

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

Book One of *The Odyssey*



Book One of *The Odyssey*

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes



After the Trojan War, the gods and goddesses were angry with Odysseus for acting arrogantly. Specifically, the gods and goddesses did not like how Odysseus claimed that he alone had ended the war, and that his trick with the Trojan horse proved he was just as smart as they were. In his fury, Poseidon declared that Odysseus would never return to his home in Ithaca. The story of *The Odyssey* recounts the ten year long journey Odysseus makes in search of his home.

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

Interactivity Tutorial

Tell me, O muse, of that ingenious hero
who traveled far and wide after he had sacked
the famous town of Troy. Many cities did he visit,
and many were the nations with whose manners and customs he
was acquainted;
moreover he suffered much by sea
while trying to save his own life and bring his men safely home;
but do what he might he could not save his men,
for they perished through their own sheer folly
in eating the cattle of the Sun-god Hyperion;
so the god prevented them from ever reaching home.
Tell me, too, about all these things, O daughter of Zeus,
from whatsoever source you may know.

10

Information Marker
Information about the epic

i

Using this interactivity, you will read lines one through one hundred twenty-five of *The Odyssey*. In each section, you will see words highlighted in orange. You should hover your cursor over the orange text to learn more about the writing and the characters. Notice that a number appears every ten lines to mark your placement in the poem. Look for the information markers in each section. You can click on the markers to access information that will increase your understanding of the epic. Click *NEXT* to continue.

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

**BOOK ONE:
ATHENA VISITS ITHACA**

- The **invocation** to the **Muse**
- The gods discuss **Odysseus** and decide he should return
- **Athena** goes to **Ithaca** to encourage **Telemachus**. She
 - Speaks to him disguised as **Mentes**
 - Offers him advice about dealing with his mother and the suitors
 - Suggests he go on a trip to **Pylos** and **Sparta**
 - **Penelope** speaks to **Phemius**, the singer, asking him to change the song
- Telemachus criticizes Penelope and she goes upstairs
- **Eurycleia** carries the lit torches to escort Telemachus to his rooms

i

In Book One of *The Odyssey*, you will read about events shown here. Roll your cursor over each one to learn more. Click **NEXT** to begin reading *The Odyssey*. As you complete each section, click **NEXT**.

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

Tell me, O muse, of that ingenious hero
who traveled far and wide after he had sacked
the famous town of Troy. Many cities did he visit,
and many were the nations with whose manners and customs
he was acquainted;
moreover he suffered much by sea
while trying to save his own life and bring his men safely home;
but do what he might he could not save his men,
for they perished through their own sheer folly
in eating the cattle of the Sun-god Hyperion;
so the god prevented them from ever reaching home.
Tell me, too, about all these things, O daughter of Zeus,
from whatsoever source you may know them.

10



Tell me, O muse, of that ingenious hero
who traveled far and wide after he had sacked
the famous town of Troy. Many cities did he visit,
and many were the nations with whose manners and customs he was acquainted;
moreover he suffered much by sea
while trying to save his own life and bring his men safely home;
but do what he might he could not save his men,
for they perished through their own sheer folly
in eating the cattle of the Sun-god Hyperion;
so the god prevented them from ever reaching home.
Tell me, too, about all these things, O daughter of Zeus,
from whatsoever source you may know them.

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

So now all who escaped
death in battle or by shipwreck
had got safely home
except Odysseus, and he, though he was longing to return to his
wife
and country, was detained by the nymph Calypso,
who had got him into a large cave
and wanted to marry him.
But as years went by, there came a time
when the gods settled
that he should go back to Ithaca;
even then, however, when he was among his own people,
his troubles were not yet over; nevertheless all the gods had now
began to pity him
except Poseidon, who still persecuted
him without ceasing
and would not let him get home.

20



So now all who escaped
death in battle or by shipwreck
had got safely home
except Odysseus, and he, though he was longing to return to his wife
and country, was detained by the goddess Calypso,
who had got him into a large cave
and wanted to marry him.
But as years went by, there came a time
when the gods settled
that he should go back to Ithaca;
even then, however, when he was among his own people,
his troubles were not yet over; nevertheless all the gods had now begun to pity him
except Poseidon, who still persecuted
him without ceasing
and would not let him get home.

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

Now Poseidon
had gone off to the Ethiopians,
who are at the world's end,
and lie in two halves,
the one looking West
and the other East. He had gone there
to accept a **hecatomb**
of sheep and oxen, and was enjoying himself
at his festival; but the other gods met
in the house of Olympian Zeus,
and the sire of gods and men spoke first.
At that moment he was thinking of **Aegisthus**,
who had been killed by **Agamemnon's son Orestes**;
so he said to the other gods:

30

40

i

Now Poseidon
had gone off to the Ethiopians,
who are at the world's end,
and lie in two halves,
the one looking West
and the other East. He had gone there
to accept a hecatomb
of sheep and oxen, and was enjoying himself
at his festival; but the other gods met
in the house of Olympian Zeus,
and the sire of gods and men spoke first.
At that moment he was thinking of Aegisthus,
who had been killed by Agamemnon's son Orestes;
so he said to the other gods:

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

"See now, how men
lay blame upon us gods
for what is after all nothing
but their own folly.
Look at Aegisthus; he must needs
make love to Agamemnon's wife unrighteously
and then kill Agamemnon,
though he knew it would be
the death of him;
for I sent **Hermes** to warn him
not to do either of these things, inasmuch
as Orestes would be sure to take his revenge
when he grew up and wanted to return home.
Hermes told him this in all good will
but he would not listen,
and now he has paid for everything in full."

50



"See now, how men
lay blame upon us gods
for what is after all nothing
but their own folly.
Look at Aegisthus; he must needs
make love to Agamemnon's wife unrighteously
and then kill Agamemnon,
though he knew it would be
the death of him;
for I sent Hermes to warn him
not to do either of these things, inasmuch
as Orestes would be sure to take his revenge
when he grew up and wanted to return home.
Hermes told him this in all good will
but he would not listen,
and now he has paid for everything in full."

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

Then Athena said,
"Father, son of Cronos,
King of kings,
it served Aegisthus right,
and so it would anyone else who does as he did;
but Aegisthus is neither here nor there;
it is for Ulysses that my heart bleeds,
when I think of his sufferings
in that lonely sea-girt island, far away, poor man, from all his
friends.
It is an island covered with forest,
in the very middle of the sea,

60



Then Athena said,
"Father, son of Cronos,
King of kings,
it served Aegisthus right,
and so it would anyone else who does as he did;
but Aegisthus is neither here nor there;
it is for Ulysses that my heart bleeds,
when I think of his sufferings
in that lonely sea-girt island, far away, poor man, from all his friends.
It is an island covered with forest,
in the very middle of the sea,

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

And a goddess lives there, 70
daughter of the magician Atlas,
who looks after the bottom of the ocean,
and carries the great columns
that keep heaven and earth asunder. This daughter of Atlas
has got hold of poor unhappy Odysseus
and keeps trying by every kind of blandishment
to make him forget his home,
so that he is tired of life, and thinks of nothing
but how he may once more see the smoke
of his own chimneys. You, sir, take 80
no heed of this, and yet when Odysseus was before Troy
did he not propitiate you
with many a burnt sacrifice?
Why then should you keep on being so angry with him?"

i

And a goddess lives there,
daughter of the magician Atlas,
who looks after the bottom of the ocean,
and carries the great columns
that keep heaven and earth asunder. This daughter of Atlas
has got hold of poor unhappy Odysseus
and keeps trying by every kind of blandishment
to make him forget his home,
so that he is tired of life, and thinks of nothing
but how he may once more see the smoke
of his own chimneys. You, sir, take
no heed of this, and yet when Odysseus was before Troy
did he not propitiate you
with many a burnt sacrifice?
Why then should you keep on being so angry with him?"

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

And Zeus said,
"My child, what are you talking about?
How can I forget Odysseus
than whom there is no more capable man on earth,
nor more liberal in his offerings
to the immortal gods that live in heaven?
Bear in mind, however, that Poseidon
is still furious with Odysseus
for having blinded
an eye of Polyphemus
king of the Cyclopes.
Polyphemus is son to Poseidon
by the nymph Thoosa,
daughter to the sea-king Phorcys;

90



And Zeus said,
"My child, what are you talking about?
How can I forget Odysseus
than whom there is no more capable man on earth,
nor more liberal in his offerings
to the immortal gods that live in heaven?
Bear in mind, however, that Poseidon
is still furious with Odysseus
for having blinded
an eye of Polyphemus
king of the Cyclopes.
Polyphemus is son to Poseidon
by the nymph Thoosa,
daughter to the sea-king Phorcys;

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

Therefore though he will not kill Odysseus outright,
he torments him by preventing him from getting home. **100**
Still, let us lay
our heads together and see
how we can help him to return;
Poseidon will then be pacified,
for if we are all of a mind
he can hardly stand out against us."



Therefore though he will not kill Odysseus outright,
he torments him by preventing him from getting home.
Still, let us lay
our heads together and see
how we can help him to return;
Poseidon will then be pacified,
for if we are all of a mind
he can hardly stand out against us."

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

And Athena said,
"Father, son of Cronos,
King of kings, if, then, the gods
now mean that Odysseus
should get home,
we should first send Hermes
to the Ogygian island
to tell Calypso that
we have made up our minds
and that he is to return.

110



And Athena said,
"Father, son of Cronos,
King of kings, if, then, the gods
now mean that Odysseus
should get home,
we should first send Hermes
to the Ogygian island
to tell Calypso that
we have made up our minds
and that he is to return.

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

In the meantime I will go to Ithaca,
to put heart into Odysseus' son Telemachus;
I will embolden him to call the **Achaeans**
in assembly, and speak out to the suitors of his mother **120**
 Penelope,
who persist in eating up any number
of his sheep and oxen; I will also conduct him
to Sparta and to Pylos,
to see if he can hear anything about
the return of his dear father-
for this will make people speak well of him."

i

In the meantime I will go to Ithaca,
to put heart into Odysseus' son Telemachus;
I will embolden him to call the Achaeans
in assembly, and speak out to the suitors of his mother Penelope,
who persist in eating up any number
of his sheep and oxen; I will also conduct him
to Sparta and to Pylos,
to see if he can hear anything about
the return of his dear father-
for this will make people speak well of him."

Module 7: The Epic – *The Odyssey*
Topic 1 Content: Book One of *The Odyssey* Notes

This concludes this reading of *The Odyssey*. Click the ***EXIT*** button to return to the topic content, or the ***REVIEW*** button to repeat the interactivity.

✕ **EXIT**

↺ **REPLAY**

This concludes this reading of *The Odyssey*. Click the ***EXIT*** button to return to the topic content, or the ***REVIEW*** button to repeat the interactivity.