

SEMESTER 2

Week 11: Mar. 19 – Mar. 23

Reading Selections	Genre	Objectives	Pages
The Odyssey, Part I	Epic Poem	Literary Study: Analyzing epic and epic hero Reading Strategy: Analyzing figurative language Vocabulary: Distinguishing between denotation and connotation	229-244

Assignments

Supplementary Reading

- ___ Read “Homer’s Odyssey: General Introductory Notes” (page 2 this packet)
- ___ Read (before, during, and after your reading in the book) “The Odyssey Part 1 Summary in Student Language” (pages 3-5 this packet)

Read and Write Book

- ___ pages 230-231 “Before You Read” Activities _____(points/grade)
- ___ pages 232-244 **Read** (notes & margin activities) _____(points/grade)

Vocabulary

- ___ Complete the “Connotation/Denotation/Euphemism” Worksheet (pp. 6-7 this packet) _____(points/grade)

High School Grammar Packet

- ___ Sentence Revision #4: “Adjectives” _____(points/grade)

HOMER'S ODYSSEY General Introductory Notes

ORAL EPIC

The *Odyssey* is an epic poem (Greek *epos* = verse). It was composed to be recited to the accompaniment of a lyre (a musical instrument) to a listening audience, not written to be read out .

It is characteristic of oral poetry in its constant repetitions, both of phrase and line (*formulae*) and whole scenes {*typical scenes/themes*). These are the building blocks of the oral poet/bard in his recitation, enabling him to compose on the spot, although not without prior knowledge of these linking repetitions, e.g. *resourceful* Odysseus, *thoughtful* Telemachus. Because of this, the epithets applied to people may not always be appropriate to the context - they assisted in composition of poetry written in meter (dictated by syllable length and number of syllables).

COMPOSITION

The *Odyssey* was composed by a Greek living in Ionia (west coast of Turkey) probably during the late 8th. Cent. BC. We do not know how or when it came to be written down, who Homer was, or whether he was also the poet of the *Iliad*, as is traditionally thought.

Both *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are set in the Mycenaean Bronze Age (c. 1600-1100 BC).

From 1000 BC onwards, iron became the predominant metal in the Greek world, but Homeric armour, etc. is always of bronze. We assume the 8th Century for composition of the epics because there are so few post-8th Century customs, practices and artefacts referred to in the poems (e.g. writing, which is never mentioned in the *Odyssey*).

The *Odyssey* is 12,110 lines long and would have taken about 20-25 hours to recite, so it was possibly intended in serial form. It is divided into 24 books, one for each letter of the Greek alphabet--probably a later division since 'Homer' probably did not write.

The *Odyssey* as we have it falls into six four-book groups, a possible clue to its recitation units. Only by the 6th. Cent. was there a written text of the *Odyssey*, and our earliest manuscripts dates from the 10th/11th. Cent. AD.

BACKGROUND TO THE STORY

Odysseus, King of Ithaca, son of Laertes, husband of Penelope and father of Telemachus, had gone off to the Trojan War twenty years previously, when the *Odyssey* begins. The War lasted for ten of these years; the remaining time has been spent by Odysseus trying to return home. In his absence, various suitors for his wife's hand have been constantly hanging about in his palace, no one knowing whether he will return. Book 1 opens prior to his return, when Odysseus himself is with the nymph Calypso on her island where he has been for seven years.

oral = spoken

epithet = a characteristic adjective or phrase

The Odyssey Part 1 Summary (in Student Language!)

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Odysseus introduces himself and begins to tell his story, starting with the moment his men leave Troy. We've got almost ten years to cover here. He starts by describing his home – the island of Ithaca of course – and all of the surrounding islands.

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He laments that he was held captive by Calypso, and actually declares (in our Lattimore translation) that she "never could [...] persuade the heart within me" to be her lover. (Basically, he means that he was acting like he loved her, but didn't feel that way in his heart.)

Now Odysseus covers the stuff we don't know – the years in between Troy and Calypso. Also, welcome to the historical present...

Odysseus and his men first come to the land of the Kikonians, where they kill everyone, take plunder, and enslave the women.

Odysseus tries to get his men to go back to sea so they can get home already, but the men are starving and therefore mutinous. Many Ithakans are killed in the plundering struggle (the natives put up a fight).

Those who escape are victims of a god-sent storm and have to wait around for a few days before they can sail again.

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Ten days later, they land on the island of the Lotus Eaters.

This sounds like a great tropical get-away, which is exciting until three of Odysseus's men eat the lotus flower, lose their memory of home and family, and want nothing more than to stay on the island... forever.

Odysseus quickly rounds up his men, including the three lotus-afflicted guys, and leaves.

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Next they arrive at the land of the uncivilized Cyclopes, giant monsters with only one eye. Because of their uncivilized ways, these monsters have no seamanship and let their fertile land go to waste. All they do is tend flocks of sheep.

When Odysseus and his crew run across a Cyclops's deserted cave, his men want to steal from there – but Odysseus won't let them.

Instead, he wants to treat the Cyclops like a human being and play the part of good guests (more on that hospitality thing). So they burn an offering in the monster's cave and wait for his return.

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Not surprisingly, the Cyclops soon returns, driving in his herd of sheep and closing the entrance of the cave behind him with a huge boulder.

Then he's all, "What are you doing in my cave?"

After some bantering he refuses their suggestion of hospitality – he doesn't care for Zeus's rules about being good guests and hosts.

The Cyclops asks Odysseus where he has landed his ship. Odysseus, quick on his feet, says that they have been shipwrecked by Poseidon (this will make for some gorgeous irony in a few pages).

The Cyclops, also quick on his feet, bends down, grabs two men, and promptly eats them.

Then he goes to sleep.

Odysseus draws his sword, meaning to kill the Cyclops in his sleep. But he

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stops when he realizes that they can never escape the cave without the strength of the Cyclops to remove the gigantic rock at the entrance. Foiled again.

So they mill around and wait for the monster to wake up and have breakfast. The Cyclops wakes in the morning and, yes, has a few of Odysseus's men for breakfast.

When he leaves to tend his flocks for the day, Odysseus hatches and plots a plan. He has his men carve out a huge wooden pole and sharpen its end in fire.

When the Cyclops returns, Odysseus cunningly offers him wine and tells him that his name is "Nobody."

The Cyclops gets drunk from the wine and passes out.

Time for action. Odysseus and his men drive the sharpened pole straight into the Cyclops's only eye, blinding him.

The Cyclops makes such a racket in his pain that other Cyclopes gather outside his cave and ask him what is wrong. We hear his name – Polyphemos – for the first time. They ask if any man has tricked him.

Polyphemos yells out to them: "Nobody's tricked me, Nobody's ruined me!" So the others are all, "OK, fine, then stop making a ruckus. Nobody's ruined us, either" and they go back to their fun times in the pastures.

But first, they reveal the information that Poseidon, god of the sea, is Polyphemos's father.

Uh-oh.

Odysseus takes a moment to congratulate himself.

But there still in the little problem of how to escape the cave. The Cyclops, meanwhile, can't see anything and therefore can't grab up the men to eat them for their treachery, so he just gives up and goes to bed after pulling the spike out of his eye.

While he sleeps, Odysseus devises yet another plan: he ties each of his men beneath one of Polyphemos's rams, saving the biggest for himself, of course.

The next morning, Polyphemos lets his flock out, reaching down and feeling the tops of their fleece for escaping men. Of course, he doesn't detect anything.

Odysseus's ram is the last one out and Polyphemos asks him (the ram) what is wrong; he is usually the first out. He decides that his king ram must be sympathizing with his master because of the whole mutilated eye thing and lets the creature pass.

Outside, Odysseus triumphantly unties his men and all make their way to their ship, stealing the escape-vessel sheep while they're at it.

Sweet – surely they are home free?

Nope. Odysseus cannot help taunting Polyphemos as they sail away. We're sensing a trend here.

Polyphemos, enraged, throws a gigantic rock that passes over the Ithakans' ship.

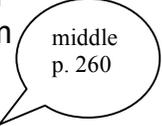
The men are frightened and rather reasonably want Odysseus to stop taunting

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Polyphemos, but he's having too much fun trash-talking. He then pulls the moronic move of revealing his real name to Polyphemos. In fact, he doesn't just reveal his name; he basically delivers his personal biography: he is Odysseus, raider of cities, Laertes's son, the man from Ithaka.



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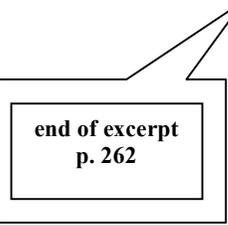
Polyphemos, quite a tattletale, runs to Poseidon and prays that he curse Odysseus. He wishes that Odysseus will never get home, or if he does, that he will lose all his companions in the journey.

This is where we can all stop wondering why Poseidon hates Odysseus so much.

Polyphemos hurls another rock, this one landing behind the ship and forcing it out to sea.

Shortly thereafter, Odysseus lands and makes a sacrifice to Zeus.

It is rejected. (We don't really know how that works, but take Odysseus's word for it – he clearly messed with the wrong one-eyed man-eating son-of-a-god.)



end of excerpt
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And so the story continues....

Name _____

Hour _____

Connotation/Denotation/Euphemism

Part One: Organize the following words from each list into a group of words with positive connotations and a list with negative connotations. Each word must be used in one of the two lists. You will do this on another sheet of paper.

- 1. tight, miserly, frugal, economical, careful, penurious, thrifty, budget-minded, prudent, penny-pinching
- 2. dislike, resent, lament, hate, scorn, disapprove, decry, deplore, oppose, regret
- 3. odd, curious, off-the-wall, outlandish, weird, singular, bizarre, unusual, strange, extraordinary, remarkable, eerie, noteworthy

Part Two: Often two words mean roughly the same thing, except that one has an unfavorable, the other, a favorable, connotation. Thus, although you may like to think of yourself as an *idealist*, people who do not sympathize with your attitudes might call you a *dreamer*. For the following pairs of terms, write short explanations of why you might like to be described by one term but not the other. Choose five to do. You will do this on another sheet of paper. Make sure you label which pair you are doing.

- 1. self-confident/conceited
- 2. assertive/pushy
- 3. firm/stubborn
- 4. hard-working/workaholic
- 5. flexible/indecisive
- 6. casual/sloppy
- 7. mature/old

Part Three: For each pair of words and a phrase, list the one that is positive in the "Positive Connotation" category, the one that is negative in the "Negative Connotation" category, and the phrase that is a more neutral definition for both words in the "Denotation" column.

- 1. gaze, look steadily, stare
- 2. fragrance, odor, a smell sensed by the olfactory nerve
- 3. brainwash, persuade, influence one way or another
- 4. delayed, not on time, tardy
- 5. somewhat interested, nosy, curious
- 6. lazily, without haste, leisurely
- 7. ask of someone, demand, request
- 8. gathering, a large group, mob
- 9. slim, skinny, less than average build
- 10. discuss with others, debate, argue
- 11. observe, watch, spy
- 12. a young age, youthful, immature
- 13. not having a care, irresponsible, carefree,
- 14. unique, not commonly found, strange
- 15. find, detect, snoop
- 16. inexpensive, fairly priced, or cheap
- 17. isolation, privacy, having an opportunity to be alone
- 18. assertive, firmly confident, pushy
- 19. extravagance, generosity, giving much,

	Positive Connotation	Denotation	Negative Connotation
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			

9			
10			
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12			
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14			
15			
16			
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19			

Part Four: The expressions in italics are euphemisms. What do they probably mean?

1. She was *less favored by beauty than her sister*

2. Someone *borrowed money from my locker* without asking me.

3. I just bought a *pre-owned* car yesterday.

4. I just won a *lunch reservation* from Mr. Simon.

5. The *caretaker* does an excellent job at Braden.

6. I got in a bit of trouble for *stretching the truth* about the broken lamp.

7. Now I'm headed for the *correctional facility* again.

8. Where do I work? Actually, I'm *between jobs* at the moment.

9. Now that I'm *getting up there in years* I don't like birthdays so much.

10. Eric's driving skills leave *plenty of room for improvement*.

Week 12: Mar. 26 – Mar. 30

Reading Selection	Genre	Objectives	Pages
The Odyssey Part 1, continued	Epic Poem	Literary Study: Analyzing epic and epic hero Reading Strategy: Analyzing figurative language Vocabulary: Distinguishing between denotation and connotation	246-266

Assignments

Supplementary Reading

___ Re-read (before, during, and after your reading in the book) “The Odyssey Part 1 Summary in Student Language” (pages 3-5 this packet)

Read and Write Book

___ pages 246-262 **Read** (notes & margin activities) _____ (points/grade)
 ___ pages 234-265 “After You Read” Activities _____ (points/grade)
 ___ page 266 Problem Solution Chart _____ (points/grade)

Writing

You have now read some of the adventures of the most famous epic hero of all time: Odysseus! Identify 2 or 3 important traits that Odysseus needs to survive his long and eventful journey. Write one paragraph about each trait, referring to specific lines and sections in the poem where you see this trait demonstrated. Don’t be shy about offering your opinion and/or insight.

Next, draw some conclusions about the traits YOU need to develop in order to survive and succeed in your own lifelong odyssey. Are they similar traits, or different? Explain in a paragraph.

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___ Sentence Revision #5: “Participial Phrases” _____ (points/grade)

Week 14: Apr. 16 – Apr. 20

Reading Selection	Objectives
Released STAR Questions	Reading Strategy: Review and practice for the STAR Test

Assignments

High School Grammar Packet

___ Lesson 66: “Usage: *amount to could of*” _____ (points/grade)