

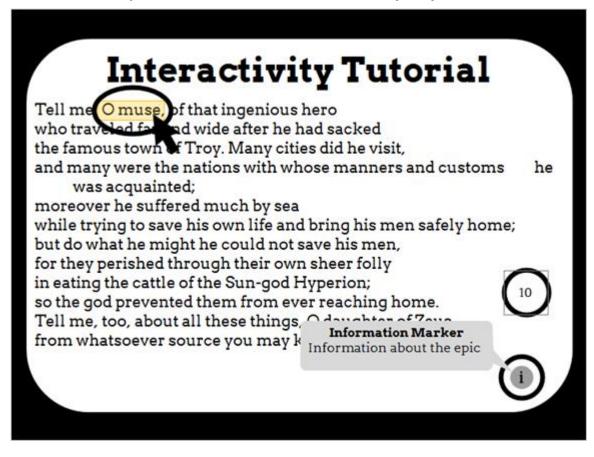
Book One of The Odyssey





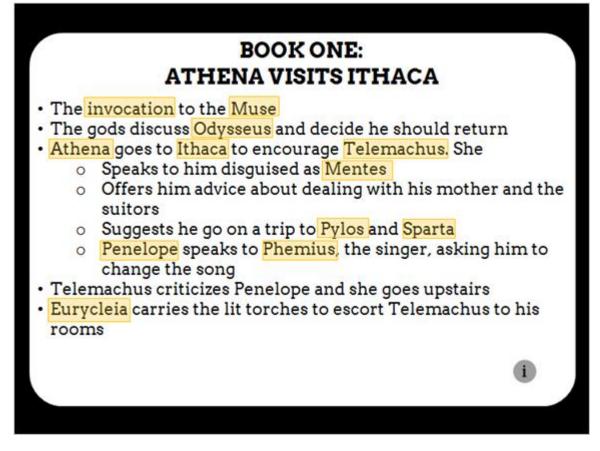
After the Trojan War, the gods and goddesses were angry with Odysseus for acting arrogantly. Specifically, the gods and goddesses did not like how Odysseus claimed that he alone had ended the war, and that his trick with the Trojan horse proved he was just as smart as they were. In his fury, Poseidon 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.





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.





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*.



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.

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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 20 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.

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Now Poseidon had gone off to the Ethiopians, 30 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, 40 who had been killed by Agamemnon's son Orestes; so he said to the other gods:

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"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."

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50

Then Athena said, "Father, son of Cronos, 60 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, i

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70 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 80 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?

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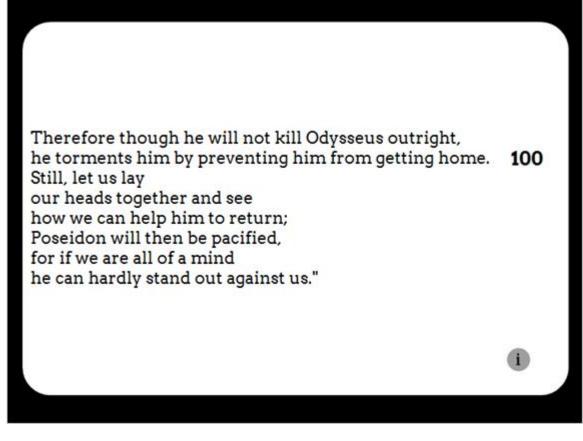
And Zeus said, "My child, what are you talking about? How can I forget Odysseus than whom there is no more capable man on earth, nor more liberal in his offerings to the immortal gods that live in heaven? Bear in mind, however, that Poseidon is still furious with Odysseus for having blinded an eye of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

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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."



And Athena said, "Father, son of Cronos, King of kings, if, then, the gods now mean that Odysseus 110 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.

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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 fatherfor this will make people speak well of him."

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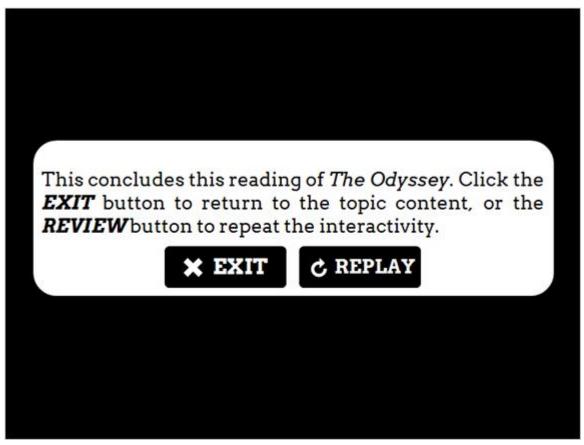
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This concludes this reading of *The Odyssey*. Click the *EXIT* button to return to the topic content, or the *REVIEW* button to repeat the interactivity.

