Reading Tool** to practice the strategies you learn in this unit.

#### READINGS IN PART 3



ANCHOR TEXT

#### EPIC

*from the Ramayana*

R. K. Narayan (p. 860)



#### MYTH

*Perseus*

Edith Hamilton (p. 868)



#### NARRATIVE ESSAY

*The Washwoman*

Issac Bashevis Singer  
(p. 878)



#### INTERVIEW

*from The Hero's Adventure*

Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers (p. 886)



#### PERSONAL ESSAY

*from My Hero: Extraordinary People on the Heroes Who Inspire Them*

Elie Wiesel (p. 892)



#### SCIENTIFIC ARTICLE

*Of Altruism, Heroism and Nature's Gifts in the Face of Terror*

Natalie Angier (p. 898)



#### INFOGRAPHIC

*American Blood Donation*

(p. 904)



*from the* **Ramayana**



retold by R. K. Narayan

**Background:** As an adult, Rama is about to inherit the throne from his father when evil plots result in his banishment from the kingdom. For fourteen years, he wanders in exile with his wife, Sita, and his brother, Lakshmana. During this time, Sita is kidnapped by the evil giant Ravana, chief of a group of rakshasas, or demons. His name means “He who makes the universe scream.” Rama sets out to rescue Sita with the help of Hanuman, the monkey god, and a huge battle ensues. This selection opens as the battle is reaching its climax.



## Rama and Ravana in Battle

Every moment, news came to Ravana of fresh disasters in his camp. One by one, most of his commanders were lost. No one who went forth with battle cries was heard of again. Cries and shouts and the wailings of the widows of warriors came over the chants and songs of triumph that his courtiers arranged to keep up at a loud pitch in his assembly hall. Ravana became restless and abruptly left the hall and went up on a tower, from which he could obtain a full view of the city. He surveyed the scene below but could not stand it. One who had spent a lifetime in destruction, now found the gory spectacle **intolerable**. Groans and wailings reached his ears with deadly clarity. . . . This was too much for him. He felt a terrific rage rising within him, mixed with some admiration for Rama’s valor. He told himself, “The time has come for me to act by myself again.”

He hurried down the steps of the tower, returned to his chamber, and prepared himself for the battle. He had a ritual bath and performed special prayers to gain the **benediction** of Shiva; donned his battle dress, matchless armor, armlets, and crowns. He had on a protective armor for every inch of his body. . . .

When he emerged from his chamber, his heroic appearance was breathtaking. He summoned his chariot, which could be drawn by horses or move on its own if the horses were hurt or killed. People

◀ **intolerable**  
(in təl’ər ə bəl) *adj.*  
impossible to put up with; unbearable

◀ **benediction**  
(ben’ə dik’shən) *n.*  
goodwill or blessing

stood aside when he came out of the palace and entered his chariot. “This is my resolve,” he said to himself: “Either that woman Sita, or my wife Mandodari, will soon have cause to cry and roll in the dust in grief. Surely, before this day is done, one of them will be a widow.”

The gods in heaven noticed Ravana’s determined move and felt that Rama would need all the support they could muster. They requested Indra to send down his special chariot for Rama’s use. When the chariot appeared at his camp, Rama was deeply impressed with the magnitude and brilliance of the vehicle. . . .

Rama fastened his sword, slung two quivers full of rare arrows over his shoulders, and climbed into the chariot.

The beat of war drums, the challenging cries of soldiers, the trumpets, and the rolling chariots speeding along to confront each other, created a deafening mixture of noise. While Ravana had instructed his charioteer to speed ahead, Rama very gently ordered his chariot driver, “Ravana is in a rage; let him perform all the antics he desires and exhaust himself. Until then be calm; we don’t have to hurry forward. Move slowly and calmly, and you must strictly follow my instructions; I will tell you when to drive faster.”

Ravana’s assistant and one of his staunchest supporters, Mahodara—the giant among giants in his physical appearance—begged Ravana, “Let me not be a mere spectator when you confront Rama. Let me have the honor of grappling with him. Permit me to attack Rama.”

This illustration depicts an earlier episode in the *Ramayana*. Here, Rama’s ally Hanuman, the monkey god, has enlarged himself to serve as a bridge for Rama’s army.



“Rama is my sole concern,” Ravana replied. “If you wish to engage yourself in a fight, you may fight his brother Lakshmana.”

Noticing Mahodara’s purpose, Rama steered his chariot across his path in order to prevent Mahodara from reaching Lakshmana. Whereupon Mahodara ordered his chariot driver, “Now dash straight ahead, directly into Rama’s chariot.”

The charioteer, more practical-minded, advised him, “I would not go near Rama. Let us keep away.” But Mahodara, **obstinate** and intoxicated with war fever, made straight for Rama. He wanted to have the honor of a direct encounter with Rama himself in spite of Ravana’s advice; and for this honor he paid a heavy price, as it was a moment’s work for Rama to destroy him, and leave him lifeless and shapeless on the field. Noticing this, Ravana’s anger mounted further. He commanded his driver, “You will not slacken now. Go.” Many ominous signs were seen now—his bowstrings suddenly snapped; the mountains shook; thunders rumbled in the skies; tears flowed from the horses’ eyes; elephants with decorated foreheads moved along dejectedly. Ravana, noticing them, hesitated only for a second, saying, “I don’t care. This mere mortal Rama is of no account, and these omens do not concern me at all.” Meanwhile, Rama paused for a moment to consider his next step; and suddenly turned towards the armies supporting Ravana, which stretched away to the horizon, and destroyed them. He felt that this might be one way of saving Ravana. With his armies gone, it was possible that Ravana might have a change of heart. But it had only the effect of spurring Ravana on; he plunged forward and kept coming nearer Rama and his own doom.

◀ **obstinate**  
(äb´stə nət) *adj.*  
unreasonably  
determined;  
unyielding; stubborn

## ABOUT THE RETELLER

### **R. K. Narayan** (1906–2001)

R. K. Narayan was born in the city of Madras in southern India. He was one of nine children in a middle-class family. After briefly working as a teacher, he became a writer. In 1960, his novel *The Guide* won India’s highest literary honor.

Within a career that spanned nearly seventy years, Narayan wrote more than fifteen novels—as well as collections of short stories and essays. His works skillfully combine Western plots and themes with Indian subject matter.



# Close Reading Activities

## READ

### Comprehension

Reread all or part of the text to help you answer the following questions.

1. Who are the two key players in the battle?
2. Why are they fighting?
3. As the excerpt begins, which side is winning?
4. How do the gods help Rama?
5. What does Rama do to Ravana's armies?

**Research: Clarify Details** This selection may include references that are unfamiliar to you. Choose at least one unfamiliar detail, and briefly research it. Then, explain how the information you learned from research sheds light on an aspect of the text.

**Summarize** Write an objective summary of the text. Remember that an objective summary is free from opinion and evaluation.

### Language Study

**Selection Vocabulary** The following passages appear in the excerpt from the *Ramayana*. Identify a synonym for each boldface word. Then, use each word in a sentence of your own.

- One who had spent a lifetime in destruction, now found the gory spectacle **intolerable**.
- He had a ritual bath and performed special prayers to gain the **benediction** of Shiva; donned his battle dress, matchless armor, armlets, and crowns.
- But Mahodara, **obstinate** and intoxicated with war fever, made straight for Rama.

**Diction and Style** Study the passage from the epic that appears below. Then, answer the questions that follow.

One who had spent a lifetime in destruction, now found the gory spectacle intolerable. Groans and wailings reached his ears with deadly clarity. . . . This was too much for him. He felt a terrific rage rising within him, mixed with some admiration for Rama's valor.

1. **(a)** Choose a synonym that the writer could have used in place of *spectacle*. **(b)** Explain the differences in connotations between the synonym and *spectacle*. **(c)** Given its connotations, why do you think the author chose *spectacle* rather than a synonym? Explain.

2. **(a)** What does the word *terrific* often mean in general usage? **(b)** How does its meaning here suggest both terror and immensity? Explain.

**Conventions** Read this passage from the epic. Identify each sentence as simple or compound. Then, explain how the author's use of varied sentence structures makes the dialogue believable.

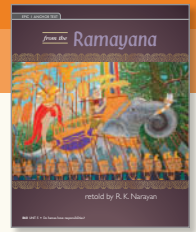
"I don't care. This mere mortal Rama is of no account, and these omens do not concern me at all."

### Academic Vocabulary

The following words appear in blue in the instructions and questions on the facing page.

**chaos**      **rationality**      **embodiment**

Categorize the words by deciding whether you know each one well, know it a little bit, or do not know it at all. Then, use a print or online dictionary to look up the definitions of the words you are unsure of or do not know at all.



## Literary Analysis

Reread the identified passages. Then, respond to the questions that follow.

### Focus Passage 1 (p. 862)

The beat of war drums...to drive faster.”

#### Key Ideas and Details

1. What is happening on the battlefield as Rama arrives in his chariot?
2. What instructions does Rama give to his charioteer?

#### Craft and Structure

3. **(a) Distinguish:** In the first sentence, which words create an image of the **chaos** and din of battle? **(b) Interpret:** How does the mood of the passage shift as Rama enters the scene? **(c) Analyze:** Cite specific word choices that create this abrupt shift in mood.
4. **Analyze:** What attitude toward Ravana is suggested by Rama’s use of the word *antics* and the notion that Ravana will soon “exhaust himself”? Explain.

#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

5. **(a) Distinguish:** Identify details throughout the excerpt that relate to caution or to heedlessness. **(b) Connect:** Explain how the epic associates goodness with calm and **rationality** and evil with disorder and impulsiveness.

## Archetype

An **archetype** is a character, image, situation, or type of plot that appears in the literature of all cultures and eras. Reread the selection, and note its presentation of archetypes.

1. **(a)** What qualities do the main characters exhibit? **(b)** How do these qualities reflect the archetypes of good and evil? Explain.
2. **(a)** What archetypal situations are depicted in the selection? Explain. **(b)** How is the situation itself an example of an archetype? Explain.

### Focus Passage 2 (p. 863)

The charioteer, more...his own doom.

#### Key Ideas and Details

1. **(a)** What does Mahodara do, despite the charioteer’s advice? **(b)** What is his motivation? **(c)** What happens to Mahodara as a result?
2. **(a)** What omens warn Ravana of his peril? **(b)** How does Ravana react to the omens? **(c)** What qualities in his character do these reactions reveal? Explain.

#### Craft and Structure

3. **Interpret:** Which details used to describe Mahodara suggest that violence is like both a drug and an illness? Explain.
4. **(a)** Why does Rama destroy Ravana’s armies? **(b) Analyze:** What attitude toward the value of life does this action suggest? **(c) Connect:** How does this detail remind the reader that Rama is the **embodiment** of a god?

#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

5. **Analyze:** In what ways does Ravana’s dismissal of omens suggest that in his battle with Rama he is at odds with creation itself? Explain.

3. **Defining Heroism:** **(a)** What personal qualities does an archetypal hero possess? **(b)** In what ways is Rama an archetypal hero? Explain, citing details from the selection to support your response.

## DISCUSS

### From Text to Topic **Write and Discuss**

Write a quick response to the passage. Then, share and discuss your response and the passage with a small group of classmates.

Every moment, news came ... act by myself again." (p. 861)

## WRITE

### Writing to Sources **Informative Text**

#### Assignment

Write a **comparison-and-contrast essay** in which you discuss the similarities and differences between Rama and Ravana, and explore what each character means in the epic's presentation of good versus evil.

**Prewriting and Planning** Reread the excerpt, looking for descriptions of each character's thoughts, feelings, actions, and words. Record your notes in a two-column chart.

**Drafting** Select an organizational structure, such as the block method or the point-by-point method. If you choose the block method, discuss all of your ideas about Rama and then all of your ideas about Ravana. If you choose the point-by-point method, discuss one idea at a time as it relates to each character.

- Clearly state a central idea or thesis early in your essay.
- Include sufficient and varied evidence, such as explanations, details from the epic, and direct quotations, to support your ideas.
- Use signal words and phrases to clarify your comparisons and contrasts. Signal words include transitional expressions, such as *similarly*, *however*, *on the other hand*, *likewise*, and *conversely*.
- End your draft with a memorable conclusion that follows logically from your central idea.

**Revising** Reread your essay, examining the textual evidence you have used to support your analysis. Review the direct quotations you have chosen, and make sure each is the best choice to illustrate and reinforce your comparisons.

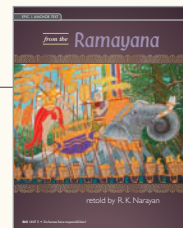
**Editing and Proofreading** Review your draft to make sure you have avoided errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics. Check that you have maintained an appropriate academic style throughout your essay. Be sure that any paraphrases accurately reflect the original text.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why might Ravana admire Rama?
2. Does Ravana seem wholly evil in this passage? Why or why not?
3. What might Ravana, in his rage, represent?

### CONVENTIONS

Check your essay for the overuse of a basic subject-verb pattern. Add interest by revising some sentences to begin with prepositional phrases. Set off an introductory prepositional phrase of four or more words with a comma.



## RESEARCH

### Research Investigate the Topic

**Rama as Hero** Rama is an important figure in Indian culture, and the *Ramayana* is the main account of his life and journey. In this excerpt, we see one episode from Rama's life, in which he is heroic and associated with good. However, not all elements of Rama's story show him in a heroic light.

#### Assignment

Conduct research to learn about Rama's story and to assess his overall portrayal as a hero working on the side of good. Consult various literary analyses, and read further about his adventures in the *Ramayana*. Carefully identify your sources. Share your findings in a **research report**.

**Gather Sources** Locate authoritative print and electronic sources. Secondary sources, such as commentaries and literary analyses, will give you insight into the topic. You may wish to revisit the original excerpt to identify the qualities that you believe make Rama a hero. Then, look for these qualities in other parts of Rama's story. Find sources that feature expert authors and up-to-date information.

**Take Notes** Use an organized note-taking strategy as you gather information.

- If you are conducting research on the Internet, use the Bookmark feature to organize Web sites you visit frequently to keep them easily accessible.
- As you work through a variety of sources, notice whether any are markedly different from the others in content or presentation. For example, a source may be disorganized, inappropriate in tone, or factually inaccurate. If so, omit that source from consideration, as it is not credible.
- Make sure you record all the source information you need while you have the source in hand. Making a photocopy of a copyright page and pages with direct quotations can save you time later.
- Label your notes with the name of the source for easy reference.

**Synthesize Multiple Sources** Assemble data from your sources, and organize them into a cohesive report. Follow accepted conventions to create a Works Cited list of all sources you use in your essay. See the Citing Sources pages in the Introductory Unit of this textbook for additional guidance.

**Organize and Present Ideas** Review your report for accuracy, clarity, and the correct uses of conventions. Then, create presentation notes that identify the most important points you want to convey to listeners. Use your presentation notes to deliver a summary of your findings to the class.

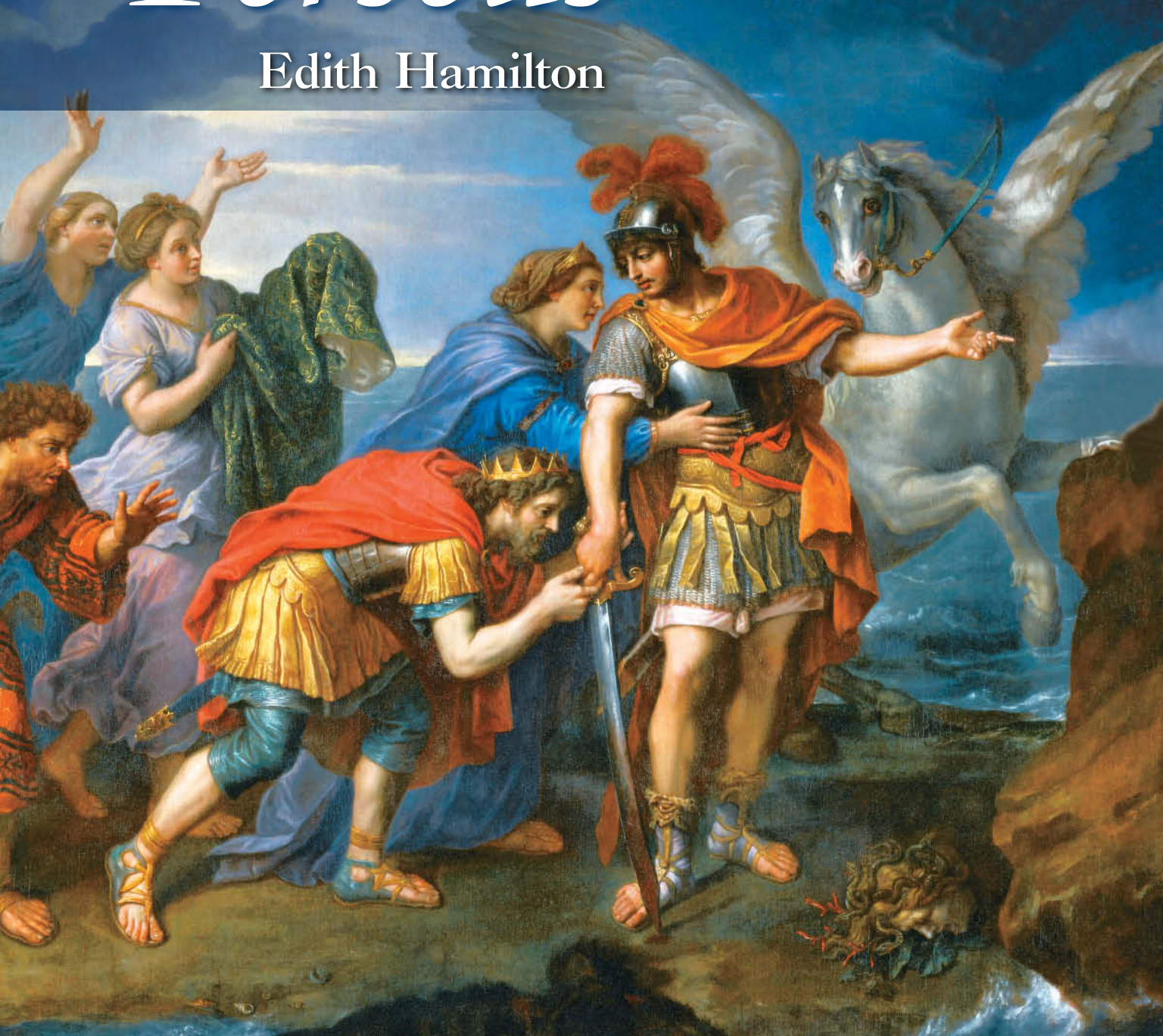
#### PREPARATION FOR ESSAY

You may use the knowledge you gain during this research assignment to support your claims in an essay you will write at the end of this section.



# Perseus

Edith Hamilton



**K**ing Acrisius [a kris' ē əs] of Argos had only one child, a daughter, Danaë [dan' ā ē]. She was beautiful above all the other women of the land, but this was small comfort to the King for not having a son. He journeyed to Delphi to ask the god if there was any hope that some day he would be the father of a boy. The priestess told him no, and added what was far worse: that his daughter would have a son who would kill him.

The only sure way to escape that fate was for the King to have Danaë instantly put to death—taking no chances, but seeing to it himself. This Acrisius would not do. His fatherly affection was not strong, as events proved, but his fear of the gods was. They visited with terrible punishment those who shed the blood of **kindred**. Acrisius did not dare slay his daughter. Instead, he had a house built all of bronze and sunk underground, but with part of the roof open to the sky so that light and air could come through. Here he shut her up and guarded her.

So Danaë endured, the beautiful,  
To change the glad daylight for brass-bound walls,  
And in that chamber secret as the grave  
She lived a prisoner. Yet to her came  
Zeus in the golden rain.

As she sat there through the long days and hours with nothing to do, nothing to see except the clouds moving by overhead, a mysterious thing happened, a shower of gold fell from the sky and filled her chamber. How it was revealed to her that it was Zeus who had visited her in this shape we are not told, but she knew that the child she bore was his son.

For a time she kept his birth secret from her father, but it became increasingly difficult to do so in the narrow limits of that bronze house and finally one day the little boy—his name was Perseus—was discovered by his grandfather. “Your child!” Acrisius cried in great anger. “Who is his father?” But when Danaë answered proudly, “Zeus,” he would not believe her. One thing only he was sure of, that

◀ **kindred**  
(kin'drid) *n.* people to whom one is related by blood

the boy's life was a terrible danger to his own. He was afraid to kill him for the same reason that had kept him from killing her, fear of Zeus and the Furies who pursue such murderers. But if he could not kill them outright, he could put them in the way of tolerably certain death. He had a great chest made, and the two placed in it. Then it was taken out to sea and cast into the water.

In that strange boat Danaë sat with her little son. The daylight faded and she was alone on the sea.

When in the carven chest the winds and waves  
Struck fear into her heart she put her arms,  
Not without tears, round Perseus tenderly  
She said, "O son, what grief is mine.  
But you sleep softly, little child,  
Sunk deep in rest within your cheerless home,  
Only a box, brass-bound. The night, this darkness visible,  
The scudding waves so near to your soft curls,  
The shrill voice of the wind, you do not heed,  
Nestled in your red cloak, fair little face."

Through the night in the tossing chest she listened to the waters that seemed always about to wash over them. The dawn came, but with no comfort to her for she could not see it. Neither could she see that around them there were islands rising high above the sea, many islands. All she knew was that presently a wave seemed to lift them and carry them swiftly on and then, retreating, leave them on something solid and motionless. They had made land; they were safe from the sea, but they were still in the chest with no way to get out.

Fate willed it—or perhaps Zeus, who up to now had done little for his love and his child—that they should be discovered by a good man, a fisherman named Dictys. He came upon the great box and broke it open and took the pitiful cargo home to his wife who was as kind as he. They had no children and they cared for Danaë and Perseus as if they were their own. The two lived there many years, Danaë content to let her son follow the fisherman's humble trade, out of harm's way. But in the end more trouble came. Polydectes [pɒl i dek tēz], the ruler of the little island, was the brother of Dictys, but he was a cruel and ruthless man. He seems to have taken no notice of the mother and son for a long time, but at last Danaë attracted his attention. She was still radiantly beautiful even though Perseus by now was full grown, and Polydectes fell in love with her. He wanted her, but he did not want her son, and he set himself to think out a way of getting rid of him.

There were some fearsome monsters called Gorgons who lived on an island and were known far and wide because of their deadly

power. Polydectes evidently talked to Perseus about them; he probably told him that he would rather have the head of one of them than anything else in the world. This seems practically certain from the plan he devised for killing Perseus. He announced that he was about to be married and he called his friends together for a celebration, including Perseus in the invitation. Each guest, as was customary, brought a gift for the bride-to-be, except Perseus alone. He had nothing he could give. He was young and proud and keenly **mortified**. He stood up before them all and did exactly what the King had hoped he would do, declared that he would give him a present better than any there. He would go off and kill Medusa and bring back her head as his gift. Nothing could have suited the King better. No one in his senses would have made such a proposal. Medusa was one of the Gorgons,

And they are three, the Gorgons, each with wings  
And snaky hair, most horrible to mortals.

Whom no man shall behold and draw again  
The breath of life,

for the reason that whoever looked at them were turned instantly into stone. It seemed that Perseus had been led by his angry pride into making an empty boast. No man unaided could kill Medusa.

But Perseus was saved from his folly. Two great gods were watching over him. He took ship as soon as he left the King's hall, not daring to see his mother first and tell her what he intended, and he sailed to Greece to learn where the three monsters were to be found. He went to Delphi, but all the priestess would say was to bid him seek the land where men eat not Demeter's golden grain, but only acorns. So he went to Dodona, in the land of oak trees, where the talking oaks were which declared Zeus's will and where the Selli lived who made their bread from acorns. They could tell him, however, no more than this, that he was under the protection of the gods. They did not know where the Gorgons lived.

When and how Hermes and Athena came to his help is not told in any story, but he must have known despair before they did so. At last, however, as he wandered on, he met a strange and beautiful person. We know what he looked like from many a poem, a young man with the first down upon his cheek when youth is loveliest,

◀ **mortified**  
(môrt' ə fid')  
adj. extremely  
embarrassed



*And they are three, the  
Gorgons, each with wings  
And snaky hair, most  
horrible to mortals.*

carrying, as no other young man ever did, a wand of gold with wings at one end, wearing a winged hat, too, and winged sandals. At sight of him hope must have entered Perseus' heart, for he would know that this could be none other than Hermes, the guide and the giver of good.

This radiant personage told him that before he attacked Medusa he must first be properly equipped, and that what he needed was in the possession of the nymphs of the North. To find the nymphs' abode, they must go to the Gray Women who alone could tell them the way. These women dwelt in a land where all was dim and shrouded in twilight. No ray of sun looked ever on that country, nor the moon by night. In that gray place the three women lived, all gray themselves and withered as in extreme old age. They were strange creatures, indeed, most of all because they had but one eye for the three, which it was their custom to take turns with, each removing it from her forehead when she had had it for a time and handing it to another.

All this Hermes told Perseus and then he unfolded his plan. He would himself guide Perseus to them. Once there Perseus must keep hidden until he saw one of them take the eye out of her forehead to pass it on. At that moment, when none of the three could see, he must rush forward and seize the eye and refuse to give it back until they told him how to reach the nymphs of the North.

He himself, Hermes said, would give him a sword to attack Medusa with—which could not be bent or broken by the Gorgon's scales, no matter how hard they were. This was a wonderful gift, no doubt, and yet of what use was a sword when the creature to be struck by it could turn the swordsman into stone before he was within striking distance? But another great deity was at hand to help. Pallas Athena stood beside Perseus. She took off the shield of polished bronze which covered her breast and held it out to him. "Look into this when you attack the Gorgon," she said. "You will be able to see her in it as in a mirror, and so avoid her deadly power."

Now, indeed, Perseus had good reason to hope. The journey to the twilight land was long, over the stream of Ocean and on to the very border of the black country where the Cimmerians dwell, but Hermes was his guide and he could not go astray. They found the Gray Women at last, looking in the wavering light like gray birds, for they had the shape of swans. But their heads were human and beneath their wings they had arms and hands. Perseus did just as Hermes had said, he held back until he saw one of them take the eye out of her forehead. Then before she could give it to her sister, he snatched it out of her hand. It was a moment or two before the three

realized they had lost it. Each thought one of the others had it. But Perseus spoke out and told them he had taken it and that it would be theirs again only when they showed him how to find the nymphs of the North. They gave him full directions at once; they would have done anything to get their eye back. He returned it to them and went on the way they had pointed out to him. He was bound, although he did not know it, to the blessed country of the Hyperboreans [hī per bō' rē anz], at the back of the North Wind, of which it is said: "Neither by ship nor yet by land shall one find the wondrous road to the gathering place of the Hyperboreans." But Perseus had Hermes with him, so that the road lay open to him, and he reached that host of happy people who are always banqueting and holding joyful **revelry**. They showed him great kindness: they welcomed him to their feast, and the maidens dancing to the sound of flute and lyre paused to get for him the gifts he sought. These were three: winged sandals, a magic wallet which would always become the right size for whatever was to be carried in it, and, most important of all, a cap which made the wearer invisible. With these and Athena's shield and Hermes' sword Perseus was ready for the Gorgons. Hermes knew where they lived, and leaving the happy land the two flew back across Ocean and over the sea to the Terrible Sisters' island.

◀ **revelry**  
(rev' əl rē) *n.* noisy  
merrymaking

By great good fortune they were all asleep when Perseus found them. In the mirror of the bright shield he could see them clearly, creatures with great wings and bodies covered with golden scales and hair a mass of twisting snakes. Athena was beside him now as well as Hermes. They told him which one was Medusa and that was important, for she alone of the three could be killed; the other two were immortal. Perseus on his winged sandals hovered above them, looking, however, only at the shield. Then he aimed a stroke down at Medusa's throat and Athena guided his hand. With a single sweep of his sword he cut through her neck and, his eyes still fixed on the shield with never a glance at her, he swooped low enough to seize the head. He dropped it into the wallet which closed around it. He had nothing to fear from it now. But the two other Gorgons had awakened and, horrified at the sight of their sister slain, tried to pursue the slayer. Perseus was safe; he had on the cap of darkness and they could not find him.

So over the sea rich-haired Danaë's son,  
Perseus, on his winged sandals sped,  
Flying swift as thought.  
In a wallet of silver,  
A wonder to behold,  
He bore the head of the monster,

While Hermes, the son of Maia,  
The messenger of Zeus,  
Kept ever at his side.

On his way back he came to Ethiopia and alighted there. By this time Hermes had left him. Perseus found, as Hercules was later to find, that a lovely maiden had been given up to be devoured by a horrible sea serpent. Her name was Andromeda and she was the daughter of a silly vain woman,

That starred Ethiop queen who strove  
To set her beauty's praise above  
The sea-nymphs, and their power offended.

She had boasted that she was more beautiful than the daughters of Nereus, the Sea-god. An absolutely certain way in those days to draw down on one a wretched fate was to claim superiority in anything over any deity;<sup>1</sup> nevertheless people were perpetually doing so. In this case the punishment for the arrogance the gods detested fell not on Queen Cassiopeia [kas' ē ō pē' ə], Andromeda's mother, but on her daughter. The Ethiopians were being devoured in numbers by the serpent; and, learning from the oracle that they could be freed from the pest only if Andromeda were offered up to it, they forced Cepheus [sē' fəs], her father, to consent. When Perseus arrived the maiden was on a rocky ledge by the sea, chained there to wait for the coming of the monster. Perseus saw her and on the instant loved her. He waited beside her until the great snake came for its prey; then he cut its head off just as he had the Gorgon's. The headless body dropped back into the water; Perseus took Andromeda to her parents and asked for her hand, which they gladly gave him.

With her he sailed back to the island and his mother, but in the house where he had lived so long he found no one. The fisherman Dictys' wife was long since dead, and the two others, Danaë and the man who had been like a father to Perseus, had had to fly and hide themselves from Polydectes, who was furious at Danaë's refusal to marry him. They had taken refuge in a temple, Perseus was told. He learned also that the King was holding a banquet in the palace and all the men who favored him were gathered there. Perseus instantly saw his opportunity. He went straight to the palace and entered the hall. As he stood at the entrance, Athena's shining buckler on his breast, the silver wallet at his side, he drew the eyes of every man there. Then before any could look away he held up the Gorgon's head; and at the sight one and all, the cruel King and his servile courtiers, were turned into stone. There they sat, a row of statues,

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1. deity (dē' ə tē) *n.* a god.

each, as it were, frozen stiff in the attitude he had struck when he first saw Perseus.

When the islanders knew themselves freed from the tyrant it was easy for Perseus to find Danaë and Dictys. He made Dictys king of the island, but he and his mother decided that they would go back with Andromeda to Greece and try to be reconciled to Acrisius, to see if the many years that had passed since he had put them in the chest had not softened him so that he would be glad to receive his daughter and grandson. When they reached Argos, however, they found that Acrisius had been driven away from the city, and where he was no one could say. It happened that soon after their arrival Perseus heard that the King of Larissa, in the North, was holding a great athletic contest, and he journeyed there to take part. In the discus-throwing when his turn came and he hurled the heavy missile, it swerved and fell among the spectators. Acrisius was there on a visit to the King, and the discus struck him. The blow was fatal and he died at once.

So Apollo's oracle was again proved true. If Perseus felt any grief, at least he knew that his grandfather had done his best to kill him and his mother. With his death their troubles came to an end. Perseus and Andromeda lived happily ever after. Their son, Electryon, was the grandfather of Hercules.

Medusa's head was given to Athena, who bore it always upon the aegis, Zeus's shield, which she carried for him.

## ABOUT THE RETELLER

### **Edith Hamilton** (1867–1963)

Edith Hamilton was a groundbreaking educator who helped found the Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore, the first college preparatory school for women. She taught a generation of young women not to limit their goals simply because they were not men.

After leaving Bryn Mawr, Hamilton began writing articles about ancient Greece, which she later turned into a book entitled *The Greek Way* (1930). Her other books include *The Roman Way* (1932) and *Mythology* (1942), which are both beautifully crafted retellings of ancient myths.





# Close Reading Activities

## READ

### Comprehension

Reread all or part of the text to help you answer the following questions.

1. What fate does the priestess at Delphi predict for King Acrisius?
2. What does Acrisius do to try to avoid this fate?
3. How does Perseus find the Gorgons?
4. What does Perseus do to Polydectes?
5. What happens to Acrisius in the end?

**Research: Clarify Details** This myth may include references that are unfamiliar to you. Choose at least one unfamiliar detail, and briefly research it. Then, explain how the information you learned from research sheds light on an aspect of the myth.

**Summarize** Write an objective summary of the myth. Remember that an objective summary is free from opinion and evaluation.

### Language Study

**Selection Vocabulary** The phrases at right appear in the myth. Define each boldface word and identify a synonym. Then, write a paragraph in which you use all three boldface words correctly.

- the blood of **kindred**
- young and proud and keenly **mortified**
- banqueting and holding joyful **revelry**

### Literary Analysis

Reread the identified passage. Then, respond to the questions that follow.

#### Focus Passage (pp. 873–874)

By great good fortune ... ever at his side.

#### Key Ideas and Details

1. **(a)** How is Medusa different from the other Gorgons? **(b) Summarize:** Explain the equipment that Perseus uses and the actions he takes to kill Medusa.

#### Craft and Structure

2. **Connect:** What does the stanza of poetry represent? Explain. **(b) Analyze:** What quality does the inclusion of poetry bring to the retelling of this ancient story? Explain your analysis.

#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

3. **Evaluate:** Is Perseus' slaying of Medusa heroic? Why or why not?

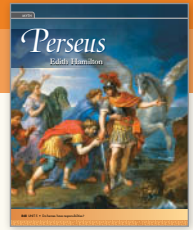
### The Hero's Quest

The **hero's quest** is an archetypal, or **universal**, plot structure. In a classic quest tale the hero undertakes a journey for something of great value; faces and overcomes obstacles; receives a boon, or benefit, that helps others; and returns home changed.

1. **(a)** What object of great value does Perseus seek? **(b)** What obstacles does he encounter? **(c)** How do these obstacles test his character?

2. **(a)** What aid does Perseus receive? **(b)** What boon or benefit does he carry home?

3. **Defining Heroism:** Is Perseus truly heroic as we might define the term today? Explain why or why not, citing evidence from the text.



## DISCUSS • RESEARCH • WRITE

### From Text to Topic **Group Discussion**

Discuss the following passage with a group of classmates. Take notes during the discussion. Contribute your own ideas, and support them with examples from the text.

He had nothing he could give. He was young and proud and keenly mortified. He stood up before them all and did exactly what the King had hoped he would do, declared that he would give him a present better than any there. He would go off and kill Medusa and bring back her head as his gift.

### Research **Investigate the Topic**

**Heroes in Greek Mythology** Greek mythology is **rife** with heroes like Perseus who accomplish great feats with the help of gods and goddesses.

#### Assignment

Conduct research to learn about another hero or heroine from Greek mythology. Consult retellings of Greek myths and literary analyses of Greek heroes. Gather information about the hero, his or her strengths and weaknesses, and textual details that reveal those qualities. Once you have gathered your information, compare the hero you researched with Perseus. Use your analysis of the two heroic figures to prepare a **poster** that combines text with images.

### Writing to Sources **Argument**

Perseus is one of the many heroes of ancient Greece whose motivations and actions may seem questionable to modern readers.

#### Assignment

Write a **response to literature** in which you analyze the character of Perseus, determine whether he displays true heroism, and effectively state and defend your position. Follow these steps:

- Explain the criteria you used to assess whether someone is truly heroic. Then, show how Perseus does or does not meet that criteria.
- Develop your position thoroughly, but also take into account at least one differing opinion. Supply evidence that explains the strengths and limitations of both interpretations.
- Write a conclusion that makes logical sense, given the argument you have laid out, and briefly restates the points you have made.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. In what ways does Perseus combine the qualities of an ordinary person with those of a hero? Explain.
2. Assess Perseus' plan for killing Medusa. Is it sensible? Why or why not?

### PREPARATION FOR ESSAY

You may use the results of this research project in an essay you will write at the end of this section.

### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Academic terms appear in blue on these pages. If these words are not familiar to you, use a dictionary to find their definitions. Then, use them as you speak and write about the text.

# The Washwoman

Isaac Bashevis Singer





ur home had little contact with Gentiles.<sup>1</sup> The only Gentile in the building was the janitor. Fridays he would come for a tip, his “Friday money.” He remained standing at the door, took off his hat, and my mother gave him six groschen.<sup>2</sup>

Besides the janitor there were also the Gentile washwomen who came to the house to fetch our laundry. My story is about one of these.

She was a small woman, old and wrinkled. When she started washing for us, she was already past seventy. Most Jewish women of her age were sickly, weak, broken in body. All the old women in our street had bent backs and leaned on sticks when they walked. But this washwoman, small and thin as she was, possessed a strength that came from generations of peasant forebears. Mother would count out to her a bundle of laundry that had accumulated over several weeks. She would lift the unwieldy pack, load it on her narrow shoulders, and carry it the long way home. She lived on Krochmalna Street too, but at the other end, near the Wola section. It must have been a walk of an hour and a half.

She would bring the laundry back about two weeks later. My mother had never been so pleased with any washwoman. Every piece of linen sparkled like polished silver. Every piece was neatly ironed. Yet she charged no more than the others. She was a real find. Mother always had her money ready, because it was too far for the old woman to come a second time.

Laundering was not easy in those days. The old woman had no faucet where she lived but had to bring in the water from a pump. For the linens to come out so clean, they had to be scrubbed thoroughly in a washtub, rinsed with washing soda, soaked, boiled in an enormous pot, starched, then ironed. Every piece was

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1. **Gentiles** (jen' tilz) *n.* any persons not Jewish; here, specifically Christians.

2. **groschen** (grō' shen) *n.* Austrian cent or penny.

handled ten times or more. And the drying! It could not be done outside because thieves would steal the laundry. The wrung-out wash had to be carried up to the attic and hung on clotheslines. In the winter it would become as brittle as glass and almost break when touched. And there was always a to-do with other housewives and washwomen who wanted the attic clothesline for their own use. Only God knows all the old woman had to endure each time she did a wash!

She could have begged at the church door or entered a home for the penniless and aged. But there was in her a certain pride and love of labor with which many Gentiles have been blessed. The old woman did not want to become a burden, and so she bore her burden.

My mother spoke a little Polish, and the old woman would talk with her about many things. She was especially fond of me and used to say I looked like Jesus. She repeated this every time she came, and Mother would frown and whisper to herself, her lips barely moving, "May her words be scattered in the wilderness."

The woman had a son who was rich. I no longer remember what sort of business he had. He was ashamed of his mother, the washwoman, and never came to see her. Nor did he ever give her a groschen. The old woman told this without **rancor**. One day the son was married. It seemed that he had made a good match. The wedding took place in a church. The son had not invited the old mother to his wedding, but she went to the church and waited at the steps to see her son lead the "young lady" to the altar.

The story of the faithless son left a deep impression on my mother. She talked about it for weeks and months. It was an affront not only to the old woman but to the entire institution of motherhood. Mother would argue, "Nu, does it pay to make sacrifices for children? The mother uses up her last strength, and he does not even know the meaning of loyalty."

And she would drop dark hints to the effect that she was not certain of her own children: Who knows what they would do some day? This, however, did not prevent her from dedicating her life to us. If there was any delicacy in the house, she would put it aside for the children and invent all sorts of excuses and reasons why she herself did not want to taste it. She knew charms that went back to ancient times, and she used expressions she had inherited from generations of devoted mothers and grandmothers. If one of the children complained of a pain, she would say, "May I be your ransom and may you outlive my bones!" Or she would say, "May I be the **atonement** for the least of your fingernails." When we ate she used to say, "Health and marrow in your bones!" The day before the

**rancor** ▶  
(ranʃ kər) *n.* bitter hate

**atonement** ▶  
(ə tɒn' mənt) *n.* act of making up for a wrongdoing or an injury

new moon she gave us a kind of candy that was said to prevent parasitic worms. If one of us had something in his eye, Mother would lick the eye clean with her tongue. She also fed us rock candy against coughs, and from time to time she would take us to be blessed against the evil eye. This did not prevent her from studying *The Duties of the Heart*, *The Book of the Covenant*, and other serious philosophic works.

But to return to the washwoman. That winter was a harsh one. The streets were in the grip of a bitter cold. No matter how much we heated our stove, the windows were covered with frostwork and decorated with icicles. The newspapers reported that people were dying of the cold. Coal became dear. The winter had become so severe that parents stopped sending children to cheder,<sup>3</sup> and even the Polish schools were closed.

On one such day the washwoman, now nearly eighty years old, came to our house. A good deal of laundry had accumulated during the past weeks. Mother gave her a pot of tea to warm herself, as well as some bread. The old woman sat on a kitchen chair trembling and shaking, and warmed her hands against the teapot. Her fingers were gnarled from work, and perhaps from arthritis too. Her fingernails were strangely white. These hands spoke of the stubbornness of mankind, of the will to work not only as one's strength permits but beyond the limits of one's power. Mother counted and wrote down the list: men's undershirts, women's vests, long-legged drawers, bloomers, petticoats, shifts, featherbed covers, pillowcases, sheets, and the men's fringed garments. Yes, the Gentile woman washed these holy garments as well.

The bundle was big, bigger than usual. When the woman placed it on her shoulders, it covered her completely. At first she swayed, as though she were about to fall under the load. But an inner obstinacy seemed to call out: No, you may not fall. A donkey may permit himself to fall under his burden, but not a human being, the crown of creation.

It was fearful to watch the old woman staggering out with the enormous pack, out into the frost, where the snow was dry as salt and the air was filled with dusty white whirlwinds, like goblins dancing in the cold. Would the old woman ever reach Wola?

At first she swayed,  
as though she  
were about to fall  
under the load.

3. **cheder** (khā' dər) religious school.

She disappeared, and Mother sighed and prayed for her.

Usually the woman brought back the wash after two or, at the most, three weeks. But three weeks passed, then four and five, and nothing was heard of the old woman. We remained without linens. The cold had become even more intense. The telephone wires were now as thick as ropes. The branches of the trees looked like glass. So much snow had fallen that the streets had become uneven, and sleds were able to glide down many streets as on the slopes of a hill. Kindhearted people lit fires in the streets for vagrants<sup>4</sup> to warm themselves and roast potatoes in, if they had any to roast.

For us the washwoman's absence was a catastrophe. We needed the laundry. We did not even know the woman's address. It seemed certain that she had collapsed, died. Mother declared she had had a premonition, as the old woman left our house that last time, that we would never see our things again. She found some old torn shirts and washed and mended them. We mourned, both for the laundry and for the old, toil-worn woman who had grown close to us through the years she had served us so faithfully.

More than two months passed. The frost had subsided, and then a new frost had come, a new wave of cold. One evening, while Mother was sitting near the kerosene lamp mending a shirt, the door opened and a small puff of steam, followed by a gigantic bundle, entered. Under the bundle tottered the old woman, her face as white as a linen sheet. A few wisps of white hair straggled out from beneath her shawl. Mother uttered a half-choked cry. It was as though a corpse had entered the room. I ran toward the old woman and helped her unload her pack. She was even thinner now, more bent. Her face had become more gaunt, and her head shook from side to side as though she were saying no. She could not utter a clear word, but mumbled something with her sunken mouth and pale lips.

After the old woman had recovered somewhat, she told us that she had been ill, very ill. Just what her illness was, I cannot remember. She had been so sick that someone had called a doctor, and the doctor had sent for a priest. Someone had informed the son, and he had contributed money for a coffin and for the funeral. But the Almighty had not yet wanted to take this pain-racked soul to Himself. She began to feel better, she became well, and as soon as she was able to stand on her feet once more, she resumed her washing. Not just ours, but the wash of several other families too.

"I could not rest easy in my bed because of the wash," the old woman explained. "The wash would not let me die."

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4. **vagrants** (vā' grants) *n.* people who wander from place to place, especially those without regular jobs.

“With the help of God you will live to be a hundred and twenty,” said my mother, as a benediction.

“God forbid! What good would such a long life be? The work becomes harder and harder . . . my strength is leaving me . . . I do not want to be a burden on anyone!” The old woman muttered and crossed herself, and raised her eyes toward heaven.

Fortunately there was some money in the house and Mother counted out what she owed. I had a strange feeling: the coins in the old woman’s washed-out hands seemed to become as worn and clean and **pious** as she herself was. She blew on the coins and tied them in a kerchief. Then she left, promising to return in a few weeks for a new load of wash.

But she never came back. The wash she had returned was her last effort on this earth. She had been driven by an indomitable will to return the property to its rightful owners, to fulfill the task she had undertaken.

And now at last her body, which had long been no more than a shard<sup>5</sup> supported only by the force of honesty and duty, had fallen. Her soul passed into those spheres where all holy souls meet, regardless of the roles they played on this earth, in whatever tongue, of whatever creed. I cannot imagine paradise without this Gentile washwoman. I cannot even conceive of a world where there is no recompense for such effort.

◀ **pious**  
(pī' əs) *adj.* having or showing religious devotion

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5. **shard** (shärd) fragment or broken piece.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

### Isaac Bashevis Singer (1904–1991)

Storytelling always had an important place in Isaac Bashevis Singer’s life. He grew up in the city of Warsaw in what is now Poland. Singer’s father was a rabbi, a teacher of the Jewish faith and laws. Advice-seekers streamed through the family home, telling their stories as the fascinated young Singer listened and observed.

Fleeing persecution against Jews, Singer left Poland for New York City in 1935. In New York, Singer began to make a name for himself as a writer. He set many of his tales in the world of European Jewry he had left. Ironically, as he wrote, World War II devastated that world. Villages like the one of his birth were wiped off the face of the Earth even as Singer brought them to life on the page.





# Close Reading Activities

## READ

### Comprehension

Reread all or part of the text to help you answer the following questions.

1. How is the washwoman different from the narrator and his family?
2. Why is the washwoman's job so difficult?
3. Why does the washwoman take so long with the last bundle of wash?

**Research: Clarify Details** This essay may include references that are unfamiliar to you. Choose at least one unfamiliar detail, and briefly research it. Then, explain how the information you learned from research sheds light on an aspect of the essay.

**Summarize** Write an objective summary of the essay. Remember that an objective summary is free from opinion and evaluation.

### Language Study

**Selection Vocabulary** The following passages appear in "The Washwoman." Define each boldface word. Then, use each word in a new sentence.

- The old woman told this without **rancor**.

- Or she would say, "May I be the **atonement** for the least of your fingernails."
- ...the coins in the old woman's washed-out hands seemed to become as worn and clean and **pious** as she herself was.

### Literary Analysis

Reread the identified passage. Then, respond to the questions that follow.

#### Focus Passage (p. 881)

On one such day...ever reach Wola?

#### Key Ideas and Details

1. **(a)** In what state is the washwoman when she arrives at the author's home? **(b) Infer:** What has she endured to get there, and how is that situation more difficult when she leaves? Explain.

#### Craft and Structure

2. **(a)** Cite specific details with which the author describes the washwoman's hands. **(b)** In Singer's eyes, what do the washwoman's hands symbolize?
3. **Analyze:** How does the detailed list of laundry items add power to the portrayal of the washwoman?

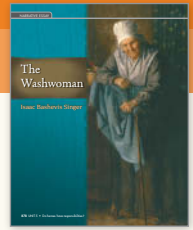
#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

4. **Synthesize:** In the author's eyes, how does the washwoman **exemplify** the idea that a human being is "the crown of creation"? Explain.

### Characterization

Characterization is the art of portraying a character. In **direct characterization**, the author tells the reader what a character is like. In **indirect characterization**, the author gives clues about a character. Reread the essay, noting what you learn about the washwoman and how you learn it.

1. **(a)** Identify two examples of direct characterization of the washwoman. **(b)** Identify two examples of indirect characterization of the washwoman—for example, descriptions of her appearance and behavior.
2. Using your responses to question 1 as examples, explain how direct and indirect characterization **align** in Singer's portrayal.



## DISCUSS • RESEARCH • WRITE

### From Text to Topic **Partner Discussion**

Discuss the following passage with a partner. Take notes during the discussion. Contribute your own ideas, and support them with examples from the text.

A donkey may permit himself to fall under his burden, but not a human being, the crown of creation.

### Research **Investigate the Topic**

**Fleeing Persecution** Like many other Polish Jews, Isaac Bashevis Singer fled his homeland to escape persecution.

#### Assignment

Conduct research about Singer and other Polish Jews and their **emigration** from Poland in the years leading up to World War II. Consult news reports, interviews, historical documents, personal essays, and firsthand accounts. Consider whether these stories are examples of heroism. Take careful notes, and identify all sources you use. Share your findings in an **oral presentation**.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What does the contrast between the beast of burden and “the crown of creation” suggest about the washwoman?
2. Does the washwoman’s effort make her heroic or merely human? Explain.

### PREPARATION FOR ESSAY

You may use the results of this research project in an essay you will write at the end of this section.

### Writing to Sources **Narrative**

“The Washwoman” provides a small window into the life of the washwoman. Singer reveals a great deal about her character at the end of her life. He also gives clues about events that brought her to where she is at the time of his narrative.

#### Assignment

Write a **short story** in which you describe the washwoman’s life in her earlier years. Use clues about her past to shape your narrative and make it consistent with Singer’s essay. Follow these steps:

- Consider how Singer describes the washwoman, and make her character consistent in your story.
- Identify a conflict that initiates the plot of your story, and develop it clearly through the rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.
- Use dialogue and description as well as precise words and phrases to convey a vivid picture of the washwoman’s life.

### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Academic terms appear in blue on these pages. If these words are not familiar to you, use a dictionary to find their definitions. Then, use them as you speak and write about the text.

| *from* | THE  
HERO'S  
ADVENTURE

*from* The Power of Myth

Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers



**MOYERS:** Why are there so many stories of the hero in mythology?

**CAMPBELL:** Because that's what's worth writing about.

Even in popular novels, the main character is a hero or heroine who has found or done something beyond the normal range of achievement and experience. A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself.

**MOYERS:** So in all of these cultures, whatever the local costume the hero might be wearing, what is the deed?

**CAMPBELL:** Well, there are two types of deed. One is the physical deed, in which the hero performs a courageous act in battle or saves a life. The other kind is the spiritual deed, in which the hero learns to experience the supernormal range of human spiritual life and then comes back with a message.

The usual hero adventure begins with someone from whom something has been taken, or who feels there's something lacking in the normal experiences available or permitted to the members of his society. This person then takes off on a series of adventures beyond the ordinary, either to recover what has been lost or to discover some life-giving **elixir**. It's usually a cycle, a going and a returning.

But the structure and something of the spiritual sense of this adventure can be seen already anticipated in the puberty or initiation rituals of early tribal societies, through which a child is compelled to give up its childhood and become an adult—to die, you might say, to its infantile personality and **psyche** and come back as a responsible adult. This is a fundamental psychological transformation that everyone has to undergo. We are in childhood in a condition of dependency under someone's protection and supervision for some fourteen to twenty-one years—and if you're going on for your Ph.D., this may continue to perhaps thirty-five. You are in no

◀ **elixir**  
(i lik'sər) *n.*  
substance that is believed to prolong or give life

◀ **psyche**  
(sī'kē) *n.*  
consciousness or mind

**motif** ▶

(mō tēf) *n.* repeated element or idea that has thematic importance, especially in a work of art, literature, or music

way a self-responsible, free agent, but an obedient dependent, expecting and receiving punishments and rewards. To evolve out of this position of psychological immaturity to the courage of self-responsibility and assurance requires a death and a resurrection. That's the basic **motif** of the universal hero's journey—leaving one condition and finding the source of life to bring you forth into a richer or mature condition.

**MOYERS:** So even if we happen not to be heroes in the grand sense of redeeming society, we still have to take that journey inside ourselves, spiritually and psychologically.

**CAMPBELL:** That's right. Otto Rank in his important little book *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero* declares that everyone is a hero in birth, where he undergoes a tremendous psychological as well as physical transformation, from the condition of a little water creature living in a realm of amniotic fluid into an air-breathing mammal which ultimately will be standing. That's an enormous transformation, and had it been consciously undertaken, it would have been, indeed, a heroic act. And there was a heroic act on the mother's part, as well, who had brought this all about.

**MOYERS:** Then heroes are not all men?

**CAMPBELL:** Oh, no. The male usually has the more conspicuous role, just because of the conditions of life. He is out there in the world, and the woman is in the home. But among the Aztecs, for example, who had a number of heavens to which people's souls would be assigned according to the conditions of their death, the heaven for warriors killed in battle was the same for mothers who died in childbirth. Giving birth is definitely a heroic deed, in that it is the giving over of oneself to the life of another.

**MOYERS:** Don't you think we've lost that truth in this society of ours, where it's deemed more heroic to go out into the world and make a lot of money than it is to raise children?

**CAMPBELL:** Making money gets more advertisement. You know the old saying: if a dog bites a man, that's not a story, but if a man bites a dog, you've got a story there. So the thing that happens and happens, no matter how heroic it may be, is not news. Motherhood has lost its novelty, you might say.

**MOYERS:** That's a wonderful image, though—the mother as hero.

**CAMPBELL:** It has always seemed so to me. That's something I learned from reading these myths.

**MOYERS:** It's a journey—you have to move out of the known, conventional safety of your life to undertake this.

**CAMPBELL:** You have to be transformed from a maiden to a mother. That's a big change, involving many dangers.

**MOYERS:** And when you come back from your journey, with the child, you've brought something for the world.

**CAMPBELL:** Not only that, you've got a life job ahead of you. Otto Rank makes the point that there is a world of people who think that their heroic act in being born qualifies them for the respect and support of their whole community.

**MOYERS:** But there's still a journey to be taken after that.

**CAMPBELL:** There's a large journey to be taken, of many trials.

**MOYERS:** What's the significance of the trials, and tests, and ordeals of the hero?

**CAMPBELL:** If you want to put it in terms of intentions, the trials are designed to see to it that the intending hero should be really a hero. Is he really a match for this task? Can he overcome the dangers? Does he have the courage, the knowledge, the capacity, to enable him to serve?

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

### Joseph Campbell (1904–1987)

At the age of seven, Joseph Campbell attended Buffalo Bill's Wild West show and became enamored with all things Native American. His curiosity led him to the studies of anthropology and English literature. Through those disciplines, Campbell formed his grand understanding of the hero, which he shared in his acclaimed book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Campbell and Bill Moyers spent hours in videotaped conversation about Campbell's ideas concerning mythology and heroism. PBS broadcast *Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth with Bill Moyers* the year after Campbell's death.



### Bill Moyers (b. 1934)

A publisher, a writer, a press secretary, a presidential assistant, a deputy director of the Peace Corps, and a broadcast journalist, Bill Moyers has expanded the tradition of television journalism to include not only political discussion but also conversations with some of the world's leading thinkers. Moyers worked for both CBS and PBS starting in the 1970s, and continues to work for PBS. He has won more than thirty Emmy awards and was inducted into the Television Hall of Fame in 1995.



# Close Reading Activities

## READ

### Comprehension

Reread all or part of the text to help you answer the following questions.

1. Why does Joseph Campbell believe there are so many stories about heroes?
2. How does Campbell define a hero?
3. What are the two types of deeds that make up the hero's journey?

**Research: Clarify Details** This interview may include unfamiliar references. Choose at least one unfamiliar detail, and briefly research it. Then, explain how the information you learned sheds light on an aspect of the interview.

**Summarize** Write an objective summary of the interview, one that is free from opinion and evaluation.

### Language Study

**Selection Vocabulary** The phrases at right appear in the interview. Define each boldface word. Then, explain why each word is a strong choice that precisely expresses the speaker's meaning.

- to discover some life-giving **elixir**
- its infantile personality and **psyche**
- the basic **motif** of the universal hero's journey

### Literary Analysis

Reread the identified passage. Then, respond to the questions that follow.

**Focus Passage** (pp. 888–889)

**MOYERS:** Don't you think ... many dangers.

#### Key Ideas and Details

1. What comparison do the speakers make between motherhood and the traditional hero's journey?

#### Craft and Structure

2. (a) What **colloquial**, or common, saying does Campbell cite? (b) **Interpret:** What does this saying mean? Explain.

3. **Analyze:** How does the saying Campbell cites relate to his larger point about the general perception of motherhood? Explain.

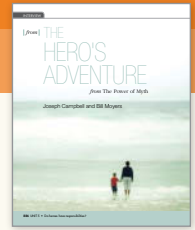
#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

4. **Synthesize:** In Campbell's view, how does the selflessness of the hero, described earlier in the interview, relate to the heroic task of motherhood? Explain, citing details from the text.

### Archetypal Narrative Patterns

**Archetypal narrative patterns** are storytelling structures that appear in literature from around the world. For example, a pattern of three is common in folk tales from all over the world. Reread the interview, and take notes on the archetypal patterns the speakers define.

1. (a) According to Campbell, what motivates the hero to undertake the journey? (b) What are the steps along the way? (c) How is the hero's journey cyclical? Explain.
2. **Defining Heroism:** In Campbell's view, why does the heroic journey require trials and tests? Explain.



## DISCUSS • RESEARCH • WRITE

### From Text to Topic Debate

Consider whether you agree or disagree with Otto Rank's idea of the "heroic act in being born," referred to below, and then debate your **stance** with classmates. Be sure you respond to other debater's points. Then, add your own ideas, supporting them with examples from the text.

Otto Rank makes the point that there is a world of people who think that their heroic act in being born qualifies them for the respect and support of their whole community.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is the sheer act of being born heroic?
2. Should a heroic act qualify a person for the respect and support of the whole community?

### Research Investigate the Topic

**Origin Stories** Joseph Campbell states that the hero is always "someone from whom something has been taken." This state of loss is sometimes referred to as a hero's "origin story."

#### Assignment

Conduct research about the "origin story" of a hero from literature, film, television, or another narrative source. Consult critical writings and the works in which the hero appears. Consider how the hero's story you research follows the universal pattern Campbell describes. Take organized notes, and document your sources. Share your findings in a **multimedia presentation**.

### PREPARATION FOR ESSAY

You may use the results of this research project in an essay you will write at the end of this section.

### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Academic terms appear in blue on these pages. If these words are not familiar to you, use a dictionary to find their definitions. Then, use them as you speak and write about the text.

### Writing to Sources Argument

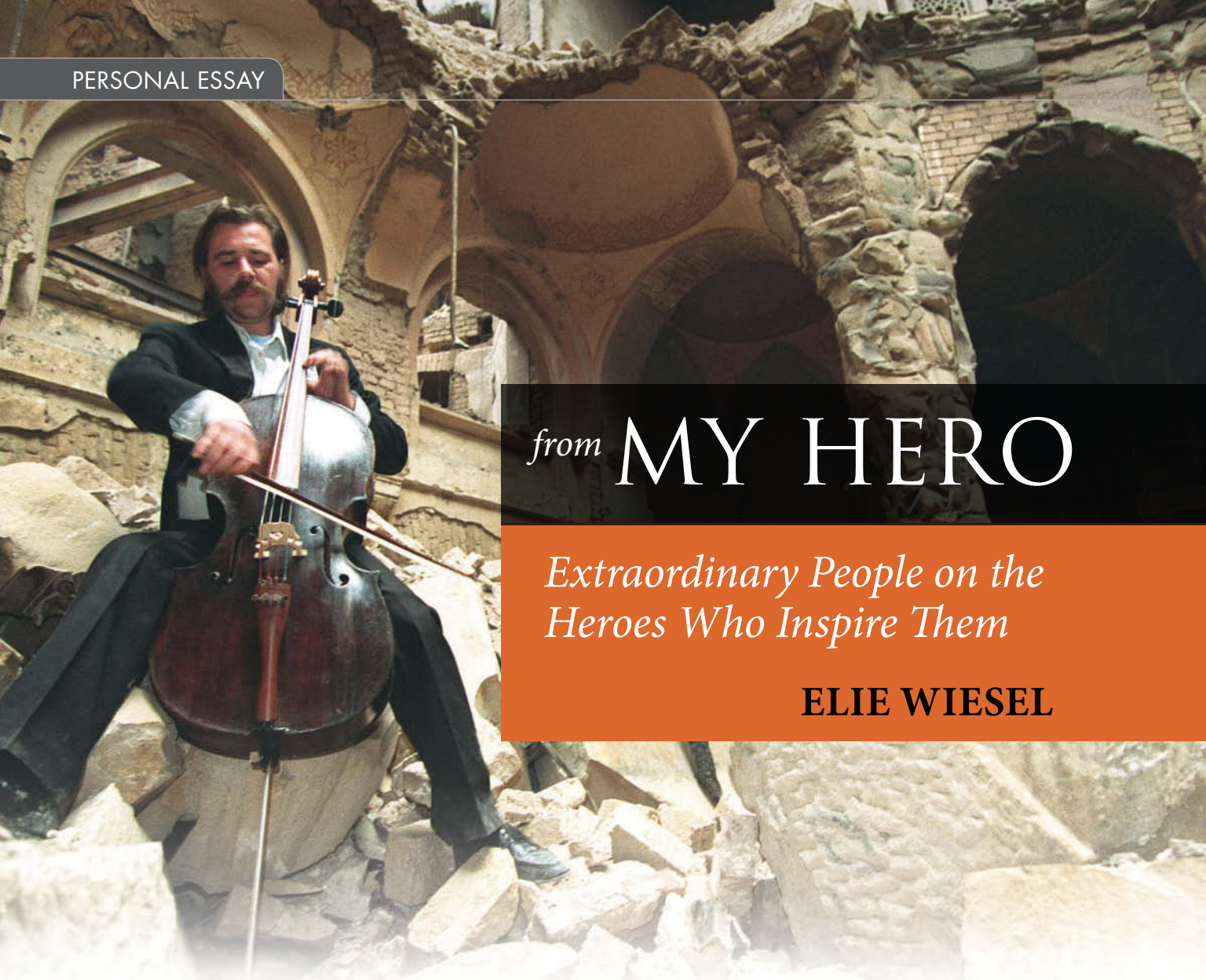
In their discussion of the idea of "the mother as hero," Campbell and Moyers briefly consider why a heroic perception of motherhood is not common throughout society.

#### Assignment

Write a **persuasive essay** in which you explain whether you think motherhood meets Campbell's definition of the heroic journey. Follow these steps:

- Reread the interview, and take notes about Campbell's definition of the heroic journey.
- Consider how motherhood does or does not fit that pattern.
- Present your claims clearly, and develop them with strong supportive evidence from the text and your own observations.





from **MY HERO**

*Extraordinary People on the  
Heroes Who Inspire Them*

**ELIE WIESEL**

Cellist Vedran Smailovic  
playing Strauss in  
the bombed National  
Library in Sarajevo

I am deeply skeptical about the very concept of the hero for many reasons and I am uncomfortable with what happens in societies where heroes are worshipped. As Goethe<sup>1</sup> said, “blessed is the nation that doesn’t need them.”

To call someone a hero is to give that person tremendous power. Certainly that power may be used for good, but it may also be used to destroy individuals.

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1. **Goethe** (gō'tē) Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), famous German Romantic writer and philosopher.

Which societies have proven to be the most fertile fields for the creation of heroes, and have devised the most compelling reasons for hero worship? Dictatorships. Stalin and Hitler<sup>2</sup> were worshipped as gods by millions. It was idolatry, or worse, blind faith. Anyone who questioned the gods, knew too much, or rebelled in any way was finished.

Even if we do not worship our heroes, they may cow us. It takes a certain amount of confidence and courage to say, “I can do something. I can change this and make a difference.” But if you, as a writer, think, “What are my words next to those of my hero, Shakespeare?” then something is lost for those who need your help and your voice. Excessive humility is no virtue if it prevents us from acting.

So we need to be very careful of those we put on a pedestal, and choose only those who **embody** those qualities that reflect the very best of human nature. But even that is a dangerous game. What do we do with a hero who has done something less than heroic?

None of our forefathers was perfect. Moses<sup>3</sup> is probably the single most important figure in the Bible besides Abraham. He was a teacher, the leader of the first liberation army, a legislator. Without him there is no Jewish religion at all. Yet of the many things he is called in the Bible, he is never called a hero, perhaps because he did not always behave heroically. He began his public career by killing an Egyptian; later, he failed to identify himself as a Jew. For these reasons and others, he is prevented from entering the Promised Land with the people he has led there. Is Moses a hero?

Is a hero a hero twenty-four hours a day, no matter what? Is he a hero when he orders his breakfast from a waiter? Is he a hero when he eats it? What about a person who is not a hero, but who has a heroic moment? In the Bible, God says “there are just men for life and there are also just men for an hour.” Is a just man for an hour a hero? The definition itself and the question of who deserves the title are slippery at best.

I do believe in the heroic act, even in the heroic moment. There are different heroisms for different moments in time. Sometimes just to make a child smile is an act of heroism.

In my tradition, a hero is someone who understands his or her own condition and limitations and, despite them, says, “I am not alone in the world. There is somebody else out there, and I want that

◀ **embody**  
(em bād'ē) *v.*  
represent or personify

2. **Stalin** (stă'lin) and **Hitler** dictators in the USSR and Germany, respectively, during World War II.

3. **Moses** Old Testament figure who led the Hebrew people out of slavery in Egypt.

**surmount** ▶  
(sər maunt') v. triumph  
over; overcome

person to benefit from my sacrifice and self-control." This is why one of the most heroic things you can do is to **surmount** anger, and why my definition of heroism is certainly not the Greek one, which has more to do with excelling in battle and besting one's enemies.

My heroes are those who stand up to false heroes. If I had to offer a personal definition of the word, it would be someone who dares to speak the truth to power. I think of the solitary man in Tiananmen Square<sup>4</sup>, who stood in front of a column of tanks as they rolled in to quash a peaceful protest, and stopped them with his bare hands. In that moment, he was standing up against the entire Chinese Communist Party. I think of the principal cellist of the Sarajevo<sup>5</sup> Opera Orchestra, who sat in the crater formed by a mortar shell blast and played for twenty-two days—one day to commemorate each one of his neighbors killed in a bread line on the same spot—while all around him, bullets whistled and bombs dropped. Those people were heroes.

Maybe heroes can simply be those people who inspire us to become better than we are. In that case, I find my heroes among my friends, family, and teachers. My mother and father's respect and love for learning had a great influence on me, and my son's generosity and humility continue to inspire me.

It was my grandfather who allowed me—who obliged me—to love life, to assume it as a Jew, and indeed to celebrate it for the Jewish people. He led a perfectly balanced life. He knew how to work the land, impose respect on tavern drunks, and break **recalcitrant** horses, but he was also devoted to his quest for the sacred. He told wonderful stories of miracle makers, of unhappy princes, and righteous men in disguise.

When I was a child, my heroes were always anonymous wanderers. They experienced the wonder of the wider world and brought it to me in my small village. These men were masters. A master must give himself over to total anonymity, dependent on the goodness of strangers, never sleeping or eating in the same place twice. Someone who wanders this way is a citizen of the world. The universe is his neighborhood. It is a concept that resonates with me to this day.

In fact, it is to one of those wanderers that I owe my constant drive to question, my pursuit of the mystery that lies within knowledge and the darkness hidden within light. I would not be the man, the Jew, I am today if a disconcerting vagabond—an anti-hero—had not accosted me on the street in Paris one day to tell

4. **Tiananmen** (tyen'ə men) **Square** large city square in Beijing, China, and site of a famous protest during the late 1980s.

5. **Sarajevo** (sar'ə yā'vō) capital city in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the cite of a major battle in the Bosnian War for independence.

**recalcitrant** ▶  
(ri kal'si trənt) *adj.*  
stubbornly defying  
control or authority

me I knew nothing. This was my teacher Shushani Rosenbaum. He said he spoke thirty languages, and there wasn't a country he hadn't visited. He looked like a beggar.

I was his best student, so he tried to destroy my faith by demonstrating the fragility of it. This was his chosen role: the troublemaker, the agitator. I gave him my reason and my will, and he shook my inner peace, destroyed everything I felt to be certain. Then he built me back up with words that banished distance and obstacles. Learning this way was a profoundly disturbing experience, but a life-changing one. I have never stopped questioning and challenging what I believe to be true. I speak of him as a disciple speaks of his master, with tremendous gratitude, and his is the advice I give to young people: "Always question."

In Hebrew there is no word for hero, but there is one that comes close, based on the word for justice: *tzaddik*. A *tzaddik* is a "righteous man," someone who overcomes his instincts . . . : jealousy, envy, ambition, the desire to hurt someone else—anything, essentially, that you want to do very much.

There is a story about a *tzaddik* that says a great deal to me about the character of the true hero. A man came to Sodom to preach against lies, thievery, violence, and indifference. No one listened, but he would not stop preaching. Finally someone asked him, "Why do you continue when you see that it is of no use?" He said, "I must keep speaking out. In the beginning, I thought I had to shout to change them. Now I know I must shout so that they cannot change me."

I find my heroes  
among my friends,  
family, and teachers.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

### Elie Wiesel (b. 1928)

Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986, Elie Wiesel is a survivor of Auschwitz and Buchenwald, concentration and death camps established by Nazi Germany during World War II. He was born in Romania in 1928 and was deported along with the rest of his family to Auschwitz in 1944. Wiesel and his two older sisters survived the camps, but his parents and younger sister did not. After the Allied troops liberated Buchenwald in 1945, Wiesel went to Paris where he returned to school and began to write. His most famous book, *Night*, a memoir published in 1958, tells of his experiences in the camps.

Wiesel immigrated to the United States in 1956 and became a U.S. citizen in 1963. He was appointed chairman of the President's Commission on the Holocaust, which recommended building the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. That project was completed in 1993.



# Close Reading Activities

## READ

### Comprehension

Reread all or part of the text to help you answer the following questions.

1. Why does Wiesel hesitate to call someone a hero?
2. According to Wiesel, what types of societies have been most apt to create heroes?
3. In Wiesel's point of view, why is the choosing of heroes a "dangerous game"?
4. What is a *tzaddik*?

**Research: Clarify Details** This essay may include references that are unfamiliar to you. Choose at least one unfamiliar detail, and briefly research it. Then, explain how the information you learned from research sheds light on an aspect of the essay.

**Summarize** Write an objective summary of the essay. Remember that an objective summary is free from opinion and evaluation.

### Language Study

**Selection Vocabulary** The following passages appear in the essay. For each boldface word, add, delete, or change the prefix or suffix—or both—to create a new word. Identify each new word's part of speech and use it in a sentence.

- So we need to ... choose only those who **embody**

those qualities that reflect the very best of human nature.

- This is why one of the most heroic things you can do is to **surmount** anger....
- He knew how to work the land, impose respect on tavern drunks, and break **recalcitrant** horses....

### Literary Analysis

Reread the identified passage. Then, respond to the questions that follow.

#### Focus Passage (pp. 893–894)

In my tradition ... Those people were heroes.

#### Key Ideas and Details

1. According to Wiesel, what is one of the most heroic things a person can do?
2. **(a)** What is Wiesel's personal definition of *hero*?  
**(b) Connect:** What examples does Wiesel give to illustrate this definition?

#### Craft and Structure

3. **(a) Distinguish:** How are the sentences that introduce and end the second paragraph similar?  
**(b) Analyze:** Which elements in the paragraph's interior sentences reveal the author's thought process and suggest that he is working through an idea? Explain.

#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

4. **Synthesize:** Why is Wiesel comfortable with the idea of the heroic moment but not with the idea of heroism? Explain, citing details from the text.

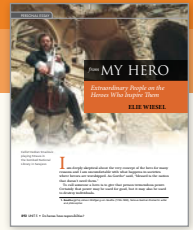
### Argumentation

In **argumentation**, a writer presents and defends a position or claim and arrives at a conclusion based on logical reasoning and evidence.

1. **(a)** What claim does Wiesel state in his first paragraph? **(b)** Cite two pieces of evidence he

uses to support that claim. **(c)** Cite two related ideas Wiesel uses to develop that claim and explain his line of reasoning.

2. **Defining Heroism:** What conclusion about heroism does Wiesel **ultimately** draw?



## DISCUSS • RESEARCH • WRITE

### From Text to Topic **Group Discussion**

Discuss the following passage with a group of classmates. Listen closely and build on one another's ideas. Support your own ideas with examples from the text.

Is a hero a hero twenty-four hours a day, no matter what? Is he a hero when he orders his breakfast from a waiter? Is he a hero when he eats it? What about a person who is not a hero, but who has a heroic moment?

### Research **Investigate the Topic**

**False Heroes** To **underscore** the **ambiguity** and possible dangers of hero worship, Elie Wiesel mentions dictators such as Stalin and Hitler who manipulated and devastated entire populations.

#### Assignment

Conduct research about one of the false heroes Wiesel mentions, and determine the role hero worship played in the figure's rise to power. Keep careful track of your sources, noting titles, authors, and publication information. Share your findings in an **informal presentation**.

### Writing to Sources **Explanatory Text**

In this essay, Elie Wiesel presents and supports his definition of the idea of heroism.

#### Assignment

Write a **definition essay**—one in which you define an abstract idea—about heroism. Follow these steps:

- Review the text to isolate the various definitions that Wiesel provides of the *hero* or *heroism*. Synthesize these ideas to arrive at your own understanding of the concept.
- State your definition in a thesis statement. Take your readers through your thought process, ordering ideas logically and providing meaningful transitions from section to section.
- Include strong supporting evidence, including examples from Wiesel's text as well as your own observations.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does Wiesel ask these questions?
2. How do you answer each of these questions? How might Wiesel answer these questions?
3. How do these questions clarify the problem Wiesel sees in defining heroism?

### PREPARATION FOR ESSAY

You may use the results of this research project in an essay you will write at the end of this section.

### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Academic terms appear in blue on these pages. If these words are not familiar to you, use a dictionary to find their definitions. Then, use them as you speak and write about the text.



# Of Altruism, Heroism and Nature's Gifts in the Face of Terror

Natalie Angier

**F**or the wordless, formless, expectant citizens of tomorrow, here are some postcards of all that matters today:

Minutes after terrorists slam jet planes into the towers of the World Trade Center, streams of harrowed humanity crowd the emergency stairwells, heading in two directions. While terrified employees scramble down, toward exit doors and survival, hundreds of New York firefighters, each laden with 70 to 100 pounds of lifesaving gear, charge upward, never to be seen again.

As the last of four hijacked planes advances toward an unknown but surely populated destination, passengers huddle together and plot resistance against their captors, an act that may explain why the plane fails to reach its target, crashing instead into an empty field outside Pittsburgh.

Hearing of the tragedy whose dimensions cannot be charted or absorbed, tens of thousands of people across the nation storm their local hospitals and blood banks, begging for the chance to give blood, something of themselves to the hearts of the wounded—and the heart of us all—beating against the void.

**Altruism** and heroism. If not for these twin radiant badges of our humanity, there would be no us, and we know it. And so, when their vile opposite threatened to choke us into submission last Tuesday, we rallied them in quantities so great we surprised even ourselves.

## altruism ►

(al'trōō iz'əm) *n.*  
interest in others' well-being that is unselfishly motivated

Nothing and nobody can fully explain the source of the emotional genius that has been everywhere on display. Politicians have cast it as evidence of the **indomitable** spirit of a rock-solid America; pastors have given credit to a more celestial source. And while biologists in no way claim to have discovered the key to human nobility, they do have their own spin on the subject. The altruistic impulse, they say, is a nondenominational<sup>1</sup> gift, the birthright and defining characteristic of the human species.

As they see it, the roots of altruistic behavior far predate *Homo sapiens*, and that is why it seems to flow forth so readily once tapped. Recent studies that model group dynamics suggest that a spirit of cooperation will arise in nature under a wide variety of circumstances.

“There’s a general trend in evolutionary biology toward recognizing that very often the best way to compete is to cooperate,” said Dr. Barbara Smuts, a professor of anthropology at the University of Michigan, who has published papers on the evolution of altruism. “And that, to me, is a source of some solace and comfort.”

Moreover, most biologists concur that the human capacity for language and memory allows altruistic behavior—the desire to give, and to sacrifice for the sake of others—to flourish in measure far beyond the cooperative spirit seen in other species.

With language, they say, people can learn of individuals they have never met and feel compassion for their suffering, and honor and even emulate their heroic deeds. They can also warn one another of any selfish cheaters or malign tricksters lurking in their midst.

“In a large crowd, we know who the good guys are, and we can talk about, and ostracize, the bad ones,” said Dr. Craig Packer, a professor of ecology and evolution at the University of Minnesota. “People are very concerned about their reputation, and that, too, can inspire us to be good.”

Oh, better than good.

“There’s a grandness in the human species that is so striking, and so profoundly different from what we see in other animals,” he added. “We are an amalgamation of families working together. This is what civilization is derived from.”

At the same time, said biologists, the very conditions that encourage heroics and selflessness can be the source of profound barbarism as well. “Moral behavior is often a within-group phenomenon,” said Dr. David Sloan Wilson, a professor of biology at the State University of New York at Binghamton. “Altruism is practiced within your group, and often turned off toward members of other groups.”

◀ **indomitable**  
(in dām’i tē bəl) *adj.*  
impossible to subdue  
or discourage

1. **nondenominational** not connected to a particular religion.



The desire to understand the nature of altruism has occupied evolutionary thinkers since Charles Darwin, who was fascinated by the apparent existence of altruism among social insects. In ant and bee colonies, sterile female workers labor ceaselessly for their queen, and will even die for her when the nest is threatened. How could such seeming selflessness evolve, when it is exactly those individuals that are behaving altruistically that fail to breed and thereby pass their selfless genes along?

By a similar token, human soldiers who go to war often are at the beginning of their reproductive potential, and many are killed before getting the chance to have children. Why don't the stay-at-homes simply outbreed the do-gooders and thus bury the altruistic impulse along with the casualties of combat?

The question of altruism was at least partly solved when the British evolutionary theorist William Hamilton formulated the idea of inclusive fitness: the notion that individuals can enhance their reproductive success not merely by having young of their own, but by caring for their genetic relatives as well. Among social bees and ants, it turns out, the sister workers are more closely related to one another than parents normally are to their offspring; thus it behooves the workers to care more about current and potential sisters than to fret over their sterile selves.

The concept of inclusive fitness explains many brave acts observed in nature. Dr. Richard Wrangham, a primatologist at Harvard, cites the example of the red colobus monkey. When they are being hunted by chimpanzees, the male monkeys are "amazingly brave," Dr. Wrangham said. "As the biggest and strongest members of their group, they undoubtedly could escape quicker than the others." Instead, the males jump to the front, confronting the chimpanzee hunters while the mothers and offspring jump to safety. Often, the much bigger chimpanzees pull the colobus soldiers off by their tails and slam them to their deaths.

Their courageousness can be explained by the fact that colobus monkeys live in multimale, multifemale groups in which the males are almost always related. So in protecting the young monkeys, the adult males are defending their kin.

Yet, as biologists are learning, there is more to cooperation and generosity than an investment in one's nepotistic patch of DNA.<sup>2</sup> Lately they have **accrued** evidence that something like group selection encourages the evolution of traits beneficial to a group, even when members of the group are not related.

In computer simulation studies, Dr. Smuts and her colleagues modeled two types of group-living agents that would behave like herbivores: one that would selfishly consume all the food in a given patch before moving on, and another that would consume resources modestly rather than greedily, thus allowing local plant food to regenerate.

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2. nepotistic patch of DNA blood relatives.

**accrued** ▶  
(ə krōōd') v. regularly  
added or increased

Researchers had assumed that cooperators could collaborate with genetically unrelated cooperators only if they had the cognitive capacity to know goodness when they saw it.

But the data suggested otherwise. “These models showed that under a wide range of simulated environmental conditions you could get selection for prudent, cooperative behavior,” Dr. Smuts said, even in the absence of cognition or kinship. “If you happened by chance to get good guys together, they remained together because they created a mutually beneficial environment.”

This sort of win-win principle, she said, could explain all sorts of symbiotic arrangements, even among different species—like the tendency of baboons and impalas to associate together because they use each other’s warning calls.

Add to this basic mechanistic selection for cooperation the human capacity to recognize and reward behaviors that strengthen the group—the tribe, the state, the church, the platoon—and selflessness thrives and multiplies. So, too, does the need for group identity. Classic so-called minimal group experiments have shown that when people are gathered together and assigned membership in arbitrary groups, called, say, the Greens and the Reds, before long the members begin expressing amity for their fellow Greens or Reds and animosity toward those of the wrong “color.”

“Ancestral life frequently consisted of intergroup conflict,” Dr. Wilson of SUNY said. “It’s part of our mental heritage.”

Yet he does not see conflict as inevitable. “It’s been shown pretty well that where people place the boundary between us and them is extremely flexible and strategic,” he said. “It’s possible to widen the moral circle, and I’m optimistic enough to believe it can be done on a worldwide scale.”

Ultimately, though, scientists acknowledge that the evolutionary framework for self-sacrificing acts is overlaid by individual choice. And it is there, when individual firefighters or office workers or airplane passengers choose the altruistic path, that science gives way to wonder.

Dr. James J. Moore, a professor of anthropology at the University of California at San Diego, said he had studied many species, including many different primates. “We’re the nicest species I know,” he said. “To see those guys risking their lives, climbing over rubble on the chance of finding one person alive, well, you wouldn’t find baboons doing that.” The horrors of last week notwithstanding, he said, “the overall picture to come out about human nature is wonderful.”

“For every 50 people making bomb threats now to mosques,” he said, “there are 500,000 people around the world behaving just the way we hoped they would, with empathy and expressions of grief. We are amazingly civilized.”

True, death-defying acts of heroism may be the province of the few. For the rest of us, simple humanity will do.

# Close Reading Activities

## READ

### Comprehension

Reread all or part of the text to help you answer the following questions.

1. What events does Angier describe at the beginning of the article?
2. According to Angier, what did many people do after hearing the news of those events?
3. What is “inclusive fitness”?

**Research: Clarify Details** This article may include references that are unfamiliar to you. Choose at least one unfamiliar detail, and briefly research it. Then, explain how the information you learned from research sheds light on an aspect of the article.

**Summarize** Write an objective summary of the article. Remember that an objective summary is free from opinion and evaluation.

### Language Study

**Selection Vocabulary** The following passages appear in the article. Define each boldface word. Then, use all the boldface words in a paragraph.

- **Altruism** and heroism. If not for these twin radiant badges of our humanity, there would be no us....

- Politicians have cast it as evidence of the **indomitable** spirit of a rock-solid America....
- Lately they have **accrued** evidence that something like group selection encourages the evolution of traits beneficial to a group....

### Literary Analysis

Reread the identified passage. Then, respond to the questions that follow.

**Focus Passage** (pp. 898–899)

Altruism and heroism ... solace and comfort.”

#### Key Ideas and Details

1. What, according to Angier, are the “twin badges of our humanity”?
2. What have recent studies shown about a spirit of cooperation in nature? Explain.

#### Craft and Structure

3. **(a) Distinguish:** Cite two charged, or emotional, terms Angier uses in the first two paragraphs to rename her topics. **(b) Analyze:** How does her diction change when she turns to scientific content? **(c) Draw Conclusions:** What does her diction suggest about a scientific perspective versus a political, social, or personal one? Explain.

#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

4. **Generalize:** Why might a scientist, or anyone, find the idea that “the best way to compete is to cooperate” comforting? Explain.

### Structure

The **structure** of a work is the way in which it is organized. A logical structure will help readers better understand connections among ideas. Reread the article, and take notes about its structure.

1. **(a)** Which paragraphs **comprise** the

introduction? **(b)** How does the introduction **establish** a foundation for the entire article?

2. **Defining Heroism:** **(a)** At what point does the conclusion begin? **(b)** How does the conclusion relate directly to the introduction? Explain.



## DISCUSS • RESEARCH • WRITE

### From Text to Topic **Write and Share**

Write a quick response to the passage, and then share your writing with a partner. Discuss your ideas and your partners' responses to both the passage and to your ideas.

"For every 50 people making bomb threats now to mosques," he said, "there are 500,000 people around the world behaving just the way we hoped they would, with empathy and expressions of grief. We are amazingly civilized."

True, death-defying acts of heroism may be the province of the few. For the rest of us, simple humanity will do.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What does Angier mean by "simple humanity"?
2. Is "simple humanity" enough? Why or why not?

### Research **Investigate the Topic**

**9/11 Relief Efforts** Natalie Angier uses the events of September 11, 2001, to frame her explanation of altruism, heroism, and human nature.

#### Assignment

Conduct research to learn about relief efforts that occurred in the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001. Relate the information you learn to the findings about altruism and heroism Angier describes in her article. Examine newspaper articles, history books, and Web sites. Take clear notes, and carefully document your sources. Share your findings in a **research report**.

### PREPARATION FOR ESSAY

You may use the results of this research project in an essay you will write at the end of this section.

### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Academic terms appear in blue on these pages. If these words are not familiar to you, use a dictionary to find their definitions. Then, use them as you speak and write about the text.

### Writing to Sources **Informative Text**

In her conclusion, Angier explains that the qualities of altruism and heroism are more **prevalent** in humans than in other species.

#### Assignment

Write an **article or blog post** in which you discuss altruistic behavior you may have observed in your school, your community, or another setting. Explain how the behavior you observed demonstrates some of the qualities Angier describes in her essay. Follow these steps:

- Using Angier's essay as a model, begin with an engaging introduction that sets up a foundation for the rest of your discussion.
- Organize your ideas logically, using clear transitions to connect your ideas.
- Write a conclusion in which you reflect upon the information you introduced and developed earlier in the essay.

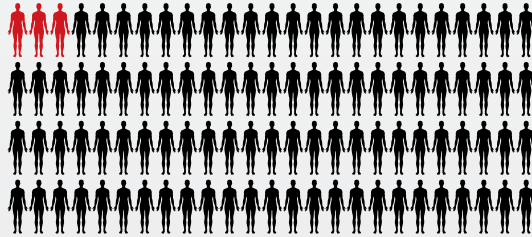
# American Blood Donation

Donating Blood in Numbers

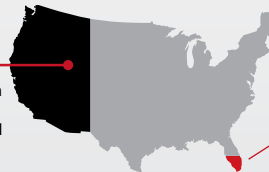
**1** pint saves **3** lives



**3** in **100** Americans donate blood



**38%**  
of population  
is eligible to  
donate blood

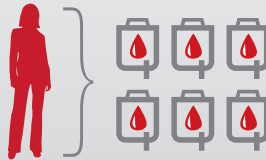


**8%**  
of eligible population  
actually gives blood

**333**  
pints  
total amount of blood  
donated by Al Fischer  
over a 60-year period



**1** person is permitted to donate only **6** pints  
of blood per year



Every **2** seconds someone  
in the United States needs blood



Data Source: American Red Cross



**10** pints  
average amount of blood  
in human body

## READ • RESEARCH

### Comprehension

Look at the graphic closely, and reread the captions and labels. Then, answer the following questions.

1. For every 100 Americans, how many donate blood?
2. How many lives can a single pint of blood save?

---

### Critical Analysis

#### Key Ideas and Details

1. **(a) Analyze:** Explain the persuasive message this graphic conveys: What do the makers of this infographic want readers to think and to do?  
**(b) Connect:** In what ways does the information, both visual and verbal, about the demand for donated blood add urgency to the message? Explain.

#### Craft and Structure

2. **Analyze:** What **distinct** information is conveyed in each of the six main sections of the graphic? Explain.
3. **(a)** What information does the image of the United States convey?  
**(b) Interpret:** Explain how this graphic **underscores** the importance of blood donation for those who are eligible to give.

#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

4. **(a) Synthesize:** What information is conveyed by the large and small images of a person? **(b) Analyze:** How does this information **implicitly** argue that Al Fischer is a hero? Explain. **(c) Evaluate:** Is this argument well supported and convincing? Explain.
5. **(a) Make a Judgment:** Is blood donation a heroic activity? Explain your position. **(b) Connect:** How might the various authors in this section answer that question? Explain, citing specific examples and evidence from the texts.

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### Research Investigate the Topic

**Blood Banks** Conduct research about the history of blood banks in the United States and how they are run and operated today. Consult authoritative sources, including Web sites run by government agencies and reputable nonprofit organizations. After you have gathered your data, write a **summary** of your findings, and explain how this topic relates to the ideas about heroism presented in this section.

#### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Academic terms appear in blue on these pages. If these words are not familiar to you, use a dictionary to find their definitions. Then, use them as you speak and write about the infographic.

#### PREPARATION FOR ESSAY

You may use the results of this research project in an essay you will write at the end of this section.

# Assessment: Synthesis

## Speaking and Listening: Group Discussion

**Heroism and Responsibility** The texts in this section vary in genre, length, style, and perspective. However, all of them share stories of heroes and the deeds they perform or reflect on what it means to be a hero. These ideas are all related to the Big Question addressed in this unit: **Do heroes have responsibilities?**

### Assignment

**Conduct discussions.** With a small group of classmates, conduct a discussion about issues of heroism and responsibility. Refer to the texts in this section, other texts you have read, your personal experience, and research you have conducted to support your ideas. Begin your discussion by addressing the following questions:

- What is a hero?
- Is there a difference between a hero and someone who performs a heroic act?
- What responsibilities do heroes have to society, to other people, and to themselves?
- What makes people choose the heroic path?
- Are all heroes good? Are heroes good all the time?

**Summarize and present your ideas.** After you have fully explored the topic, summarize your discussion, and present your findings to the class as a whole.



▲ Refer to the selections you read in Part 3 as you complete the activities on this assessment.

## Criteria for Success

### ✓ Organizes the group effectively

Appoint a group leader and a timekeeper. The group leader should present the discussion questions. The timekeeper should make sure the discussion takes no longer than twenty minutes.

### ✓ Maintains focus of discussion

As a group, stay on topic and avoid straying into other subject areas.

### ✓ Involves all participants equally and fully

Treat all participants equally and with respect. Allow everyone a chance to speak, and encourage reluctant group members to contribute.

### ✓ Works together as a group

Listen to one another's ideas, and make connections among different speaker's points. Work to arrive at a consensus.

## USE NEW VOCABULARY

As you speak and share ideas, work to use the vocabulary words you have learned in this unit. The more you use new words, the more you will "own" them.

## Writing: Narrative

**Heroism and Responsibility** Fictional heroes are often exceptional characters who may have enhanced abilities or skills. They may be professional heroes who devote their lives and skills to helping others. By contrast, a hero in everyday life may be an otherwise ordinary person who happens to perform a selfless task.

### Assignment

Write a **reflective essay** about a real person whom you consider to be a hero. Describe why this person is heroic and how he or she carries out responsibilities. Include an example of a heroic incident you have witnessed your subject perform as a way to frame your essay. As you write, draw on the selections you have read in this section and the research you have completed.

### Criteria for Success

#### Purpose/Focus

- ✓ **Makes connections to larger ideas**  
Compare the heroism of the person you are describing with examples from the texts you have read. Draw parallels or point out meaningful differences.
- ✓ **Engages the audience with significant details**  
Involve your reader by focusing on colorful or moving incidents.

#### Organization

- ✓ **Builds a clear progression of ideas**  
Structure your ideas so that they flow logically and smoothly from sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph, and section to section.

#### Development of Ideas/Elaboration

- ✓ **Uses narrative techniques effectively**  
Include elements such as dialogue, pacing, and description to create vivid pictures of characters and situations.
- ✓ **Concludes with purpose and reflection**  
Provide a conclusion that restates earlier details and offers a meaningful insight.

#### Language

- ✓ **Uses description effectively**  
Describe scenes, settings, and people clearly so that readers can visualize them.

#### Conventions

- ✓ **Eliminates errors**  
Check your essay to eliminate errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

#### WRITE TO EXPLORE

Before writing, brainstorm for ideas about heroism. Brainstorming may lead you to new insights that you can then explore in your essay.



## Writing to Sources: Argument

**Heroism and Responsibility** The related readings in this section present a range of ideas about heroism and responsibility. They raise questions, such as the following, about the concept of the hero:

- What makes a hero heroic?
- What responsibilities does a hero have, and for how long does he or she have them?
- What happens if a hero fails to live up to his or her reputation or responsibilities?
- Does a hero perform only good deeds?

Focus on the question that intrigues you the most, and then complete the following assignment.

### Assignment

Write an **argumentative essay** in which you state and defend a claim about the concepts of heroism and responsibility. Build evidence for your claim by synthesizing ideas about heroism from two or more texts in this section. Present, develop, and support your ideas with examples and details from the texts.

### INCORPORATE RESEARCH

The research you have conducted in this section may provide support for your position. Review the notes you took, and incorporate any relevant facts or details into your essay.

### Prewriting and Planning

**Examine texts.** Make a list of the texts you have read in this section, and describe your understanding of each. Then, look for connected ideas among the texts, your ideas, and the research you conducted.

**Gather information to arrive at a claim.** Use a chart like the one shown to develop your claim. Though you may refine or change your claim, the working version will help you to establish your focus.

#### Focus Question: Does a hero perform only good deeds?

Text	Passage	Notes
"My Hero: Extraordinary People on the Heroes Who Inspire Them"	[Moses] began his public career by killing an Egyptian; later, he failed to identify himself as a Jew.	A person many consider a hero had committed murder and denied his heritage. He is never called a hero in the Bible because of these deeds.
"Perseus"	Perseus kills the sea serpent, rescuing Andromeda and sparing the Ethiopians from being devoured by it.	Perseus resorts to violence, but as a result he eliminates a great evil.

**Example Claim:** Heroes may not always be good. They should be judged by their motivations in general and not solely on their actions.

**Consider opposing viewpoints.** As you lay out your argument, anticipate disagreements. Explain why your ideas are convincing, and provide evidence to support your assertions.

## Drafting

**Structure an organized argument.** Review the textual evidence you have chosen to support your claim. Use those ideas to form the points of your argument, and sequence them so that each idea leads clearly and logically to the next.

**Distinguish separate claims.** Explain why your position is different from other interpretations with which you are familiar. Support your explanation with strong reasoning and accurate evidence.

**Frame and connect ideas.** Consider grabbing your reader's attention with a controversial statement. Then, explain how that statement relates to your claim. Carefully use words, phrases, and clauses to make clear connections between sentences, paragraphs, and whole sections of your essay.

## Revising and Editing

**Check for coherence.** Review your draft to be sure that your argument flows logically from beginning to end. If any parts of the essay feel out of place, move, rewrite, or eliminate that section.

**Check style and tone.** Be sure that you have used language appropriate for your subject and audience. Review your essay, and replace any questionable word choices with more appropriate alternatives.

### CITE RESEARCH CORRECTLY

You may find supporting evidence in nontraditional sources such as a piece of music or film. Consult a reputable style guide for tips on formatting these citations. See the Citing Sources pages in the Introductory Unit of this textbook for additional guidance.

### Self-Evaluation Rubric

Use the following criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of your essay.

Criteria	Rating Scale
<b>PURPOSE/FOCUS</b> Introduces a precise claim and distinguishes the claim from (implied) alternate or opposing claims; provides a concluding section that follows from and supports the argument presented	<i>not very</i> ..... <i>very</i> 1    2    3    4
<b>ORGANIZATION</b> Establishes a logical organization; uses words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify relationships among claims, reasons, and evidence, and between claims and counterclaims	1    2    3    4
<b>DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS/ELABORATION</b> Develops the claim and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both	1    2    3    4
<b>LANGUAGE</b> Establishes and maintains a formal style and an objective tone	1    2    3    4
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> Attends to the norms and conventions of the discipline	1    2    3    4

# Independent Reading

## Titles for Extended Reading

In this unit, you have read texts in a variety of genres. Continue to read on your own. Select works that you enjoy, but challenge yourself to explore new authors and works of increasing depth and complexity. The titles suggested below will help you get started.

### INFORMATIONAL TEXT

#### Joan of Arc

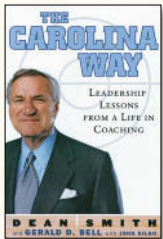
by Mary Gordon



This **biography** tells the remarkable story of the short life of a fifteenth-century peasant turned warrior named Joan. After hearing a voice she believed was God's, she left her family and home behind to lead the French army to victory over the British.

#### The Carolina Way

by Dean Smith and Gerald Bell with John Kilgo



Dean Smith, the coach of the University of North Carolina men's basketball team for almost 40 years, shares his strategies for leadership, teamwork, and winning with integrity in this **nonfiction** book.

#### The Story of Science: Newton at the Center

by Joy Hakim

EXEMPLAR TEXT

An examination of the accomplishments and lives of several scientists, this work of **nonfiction** includes interesting stories and facts that present some engaging aspects of science.

#### Nelson Mandela

by Laaren Brown and Lenny Hort



This **biography** of Nelson Mandela describes his struggles against the unjust government of South Africa and how he survived 27 years as a political prisoner. It also documents his rise to become president of his country as South Africa emerged from the dark ages of apartheid.

### LITERATURE

#### Fathers and Sons

by Ivan Turgenev

EXEMPLAR TEXT



This 1862 **novel** set in Russia delves into the gap that has grown between a generation of parents and children who differ greatly in their philosophies. As the young demand social change, the old cling desperately to tradition.

#### Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems

by Alice Walker

EXEMPLAR TEXT



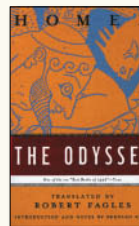
Known for her bold honesty and poetic language, Walker crafts a collection of **poetry** that explores the similarities between revolution and love.

#### The Odyssey

by Homer

Translated by Robert Fagles

EXEMPLAR TEXT



When the hero Odysseus begins his voyage home after the Trojan War, he has no idea his travels will lead him to seductive goddesses, man-eating monsters, and vengeful gods. Read this **epic tale** to decide for yourself if Odysseus is the ultimate hero.

### ONLINE TEXT SET



SPEECH

#### There Is a Longing

Chief Dan George

SHORT STORY

#### The Man to Send Rain Clouds

Leslie Marmon Silko

POEM

#### There Is No Word for Goodbye

Mary Tall Mountain

## Preparing to Read Complex Texts

**Attentive Reading** As you read literature on your own, bring your imagination and questions to the text. The questions shown below and others that you ask as you read will help you learn and enjoy literature even more.

**When reading texts from the oral tradition, ask yourself...**

### Comprehension: Key Ideas and Details

- Who are the main characters in this text, and what conflicts or struggles do they face?
- From what culture does this text come? What elements of the culture do I see in the text? For example, do I notice beliefs, foods, traditions, or settings that have particular meaning for the people of this culture?
- Do any aspects of this text seem familiar to me? For example, do any characters, settings, or events in the plot remind me of those in other stories I have read or films I have seen?

### Text Analysis: Craft and Structure

- What type of text is this: an epic, a myth, a tale, or a legend? What types of characters, events, and ideas do I expect to find?
- Is this text a retelling by a modern author? If so, does the author change the text for modern readers?
- What do I notice about the language, including descriptions and dialogue? Does the language reflect values or customs related to the cultural or historical context of the text?
- Does the text include symbols? If so, do they have special meanings in the original culture of the text? Do they also have meanings in modern life?
- Does the text include patterns of events or repetitions of statements or images? If so, which ones? What is the effect?

### Connections: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- How does this text round out the picture of the culture I might get from a nonfiction source, such as an encyclopedia entry?
- Does this text express universal ideas or values—those that are common to people in many different cultures and time periods?
- How does this text compare to similar texts I have read?
- If I were researching this culture for a report, would I include passages from this text? If so, what would those passages show?