
PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS IN THE ODYSSEY

HUMANS

- AGAMEMNON (ag' ə mem' non): king and leader of Greek forces during the Trojan war
ALCINOUS (al sin' ō əs): king of the Phaeacians and person to whom Odysseus relates his story
AMPHINOMUS (am fin' ə məs): one of Penelope's suitors
ANTINOUS (an tin' ō əs): rudest of Penelope's suitors
EUMAEUS (yoo mē' əs): Odysseus's loyal swineherd
EURYCLEIA (yoó ri klē' ə): Odysseus's faithful old nurse
EURYLOCHUS (yoo ril' ə kəs): one of Odysseus's crew
EURYMACHUS (yoo rim' ə kəs): one of Penelope's suitors
EURYNOME (yoo rin' ə mē): Penelope's housekeeper
LAERTES (lā ur' tēz): Odysseus's father
MARON (mār' on): priest of Apollo who gives Odysseus a gift of powerful wine
ODYSSEUS (ō dis' ē əs): king of Ithaca and hero of the Trojan war
PENELOPE (pə nel' ə pē): Odysseus's wife
PERIMEDES (per' i mē' dēz): one of Odysseus's crew
TELEMACHUS (tə lem' ə kəs): Odysseus and Penelope's son
TIRESIAS (tī rē' sē əs): blind prophet from the underworld
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GODS AND IMMORTALS

- APOLLO (ə pol' ō): god of sunlight, music, poetry, medicine, law, and the tending of flocks and herds
ATHENA (ə thē' nə): daughter of Zeus and goddess of wisdom, skills, and warfare who helps her chosen heroes
CALYPSO (kə lip' sō): immortal sea nymph who holds Odysseus captive for many years
CHARYBDIS (kə rib' dis): dangerous whirlpool personified as a female monster
CIRCE (sur' sē): enchantress who lives on the island of Aea
CYCLOPES (sī klō' pēz): race of one-eyed giants; an individual member of the race is a Cyclops (sī' klops)
HELIOS (hē' lē os'): god of the sun; another name for Apollo
LOTUS (lō' təs) EATERS: inhabitants of a land visited by Odysseus and his crew
POLYPHEMUS (pəl' i fē' məs): a Cyclops and son of Poseidon
POSEIDON (pə sīd' ən): god of the sea and earthquakes
SCYLLA (sil' ə): six-headed female sea monster
SIRENS (sī' rənz): sea nymphs who sing songs that lure men to their death
ZEUS (zōōs): king of the gods

Part I

An Invocation

Poets in Homer's day believed that the gods inspired their storytelling and singing. According to custom, Homer begins his performance with an invocation, calling upon the Muse, the goddess of epic poetry, for help and inspiration. The invocation serves a second purpose: to capture the audience's attention with highlights of heroic adventures that the poet will later describe in detail.

Sing in me, Muse, and through me tell the story
of that man skilled in all ways of contending,²
the wanderer, harried³ for years on end,
after he **plundered** the stronghold
5 on the proud height of Troy.

He saw the townlands
and learned the minds of many distant men,
and weathered⁸ many bitter nights and days
in his deep heart at sea, while he fought only
10 to save his life, to bring his shipmates home.
But not by will nor **valor** could he save them,
for their own recklessness destroyed them all—
children and fools, they killed and feasted on
the cattle of Lord Helios,¹⁴ the Sun,
15 and he who moves all day through heaven
took from their eyes the dawn of their return.

Of these adventures, Muse, daughter of Zeus,¹⁷
tell us in our time, lift the great song again.
Begin when all the rest who left behind them
20 headlong death in battle or at sea
had long ago returned, while he alone still hungered
for home and wife. Her ladyship Calypso²²
clung to him in her sea-hollowed caves—
a nymph,²⁴ immortal²⁴ and most beautiful,
25 who craved him for her own.

And when long years and seasons
wheeling brought around that point of time

2 **contending**: fighting or dealing with difficulty.

3 **harried**: constantly tormented or troubled.

8 **weathered**: got through safely; survived.

14 **Helios** (hē' lē os'): the god of the sun.

17 **Zeus** (zōōs): The most powerful of the gods, Zeus is the father of countless major and minor gods.

22 **Calypso** (kə lip' sō)

24 **nymph**: a young, beautiful spirit, or minor goddess, representing the divine power of a place or of something in nature, such as a tree, cave, or body of water. **immortal**: living forever; eternal.

Literary Element Epic and Epic Hero *How does the reader quickly learn that the story about to unfold recounts the deeds of an epic hero?*

Reading Strategy Analyzing Figurative Language *Why might the poet have used the verb wheeling to describe the passing of years and seasons?*

Vocabulary

plunder (plun' dər) *v.* to take (property) by force, especially in warfare

valor (val' ər) *n.* great courage, especially in battle

ordained^o for him to make his passage homeward,
trials and dangers, even so, attended him

- 30 even in Ithaca, near those he loved.
Yet all the gods had pitied Lord Odysseus,
all but Poseidon, raging cold and rough^o
against the brave king^o till he came ashore
at last on his own land.

New Coasts and Poseidon's Son

The gods are worried. Nearly ten years have passed since the end of the war against Troy, but one of the greatest Greek generals has not yet returned home. Odysseus has encountered a series of disasters on his voyage and is now the prisoner of a nymph named Calypso. He has also angered Poseidon, who has prevented him from returning to his wife, Penelope (pə nel' ə pē), and his son, Telemachus (tə lem' ə kəs), on the island of Ithaca. But Poseidon is visiting Africa, and the other gods agree to act behind his back.

The poet now tells of Odysseus, who is miserable after seven years on his island prison. Calypso loves her handsome captive and will not let him go, but she is forced to reconsider her position when she receives a strongly worded order from Mount Olympus. Giving in, Calypso helps Odysseus make a raft, and he thankfully departs. But he does not have smooth sailing. Poseidon, returning from Africa, spots his old enemy at sea and shipwrecks him in an instant with a fierce storm.

Zeus's daughter Athena intervenes. She casts Odysseus, naked and near death, ashore on the island of Phaeacia (fē ā' shə). There a beautiful princess discovers him and takes him home to the palace of her father, King Alcinous (al sin' ō əs). The Phaeacians treat Odysseus as a noble guest and urge him to reveal his identity. At last he relents and uncertainly begins to tell his gripping story.

28 **ordained:** set or determined by an authority—in this case, fate, or the gods.

31–33 **Odysseus** (ō dis' ē əs) . . . the **brave king:** Odysseus is the king of Ithaca.

32 **Poseidon** (pə sīd' ən), **raging cold and rough:** Poseidon, brother of Zeus, governs the oceans as well as earthquakes. In the next section, you will find clues to his anger at Odysseus.



Calliope, Muse of epic poetry.
Marble. Ludovisi collection.

“What shall I

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

Men hold° me

formidable° for **guile** in peace and war:
10 this fame has gone abroad to the sky’s rim.
My home is on the peaked sea-mark of Ithaca
under Mount Neion’s° wind-blown robe of leaves,
in sight of other islands—Dulichium,°
Same,° wooded Zacynthus°—Ithaca
15 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,
20 loveliest among goddesses, who held me
in her smooth caves, to be her heart’s delight,
as Circe of Aeaea, the enchantress,°
desired me, and detained me in her hall.
But in my heart I never gave consent.
25 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
30 of rough adventure, weathered under Zeus?”°

Odysseus relates his first adventure. He and his fleet of twelve ships attacked and plundered the coastal settlement of the Cicones (si kō’ nēz). The raid was a success, but the overconfident men became drunk and mutinous (unresponsive to Odysseus’s orders to retreat). The Cicones’s army surprised Odysseus and his men at dawn, and drove them back to sea with heavy losses.

“I might have made it safely home, that time,
but as I came round Malea° the current
took me out to sea, and from the north
a fresh gale drove me on, past Cythera.°
35 Nine days I drifted on the teeming sea
before dangerous high winds. Upon the tenth

3 tried: tested.

8 hold: regard; consider.

9 **formidable**: causing fear, dread, awe, or admiration as a result of size, strength, power, or some other impressive quality.

12 Neion (nē’ on)

13 Dulichium (dōō lik’ ē am)

14 Same (sā’ mē). Zacynthus (zə sin’ thəs)

22 Circe (sur’ sē). . . the enchantress: Circe is a goddess capable of enchanting, or working magic upon, men. Aeaea (ē ē’ ə) is her island.

30 **weathered under Zeus**: Odysseus uses words craftily. Here, he appears to give respectful credit to Zeus for getting him safely through danger; but he also is making a pun on the word *weathered*. Zeus governs the heavens and the weather and is well known for sending people storms, lightning, and thunder when he is displeased.

32 Malea (mə lē’ ə)

34 Cythera (sith’ ə rə)

Big Idea **Journeys** How has Odysseus proved to his audience that he is determined to achieve his journey’s end?

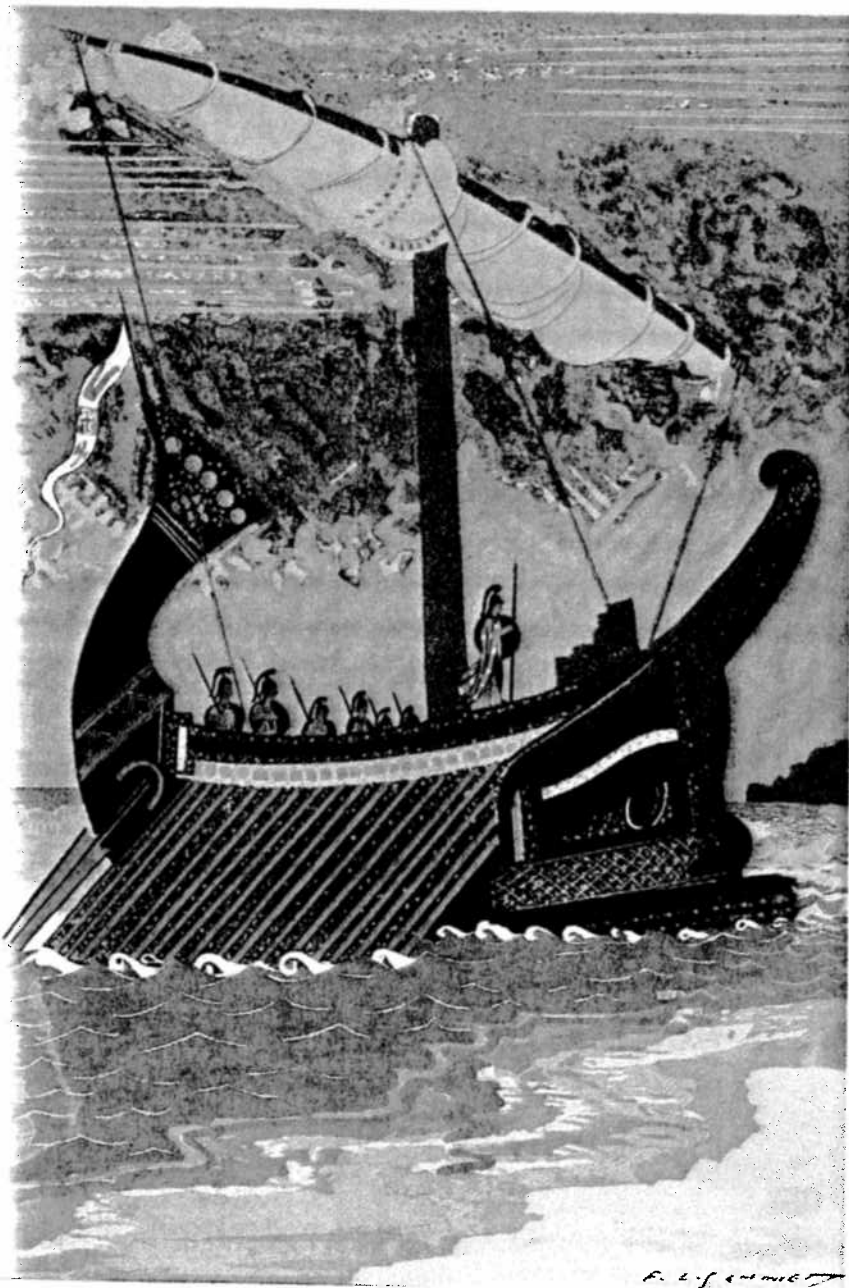
Vocabulary

guile (gīl) *n.* slyness; craftiness; skillful deception

we came to the coastline of the Lotus Eaters,
who live upon that flower. We landed there
to take on water. All ships' companies
40 mustered^o 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.^o
They fell in, soon enough, with Lotus Eaters,
who showed no will to do us harm, only
45 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
that native bloom, forgetful of their homeland.
50 I drove them, all three wailing, to the ships,

40 mustered: gathered together.

42 sustained: kept alive; supported.



*The Ship of Odysseus with Oars
and a Furled Sail, 1930–1933.*
Francois-Louis Schmied.
Stapleton Collection.

tied them down under their rowing benches,
and called the rest: 'All hands aboard;
come, clear the beach and no one taste
the Lotus, or you lose your hope of home.'

55 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.

In the next land we found were Cyclopes,^o
giants, louts,^o without a law to bless them.

60 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
wine-grapes, in clusters, ripen in heaven's rain.

65 Cyclopes have no muster and no meeting,
no consultation or old tribal ways,
but each one dwells in his own mountain cave
dealing out rough justice to wife and child,
indifferent to what the others do."

Just offshore from the land of the Cyclopes is a deserted island with a fine natural harbor. Odysseus and his men spend two comfortable nights there. On the second day, overcome by curiosity, Odysseus sails with one ship and a crew to the mainland. He wants to see just what sort of creatures these Cyclopes are.

70 "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,^o
and many rams and goats about the place
inside a sheepfold^o—made from slabs of stone
75 earthfast between tall trunks of pine and rugged
towering oak trees.

A prodigious^o man
slept in this cave alone, and took his flocks
to graze afield—remote from all companions,
80 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
85 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

58 Cyclopes (sī klō' pēz): a race of one-eyed giants.

59 louts: stupid beings.

72 screened with laurel: partly hidden behind laurel trees.

74 sheepfold: an enclosure, or pen, for holding sheep.

77 prodigious: huge; enormous.

Literary Element Epic and Epic Hero *What traits does Odysseus reveal in this episode that set him apart from his men?*

Big Idea Journeys *Why is Odysseus making this expedition? What does this side trip suggest about epic journeys?*

of that sweet liquor that Euanthes' son,
Maron, had given me. He kept Apollo's
90 holy grove at Ismarus;^o for kindness
we showed him there, and showed his wife and child,
he gave me seven shining golden talents^o
perfectly formed, a solid silver winebowl,
and then this liquor—twelve two-handled jars
95 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,
100 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^o in a bag,
105 for in my bones I knew some towering brute
would be upon us soon—all outward power,
a wild man, ignorant of civility.^o

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

'Why not

take these cheeses, get them stowed, come back,
120 throw open all the pens, and make a run for it?
We'll drive the kids and lambs aboard. We say
put out again on good salt water!'

Ah,

how sound^o that was! Yet I refused. I wished
125 to see the caveman, what he had to offer—
no pretty sight, it turned out, for my friends.
We lit a fire, burnt an offering,^o
and took some cheese to eat; then sat in silence
around the embers, waiting. When he came
130 he had a load of dry boughs on his shoulder
to stoke his fire at suppertime. He dumped it

88–90 **Euanthes'** (yoo an' thēz) son, . . . **Ismarus** (iz mār' əs): In ancient Greece, worshippers of certain gods built shrines to them, surrounded by woods, or "groves," that were considered sacred sanctuaries. Priests oversaw the planting and tending of the groves. **Maron** (mār' on) is a priest of **Apollo** (ə pol' ō), an important god associated with music, medicine, law, and the tending of flocks and herds.
92 **talents**: bars of gold used as money in ancient Greece.

104 **victuals** (vit' əls): food

107 **civility**: polite and courteous behavior.

108 **Cyclops** (sī' klops): Note the different spelling and pronunciation of this reference to a single one-eyed giant.

111–114 **pens . . . both**: The lambs are grouped by age.

115 **whey**: the watery part of milk that separates from the curd, or solid part, during the cheese-making process.

124 **sound**: sensible.

127 **burnt an offering**: The men burned some food as a gift to the gods in the hope of winning their support.

Literary Element Epic and Epic Hero *What is Odysseus admitting here? What do we learn about the traits of an epic hero from this decision?*

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

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

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

'We are from Troy, Achaeans,^o blown off course
by shifting gales on the Great South Sea;
homeward bound, but taking routes and ways
160 uncommon; so the will of Zeus would have it.
We served under Agamemnon, son of Atreus^o—
the whole world knows what city
he laid waste, what armies he destroyed.
It was our luck to come here; here we stand,
165 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.'^o

170 He answered this
from his brute chest, unmoved:

'You are a ninny,^o

144–145 **thickened . . . baskets:** The milk is curdled (**thickened**) by adding fig juice, and the whey is drained off through wicker (**withy**) baskets.

151–153 **What brings . . . by sea:** What brings you here from the sea—honest trade? Or are you wandering scoundrels who carelessly risk your lives and steal from others?

157 **Achaeans** (ə kē' əns): Greeks.

161 **Agamemnon** (ag' ə mem' non), **son of Atreus** (ā' trē əs): king of Argos, in southern Greece, who led the war against Troy.

167–169 **We would . . . guest:** Odysseus earnestly asks or begs (**entreat**) for the Cyclops's hospitality and warns him that Zeus punishes anyone who mistreats a harmless guest.

172 **ninny:** fool.

Literary Element Epic and Epic Hero *Epics include a mixture of the everyday and the supernatural. How does the Cyclops embody both of these states?*

Big Idea Journeys *What is Odysseus suggesting about misfortunes that occur on a journey?*

or else you come from the other end of nowhere,
telling me, mind the gods! We Cyclopes
175 care not a whistle for your thundering Zeus
or all the gods in bliss; we have more force by far.
I would not let you go for fear of Zeus—
you or your friends—unless I had a whim to.
Tell me, where was it, now, you left your ship—
180 around the point, or down the shore, I wonder?’
He thought he’d find out, but I saw through this,
and answered with a ready lie:

‘My ship?

Poseidon Lord, who sets the earth a-tremble,
185 broke it up on the rocks at your land’s end.
A wind from seaward served him, drove us there.
We are survivors, these good men and I.’
Neither reply nor pity came from him,
but in one stride he clutched at my companions
190 and caught two in his hands like squirming puppies
to beat their brains out, spattering the floor.
Then he dismembered them and made his meal,
gaping and crunching like a mountain lion—
everything: innards, flesh, and marrow bones.
195 We cried aloud, lifting our hands to Zeus,
powerless, looking on at this, appalled;^o
but Cyclops went on filling up his belly
with manflesh and great gulps of whey,
then lay down like a mast among his sheep.
200 My heart beat high now at the chance of action,
and drawing the sharp sword from my hip I went
along his flank to stab him where the midriff
holds the liver. I had touched the spot
when sudden fear stayed me: if I killed him
205 we perished there as well, for we could never
move his **ponderous** doorway slab aside.
So we were left to groan and wait for morning.
When the young Dawn with fingertips of rose
lit up the world, the Cyclops built a fire

196 **appalled**: horrified; shocked; terrified.

Literary Element Epic and Epic Hero *What character trait does Odysseus display here?*

Reading Strategy Analyzing Figurative Language *The poet uses two similes in this grisly description of the Cyclops’s dinner. What are they?*

Vocabulary

ponderous (pon’ dər əs) *adj.* having great weight or bulk; heavy

10 and milked his handsome ewes, all in due order,
 putting the sucklings to the mothers. Then,
 his chores being all dispatched,^o he caught
 another brace^o of men to make his breakfast,
 and whisked away his great door slab
 15 to let his sheep go through—but he, behind,
 reset the stone as one would cap a quiver.^o
 There was a din of whistling as the Cyclops
 rounded his flock to higher ground, then stillness.
 And now I pondered how to hurt him worst,
 20 if but Athena^o granted what I prayed for.
 Here are the means I thought would serve my turn:
 a club, or staff, lay there along the fold—
 an olive tree, felled green and left to season
 for Cyclops's hand. And it was like a mast
 25 a lugger of twenty oars, broad in the beam—
 a deep-sea-going craft—might carry:^o
 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;
 30 and when they had it smooth, I hewed^o again
 to make a stake with pointed end. I held this
 in the fire's heart and turned it, toughening it,
 then hid it, well back in the cavern, under
 one of the dung piles in profusion there.
 35 Now came the time to toss for it: who ventured
 along with me? whose hand could bear to thrust
 and grind that spike in Cyclops's eye, when mild
 sleep had mastered him? As luck would have it,
 the men I would have chosen won the toss—
 40 four strong men, and I made five as captain.
 At evening came the shepherd with his flock,
 his woolly flock. The rams as well, this time,
 entered the cave: by some sheep-herding whim—
 or a god's bidding—none were left outside.
 45 He hefted his great boulder into place
 and sat him down to milk the bleating ewes
 in proper order, put the lambs to suck,
 and swiftly ran through all his evening chores.
 Then he caught two more men and feasted on them.
 50 My moment was at hand, and I went forward
 holding an ivy bowl of my dark drink,^o
 looking up, saying:

‘Cyclops, try some wine.

Here's liquor to wash down your scraps of men.

212 dispatched: finished.

213 brace: pair.

216 cap a quiver: put the cap on a case for holding arrows.

220 Athena: Odysseus prays for the support of Athena, his patron goddess who guides and protects him. Among other things, Athena is a warrior goddess who directly helps her chosen heroes.

221–226 Here are . . . carry: Odysseus spies the trunk of an olive tree, which the Cyclops cut down (felled) when the wood was green and left to dry (season) before carving it into a club or staff. Odysseus compares its size to that of a mast on a seafaring ship (lugger) that is wide in the middle (broad in the beam).

230 hewed: chopped or hacked.

251 dark drink: This is the liquor Odysseus described in lines 94–102.

Big Idea Journeys What hint is Odysseus dropping here about the future of his journey?

255 Taste it, and see the kind of drink we carried
under our planks. I meant it for an offering
if you would help us home. But you are mad,
unbearable, a bloody monster! After this,
will any other traveler come to see you?
260 He seized and drained the bowl, and it went down
so fiery and smooth he called for more:
'Give me another, thank you kindly. Tell me,
how are you called? I'll make a gift will please you.
Even Cyclopes know the wine-grapes grow
265 out of grassland and loam in heaven's rain,
but here's a bit of nectar and ambrosia!'^o
Three bowls I brought him, and he poured them down.
I saw the fuddle and flush^o cover over him,
then I sang out in cordial tones:

'Cyclops,

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

And he said:

275 'Nohbdy's my meat, then, after I eat his friends.
Others come first. There's a noble gift, now.'
Even as he spoke, he reeled and tumbled backward,
his great head lolling to one side; and sleep
280 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,
and cheered my men along with battle talk
285 to keep their courage up: no quitting now.
The pike of olive,^o green though it had been,
reddened and glowed as if about to catch.
I drew it from the coals and my four fellows
gave me a hand, lugging it near the Cyclops
290 as more than natural force nerved them; straight
forward they sprinted, lifted it, and rammed it
deep in his crater eye, and I leaned on it
turning it as a shipwright turns a drill
in planking, having men below to swing

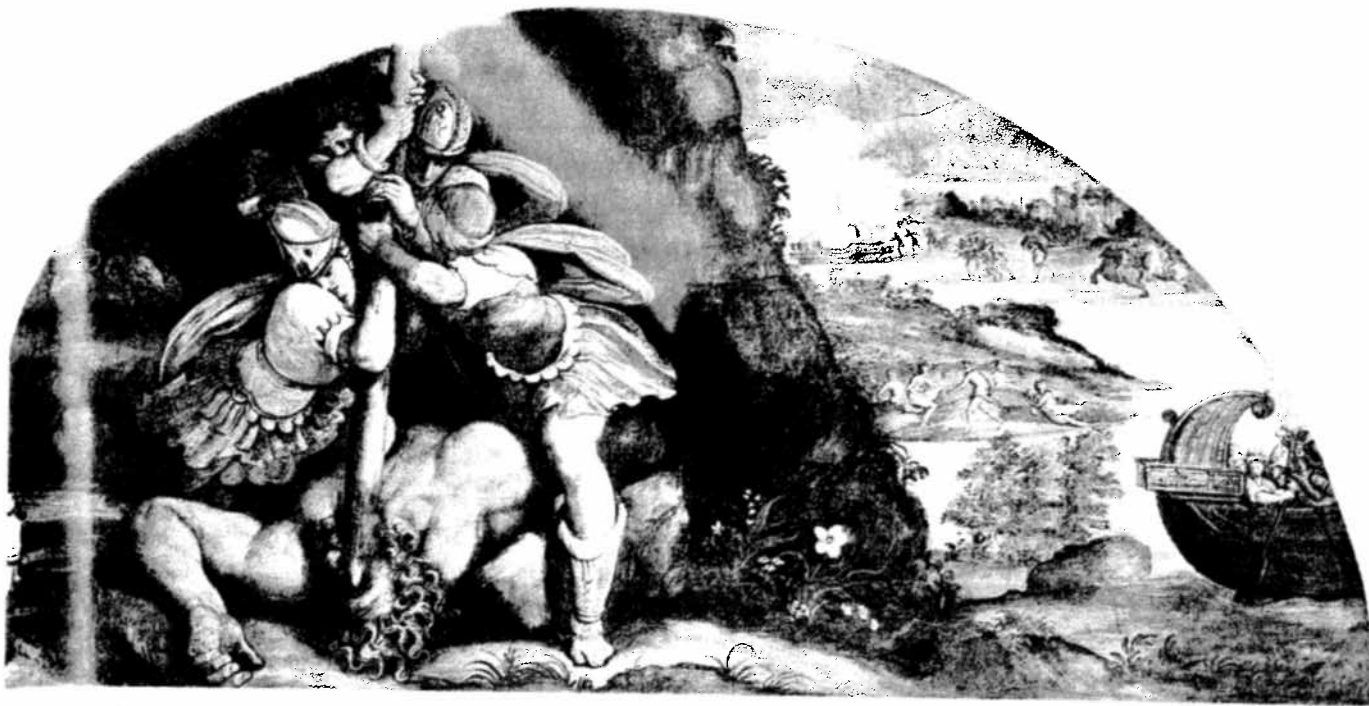
266 **nectar and ambrosia**: the foods of the gods, causing immortality. The Cyclops suggests that any wine is a gift from heaven, but this one is like the gods' own drink.

268 **fuddle and flush**: the confused mental state and reddish complexion caused by drinking alcohol.

286 **pike of olive**: the sharpened stake made from the olive tree.

Literary Element Epic and Epic Hero *What do you think Odysseus has in mind? What does it confirm about his character?*

Reading Strategy Analyzing Figurative Language *To what action does Homer compare the blinding of the Cyclops? Why might he have chosen this comparison?*



Ulysses and Polyphemos, 1560 (detail). Alessandro Allori. Fresco.
Collection of Banca Toscana (Palazzo Salviati), Florence, Italy.

295 the two-handed strap that spins it in the groove.
 296 So with our brand^o we bored that great eye socket
 297 while blood ran out around the red hot bar.
 298 Eyelid and lash were seared; the pierced ball
 299 hissed broiling, and the roots popped.

296 brand: the piece of burning hot wood.

300 In a smithy

301 adze: an axe-like tool with a curved blade.

303 hale: strong.

301 one sees a white-hot axehead or an adze^o
 302 plunged and wrung in a cold tub, screeching steam—
 303 the way they make soft iron hale^o and hard—
 304 just so that eyeball hissed around the spike.

305 The Cyclops bellowed and the rock roared round him,
 306 and we fell back in fear. Clawing his face
 307 he tugged the bloody spike out of his eye,
 308 threw it away, and his wild hands went groping;
 309 then he set up a howl for Cyclopes
 310 who lived in caves on windy peaks nearby.
 311 Some heard him; and they came by divers^o ways
 312 to clump around outside and call:

311 divers: several different; various.

‘What ails you,

313 Polyphemos?^o Why do you cry so sore
 314 in the starry night? You will not let us sleep.

314 Polyphemos (poi’ i fe’ mast): the blinded Cyclops’s name.



Odysseus. Jacob Jordaens (1593–1678). Oil on canvas, 61 × 97 cm. Pushkin Museum, Moscow.

Viewing the Art: Imagine that you are the man beneath the ram on the left. What is going through your mind? What might the Cyclops be thinking and feeling in this scene?

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:

320 'Nohbdy, Nohbdy's tricked me, Nohbdy's ruined me!'

To this rough shout they made a sage^o reply:

'Ah well, if nobody has played you foul
there in your lonely bed, we are no use in pain

given by great Zeus. Let it be your father,

325 Poseidon Lord, to whom you pray.'

So saying

they trailed away. And I was filled with laughter
to see how like a charm the name deceived them.

Now Cyclops, wheezing as the pain came on him,

330 fumbled to wrench away the great doorstone
and squatted in the breach^o with arms thrown wide

for any silly beast or man who bolted^o—

hoping somehow I might be such a fool.

321 sage: wise.

331 breach: a gap or opening.

332 bolted: broke away.

Literary Element Epic and Epic Hero *Why did Odysseus tell the Cyclops his name was Nohbdy? How well has Odysseus's plan worked?*

But I kept thinking how to win the game:
335 death sat there huge; how could we slip away?
I drew on all my wits, and ran through tactics,
reasoning as a man will for dear life,
until a trick came—and it pleased me well.
The Cyclops' rams were handsome, fat, with heavy
340 fleeces, a dark violet.

Three abreast

I tied them silently together, twining
cords of willow from the ogre's^o bed;
then slung a man under each middle one
345 to ride there safely, shielded left and right.
So three sheep could convey each man. I took
the woolliest ram, the choicest of the flock,
and hung myself under his kinky belly,
pulled up tight, with fingers twisted deep
350 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,
and peals of bleating echoed round the pens
355 where dams with udders full called for a milking.
Blinded, and sick with pain from his head wound,
the master stroked each ram, then let it pass,
but my men riding on the pectoral fleece^o
the giant's blind hands blundering never found.
360 Last of them all my ram, the leader, came,
weighted by wool and me with my meditations.
The Cyclops patted him, and then he said:
'Sweet cousin ram, why lag behind the rest
in the night cave? You never linger so,
365 but graze before them all, and go afar
to crop sweet grass, and take your stately way
leading along the streams, until at evening
you run to be the first one in the fold.
Why, now, so far behind? Can you be grieving
370 over your Master's eye? That carrion^o rogue
and his accurst companions burnt it out
when he had conquered all my wits with wine.
Nohbdy will not get out alive, I swear.
Oh, had you brain and voice to tell
375 where he may be now, dodging all my fury!
Bashed by this hand and bashed on this rock wall

343 ogre: monster; fearsome giant.

358 pectoral fleece: the wool on the rams' chests.

370 carrion: rotten, filthy.

Reading Strategy Analyzing Figurative Language *Why do you think the poet chose to personify death in this passage?*

his brains would strew the floor, and I should have rest from the outrage Nohbdy worked upon me.'

He sent us into the open, then. Close by,
 380 I dropped and rolled clear of the ram's belly,
 going this way and that to untie the men.
 With many glances back, we rounded up
 his fat, stiff-legged sheep to take aboard,
 and drove them down to where the good ship lay.
 385 We saw, as we came near, our fellows' faces
 shining; then we saw them turn to grief
 tallying those who had not fled from death.
 I hushed them, **jerking** head and eyebrows up,
 and in a low voice told them: 'Load this herd;
 390 move fast, and put the ship's head toward the breakers.'^o
 They all pitched in at loading, then embarked^o
 and struck their oars into the sea. Far out,
 as far off shore as shouted words would carry,
 I sent a few back to the adversary:

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

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

405 I got the longest boathook out and stood
 fending us off, with furious nods to all
 to put their backs into a racing stroke—
 row, row, or perish. So the long oars bent
 kicking the foam sternward, making head
 410 until we drew away, and twice as far.^o
 Now when I cupped my hands I heard the crew
 in low voices protesting:

'Godsake, Captain!

Why bait the beast again? Let him alone!'

415 '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.'^o

Literary Element Epic and Epic Hero *What emotions does the Cyclops express in this passage? Contrast his character with that of Odysseus.*

Literary Element Epic and Epic Hero *Why does Odysseus behave in this way?*

390 put . . . breakers: turn the ship around, toward the open sea.
 391 embarked: got on board.



Odysseus and Polyphemus, 1910. After L. du Bois-Reymond. Color print. Collection of Karl Becker, *Sagen des klassischen Altertums*, Berlin (Verlag Jugendhort).

402–410 Ahead . . . twice as far: The sinking hilltop creates a wave at the ship's front end (**prow**) that washes the boat backwards (**stern foremost**) to the shore.
 415–419 That tidal . . . boulder: The men complain, reasonably enough, that Polyphemus nearly smashed the ship (**All but stove us in**) and that Odysseus's shouting will give away their position (**bearing**).

He'll smash our timbers and our heads together!
I would not heed them in my glorying spirit,
but let my anger flare and yelled:

'Aye

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

'Cyclops,

At this he gave a mighty sob and rumbled:

430 'Now comes the weird^o upon me, spoken of old.
A wizard, grand and wondrous, lived here—Telemus,^o
a son of Eurymus;^o great length of days
he had in wizardry among the Cyclopes,
and these things he foretold for time to come:

430 the weird: the strange fate.

431 Telemus (tel' ə məs)

432 Eurymus (yoo ri' məs)

435 my great eye lost, and at Odysseus' hands.
Always I had in mind some giant, armed
in giant force, would come against me here.
But this, but you—small, pitiful and twiggy—
you put me down with wine, you blinded me.

440 Come back, Odysseus, and I'll treat you well,
praying the god of earthquake^o to befriend you—
his son I am, for he by his avowal
fathered me, and, if he will, he may
heal me of this black wound—he and no other
445 of all the happy gods or mortal men.'

441 god of earthquake: Poseidon

Few words I shouted in reply to him:

'If I could take your life I would and take
your time away, and hurl you down to hell!
The god of earthquake could not heal you there!'

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

'O hear me, lord, blue girdler of the islands,
if I am thine indeed, and thou art father:


455 grant that Odysseus, raider of cities, never
see his home: Laertes' son, I mean,
who kept his hall on Ithaca. Should destiny
intend that he shall see his roof again
among his family in his father land,
far be that day, and dark the years between.

460 Let him lose all companions, and return
under strange sail to bitter days at home.'^o

452–461 O hear . . . home: In ancient cultures, curses were neither made nor taken lightly. Homer's audience would have believed in their power. In his curse upon Odysseus, Polyphemus begs Poseidon to make his enemy suffer, using every detail he knows about Odysseus to make sure the god's punishment will be directed toward the right person.

Literary Element Epic and Epic Hero *How would you characterize Odysseus's judgment?*

In these words he prayed, and the god heard him.
Now he laid hands upon a bigger stone
and wheeled around, titanic for the cast,^o
465 to let it fly in the black-prowed vessel's track.
But it fell short, just aft^o the steering oar,
and whelming seas rose giant above the stone
to bear us onward toward the island.^o

470 as we ran in we saw the squadron waiting,
the trim^o ships drawn up side by side, and all
our troubled friends who waited, looking seaward.
We beached her, grinding keel in the soft sand,
and waded in, ourselves, on the sandy beach.
475 Then we unloaded all the Cyclops's flock
to make division, share and share alike,
only my fighters voted that my ram,
the prize of all, should go to me. I slew him
by the seaside and burnt his long thighbones
480 to Zeus beyond the stormcloud, Cronus's^o son,
who rules the world. But Zeus disdained^o my offering;
destruction for my ships he had in store
and death for those who sailed them, my companions.
Now all day long until the sun went down
485 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
touched the world, I roused the men, gave orders
490 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,^o
having our precious lives, but not our friends." 

There

464 **titanic for the cast**: drawing upon his great size and strength in preparation for the throw.

466 **aft**: behind.

468 **the island**: the deserted island where the other eleven ships and their crews have remained while Odysseus and his handpicked men explored the Cyclops's mainland.

471 **trim**: in good condition and ready to sail.

480 **Cronus** (krō' nəs): Heaven and Earth, the first gods, had been dethroned by their son Cronus, who was in turn overthrown by his son Zeus.

481 **disdained**: rejected.

493 **vast offing**: the visible expanse of open sea.

Big Idea Journeys *What does this passage suggest about Odysseus's return journey to Ithaca?*

Reading Strategy Analyzing Figurative Language *Where have you encountered this figure of speech before? Why might the poet have repeated it?*

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

- How did you respond to Part 1? Explain.

Recall and Interpret

- (a)What happens to the men who go ashore in the land of the Lotus Eaters? (b)Why might Odysseus be so opposed to the eating of lotus?
- (a)Summarize what happens inside the Cyclops's cave. (b)What personality traits does Odysseus reveal in leading his men to safety?
- (a)Describe an instance of Odysseus acting against the advice of his men. (b)In your opinion, why does Odysseus decide not to listen to them?

Analyze and Evaluate

- (a)Explain why Odysseus might have commented on the Cyclopes's way of life before describing his

adventures in their land. (b)Were you influenced by his description? Why or why not?

- (a)How does the Cyclops's treatment of Odysseus's men differ from his treatment of his animals? (b)Do you feel any sympathy for the Cyclops? Why or why not?
- (a)Find supporting evidence for the following statement: "There are two distinct sides to Odysseus's personality." (b)How do you think his crew regards him, given these aspects of his personality?

Connect

- Big Idea Journeys** The Invocation reveals what happens to Odysseus and his men. How did knowing the outcome affect your reading of Part 1?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Epic and Epic Hero

An epic is no ordinary adventure story. It is big in every way—in length, in action, and in setting. Even its purpose is large. Epics were not intended simply to entertain their listeners but to inspire and instruct them as well. The **epic hero** is also larger than life, but he or she has recognizable human characteristics—including human faults.

- What is extraordinary about Odysseus? What is ordinary about him? Give an example of each quality.
- How could the *Odyssey* serve to entertain, to inspire, and to teach? Explain.

Literature Groups

With your group, discuss Odysseus's actions as a leader: When does he make mistakes, and when does he act wisely? Together, make a list of "good moves" and "bad moves" that might have had a better result. Compare your list with those of other groups.

Literature Online **Web Activities** For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy Analyzing Figurative Language

An epic simile extends a comparison with elaborate descriptive details that can fill several lines of verse.

- The scene describing the blinding of the Cyclops contains two epic similes. Identify the lines of each simile and tell what is being compared.
- In your opinion, why might Homer have used more than one epic simile to describe this event?

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Synonyms For each vocabulary word, choose the synonym.

- | | | |
|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1. plunder | a. seize | b. donate |
| 2. valor | a. bravery | b. strength |
| 3. guile | a. foolishness | b. craftiness |
| 4. ponderous | a. light | b. heavy |

BEFORE YOU READ *Odyssey, Part 2*

LITERATURE PREVIEW

Connecting to the Poem

Have you ever heard the expression “between a rock and a hard place?” It means whichever choice you make is going to be difficult or risky. Before you read Part 2, think about the following questions:

- When have you had to choose between two equally unpleasant alternatives?
- How did you make your decision, and how did it work out?

Building Background

To the ancient Greeks, the gods were a common yet important part of everyday life. Some were associated with abstract ideas, such as wisdom, while others presided over particular activities, such as warfare. All Greek deities had magical powers and were immortal, but they also possessed various human foibles and failings. The gods often held grudges and behaved vengefully toward humans or toward other gods. The Greeks frequently attributed disaster or good fortune to the influence of the gods.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea Journeys

As you read, think about the stages of Odysseus’s journey. What tests must he pass as he makes his way home?

Literary Element Conflict

Conflict is the central struggle between two opposing forces in a story. External conflict exists when a character struggles against some outside force, such as another person, nature, society, or fate. An internal conflict takes place within the mind of a character. Look for conflict as you read Part 2 of the *Odyssey*.

- See Literary Terms Handbook, p. R4.

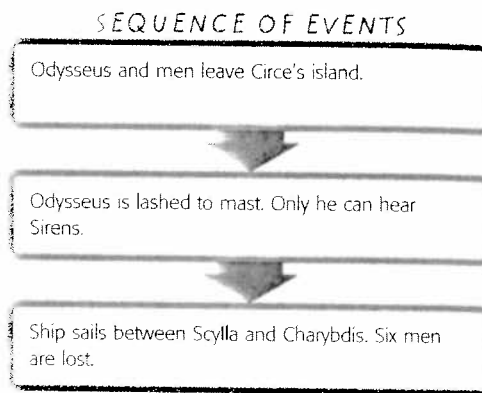
LiteratureOnline Interactive Literary Elements Handbook To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.

READING PREVIEW

Reading Strategy Identifying Sequence

The *Odyssey* is a series of vivid adventures that happen so rapidly that identifying the **sequence** of the events, or understanding their correct order, can become confusing. Stopping to summarize the story periodically—using words such as *then*, *next*, *later*, and *finally*—is one way to identify sequence.

Reading Tip: Taking Notes Use a graphic organizer to keep a visual record of the sequence of events.



Vocabulary

shun (shun) *v.* to keep away from; avoid; p. 982 *Do not shun people for their ideas.*

ardor (är' dər) *n.* passion; intensity of emotion; enthusiasm; p. 982 *Jon's ardor for video games waned as he grew interested in skiing.*

tumult (tōō' mält) *n.* commotion; uproar; p. 983 *The escaped horse caused a scene of tumult on the crowded city street.*

shroud (shroud) *v.* to cover, as with a veil or burial cloth; conceal; p. 988 *The contents of the will were shrouded in secrecy.*

Vocabulary Tip: Context Clues Often you can unlock the meaning of unfamiliar words by examining context clues, the phrases and sentences surrounding them.

LOUISIANA GRADE-LEVEL EXPECTATIONS (pages 980–993)

11d. Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including examining the sequence of information and procedures in order to critique the logic or development of ideas in texts (ELA-7-H1)

Part 2

Sea Perils and Defeat

Odysseus and his men traveled to the floating islands of Aeolus (ē' ə ləs), god of the winds, who then gave Odysseus a bag containing all of the unfavorable winds. With only the good west wind behind them, Odysseus and his crew made rapid progress. Odysseus fell asleep when Ithaca was in sight, but his men, believing that Odysseus was not sharing valuable treasures with them, opened the bag. Instantly, the winds rushed out, blowing them back to Aeolus, who refused to help them a second time.

After several days back at sea, they reached the land of the Laestrygonians, monstrous cannibals. Only Odysseus's ship and crew escaped destruction.

Next stop: a thickly forested island. When Odysseus sent half of his remaining men to explore the interior, only a single breathless survivor returned. He told Odysseus that the goddess Circe had lured the rest of the men to her house with food and wine and then turned them into pigs. Odysseus rescued them, forcing Circe to restore his men to their original forms with a magical herb provided by the messenger god Hermes.

Before Circe allowed Odysseus to leave a year later, he had to journey to the land of the dead. There he learned from the blind prophet, Tiresias, that he would eventually return home, but that he must not injure the cattle of the sun god Helios. Upon Odysseus's return from the land of the dead, Circe repeated this warning and described the dangers that Odysseus would encounter. First, he'd meet the sirens, who lure sailors to their deaths with a beautiful song; then, the many-headed Scylla, who lurks in a cave on a high cliff above a ship-devouring whirlpool named Charybdis. She instructed him to steer toward Scylla and not try to fight back.

Odysseus continues telling his host about his adventures.

*"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.*

*I made straight for the ship, roused up the men
5 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 off-shore breeze blew to our liking—
a canvas-bellying breeze, a lusty shipmate*

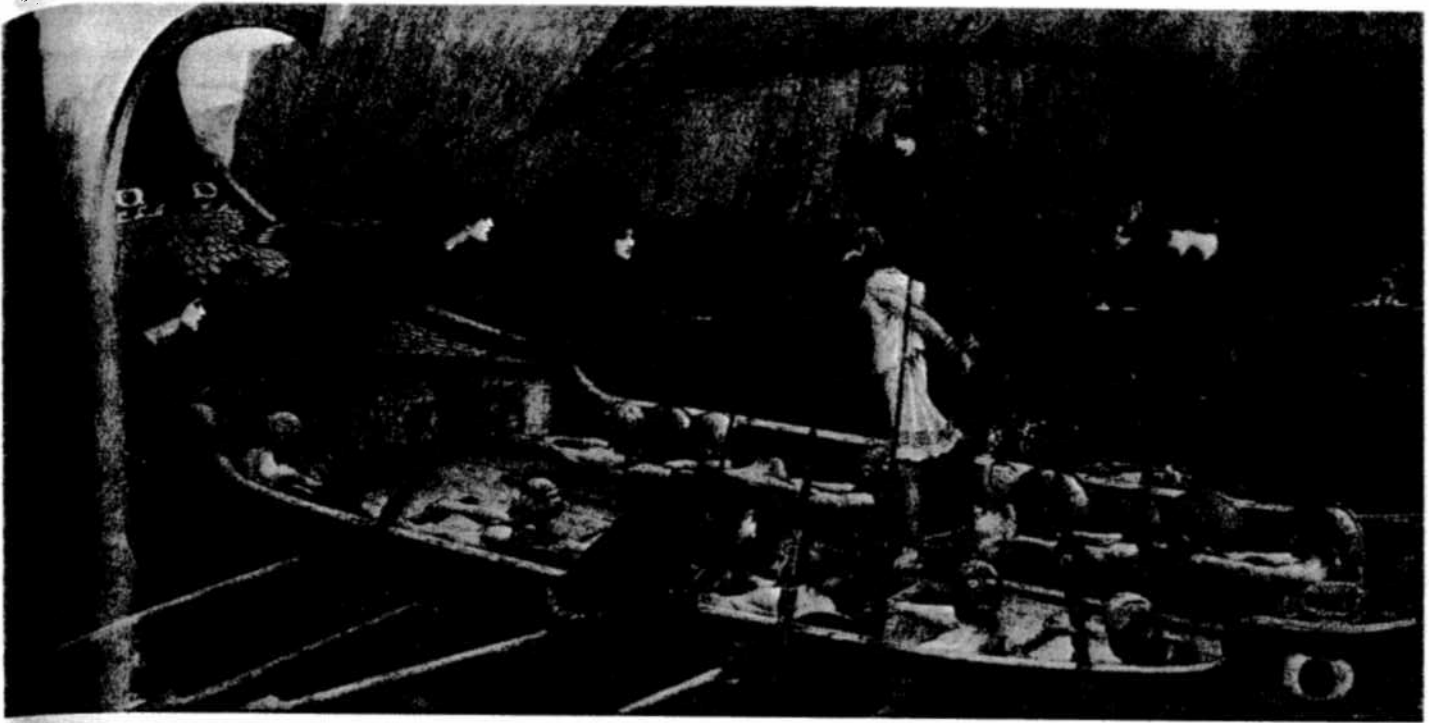
10 sent by the singing nymph with sunbright hair.°

*So we made fast the braces,° and we rested,
letting the wind and steersman work the ship.*

8–10 *But soon . . . hair:* The goddess Calypso has sent the breeze.

11 *made fast the braces:* tied down the ropes used to maneuver the sails.

Big Idea Journeys Assess how Odysseus's men must be feeling at the beginning of this journey. Why might Odysseus feel differently?



Ulysses and the Sirens, 1891. John William Waterhouse. Oil on canvas, 100 x 201.7 cm. Collection of National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.

but they bent steady to the oars. Then Perimedes^o
 got to his feet, he and Eurylochus,^o
 55 and passed more line about, to hold me still.
 So all rowed on, until the Sirens
 dropped under the sea rim,^o and their singing
 dwindled^o away.

My faithful company

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

But scarcely had that island

faded in blue air than I saw smoke
 65 and white water, with sound of waves in **tumult**—
 a sound the men heard, and it terrified them.
 Oars flew from their hands; the blades went knocking
 wild alongside till the ship lost way,
 with no oarblades to drive her through the water.

70 Well, I walked up and down from bow to stern,
 trying to put heart into them, standing over

Literary Element Conflict *Why are the men disobeying Odysseus? What would happen if they obeyed him?*

Vocabulary

tumult (tōō' malt) n. commotion; uproar

53 Perimedes (per' i mē' dēz)

54 Eurylochus (yoo ril' ə kəs)

57 sea rim: horizon.

58 dwindled: gradually lessened; diminished.

every oarsman, saying gently,

‘Friends,

have we never been in danger before this?

75 More fearsome, is it now, than when the Cyclops
penned us in his cave? What power he had!
Did I not keep my nerve, and use my wits
to find a way out for us?

Now I say

80 by hook or crook this peril^o too shall be
something that we remember.

Heads up, lads!

We must obey the orders as I give them.

85 Get the oarshafts in your hands, and lay back
hard on your benches; hit these breaking seas.
Zeus help us pull away before we founder.
You at the tiller, listen, and take in
all that I say—the rudders are your duty;
keep her out of the combers and the smoke;
90 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,^o I
told them nothing, as they could do nothing.

95 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^o and took up
two heavy spears, then made my way along
100 to the foredeck—thinking to see her first from there,
the monster of the gray rock, harboring
torment for my friends. I strained my eyes
upon that cliffside veiled in cloud, but nowhere
could I catch sight of her.

105 And all this time,

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

The shot spume

soared to the landside heights, and fell like rain.^o

115 But when she swallowed the sea water down
we saw the funnel of the maelstrom,^o heard

80 **peril:** danger; risk; something that may cause injury or destruction.

93 **Scylla** (sil’ ə): an immortal monster with twelve tentacled arms, six heads, and three rows of teeth in each of her six mouths.

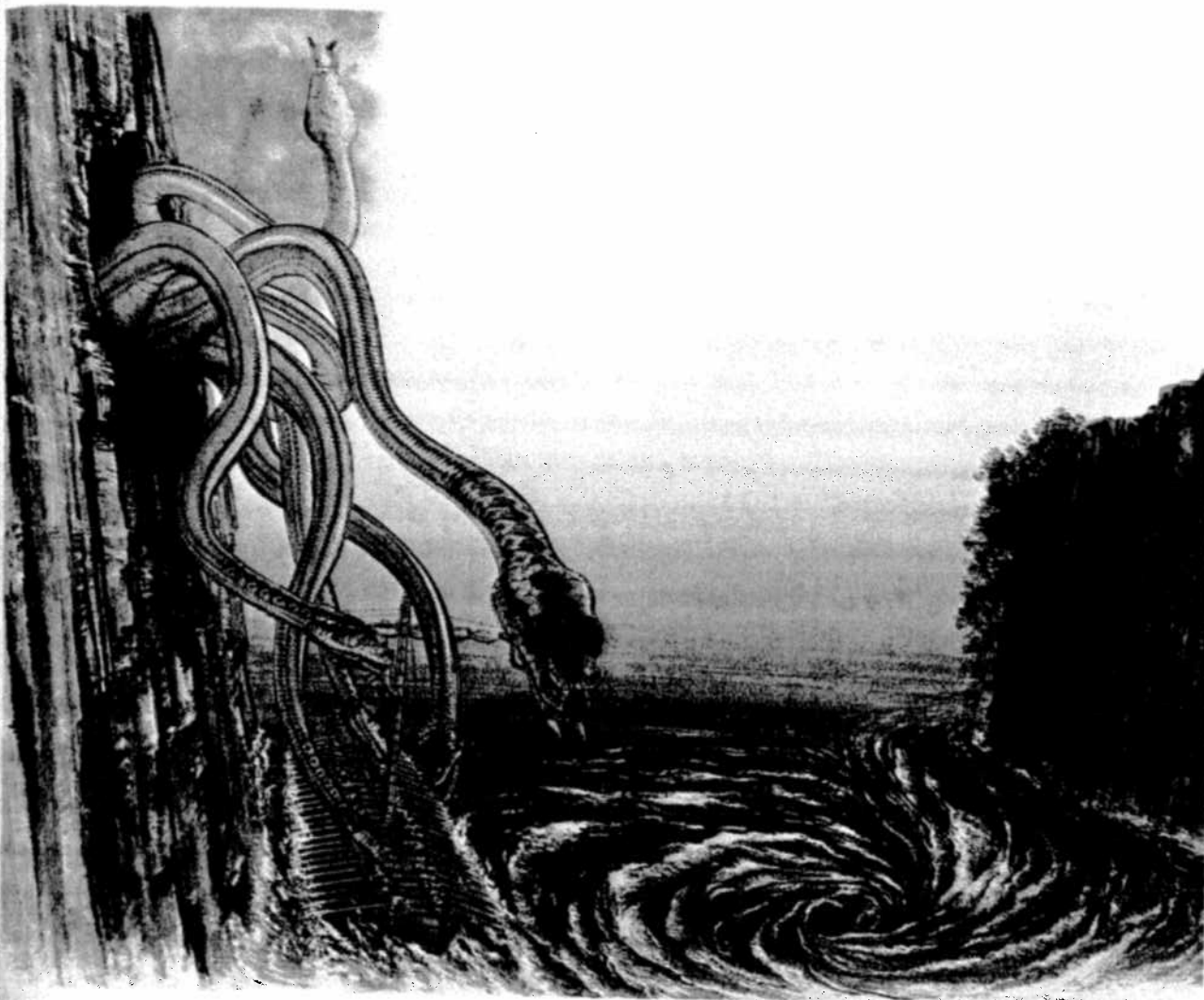
98 **cuirass:** armor.

106 **travail:** exhausting, painful labor.

107–114 **we rowed . . . rain:** The ship enters a narrow channel (**strait**) between Scylla on the left and **Charybdis** (kə rib’ dis) on the right. Rising and falling with the surge of tidal currents, the whirlpool sucks water down her dreadful throat (**dire gorge**), then spews it into the air as a geyser.

116 **maelstrom:** violent whirlpool.

Literary Element Conflict What potential conflict is Odysseus trying to avoid here? Do you think he is being wise?



Scylla Devours Odysseus' Companions, undated. Peter Connolly. Watercolor.

the rock bellowing all around, and dark
sand raged on the bottom far below.
My men all blanched^o against the gloom, our eyes
120 were fixed upon that yawning mouth in fear
of being devoured.

Then Scylla made her strike,
whisking six of my best men from the ship.
I happened to glance aft at ship and oarsmen
125 and caught sight of their arms and legs, dangling
high overhead. Voices came down to me
in anguish, calling my name for the last time.
A man surfcasting on a point of rock
for bass or mackerel, whipping his long rod

119 blanched: turned pale.

Literary Element Conflict *The men are in conflict with both Scylla and Charybdis. Why are the two a particularly dangerous combination?*

130 to drop the sinker and the bait far out,
will hook a fish and rip it from the surface
to dangle wriggling through the air:

so these

were borne aloft in spasms^o toward the cliff.

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

140 We rowed on.

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

Then we were coasting

145 the noble island of the god, where grazed
those cattle with wide brows, and bounteous flocks
of Helios,^o lord of noon, who rides high heaven.

From the black ship, far still at sea, I heard
the lowing of the cattle winding home
and sheep bleating; and heard, too, in my heart
150 the words of blind Tiresias of Thebes
and Circe of Aeaëa: both forbade me
the island of the world's delight, the Sun.
So I spoke out in gloom to my companions:

155 'Shipmates, grieving and weary though you are,
listen: I had forewarning from Tiresias
and Circe, too; both told me I must shun
this island of the Sun, the world's delight.
Nothing but fatal trouble shall we find here.

160 Pull away, then, and put the land astern.'
That strained them to the breaking point, and, cursing,
Eurylochus cried out in bitterness:

'Are you flesh and blood, Odysseus, to endure
more than a man can? Do you never tire?
God, look at you, iron is what you're made of.

165 Here we all are, half dead with weariness,
falling asleep over the oars, and you
say "No landing"—no firm island earth
where we could make a quiet supper. No:
pull out to sea, you say, with night upon us—
170 just as before, but wandering now, and lost.

Sudden storms can rise at night and swamp
ships without a trace.

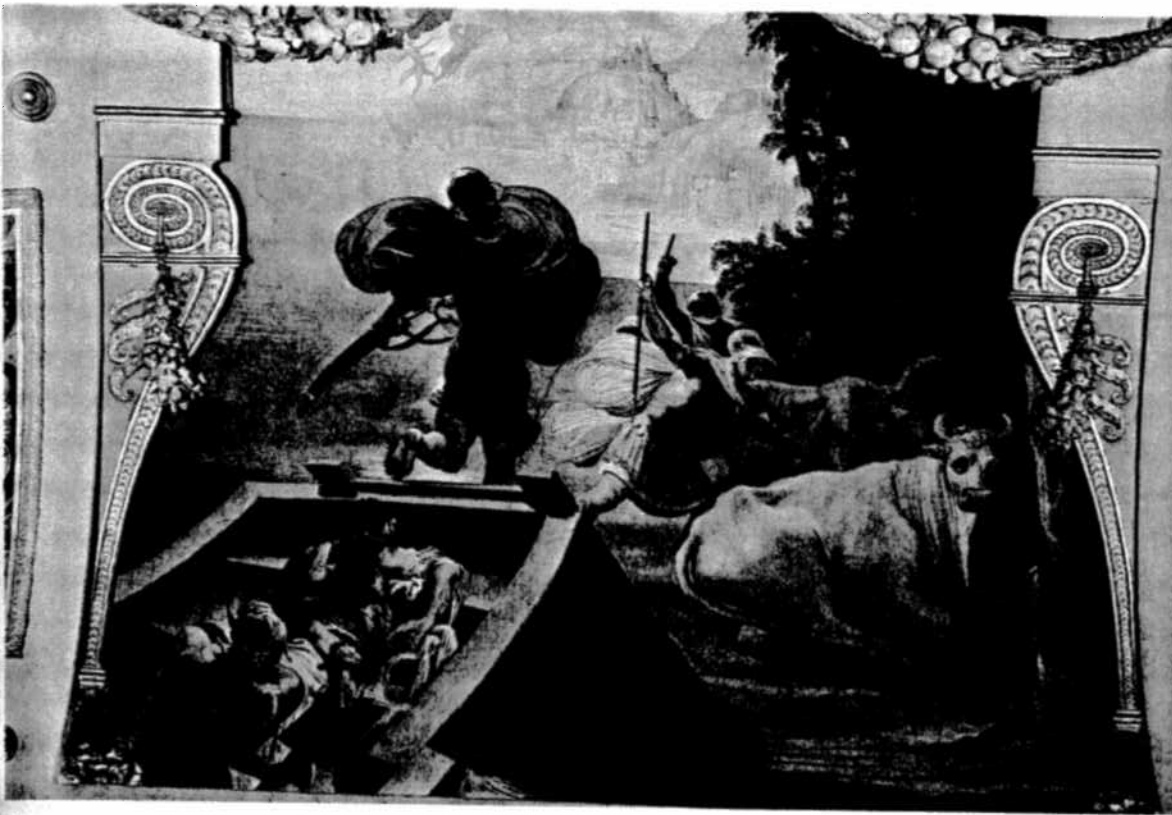
134 **borne aloft in spasms**: carried high while struggling furiously.

136 **dire grapple**: desperate struggle.

139 **questing**: seeking; searching or pursuing in order to find something or achieve a goal.

146 **Helios**: the Greek god of the sun. Odysseus's ship is nearing the island where Helios lives.

Reading Strategy Identifying Sequence How can you tell that Odysseus's ship has successfully navigated Scylla and Charybdis?



The Companions of Ulysses Slaying the Cattle of the Sun God Helios, 16th century. Pellegrino Tibaldi. Fresco. Palazzo Poggi, Bologna, Italy.

Viewing the Art: What does the facial expression and body language of the man in the lower left corner of the painting suggest to you? Consider the warning Odysseus has given his crew.

Where is your shelter
 if some stiff gale blows up from south or west—
 175 the winds that break up shipping every time
 when seamen flout^o the lord gods' will? I say
 do as the hour demands and go ashore
 before black night comes down.

We'll make our supper
 180 alongside, and at dawn put out to sea.'
 Now when the rest said 'Aye' to this, I saw
 the power of destiny devising ill.
 Sharply I answered, without hesitation:
 'Eurylochus, they are with you to a man.
 185 I am alone, outmatched.

Let this whole company
 swear me a great oath: Any herd of cattle
 or flock of sheep here found shall go unharmed;
 no one shall slaughter out of wantonness^o
 190 ram or heifer; all shall be content

176 flout: defy; ignore; scoff at.

189 wantonness: recklessness or lack of restraint.

Big Idea
 time?

Journeys What does this passage suggest about sea journeys in Homer's time?

with what the goddess Circe put aboard.'

They fell at once to swearing as I ordered,
and when the round of oaths had ceased, we found
a halfmoon bay to beach and moor the ship in,
195 with a fresh spring nearby. All hands ashore
went about skillfully getting up a meal.
Then, after thirst and hunger, those besiegers,
were turned away, they mourned for their companions
plucked from the ship by Scylla and devoured,
200 and sleep came soft upon them as they mourned.

In the small hours of the third watch, when stars
that shone out in the first dusk of evening
had gone down to their setting, a giant wind
blew from heaven, and clouds driven by Zeus
205 **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
to cover in a grotto, a sea cave
where nymphs had chairs of rock and sanded floors.
210 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,
or we pay dearly for it.

215 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
220 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,
225 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.

230 So one day I withdrew to the interior

Reading Strategy Identifying Sequence *What do the men do before mourning their dead companions?*

Vocabulary

shroud (shroud) *v.* to cover, as with a veil or burial cloth; conceal

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.

235 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.

Now on the shore Eurylochus

240 made his insidious^o plea:

‘Comrades,’ he said,

‘You’ve gone through everything; listen to what I say.

All deaths are hateful to us, mortal wretches,

but famine is the most pitiful, the worst

245 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;

and once at home, in the old country of Ithaca,

250 if ever that day comes—

we’ll build a costly temple and adorn^o it
with every beauty for the Lord of Noon.

But if he flares up over his heifers lost,

wishing our ship destroyed, and if the gods

255 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!’

trooping away at once to round up heifers.

260 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—

having no barley meal—to strew the victims,^o

265 performed the prayers and ritual, knifed the kine^o

and flayed^o each carcass, cutting thighbones free

to wrap in double folds of fat. These offerings,

with strips of meat, were laid upon the fire.

Then, as they had no wine, they made libation^o

240 **insidious**: slyly treacherous or
deceitful; scheming.

251 **adorn**: to decorate; add beauty,
honor, or distinction.

263–264 **They . . . victims**: Usually, in
preparing a burnt offering, fruit or grain
was spread over and around the animal’s
carcass.

265 **kine**: cattle.

266 **flayed**: stripped off the skin of.

269 **libation**: a ritual pouring of wine or
another liquid as part of an offering.

Reading Strategy Identifying Sequence *What sequence of events is described in
lines 218–232?*

Literary Element Conflict *With whom, or what, are Eurylochus and the other men in
conflict?*

Big Idea Journeys *Why would Eurylochus rather drown than starve?*

270 with clear spring water, broiling the entrails^o first;
and when the bones were burnt and tripes^o shared,
they spitted^o the carved meat.

Just then my slumber

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

'O Father Zeus and gods in bliss forever,
you made me sleep away this day of mischief!
280 O cruel drowsing, in the evil hour!
Here they sat, and a great work they contrived.'^o

Lampetia^o in her long gown meanwhile
had borne swift word to the Overlord of Noon:
'They have killed your kine.'

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

'O Father Zeus and gods in bliss forever,
punish Odysseus' men! So overweening,^o
now they have killed my peaceful kine, my joy
290 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.'^o

295 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.'^o

300 —Calypso later told me of this exchange,
as she declared that Hermes^o had told her.
Well, when I reached the sea cave and the ship,
I faced each man, and had it out;^o but where
could any remedy be found? There was none.

305 The silken beeves^o of Helios were dead.
The gods, moreover, made queer signs appear:
cownhides began to crawl, and beef, both raw
and roasted, lowed like kine upon the spits.

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

270–271 **entrails, tripes:** internal organs.

272 **spitted:** threaded pieces onto a spit or rod, for roasting over a fire.

276 **eddied:** swirled.

281 **contrived:** schemed; plotted.

282 **Lampetia** (lam pē' shə): a guardian of the island and animals. Her father is Helios; her mother is a human woman.

288 **overweening:** arrogant; self-important; not humble enough.

292–294 **Restitution . . . underworld:** Helios threatens to abandon the sky and shine, instead, on the land of the dead if the gods do not punish Odysseus's men.

296–299 **Peace . . . winedark sea:** Zeus coolly silences Helios, offering to set matters straight with a single thunderbolt.

301 **Hermes** (hur' mēz): the messenger god.

303 **I faced each man, and had it out:** Odysseus confronts each crewman.

305 **beeves:** cattle.

Literary Element. Conflict *Why has Zeus entered the conflict?*

had ceased, blown out, and with an offshore breeze
we launched again stepping° the mast and sail,
315 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
320 above the ship, while gloom spread on the ocean.
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°
325 showered into the bilge.°

On the afterdeck
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.
330 With crack on crack of thunder, Zeus let fly
a bolt against the ship, a direct hit,
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
335 like petrels° on the waves.

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

I clambered
340 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
rawhide rope, and I used this for lashing
345 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
350 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°
355 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° being far below, and far
above my head the branches and their leaves,

315 **stepping**: fixing into position.

319 **Cronion**: a name that identifies Zeus as Cronus's son.

323 **forestays**: the ropes that support the main mast.

324 **running rigging**: the ropes that support all masts and sails.

325 **bilge**: the lowest interior part of a ship.

335 **petrels**: sea birds.

339–346 **I clambered . . . storm**: Before the ship is broken in two by a long breaking wave (**comber**), Odysseus scrambles from front to back (**fore and aft**); afterwards, he grabs a mast rope (**backstay**) and pieces together a crude raft.

354 **billow**: a great, swelling wave.

358 **bole**: trunk.

Big Idea Journeys Is Zeus's action just? Why or why not?

360 massed, overshadowing Charybdis pool.
But I clung grimly, thinking my mast and keel
would come back to the surface when she spouted.
And ah! how long, with what desire, I waited!
till, at the twilight hour, when one who hears
365 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,
370 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, this time,
kept me from her eyes. Once through the strait,
nine days I drifted in the open sea
375 before I made shore, buoyed up by the gods,
upon Ogygia° Isle. The dangerous nymph
Calypso lives and sings there, in her beauty,
and she received me, loved me.

376 Ogygia (ō gij' yə)

But why tell

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

382–383 hold with: approve of; have
patience for.

Reading Strategy: Identifying Sequence *Odysseus has been telling his story to the Phaeacians. When did this narrative begin?*



Scylla. 5th century B.C. Melos, Greece. Terra-cotta relief. British Museum, London.

AFTER YOU READ

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

1. At the end of Part 2, is Odysseus very lucky, very unlucky, or a combination of both? Explain.

Recall and Interpret

2. (a)How does Odysseus protect his men from the song of the Sirens? (b)How do his men protect him?
3. (a)What are Scylla and Charybdis? (b)Why does Odysseus not tell his men about Scylla?
4. (a)Why do Odysseus and his men stay longer than planned on the island of Helios, and what are the consequences of this delay? (b)Why does Eurylochus prove to be a more persuasive leader in this episode than Odysseus?

Analyze and Evaluate

5. (a)Describe the relationship Odysseus has with his men. (b)What, if anything, might Odysseus have done to improve this relationship?
6. (a)What character traits do the events in Part 2 expose in Odysseus and his men? (b)Do you find these traits believable? Why or why not?
7. (a)In your opinion, is Zeus or Odysseus responsible for Odysseus's survival? (b)What is your opinion of Zeus's character?

Connect

8. **Big Idea Journeys** Which circumstances of Odysseus's journey so far might happen on real-life journeys? Explain.

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Conflict

As in most adventure stories, external **conflict** takes center stage in the *Odyssey*. Look a little closer, however, and you will also see evidence of internal conflict, the struggle that occurs within a person's mind.

1. (a)Identify three examples of external conflict in Part 2. (b)What did these conflicts reveal about the characters involved in them?
2. (a)What is an example of an internal conflict in Part 2? (b)What did this internal conflict suggest about life or about human nature?

Writing About Literature

Analyze Description A description is a detailed portrayal of a person, place, thing, or event. Descriptive details help readers see, hear, smell, taste, or feel the subject of the description. Review Odysseus's encounters with the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, Helios's cattle, and Zeus's wrath. List the details that are most important in each episode. Then write a paragraph explaining how the descriptive details in the episode make the action more vivid or exciting.

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy Identifying Sequence

Writers often use signal words and phrases to show the order of events. Examples are *then*, *next*, *at the same time*, *immediately*, *a few months later*, and *finally*.

1. List four different sequence signal words or phrases used in Part 2. What did they help signal?
2. Summarize the events on Helios's island. Use a different signal word for each event.

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Context Clues For each boldfaced vocabulary word, select the best definition.

1. We had to **shroud** our plans in secrecy.
a. form b. cover c. revise
2. The patriots felt **ardor** for their cause.
a. enthusiasm b. repulsion c. concern
3. **Shun** the outdoors during an ice storm.
a. visit b. examine c. avoid
4. The school yard is full of **tumult** during recess.
a. silence b. uproar c. cooperation

BEFORE YOU READ *Odyssey, Part 3*

LITERATURE PREVIEW

Connecting to the Poem

Meeting someone you love after a long absence is often surprising and not always easy. Before you read Part 3 of the *Odyssey*, think about the following questions:

- How have you changed over the last five years?
- Recall an occasion when you met someone after a long absence. What did you notice? What surprised you?

Building Background

Strangers were important figures in Greek culture during Homer's time. In a society divided into tiny kingdoms that were often at war, a stranger was a potential threat. On the other hand, kindness to strangers could lead to valuable alliances. And what if a stranger was a god, wandering the earth in disguise? Strangers expected—and generally received—hospitality.

Think back to Part 1, when Odysseus wondered what gift the Cyclops would give him on his arrival. As you read Part 3, notice how the arrival of a stranger plays a major role in the developing drama.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea Journeys

At the beginning of Part 3, Odysseus arrives on the shores of Ithaca after an absence of twenty years. Read to find out if his troubles are over.

Literary Element Characterization

Characterization refers to the methods a writer uses to reveal the personality of a character. In direct characterization, explicit statements are made about a character. In indirect characterization, the writer reveals a character's personality through his or her words, thoughts, and actions and through what other characters think and say about that individual.

- See Literary Terms Handbook, p. R4.

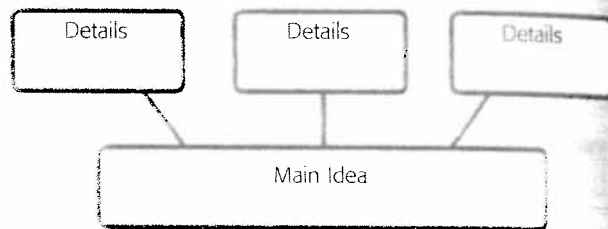
Literature Online Interactive Literary Elements Handbook To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com

READING PREVIEW

Reading Strategy Determining Main Idea and Supporting Details

Epic poems, like the *Odyssey*, are so rich with descriptive language that it is sometimes hard to distinguish the **main idea** from the **supporting details**. As you read, ask yourself: What is the point of this scene? Then ask yourself: How is Homer making his point? The answer to the first question will provide the main idea; the second question relates to the details.

Reading Tip: Taking Notes Use an organizer to record main ideas and supporting details as you read.



Vocabulary

cower (kou' ar) *v.* to crouch or shrink back, as in fear or shame; p. 995 *The mouse cowered in the corner as the cat moved toward it.*

impudence (im' pyə dəns) *n.* speech or behavior that is aggressively forward or rude; p. 999 *We were amazed at our guests' impudence in requesting special privileges.*

guise (gīz) *n.* outward appearance; false appearance; p. 1000 *He worked for his own interests under the guise of compassion toward others.*

renowned (ri nound') *adj.* famous; widely known; p. 1002 *Many people attended the talk by the renowned scientist.*

Vocabulary Tip: Analogies Analogies are comparisons based on the relationships between ideas.

Part 3

Father and Son

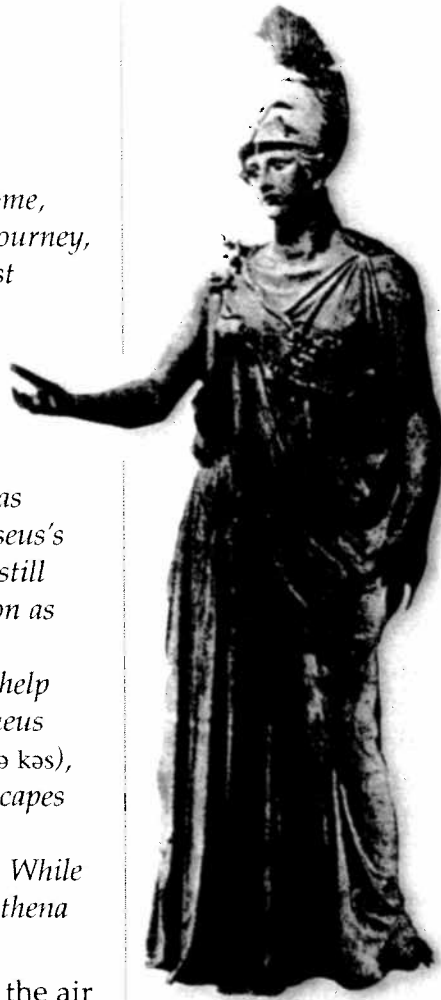
The kindly Phaeacians load Odysseus with gifts and take him home, leaving him fast asleep on the shores of Ithaca. On their return journey, Poseidon turns their ship into a lump of stone for daring to assist Odysseus.

Odysseus is disoriented after twenty years away from home, but the goddess Athena meets him and tells him what happened: during his long absence, a number of young men from Ithaca and neighboring islands have moved into Odysseus's great house. Thinking Odysseus is dead, the suitors, as they are called, eat his food, drink his wine, and insist that Odysseus's wife Penelope choose one of them as her husband. Penelope, who still loves Odysseus and prays for his safe return, has put off a decision as long as she can, but the situation has become very tense.

Athena disguises Odysseus as an old beggar and promises to help him. She tells him to seek shelter with a swineherd named Eumaeus (yoo mē' əs). Meanwhile, Odysseus's son, Telemachus (tə lem' ə kəs), who had set out on a journey to discover the fate of his father, escapes an ambush planned by the suitors and secretly lands on Ithaca. Following Athena's instructions, he also goes to Eumaeus's hut. While the loyal swineherd is informing Penelope of her son's return, Athena appears to the disguised Odysseus.

From the air

- she walked, taking the form of a tall woman, handsome and clever at her craft, and stood beyond the gate in plain sight of Odysseus, unseen, though, by Telemachus, unguessed, for not to everyone will gods appear.^o Odysseus noticed her; so did the dogs, who **cowered** whimpering away from her. She only 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, Odysseus, master of land ways and sea ways, dissemble^o to your son no longer now.



Statue of Athena, 340–330 bc
Bronze. National Archaeological
Museum, Athens.

1–6 From . . . **appear**: Athena's "craft" includes the ability to disguise herself or others and to make herself visible or invisible. She has already made Odysseus appear to be an old beggar. Now she makes herself visible to Odysseus and, at the same time, invisible to his son Telemachus.

15 **dissemble**: pretend.

Big Idea Journeys What has happened to Odysseus since he left Helios's island? What is happening now?

Vocabulary

cower (kou' ər) v. to crouch or shrink back, as in fear or shame

“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
60 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,^o
65 uses as she will; she has the knack
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.”^o

70 When he had spoken, down he sat.

Then, throwing

his arms around this marvel of a father
Telemachus began to weep. Salt tears
rose from the wells of longing in both men,
75 and cries burst from both as keen and fluttering
as those of the great taloned hawk,
whose nestlings farmers take before they fly.
So helplessly they cried, pouring out tears,
and might have gone on weeping so till sundown,
80 had not Telemachus said:

“Dear father! Tell me

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

85 Then said Odysseus, who had borne the barren sea:^o

“Only plain truth shall I tell you, child.
Great seafarers, the Phaeacians, gave me passage
as they give other wanderers. By night
over the open ocean, while I slept,
90 they brought me in their cutter,^o set me down
on Ithaca, with gifts of bronze and gold
and stores of woven things. By the gods’ will
these lie all hidden in a cave. I came
to this wild place, directed by Athena,
95 so that we might lay plans to kill our enemies.
Count up the suitors for me, let me know

64 **Hope of Soldiers:** When she chooses to be, Athena is a fierce battle-goddess, defending Greece—and favored Greeks—from outside enemies.

68–69 **It is . . . low:** It is not difficult for the gods to make a man appear great or humble.

85 **borne the barren sea:** endured the hardships of the sea.

90 **cutter:** a single-masted sailboat.

Literary Element Characterization *Why did Telemachus not believe his father at first? What are your impressions of Telemachus?*

Reading Strategy Determining Main Idea and Supporting Details *Why does Homer include these details?*

“This is not princely, to be swept
away by wonder at your father’s presence.
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Odysseus, title page of "Homer: The Odyssey," 1830–33. Francois-Louis Schmied. Color lithograph. Private collection.

what men at arms are there, how many men.
I must put all my mind to it, to see
if we two by ourselves can take them on
100 or if we should look round for help."

The Beggar at the Manor

The next morning Telemachus returns home and tells Penelope about his travels but not about his father's homecoming. Odysseus, disguised again as a beggar, also returns to his own house. No one recognizes him except his faithful old dog, which lifts up its head, wags its tail, and dies. In the great hall, Telemachus permits the "beggar" to ask for food. The suitors give him bread and meat, as is the custom, but one of their leaders, a man named Antinous (an tin' ō əs), is particularly insulting. He refuses to offer any food, and while Odysseus is talking, he angrily interrupts.

But here Antinous broke in, shouting:

"God!

Big Idea Journeys In what sense is Odysseus's journey far from over?

What evil wind blew in this pest?

Get over,

5 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!

10 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?"

With guile Odysseus drew away,^o then said:

"A pity that you have more looks than heart.
You'd grudge a pinch of salt from your own larder

15 to your own handy man. You sit here, fat
on others' meat, and cannot bring yourself
to rummage out a crust of bread for me!"

Then anger made Antinous' heart beat hard,
and, glowering^o under his brows, he answered:

20 You think you'll shuffle off and get away
after that **impudence**? Oh, no you don't!"

"Now!

The stool he let fly hit the man's right shoulder
on the packed muscle under the shoulder blade—

25 like solid rock, for all the effect one saw.
Odysseus only shook his head, containing
thoughts of bloody work,^o as he walked on,
then sat, and dropped his loaded bag again
upon the door sill. Facing the whole crowd

30 he said, and eyed them all:

"One word only,

my lords, and suitors of the famous queen.

One thing I have to say.

35 There is no pain, no burden for the heart
when blows come to a man, and he defending
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!

40 If beggars interest the gods, if there are Furies

12 **With guile . . . away:** Odysseus is slyly provoking Antinous.

19 **glowering:** scowling; looking at angrily.

26–27 **containing thoughts of bloody work:** keeping murderous thoughts under control. Odysseus imagines killing Antinous, but holds his temper.

Literary Element Characterization *What have you learned about Antinous so far?*

Vocabulary

impudence (im'pyə dāns) n. speech or behavior that is aggressively forward or rude

pent in the dark to avenge a poor man's wrong, then may Antinous meet his death before his wedding day!"⁴²

Then said Eupheithes⁴³ son, Antinous:

"Enough.

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

But now the rest were mortified,⁴⁹ and someone spoke from the crowd of young bucks to rebuke⁵⁰ him:

"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
55 in towns and settlements to keep an eye on manners, good or bad."

But at this notion

Antinous only shrugged.

Telemachus,

60 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

65 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!"⁶⁸

And Eurynome⁶⁹

70 her housekeeper, put in:

"He and no other?

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

Her gentle mistress said:

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

34–42 There is . . . wedding day: A man is not really hurt, the beggar says, when he is injured defending his property; but when he is attacked for being hungry, that's another matter. Odysseus's curse upon Antinous calls upon the **Furies**—three female spirits who punish wrongdoers—to bring about his death.
43 Eupheithes (yoo pé' théz)

49 **mortified**: deeply embarrassed, shamed, or humiliated.
50 **rebuke**: to scold sharply; criticize.

68 **Apollo's bowshot**: Among other things, Apollo is the archer god and the god of truth. His sacred silver bow can kill literally with an arrow and figuratively with the truth.

69 Eurynome (yoo rin' ə mē)

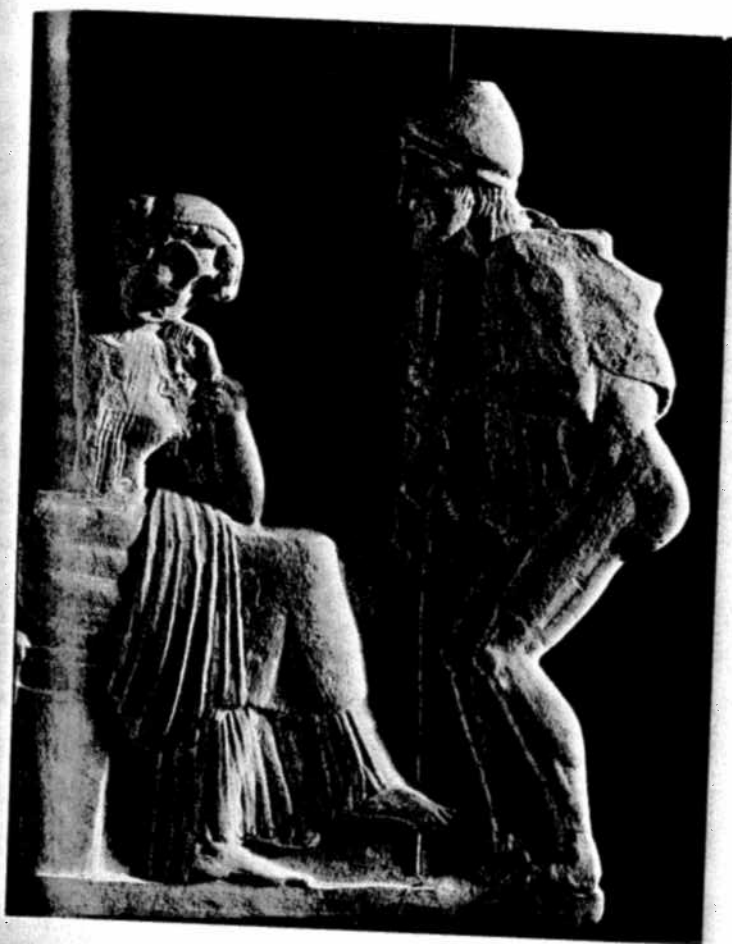
Odysseus's main point about Antinous's behavior?

What is

From what you have read so far, how would you describe Penelope?

From what you have read so far, how would you describe Penelope?

guise (gīz) n. outward appearance; false appearance



Odysseus Reunited with Penelope.
Terra-cotta relief. Louvre Museum,
Paris.

Here is a poor man come, a wanderer,
driven by want to beg his bread, and everyone
80 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:

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

Lively action continues in the great hall, where another beggar attempts to bully Odysseus. Antinous mockingly arranges a boxing match between the two, which Odysseus wins. Telemachus orders the disorderly crowd to leave for the evening. Surprised by his authority, the suitors obey, giving Odysseus and Telemachus time to remove all weapons from the hall as part of their preparation for battle. Then Odysseus goes to meet his wife for the first time in nearly twenty years.

Carefully Penelope began:

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

85 Eumaeus (yoo mē' əs)

And he replied:

95 “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^o over the strong: his black lands bear
100 both wheat and barley, fruit trees laden bright,
new lambs at lambing time—and the deep sea
gives great hauls of fish by his good strategy,
so that his folk fare well.

98 **equity**: fairness and justice.

O my dear lady,

105 this being so, let it suffice^o to ask me
of other matters—not my blood, my homeland.
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.
110 One of the maids might say—or you might think—
I had got maudlin^o over cups of wine.”
And Penelope replied:

104 **suffice**: be enough.

“Stranger, my looks,

115 my face, my carriage,^o were soon lost or faded
when the Achaeans crossed the sea to Troy,
Odysseus my lord among the rest.
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.
120 Sons of the noblest families on the islands,
Dulichium, Same, wooded Zacynthus,
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^o
125 or herald^o on the realm’s affairs?

111 **maudlin**: excessively and foolishly emotional.

114 **carriage**: manner of moving or holding the head and body.

How could I?

wasted with longing for Odysseus, while here
they press for marriage.

130 Ruses^o 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,
let me finish my weaving before I marry,
135 or else my thread will have been spun in vain.

124 **suppliant** (sup’ lē ənt): one who humbly begs or requests something.

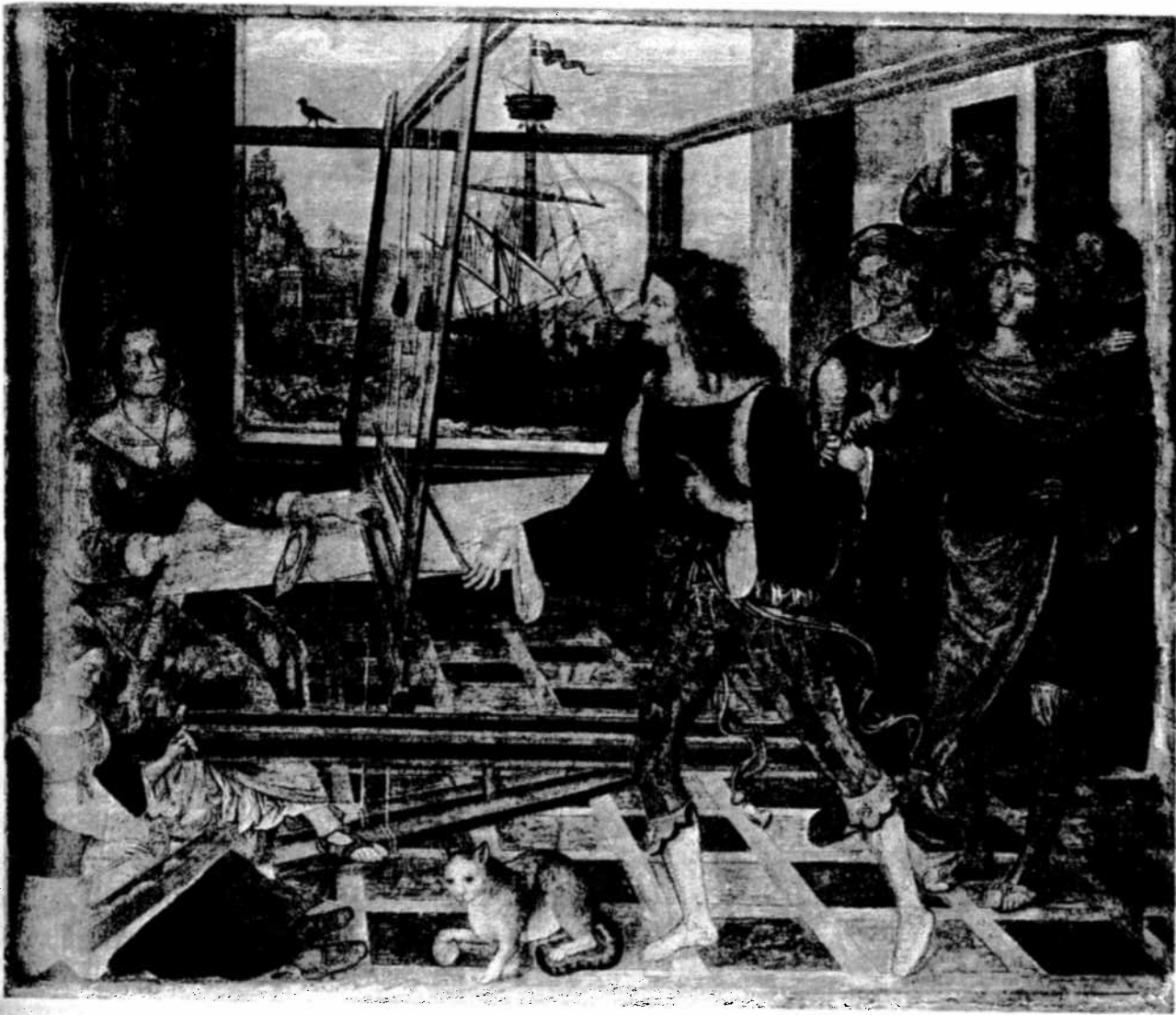
125 **herald**: court messenger.

129 **Ruses**: tricks; schemes.

Reading Strategy Determining Main Idea and Supporting Details *Why is this a particularly difficult interview for Odysseus?*

Vocabulary

renowned (ri nound’) *adj.* famous; widely known



Scenes From the Odyssey, ca. 1509. Bernardino Pintoricchio. National Gallery Collection, London, U.K.

It is a shroud I weave for Lord Laertes^o
 when cold Death comes to lay him on his bier.^o
 The country wives would hold me in dishonor
 if he, with all his fortune, lay unshrouded.'

140 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.
 But when the seasons brought a fourth year on,
 145 as long months waned,^o and the long days were spent,
 through impudent folly in the slinking maids
 they caught me—clamored up to me at night;^o
 I had no choice then but to finish it.

136 It is . . . Laertes: Penelope has claimed to be weaving a burial cloth (**shroud**) for Odysseus's father.

137 **bier**: a platform on which a corpse or coffin is placed before burial.

145 **waned**: drew to an end.

146–147 **through . . . night**: After outwitting the suitors for more than three years, Penelope is finally betrayed by some of her own sneaky (**slinking**) maids, who crept into her room at night and caught her in the act of undoing her weaving.

Literary Element Characterization *What characteristic do Odysseus and Penelope share?*

And now, as matters stand at last,
 150 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.
 He comprehends it, being a man full grown,
 155 able to oversee the kind of house
 Zeus would endow^o with honor.

156 **endow**: provide or equip.

The Test of the Bow

Resigned to ending the suitors' reign over her home, Penelope cries herself to sleep that night, dreaming of the husband she believes is lost forever. The next day the suitors return to the hall, more unruly than ever. Penelope appears, carrying the huge bow that belongs to Odysseus. Her maids follow, bearing twelve iron ax heads. Penelope has a proposition for the suitors.

“My lords, hear me:
 suitors indeed, you commandeered^o this house
 to feast and drink in, day and night, my husband
 being long gone, long out of mind. You found
 5 no justification^o for yourselves—none
 except your lust to marry me. Stand up, then:
 we now declare a contest for that prize.
 Here is my lord Odysseus' hunting bow.
 Bend and string it if you can. Who sends an arrow
 10 through iron axe-helve sockets, twelve in line?^o
 I join my life with his, and leave this place, my home,
 my rich and beautiful bridal house, forever
 to be remembered, though I dream it only.”

2 **commandeered**: seized by force or threats.

5 **justification**: a reason for an action that shows it to be just, right, or reasonable.

9–10 **Bend . . . line**: The challenge has two parts: First, a suitor must bend and string the heavy bow—a task requiring strength and skill. Second, he must shoot an arrow through the narrow holes of twelve ax-heads set in a row.

One by one the suitors try to string the bow, and all fail. Only Antinous delays his attempt. In the meantime, Odysseus steps outside with the swineherd Eumaeus and Philoetius (fi loi' tē əs), another faithful herdsman, and reveals his identity to them. Odysseus returns to the hall and asks to try his hand at stringing the bow. Antinous sneers at this idea, but Penelope and Telemachus both insist he proceed. Telemachus orders the women to leave, Philoetius locks the gates of the hall, and Eumaeus presents to Odysseus the great bow he has not held for twenty years.

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

14–25 **And Odysseus . . . old buzzard**: As Odysseus examines the old bow for termite holes (**borings**) that might have weakened the wood since he last used it, the suitors take the chance to make fun of the “beggar.”

Big Idea Journeys *Why was this the perfect time for Odysseus to arrive home?*

23

"Dealer in old bows!"

"A bow lover!"

at home!"

"Maybe he has one like it

"Or has an itch to make one for himself."

25

"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!"

But the man skilled in all ways of contending,
satisfied by the great bow's look and heft,²⁹

30

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.

35

Then slid his right hand down the cord and plucked it,
so the taut gut³⁶ vibrating hummed and sang
a swallow's note.

In the hushed hall it smote³⁸ the suitors
and all their faces changed. Then Zeus thundered

40

overhead, one loud crack for a sign.
And Odysseus laughed within him that the son
of crooked-minded Cronus had flung that omen³⁹ down.⁴⁰

He picked one ready arrow from his table
where it lay bare: the rest were waiting still

45

in the quiver for the young men's turn to come.⁴¹
He nocked it,⁴² let it rest across the handgrip,
and drew the string and grooved butt of the arrow,
aiming from where he sat upon the stool.

Now flashed

50

arrow from twanging bow clean as a whistle
through every socket ring, and grazed⁴³ not one,
to thud with heavy brazen head⁴⁴ beyond.

Then quietly

Odysseus said:

55

"Telemachus, the stranger
you welcomed in your hall has not disgraced you.
I did not miss, neither did I take all day
stringing the bow. My hand and eye are sound,

29 **heft**: weight.

36 **taut gut**: tightly drawn bowstring (made of animal "gut" or intestine).

38 **smote**: struck, as though from a hard blow; affected suddenly with a powerful and unexpected feeling, such as fear.

39-42 **Then Zeus . . . down**: Odysseus recognizes the crack of thunder as a sign that Zeus is on his side.

42 **omen**: a sign or event thought to foretell good or bad fortune; forewarning.

44-45 **the rest . . . come**: The remaining arrows will be used by the contestants who follow Odysseus.

46 **nocked it**: fitted the nock, or notched end, of the arrow into the string.

51 **grazed**: touched.

52 **brazen head**: brass arrowhead.

Context How does the inclusion of this line among the taunts and jeers of the suitors relate to the main idea presented in this scene?

Characterization To what is Homer comparing Odysseus in lines 28-34? What do these comparisons contribute to his characterization?



Odysseus Competes with the Suitors (detail). 5th century BC, Greek. Attic red-figured skyphos. Staatliche Museum, Antikensammlung, Berlin, Germany.

Viewing the Art: What do you suppose Odysseus is thinking as he takes aim?

not so contemptible as the young men say.

60 The hour has come to cook their lordships' mutton⁶⁰—
supper by daylight. Other amusements later,
with song and harping that adorn a feast."

He dropped his eyes and nodded, and the prince
Telemachus, true son of King Odysseus,

65 belted his sword on, clapped hand to his spear,
and with a clink and glitter of keen bronze
stood by his chair, in the forefront near his father. ∞

60 **cook their lordships' mutton:**
literally, cook their sheep meat. But
Odysseus is using a phrase that
Telemachus can take metaphorically,
like the phrase *cook their goose*
("get even").

Big Idea Journeys Do you think that Odysseus's long journey is finally over? Why or why not?

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

1. Did any aspects of Odysseus's behavior surprise you in Part 3? Explain, telling what you might have done if you were in his place.

Recall and Interpret

2. (a) What role does Athena play in reuniting Odysseus with his son, Telemachus? (b) Give two reasons why Telemachus might have trouble identifying his father at first.
3. (a) Why does Penelope summon the beggar? (b) How does Odysseus behave, and what does this say about his character?
4. (a) What is "the test of the bow"? (b) Why might Penelope have given it?

Analyze and Evaluate

5. (a) Compare the behavior of Odysseus and Telemachus during the recognition scene. (b) In your opinion, is this scene believable? Why or why not?
6. (a) What is Antinous like, and how does he stand apart from the rest of the suitors? (b) Why do you think Homer develops Antinous's character in this way?
7. (a) Which scene in this part did you consider the most interesting or effective? (b) What does the scene suggest about Greek culture and values? Explain.

Connect

8. **Big Idea Journeys** What do you think might happen next? Explain.

LITERARY ANALYSIS

READING AND VOCABULARY

Literary Element Characterization

Authors do not have to restrict themselves to one form of **characterization**. They may describe their characters directly but also allow them to reveal their personalities through words and actions.

1. What method of characterization does Homer use to reveal Penelope's personality? Support your ideas with examples.
2. For another character in Part 3, find an action, a line or two of dialogue, or another clue to that character's personality. Explain what insight the detail gave you about the character.

Literature Groups

Odysseus is planning to make the suitors pay for their behavior—but do they all deserve the same fate? What do you predict will happen? What do you want to happen? Discuss these questions in your group. Then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of two opposite courses of action available to Odysseus and Telemachus. Call one "Let 'em have it" and the other "Let's be reasonable." Vote on which course of action you prefer. Share your results with the class.

Reading Strategy Determining Main Idea and Supporting Details

The main idea of a piece of writing may be directly stated or implied.

1. Review Penelope's speech in lines 141–151. Where does she express the main idea in this passage?
2. Examine the last five lines of Part 3. What idea does Homer indirectly state in this description of Telemachus?

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Analogies Complete each analogy.

1. **guise : mask :: omen :**
a. prayer b. forewarning c. gift
2. **cower : fear :: cringe :**
a. happiness b. sadness c. embarrassment
3. **healthful : unwholesome :: renowned :**
a. unknown b. knowing c. unknowable
4. **impudence : politeness :: reluctance :**
a. cheerfulness b. eagerness c. intelligence

BEFORE YOU READ *Odyssey, Part 4*

LITERATURE PREVIEW

Connecting to the Poem

Home is a word rich in associations. Before you read Part 4, think about the following questions:

- What does *home* mean to you?
- What do you miss most when you are away from home?

Building Background

Although Homer probably composed the *Odyssey* between 750 and 700 B.C., the epic is set during the Mycenaean period, a much earlier time in Greek history. Archaeologists have discovered that from about 1600 B.C. to 1200 B.C., a remarkable civilization grew up around the city of Mycenae. This culture built massive palaces and forts. Skilled artisans created exquisitely decorated tools, including weapons and drinking vessels in bronze and silver. There was a form of writing.

But the Mycenaean culture came tumbling down swiftly and mysteriously. By about 1100 B.C., its palaces were in ruins, its artists scattered, and the secret of its writing lost. In Part 4, as in much of the *Odyssey*, Homer offers his audience glimpses of the government, social classes, customs, architecture, and values of Mycenaean culture, which he collected from the myths and legends that had been passed on orally from that time.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea Journeys

As you read Part 4, notice how Homer resolves questions about Odysseus's homecoming.

Literary Element Plot

The sequence of events in a narrative work is its **plot**. The point of greatest emotional intensity, interest, or suspense is the plot's climax. Try to identify this point in the plot as you read Part 4.

- See Literary Terms Handbook, p. R13.

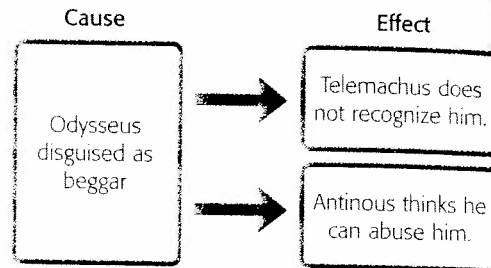
LiteratureOnline Interactive Literary Elements Handbook To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.

READING PREVIEW

Reading Strategy Analyzing Cause-and-Effect Relationships

One event frequently causes another. For example, Odysseus offends Poseidon (cause) and spends much of the poem paying for his behavior (effect). Analyzing **cause-and-effect relationships** in a work of literature will help you better understand the work's plot.

Reading Tip: Taking Notes Use a graphic organizer to help you visualize cause-and-effect relationships.



Vocabulary

jostle (jos'əl) *v.* to bump, push, or shove roughly, as with elbows in a crowd; p. 1009
I was jostled in the crowd.

implacable (im plak'ə bəl) *adj.* impossible to satisfy or soothe; unyielding; p. 1011
The general was implacable and refused to admit defeat.

lavish (lav'ish) *v.* to give generously; provide in abundance; p. 1016
Ben's grandparents lavished gifts upon him when he graduated.

aloof (ə loōf') *adj.* emotionally distant; uninvolved; disinterested; standoffish; p. 1016
Rather than interfere, I tried to remain aloof.

Vocabulary Tip: Word Origins It is not always obvious how the history of a word is tied to its present-day meaning. Use a dictionary to research the etymologies of everyday words.

LOUISIANA GRADE-LEVEL EXPECTATIONS (pages 1008–1021)

14a. Analyze information within and across grade-appropriate texts using various reasoning skills, including identifying cause-effect relationships (ELA-7-H4)

Part 4

Death in the Great Hall

Now shrugging off his rags the wiliest fighter of the islands
leapt and stood on the broad door sill, his own bow in his hand.
He poured out at his feet a rain of arrows from the quiver
and spoke to the crowd:

5 "So much for that. Your clean-cut game is over.
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,
10 embossed,^o two-handed, 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^o 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?

15 Odysseus' arrow hit him under the chin
and punched up to the feathers^o through his throat.
Backward and down he went, letting the winecup fall
from his shocked hand. Like pipes his nostrils jetted
crimson runnels,^o a river of mortal red,
20 and one last kick upset his table
knocking the bread and meat to soak in dusty blood.
Now as they craned to see their champion where he lay
the suitors **jostled** in uproar down the hall,
everyone on his feet. Wildly they turned and scanned
25 the walls in the long room for arms; but not a shield,
not a good ashen spear was there for a man to take and throw.^o
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!"

30 "Our finest lad is down!
You killed the best on Ithaca."

"Buzzards will tear your eyes out!"

For they imagined as they wished—that it was a wild shot,

10 **embossed**: decorated with designs that are slightly raised from the surface.

12 **revelry**: noisy festivity; merrymaking.

16 **punched up to the feathers**: The arrow goes clear through the throat so that only the arrow's feathers remain visible in front.

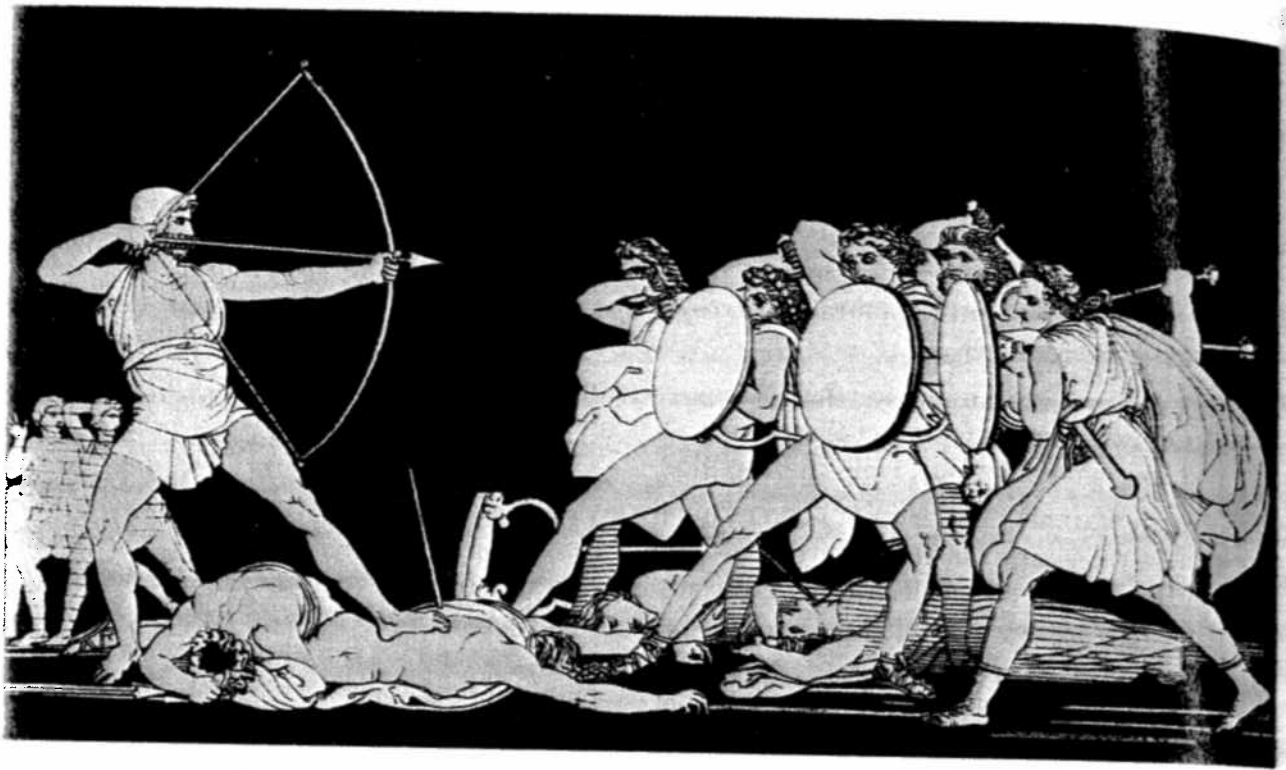
19 **runnels**: streams.

24–26 **Wildly . . . throw**: Odysseus and Telemachus had removed all weapons and armor from the room on the previous night.

Literary Element Plot How would you describe the level of suspense at this point in the story? Explain.

Vocab

jostle (jos' əl) v. to bump, push, or shove roughly, as with elbows in a crowd



Odysseus Slaying the Suitors.

Viewing the Art: What does this image suggest to you about Odysseus's standing among other men?

an unintended killing—fools, not to comprehend
35 they were already in the grip of death.^o
But glaring under his brows Odysseus answered:
“You yellow dogs, you thought I’d never make it
home from the land of Troy. You took my house to plunder,
twisted my maids to serve your beds. You dared
40 bid for my wife while I was still alive.
Contempt was all you had for the gods who rule wide heaven,
contempt for what men say of you hereafter.
Your last hour has come. You die in blood.”

As they all took this in, sickly green fear
45 pulled at their entrails, and their eyes flickered
looking for some hatch or hideaway from death.
Eurymachus alone could speak. He said:
“If you are Odysseus of Ithaca come back,
all that you say these men have done is true.
50 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^o
to do these things. He cared less for a marriage

33–35 For they . . . death: The suitors still do not realize that their opponent is Odysseus and that he has killed Antinous intentionally.

52 whipped us on: encouraged us; drove us.

Reading Strategy Analyzing Cause-and-Effect Relationships *What has caused Odysseus to decide to kill the suitors? Explain.*

than for the power Cronion^o has denied him
as king of Ithaca. For that
55 he tried to trap your son and would have killed him.
He is dead now and has his portion.^o Spare
your own people. As for ourselves, we'll make
restitution of wine and meat consumed,
60 and add, each one, a tithe^o of twenty oxen
with gifts of bronze and gold to warm your heart.
Meanwhile we cannot blame you for your anger."
Odysseus glowered under his black brows
and said:

65 "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,
70 or run for it, if you think you'll escape death.
I doubt one man of you skins by."^o

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

75 "Friends," he said, "the man is **implacable**.
Now that he's got his hands on bow and quiver
he'll shoot from the big door stone there
until he kills us to the last man.

Fight, I say,

80 let's remember the joy of it. Swords out!
Hold up your tables to deflect^o his arrows.
After me, everyone: rush him where he stands.
If we can budge him from the door, if we can pass
into the town, we'll call out men to chase him.
This fellow with his bow will shoot no more."

85 He drew his own sword as he spoke, a broadsword of fine
bronze,
honed like a razor on either edge. Then crying hoarse and loud
he hurled himself at Odysseus. But the kingly man let fly
an arrow at that instant, and the quivering feathered butt^o
sprang to the nipple of his breast as the barb^o stuck in his liver.

54 Cronion: Zeus.

57 his portion: what he deserved; what
fate had in store for him.

60 tithe (tī th): payment; tax.

71 skins by: gets out alive.

80 deflect: to cause to go off course;
turn aside.

88 butt: end.

89 barb: arrowhead; point.

Reading Strategy: Analyzing Cause-and-Effect Relationships *The suitors vastly outnumber Odysseus and Telemachus. Why are they so alarmed?*

Vocabulary:

implacable (im plāk' ə bəl) *adj.* impossible to satisfy or soothe; unyielding

90 The bright broadsword clanged down. He lurched and fell
aside,
pitching across his table. His cup, his bread and meat,
were spilt and scattered far and wide, and his head slammed
on the ground.
Revulsion,^o anguish in his heart, with both feet kicking out,
he downed his chair, while the shrouding wave of mist^o closed
on his eyes.

95 Amphinomus^o now came running at Odysseus,
broadsword naked in his hand. He thought to make
the great soldier give way at the door.
But with a spear throw from behind Telemachus hit him
between the shoulders, and the lancehead drove
100 clear through his chest. He left his feet and fell
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
someone might jump him from behind or cut him down with
a sword
105 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
110 outfits to Eumaeus and this cowherd.
Better to have equipment."

Said Odysseus:

115 "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^o me."

Quick

upon his father's word Telemachus
ran to the room where spears and armor lay.
He caught up four light shields, four pairs of spears,
120 four helms of war high-plumed with flowing manes,^o
and ran back, loaded down, to his father's side.
He was the first to pull a helmet on
and slide his bare arm in a buckler strap.^o
The servants armed themselves, and all three took their stand
125 beside the master of battle.^o

While he had arrows

93 *revulsion*: intense dislike, disgust, or horror.

94 *shrouding wave of mist*: death.

95 *Amphinomus* (am fin' ə məs)

115 *dislodge*: force back; kill.

120 *helms . . . manes*: war helmets decorated from front to back with a crest or ridge of long feathers resembling horses' manes.

123 *slide . . . strap*: The Greeks' small, round shield (*buckler*) had a strap in back through which the warrior slid his arm.

125 *master of battle*: Odysseus.

Literary Element Plot *Is tension rising or falling at this point? Explain.*

Big Idea Journeys *How is Telemachus responding to the challenges of the fight?*

he aimed and shot, and every shot brought down
one of his huddling enemies.

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

Odysseus and Telemachus, along with their two allies, cut down all the suitors. Athena also makes an appearance, rallying their spirits and ensuring that none of her favorites is injured. Finally the great hall is quiet.

135 In blood and dust
he saw that crowd all fallen, many and many slain.
Think of a catch that fishermen haul in to a halfmoon bay
in a fine-meshed net from the whitecaps of the sea:
140 how all are poured out on the sand, in throes for^o the salt sea,
twitching their cold lives away in Helios' fiery air:
so lay the suitors heaped on one another.

139 in throes for: in pain or struggle to return to.

The Trunk of the Olive Tree

Penelope's old nurse hurries upstairs to tell her mistress that Odysseus has returned and that all the suitors are dead. Penelope is amazed but refuses to admit that the stranger could be her husband. Instead, she believes that he must be a god.

The old nurse sighed:

"How queer, the way you talk!

Here he is, large as life, by his own fire,
and you deny he ever will get home!

5 Child, you always were mistrustful!
But there is one sure mark that I can tell you:
that scar left by the boar's tusk long ago.
I recognized it when I bathed his feet
and would have told you, but he stopped my mouth,
10 forbade me, in his craftiness.

Come down,

I stake my life on it, he's here!

Let me die in agony if I lie!"

Penelope said:



Statuette of Ulysses. Roman. Bronze.
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

Literary Element Plot *How does Odysseus perform as a fighter?*

Reading Strategy Analyzing Cause-and-Effect Relationships *What causes and effects did you notice in this scene?*

15 "Nurse dear, though you have your wits about you,
still it is hard not to be taken in
by the immortals. Let us join my son, though,
and see the dead and that strange one who killed them."
She turned then to descend the stair, her heart
20 in tumult. Had she better keep her distance
and question him, her husband? Should she run
up to him, take his hands, kiss him now?^o
Crossing the door sill she sat down at once
in firelight, against the nearest wall,
25 across the room from the lord Odysseus.

19–22 She turned . . . now: Penelope's thoughts reveal that she is not so uncertain of "that strange one" as she has let on.

There

leaning against a pillar, sat the man
and never lifted up his eyes, but only waited
for what his wife would say when she had seen him.
30 And she, for a long time, sat deathly still
in wonderment—for sometimes as she gazed
she found him—yes, clearly—like her husband,
but sometimes blood and rags were all she saw.^o
Telemachus's voice came to her ears:

33 blood . . . saw: Odysseus is again disguised as the old beggar.

35 "Mother,
cruel mother, do you feel nothing,
drawing yourself apart this way from Father?
Will you not sit with him and talk and question him?
What other woman could remain so cold?
40 Who shuns her lord, and he come back to her
from wars and wandering, after twenty years?
Your heart is hard as flint and never changes!"
Penelope answered:

"Mother,

"I am stunned, child.
45 I cannot speak to him. I cannot question him.
I cannot keep my eyes upon his face.
If really he is Odysseus, truly home,
beyond all doubt we two shall know each other
better than you or anyone. There are
50 secret signs we know, we two."^o

A smile

came now to the lips of the patient hero, Odysseus,
who turned to Telemachus and said:

50 secret . . . two: Eurynome has already said that she recognized Odysseus's scar; but Penelope is thinking of signs that are a secret strictly between her and Odysseus.

"Peace: let your mother test me at her leisure.
55 Before long she will see and know me best.
These tatters, dirt—all that I'm caked with now—
make her look hard at me and doubt me still.
As to this massacre, we must see the end.
Whoever kills one citizen, you know,

Big Idea Journeys Why does Penelope hesitate to accept her husband?

60 and has no force of armed men at his back,
had better take himself abroad by night
and leave his kin. Well, we cut down the flower of Ithaca,
the mainstay of the town. Consider that.”

Telemachus replied respectfully:

65 “Dear
Father,
enough that you yourself study the danger,
foresighted in combat as you are,
they say you have no rival.

We three

stand
70 ready to follow you and fight. I say
for what our strength avails,^o we have the courage.”
And the great tactician,^o Odysseus, answered:

Here is our best maneuver, as I see it:
75 bathe, you three,^o and put fresh clothing on,
order the women to adorn themselves,
and let our admirable harper choose a tune
for dancing, some lighthearted air, and strum it.
Anyone going by, or any neighbor,
80 will think it is a wedding feast he hears.
These deaths must not be cried about the town
till we can slip away to our own woods. We’ll see
what weapon, then, Zeus puts into our hands.”^o

They listened attentively, and did his bidding,
85 bathed and dressed afresh; and all the maids
adorned themselves. Then Phemius^o the harper
took his polished shell^o and plucked the strings,
moving the company to desire
for singing, for the sway and beat of dancing,
90 until they made the manor hall resound
with gaiety of men and grace of women.
Anyone passing on the road would say:
“Married at last, I see—the queen so many courted.
Sly, cattish wife! She would not keep—not she!—
95 the lord’s estate until he came.”



“Good.

Youth Singing and Playing the Kithara, c. 490 b.c. Terra-cotta, height: 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

71 **avails**: is worth; helps.

72 **tactician**: one skilled in forming and carrying out (military) tactics or plans.

75 **you three**: Telemachus, Eurmaeus, and Philoetius.

74–83 **Here . . . hands**: Odysseus’s plan is this: First, stall for time by making people think that Penelope’s wedding feast is in progress. Then escape to the woods, and trust in Zeus.

86 **Phemius** (fē’ mē as)

87 **polished shell**: harp.

Reading Strategy Analyzing Cause-and-Effect Relationships *What does Odysseus fear will be the effect of his slaughter of the suitors?*

Literary Element Plot *How is Homer introducing rising tension?*

So travelers'

thoughts might run—but no one guessed the truth.
 Greathearted Odysseus, home at last,
 was being bathed now by Eurynome
 100 and rubbed with golden oil, and clothed again
 in a fresh tunic and a cloak. Athena
 lent him beauty, head to foot. She made him
 taller, and massive, too, with crisp hair
 in curls like petals of wild hyacinth
 105 but all red-golden. Think of gold infused
 on silver by a craftsman, whose fine art
 Hephaestus^o taught him, or Athena:^o one
 whose work moves to delight: just so she **lavished**
 beauty over Odysseus' head and shoulders.
 110 He sat then in the same chair by the pillar,
 facing his silent wife, and said:

107 **Hephaestus** (hi fes' tās); the god of fire and metalworking. **Athena**; in addition to all her other roles, she was the goddess of arts and crafts.

"Strange woman,

the immortals of Olympus made you hard,
 harder than any. Who else in the world
 115 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?^o
 Nurse, make up a bed for me to sleep on.
 Her heart is iron in her breast."

112–117 **Strange . . . year**: Finally, after all his other battles have been won, Odysseus must win back his wife. Now he questions and criticizes her with uncharacteristic directness.

Penelope

120 spoke to Odysseus now. She said:

"Strange man,

if man you are . . . This is no pride on my part
 nor scorn for you—not even wonder, merely.
 125 I know so well how you—how he—appeared
 boarding the ship for Troy. But all the same . . .
 Make up his bed for him, Eurycleia.^o
 Place it outside the bedchamber my lord
 built with his own hands. Pile the big bed
 130 with fleeces, rugs, and sheets of purest linen."^o
 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?"

127 **Eurycleia** (yoo' ri klē' ə)

127–130 **Make up . . . linen**: Sounding sweetly hospitable, Penelope now tests the man who says he is her husband. She proposes that her maid move Odysseus's big bed out of the bedchamber and make it up.

What is Athena doing? Why?

What is Athena

lavish

lavish (lav' ish) *v.* to give generously; provide in abundance

aloof (ə'loo'f) *adj.* emotionally distant; uninvolved; disinterested; standoffish

135 No builder had the skill for that—unless
a god came down to turn the trick. No mortal
in his best days could budge it with a crowbar.
There is our pact and pledge, our secret sign,
built into that bed—my handiwork
140 and no one else's!

An old trunk of olive

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

There's our sign!

I know no more. Could someone else's hand
155 have sawn that trunk and dragged the frame away?"^o

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

"Do not rage at me, Odysseus!

No one ever matched your caution! Think
what difficulty the gods gave: they denied us
life together in our prime and flowering years,
165 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,
impostors who might come—and all those many
170 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—
only my own slave, Actoris,^o that my father
175 sent with me as a gift—she kept our door.
You make my stiff heart know that I am yours."

133–155 **Woman, . . . away:** The original bed could not be moved. One bedpost was a tree trunk rooted in the ground, a secret known only by Penelope, a servant, and Odysseus, who built the bed with his own hands. Furious and hurt, Odysseus thinks Penelope has allowed someone to saw the bed frame from the tree.

157 **tremulous:** characterized by trembling; shaky.

174 **Actoris** (ak tôr' is)

Literary Element Plot How does Odysseus respond to Penelope's suggestion that the maid move the bed outside the bedchamber?

Big Idea Journeys How has Penelope's tone shifted? Why?



Ulysses and Penelope Embracing.

Now from his breast into his eyes the ache
of longing mounted, and he wept at last,
his dear wife, clear and faithful, in his arms,
180 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
185 to crawl, clotted with brine, on kindly beaches
in joy, in joy, knowing the abyss behind:^o
and so she too rejoiced, her gaze upon her husband,
her white arms round him pressed as though forever.

The next day, Odysseus is reunited with his father, Laertes, as news of the death of the suitors passes through town. Families go to Odysseus's manor to gather the bodies for burial. There, Antinous's father rallies the families to avenge the deaths of their sons and brothers. As battle begins, however, Athena appears and calls the island to peace. ☞

181–186 a swimmer . . . behind:
Odysseus is compared to someone who swims to shore after a shipwreck. Coated with sea salt (clotted with brine), he rejoices that his wife is in his arms and his hellish experience (the abyss) is over.

AFTER YOU READ

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

1. What do you think of the way in which Odysseus deals with the suitors?

Recall and Interpret

2. (a) How does Eurymachus attempt to avert bloodshed? (b) How does Odysseus respond?
3. (a) How do the nurse and Telemachus try to convince Penelope that the stranger is Odysseus? (b) Why might Penelope be unclear about what to do?
4. (a) How is proving himself to his wife different from the other challenges Odysseus has faced? (b) What enables him to meet this challenge?

Analyze and Evaluate

5. (a) Compare Eurymachus's first speech to Odysseus with his second plea to the suitors. (b) Which do you think represents the "real" Eurymachus?
6. (a) What kind of person is Telemachus? (b) How does he compare with his father?
7. Do you believe that Odysseus's desire for revenge is a moral flaw? Explain.

Connect

8. **Big Idea Journeys** How have Odysseus's adventures shaped his character?

DAILY LIFE AND CULTURE

Ancient Greek Society and Family Roles

The geography of ancient Greece created isolation. The sea and the mountainous terrain hindered travel between city-states. The simple herding lifestyle and warlike character of the Achaeans (who comprise the characters of the *Odyssey*), as well as their local pride and jealousies, prevented permanent alliances between the independent city-states. Although the *Iliad* tells how Greeks from many city-states joined to fight a common foe, ancient Greece never became a united nation. Citizens felt loyalty only to their city or kingdom.

At the center of their societies were the households of the aristocratic families. These did not consist simply of a nobleman, his wife, and their offspring but also included members of the extended family, along with servants and slaves. All men, including the noblemen, were familiar with the physical tasks of daily life, including plowing and caring for animals. An important chieftain such as Odysseus, however, would have rarely spent time in such lowly occupations.

The wife in a great household had status, but women in ancient Greece were not equal to men. Marriages were arranged by men for political or social reasons. A woman had little say in the matter. A noblewoman might spend her days managing her household or working at crafts such as weaving or embroidery.

Discuss the following questions with your classmates.

1. Why might the geographical and political isolation of ancient Greece have made a journey like Odysseus's particularly difficult?
2. What evidence do you find in the *Odyssey* to confirm that women were not considered of equal status to men?



Literary Element Plot

In a story or epic narrative, the climax is the moment when the events of the **plot** reach an emotional high point and the action takes a new turn. Very often this is also the moment of greatest interest or excitement for the reader. In a long work such as the *Odyssey*, there may be more than one climax. Odysseus's encounter with Polyphemus, for example, is a self-contained tale within the epic—and the moment when Odysseus blinds the Cyclops is its climax.

1. What is the climax of "Death in the Great Hall"?
What is the climax of "The Trunk of the Olive Tree"?
2. Which of these climaxes could be considered the climax of the epic as a whole? Explain your answer.

Review: Narrator

As you learned on pages 206–207, a **narrator** is the person who tells a story. An epic poem is narrated in predictable ways. For example, a poet-narrator may start out with an invocation that states the tale's subject and asks for inspiration from a guiding spirit. The narration may begin in the "middle of things," describing what is happening after certain important events have already occurred. The *Odyssey* has two principal narrators: Odysseus and the poet.

Partner Activity Meet with a classmate and go through the text to decide which events are narrated by Odysseus and which by the poet. Then designate one of you to be Odysseus and one to be the poet. Take turns narrating the sections assigned to you in your own words. Use note cards to help you recall details. Remember that if you are Odysseus, you should narrate your part of the story in the first person, using *I*. If you are the poet, use the third person.

Episode: the Sirens
Narrator: Odysseus

warned by Circe
sea goes calm
beeswax for ears
begs to be released
men tie him tighter

Reading Strategy Analyzing Cause-and-Effect Relationships

Writers often try to show their readers why things happen as they do. The ancient Greeks believed that gods caused many of life's mysteries: thunder, war, particular storms at sea. How a person behaved mattered too. Good and bad actions led to rewards and punishments. The *Odyssey* is full of examples of cause and effect. Decide whether each event listed below is a cause, an effect, or both. If the event is a cause, write down one effect, and vice versa. If it is both, include a cause and an effect.

1. Odysseus suffers a series of misfortunes at sea.
2. Odysseus's men kill the cattle of Helios.
3. Each night Penelope unravels the shroud she is weaving.
4. Antinous throws a stool at Odysseus.

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Word Origins For each boldfaced word, use a dictionary to find the word's origin.

1. **jostle**
a. Middle English b. Greek c. other
2. **implacable**
a. German b. Latin c. Greek
3. **lavish**
a. German b. Latin c. French
4. **aloof**
a. German b. Latin c. other

Academic Vocabulary

Here are two words from the vocabulary list on page R86.

encounter (en koun'tər) *v.* to come across; meet

decade (dek'ād) *n.* a period of ten years

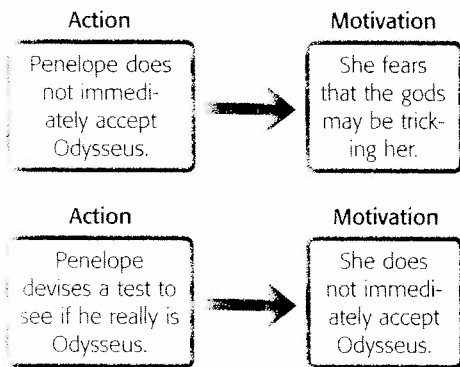
Practice and Apply

1. Where in the *Odyssey* do you encounter graphic descriptions of fighting?
2. For how many decades is Odysseus absent from Ithaca?

Writing About Literature

Analyze Character Reread the section in which Odysseus's identity is revealed to Penelope. Why does she not immediately accept her long-lost husband? What does her hesitation say about her character and about her twenty-year ordeal? In a few paragraphs, explain why Penelope acts the way she does. Explore how her reaction affects your own response to this part of the *Odyssey*.

Prepare for your essay with flow charts like the ones below. Use the flow charts to list Penelope's actions and the motivations for those actions.



After you complete your draft, meet with a peer reviewer to evaluate each other's work and to suggest improvements. Then proofread and edit your draft to correct errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Interdisciplinary Activity: Geography

Did Homer have real places in mind when he plotted Odysseus's fantastic voyage? Over the centuries, many scholars have tried to show that Odysseus did follow a real geographical route. Some theorists think he sailed as far away as Iceland. Others think he simply sailed the island of Sicily. Many of Homer's geographical descriptions are hazy, confusing, or even contradicting, making it difficult to pinpoint the route he takes with precision. Research some of the places that scholars have associated with Odysseus's journey. Choose one of these sites and find out what it is like today. Create a travel brochure describing the place.

Homer's Language and Style

Using Compound Adjectives What do the following phrases from the *Odyssey* have in common?

- sea-hollowed caves*
- black-prowed vessel*
- canvas-bellying breeze*

Each is a compound adjective made up of two words joined by a hyphen. Such compounds have the effect of shortening and simplifying a descriptive passage. They also allow a poet to change the sound and rhythm of a line to make it more effective.

Remember that Homer's words were written down long ago. The translator, Robert Fitzgerald, has tried to capture the flavor and rhythm of Homer's spoken language. For example, instead of "the sea was as dark as wine," Fitzgerald's Greek translation includes "the winedark sea"—the same meaning but with a more concentrated and direct effect. Instead of talking of "Cronus, who had a crooked mind," he refers to "crooked-minded Cronus." Note that a compound adjective often includes one word that is not normally an adjective at all. For example, *black-prowed* turns a noun (*prow*) into an adjective (*prowed*).

Activity Rewrite the following phrases so that they contain compound adjectives.

1. a jar with two handles
2. a ship with long oars
3. a bolt that is white with heat
4. a bow that is made well
5. a sheep with stiff legs

Revising Check

Compound Adjectives Compound adjectives can add to the liveliness of your own writing. With a partner, go through your character analysis of Penelope and note places where compound adjectives would make your writing more vivid. Revise your draft as needed.

LiteratureOnline Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.