

Odyssey Questions and Vocabulary**Directions:**

- Answer all the review questions for each book on a separate sheet of paper. These questions will be checked, but not collected, by me.
- **Questions marked "SA" are short answer questions. These questions need to be answered in a complete paragraph (6-8 sentences). The paragraph should have a clear topic sentence and utilize textual evidence (cited quotes) from the poem. The paragraph will be turned in to me, so write it on a separate sheet of paper.**
- For each vocabulary word, locate the sentence in the book in which the word appears and copy the sentence into your notebook. Then, write your own sentence using the same word.

Book 1 (p. 77-92) - Athena Inspires the Prince

1. What is the purpose of the first ten lines of the poem?
2. Where is Odysseus and why has he not yet returned home from the Trojan War?
3. What does Athena do during a meeting on Mount Olympus?
4. At Odysseus' house in Ithaca, we are introduced to the suitors. What are they doing in the house?
5. What words are used to describe the suitors?
6. How does Athena present herself to Telemachus?
7. Athena tells Telemachus to seek information about his father Odysseus from which men?
8. Athena gives Telemachus one piece of information about his father. What is it?
9. What does Athena counsel Telemachus to do to the suitors?
10. How has Telemachus changed since the beginning of Book 1, and how does Penelope react?

Book 1 Vocabulary

- hallowed (p. 77): adjective; holy, sacred, revered
- uncanny (p. 84): adjective: suggesting superhuman or supernatural powers; eerie; mysterious
- carouse [carousing] (p. 84): verb; to take part in a drunken or otherwise improper party/gathering
- lofty (p. 91): adjective; elevated in character and spirit; noble; impressively high

Book 2 (p. 93-106) - Telemachus Sets Sail

1. Why does Telemachus call the men to assembly?
2. How has Penelope managed to hold off the suitors' demands for the past four years?
3. What sign does Zeus send to the assembly, and what is its meaning?
4. What does Telemachus plan to do now?
5. How does Athena aid Telemachus?

Book 2 Vocabulary

- squander [squandered] (p. 95): verb [adjective]; to spend extravagantly or foolishly; to waste
- wretched (p. 95): adjective; deeply afflicted, dejected, or distressed; extremely or deplorably bad
- doddering (p. 101): adjective; weak and appearing to be of old age
- mar (p. 105): verb; to detract from the perfection or wholeness of; to spoil

Book 3 (p. 107-123) - King Nestor Remembers

1. Where does the action in Book 3 take place?
2. Where is Athena during this part of the story, and how does she support Telemachus?
3. Describe Nestor.
4. What argument between Menelaus and Agamemnon does Nestor describe?
5. What happens at the homecoming of Agamemnon? What does Orestes do?
6. What advice does Nestor give Telemachus about being away from home?

Book 3 Vocabulary

- subtle (p. 108): adjective; delicate, elusive; perceptive, refined
- hearsay (p. 113): noun; a rumor
- contingent (p. 113): noun; a representative group or delegation
- pauper (p. 118): noun; a very poor person

Book 4 (p. 124-151) - The King and Queen of Sparta

1. What is the setting of Book 4?
 2. How is Telemachus' identity revealed to Menelaus?
 3. Menelaus describes his stay in Egypt to Telemachus. During his stay there, who told Menelaus where Odysseus was detained?
 4. According to Menelaus' informant, where was Odysseus?
 5. Why is Menelaus to go to the Elysian Fields instead of dying as other mortals do?
 6. The scene shifts to the home of Odysseus. What plan do the suitors devise against Telemachus? Identify the leading men of the suitors.
 7. Who comforts Penelope after she learns of the suitors' plan and the journey?
- SA: Although Odysseus is the epic hero of the poem, Homer spends the first four books following Telemachus. What is the reason for focusing the first part on Telemachus and not Odysseus?

Book 4 Vocabulary

- tribute (p. 130): noun; payment or gift showing respect, gratitude, or affection
- potent (p. 131): adjective; powerful, effective
- stamina (p. 135): noun; staying power, endurance
- slake [slaked] (p. 143): verb; to subside; to reduce in degree or intensity

Book 5 (p. 152-167) - Odysseus - Nymph and Shipwreck

1. What argument does Athena make to the other gods at the beginning of the book?
2. What is Hermes sent to do?
3. What epithet is attached to Hermes?
4. Calypso becomes angry when Hermes tells her what she must do. She thinks the gods are punishing her for something - what?
5. How has Odysseus been feeling on Calypso's island? How has he been acting?
6. What reasons does Calypso give Odysseus to stay on the island?
7. What does Calypso help Odysseus build?
8. What does Poseidon do when he sees Odysseus has left the island?
9. Odysseus is stranded at sea. Who helps him? What does she give Odysseus?
10. What happens to Odysseus at the end of Book 5?

Book 5 Vocabulary

- pungent (p. 154): adjective; having an intense flavor or odor
- fortify [fortified] (p. 155): verb; to make strong; to strengthen and secure (as a town)
- indignation (p. 156): noun; anger aroused by something unjust, unworthy, or mean
- foil [foiled] (p. 157): verb; to prevent from attaining an end; defeat

Book 6 (p. 168-178) – The Princess and the Stranger

1. Where has Odysseus landed in book 6?
2. Who does Athena visit? What does Athena tell her to do?
3. How does Nausicaa discover Odysseus?
4. What does Odysseus decide to do when he sees Nausicaa?
5. How does Nausicaa demonstrate that she respects the laws of hospitality? (Cite specific lines)
6. On page 176 (lines 265 to 271), the princess speaks to one of the maids. What do her lines mean?
7. Why doesn't Nausicaa bring Odysseus to the palace in person? What plan does she come up with?

Book 6 Vocabulary

- beguile [beguiled] (p. 170): verb; to lead by deception; hoodwink
- brine (p. 175): noun; the water of a sea or salt lake
- spurn [spurns] (p. 177): verb; to reject with disdain or contempt

Book 7 (p. 179-190) - Phaeacia's Halls and Gardens

1. How does Athena help Odysseus in the beginning of book 7?
2. Which king and queen does Odysseus meet in book 7?
3. Whom does Odysseus approach for assistance when he enters the palace?
4. How do the king and queen show that they, too, respect the laws of hospitality? Cite specific parts of the book.
5. What does Alcinous offer Odysseus so he would stay with them?

SA: Compare Nausicaa and Telemachus. In what ways do their lives and experiences mirror each other or differ?

Book 7 Vocabulary

- libation [libations] (p. 184): noun; a drink containing alcohol
- suppliant [suplicants] (p. 185): noun; someone asking humbly and earnestly of another person; a beggar
- brusque [brusquely] (p. 187): adjective [adverb]; blunt in manner or speech
- squall [squalls] (p. 188): noun; a sudden violent wind often with rain or snow

Book 8 (p. 191-210) – A Day for Songs and Contests

1. Who insults Odysseus? What does he accuse Odysseus of being?
2. How does Odysseus prove this man wrong?
3. Why do you think Homer interrupts the narrative to have Demodocus sing about the love of Ares and Aphrodite?
4. Why does Odysseus cry when Demodocus plays again (p. 208)?
5. Later in the book the Phaeacians will be punished by Poseidon for helping Odysseus. Where is this foreshadowed in the chapter?

Book 8 Vocabulary

- slander (p. 197): noun; a false and defamatory oral statement about a person
- cleave [cleaving] (p. 197): verb; to penetrate or pass through something by or as if by cutting
- prowess (p. 199): noun; distinguished bravery; extraordinary ability
- staunch (p. 210): adjective; steadfast in loyalty or principle

Book 9 (p. 211-229) – In the One-Eyed Giant’s Cave

1. What do Odysseus and his crew do on the island of the Cicones? This stop is disastrous for many of Odysseus’ crew – why?
2. What effect does the lotus have on anyone who tastes it?
3. What does Odysseus take with him when they go to investigate the Cyclops’ cave? Why is it unique?
4. When Odysseus and his men discover the cave the men want to take some the Cyclops’ food and leave immediately. Odysseus, however, doesn’t want to leave right away – why?
5. What does the Cyclops do to Odysseus’ men once he discovers them in his cave?
6. Why doesn’t Odysseus just kill the Cyclops?
7. How does Odysseus trick the Cyclops with his name?

8. How are Odysseus and his men able to escape the Cyclops' cave?
 9. What boastful act does Odysseus do which sets up his suffering later?
- SA: Odysseus leads his men through several difficult experiences in book 9. Is Odysseus an effective leader in these episodes? Why or why not?

Book 9 Vocabulary

- mutinous (p. 213): adjective; rebellious; being in a state of concerted revolt
- unscathed (p. 214): adjective; wholly unharmed; not injured
- ruddy (p. 217): adjective; having a healthy reddish color
- brandish (p. 221): verb; to shake or wave (as a weapon) menacingly; to exhibit in an aggressive manner

Book 10 (p. 230-248) – The Bewitching Queen of Aeaea

1. How long does Odysseus stay with Aeolus? What does Aeolus give Odysseus when he leaves?
2. At the beginning of book 10 Odysseus almost reaches home, but his crew does something foolish that prevents this from happening – what?
3. What happens on the islands of Laestrygonians?
4. What happens to Odysseus' crew when they visit Circe?
5. Who protects Odysseus from Circe's witchery? How? What does this protector tell Odysseus he must do once he reaches Circe?
6. Once Odysseus has overcome Circe, how does Circe treat Odysseus and his crew?
7. How long do Odysseus and his crew stay with Circe?
8. When Odysseus reminds Circe of her promise to help them get home safely, what does she tell him he must do first? Why?
9. What tragedy takes place just before they leave?

SA: Compare Circe, Nausicaa, and Calypso. How are they alike or different in their attitudes toward Odysseus? Which does Odysseus prefer and why?

Book 10 Vocabulary

- sumptuous (p. 234): adjective; extremely costly, rich, luxurious, or magnificent
- teem [teeming] (p. 241): verb; to become filled to overflowing
- desolate (p. 246): adjective; devoid of inhabitants and visitors; joyless; sorrowful
- listless (p. 246): adjective; characterized by lack of interest, energy, or spirit

Book 11 (p. 249-270) – The Kingdom of the Dead

1. What happens when Odysseus sacrifices the sheep?
2. Who is the first ghost that visits Odysseus? What does he want?
3. What advice does Tiresias give Odysseus?
4. What information does Odysseus learn from his mother?
5. When Odysseus feels his story has been long enough, about whom does Alcinous want to hear?
6. What happened to Agamemnon?
7. What does Achilles say about death (p. 265)?
8. Next Odysseus visits those who are tormented in the afterlife. Describe the punishment of Tantalus and Sisyphus.

Book 11 Vocabulary

- shambling (p. 251): adjective; characterized by slow awkward movement
- wraith (p. 256): noun; ghost, shadow
- magnanimous (p. 258): adjective; showing a courageous spirit, generosity of mind

- ignominious (p. 262): adjective; characterized by disgrace or shame; dishonorable

Book 12 (p. 271-285) – The Cattle of the Sun

1. What is the first thing Odysseus and his men do when they land back on Circe's island?
2. Circe gives Odysseus several warnings before he leaves. What does she warn him about the Sirens? Scylla and Charybdis? The Sungod's cattle?
3. How does Odysseus' crew ensure Odysseus doesn't fall victim to the sirens?
4. What does Odysseus make his crew swear to before they land?
5. How long are Odysseus and his crew stuck on the island?
6. What fatal mistake does the crew make? Why?
7. How does Zeus punish Odysseus' crew?
8. After nine days of drifting, where does Odysseus land?

SA: Who is responsible for the crew members' deaths – Odysseus or the crew? Using *specific examples* from any book, make a compelling argument for who is to blame.

Book 12 Vocabulary

- transfix (p. 272): verb; to hold motionless (as if by piercing)
- loll [lolling] (p. 273): verb; to act in a lazy manner; lounge
- ravishing (p. 277): adjective; unusually attractive, pleasing, or striking
- scud (p. 283): verb; to move or run swiftly especially as if driven forward

Book 13 (p. 286-300) – Ithaca at Last

1. What additional gifts does Alcinous give Odysseus?
2. Poseidon is angry when he discovers Odysseus has sailed for home. What does Poseidon do in order to keep his "respect"?
3. How does Alcinous change after Poseidon's punishment?
4. Who appears to Odysseus when he lands in Ithaca? What does this person tell Odysseus?
5. Athena admits to Odysseus that she didn't help him earlier – why?
6. What plan do Athena and Odysseus create for him to return to the city?
7. What disguise does Athena give Odysseus?

Book 13 Vocabulary

- ardent (p. 287): adjective; characterized by warmth of feeling typically expressed in eager zealous support or activity
- oblivion (p. 289): noun; the condition or state of being forgotten or unknown
- tactician (p. 296): noun; someone skilled in tactics, craft
- recess (p. 298): noun; a hidden, secret, or secluded place or part

Book 14 (p. 301-318) – The Loyal Swineherd

1. Who is Eumeus?
2. Why does Eumeus not recognize Odysseus?
3. How does Odysseus react to the "snarling dogs"?
4. What kind of man is Eumeus? Accurately describe his character and give support for your choices.
5. What things does Eumeus say the suitors have done?
6. What does Eumeus think has happened to Odysseus?
7. What in Odysseus' fabricated story to Eumeus seems to incorporate or echo the events that Odysseus really did experience?
8. Eumeus is reluctant to trust Odysseus because he was fooled before. How? By whom?

- On page 316-317 Odysseus “tests” Eumeus – how? How does Eumeus respond to the “test”?

Book 14 Vocabulary

- maul [mauling] (p. 302): verb; to beat, bruise, or handle roughly
- gallant (p. 307): adjective; splendid; spirited; brave; nobly chivalrous and often self-sacrificing
- paltry (p. 308): adjective; inferior; trashy; meager
- renowned (p. 309): adjective; celebrated, famous

Book 15 (p. 319-337) – The Prince Sets Sail for Home

- When the book begins, where is Telemachus?
- How does Athena get Telemachus to head for home?
- What gift does Menelaus give Telemachus?
- What good omen appears when they make the parting sacrifice? How does Helen interpret the omen?
- Who asks to go with Telemachus? Why?
- What does Odysseus tell Eumeus he plans on doing? Why does Eumeus think this is a bad idea?
- What news does Eumeus give Odysseus of his father Laertes?
- What “sign” does Telemachus receive that he is destined to rule Ithaca?

Book 15 Vocabulary

- brazen (p. 319): adjective; marked by contemptuous boldness
- irreproachable (p. 320): adjective; blameless
- staid (p. 323): adjective; marked by calmness and self-restraint
- bauble (p. 332): noun; a trinket; something of little appeal

Book 16 (p. 338-353) – Father and Son

- What does Telemachus ask Eumeus upon his return to Ithaca?
- What does Telemachus send Eumeus to do?
- What does Athena do to Odysseus?
- When Telemachus sees Odysseus (no longer disguised), who does Telemachus think he is?
- How many suitors are at the palace?
- What plan does Odysseus tell Telemachus?
- How do the suitors feel about the news of Telemachus’ return? For what two reasons must the suitors dispose of Telemachus?
- Why does Penelope go out to see the suitors?

SA: Why does Odysseus choose to keep his identity and return to Ithaca a secret from everyone except Telemachus? Why does he not tell Eumeus or Penelope about his return? Do you think this is a wise decision?

Book 16 Vocabulary

- poise (p. 346): noun; easy self-possessed assurance of manner
- seasoned (p. 347): adjective; fit by experience
- pall (p. 347): noun; a feeling of gloom
- harangue [harangued] (p. 349): verb; to make speech (often critical or ranting) to the public

Book 17 (p. 354-374) – Stranger at the Gates

- Who first sees Telemachus in town? What is her reaction?
- After Telemachus and Penelope are reunited, what does Telemachus tell Penelope to do?

3. How does Telemachus treat his mother?
4. What prophecy does Theoclymenus make?
5. Who insults Odysseus and Eumeus? What does he say?
6. Who recognizes Odysseus first? What is touching about this encounter?
7. What does Athena suggest Odysseus do to “tell the innocent from the guilty”?
8. Who attacks Odysseus? What does this man do?
9. Why does Penelope want to see the beggar?

Book 17 Vocabulary

- insolent (p. 357): adjective; insultingly arrogant in speech or conduct
- craven (p. 358): adjective; lacking the least bit of courage
- scruples (p. 367): noun; ethics or principles that inhibit action
- debauch [debauched] (p. 371): verb; to lead away from virtue or excellence, to corrupt

Book 18 (p. 375-389) – The Beggar-King of Ithaca

1. Who is Arnaeus? What does he do to Odysseus?
2. How does Odysseus defeat Arnaeus?
3. How do the suitors show their cruelty at the beginning of the book?
4. Odysseus warns one of the suitors that he will soon die. Who? What does Odysseus say?
5. What does Penelope chastise Telemachus for?
6. Penelope recounts Odysseus’ parting words to her. What did Odysseus tell her just before he left?
7. What two things are revealed about Melantho?
8. What action accompanies Eurymachus’ verbal abuse of Odysseus? What is the result?

Book 18 Vocabulary

- notorious (p. 375): adjective; widely and unfavorably known
- wily (p. 376): adjective; crafty, sly
- rogue (p. 376): adjective; being isolated, aberrant, dangerous, or uncontrollable
- pernicious (p. 381): adjective; highly injurious or destructive; deadly

Book 19 (p. 390-409) – Penelope and Her Guest

1. Whom do both Penelope and Odysseus lash out at? Why?
2. In Penelope’s conversation with Odysseus, what tricks does she reveal that she has used to delay her remarriage?
3. What news does Odysseus (in disguise) tell Penelope about Odysseus?
4. What does Penelope ask Eurycleia to do?
5. How does Eurycleia recognize Odysseus?
6. What is Penelope’s dream? How does Odysseus interpret it? Why can’t Penelope accept that interpretation?
7. How has Penelope decided to pick her next husband?

SA: Critics have long debated whether or not Penelope secretly recognizes her husband in this book. What do you think? Use specific examples and lines from the book to support your answer.

Book 19 Vocabulary

- shirk [shirks] (p. 391): verb; to avoid performing an obligation
- raucous (p. 392): adjective; loud and disorderly
- douse [doused] (p. 394): verb; to throw a liquid on, to drench
- deft (p. 395): adjective; skillful

Book 20 (p. 410-423) – Portents Gather

1. Why does Odysseus have trouble sleeping? Who reassures him and what does he/she say?
2. What omen does Zeus send?
3. Who greets Odysseus and treats him kindly?
4. What suitor insults the beggar (Odysseus), and what does the suitor do?
5. While the suitors are plotting Telemachus' death, they see an omen. What is it, and what does it mean?
6. What does Athena cause to happen to the suitors? Who warns that this is evidence that evil will come to the suitors?

Book 20 Vocabulary

- shameless (p. 411): adjective; lacking sense of shame, audacious
- avenge (p. 411): verb; to take vengeance; avenger (noun): a person who exacts vengeance
- sardonic (p. 420): adjective; bitter or scornful mocking
- congenial (p. 421): adjective; suitable or pleasing in nature or character

Book 21 (p. 424-438) – Odysseus Strings His Bow

1. What does Penelope take out of Odysseus' vault?
2. From whom and for what reason did Odysseus receive the bow?
3. Why does Telemachus not string the bow?
4. When the suitors have difficulty with the bow, what do they do to try to make it easier to string?
5. To whom does Odysseus reveal himself while the suitors are trying to string the bow, and what actions are each directed to take?
6. What does Odysseus do at the end of the book?

Book 21 Vocabulary

- commandeer [commandeered] (p. 425): verb; to take possession of forcibly
- genteel (p. 429): adjective; having an aristocratic (high class) quality or flavor
- reveler (p. 434): noun; someone who parties, a merrymaker
- blithe (p. 436): adjective; happy and lighthearted

Book 22 (p. 439-454) – Slaughter in the Hall

1. In the battle in the great hall, who is killed first? How? Why?
 2. What does Eurymachus do to try to save himself? What does he promise to Odysseus?
 3. How does Melanthius help the suitors? Who stops him?
 4. How does Athena spur Odysseus on? How does she prove that Odysseus and Telemachus can fend for themselves?
 5. What reason does the bard give to keep himself alive?
 6. Who does Odysseus spare?
 7. What must the disloyal women servants do? What happens to them afterwards?
- SA: Was Odysseus' treatment of the disloyal maids and suitors just? Why or why not?

Book 22 Vocabulary

- blanch [blanched] (p. 440): verb; to take the color out of; to make pale
- whet [whetted] (p. 447): verb; to sharpen by rubbing on or with something
- wry (p. 449): adjective; cleverly and often ironically or grimly humorous
- fumigate (p. 454): verb; to apply smoke, vapor, or gas for the purpose of disinfecting

Book 23 (p. 455-467) – The Great Rooted Bed

1. How does Penelope react when she finally sees Odysseus?

2. What does Telemachus criticize Penelope for?
3. How does Penelope say she and Odysseus will know each other?
4. What do Telemachus and Odysseus decide to do to keep the townspeople unaware of what has happened?
5. How does Penelope test Odysseus to see if he is really Odysseus? How does Odysseus pass this test?
6. What favor does Athena grant Odysseus and Penelope? Why? How does she help Odysseus and Telemachus escape?

Book 23 Vocabulary

- lilting (p. 460): adjective; rhythmical swing or cadence *or* cheerful
- infernal (p. 465): adjective; relating to hell or the land of the dead
- molder [moldering] (p. 466): verb; to crumble into particles

Book 24 (p. 468-485) – Peace

1. What is the setting for the beginning of this book? What amazes Agamemnon and the other men already with him?
2. What is Agamemnon's reaction to Odysseus' execution of the suitors? To Penelope's waiting for her husband? How does he contrast his death to that of the others?
3. How does Odysseus prove to Laertes that he is his son? How does Athena change the older man after his bath?
4. What is happening back at Odysseus' home? Of what does Medon warn them? Of what does Halitherses remind them? What is the townspeople's reaction?
5. What happens among the gods regarding the events in Ithaca?
6. What must Odysseus and Telemachus do next?
7. Who finally brings peace to Ithaca? How?

SA: By the end of book 23, Odysseus has beaten the suitors, won back his kingdom, and been reunited with his family. So, what's the point of book 24? Do you think it's necessary? Why or why not?

Book 24 Vocabulary

- unseemly (p. 475): adjective; not according with established standards of good form or taste
- mull [mulling] (p. 475): verb; to consider at length, to ponder
- squalid (p. 476): adjective; marked by filthiness and degradation from neglect or poverty
- droves (p. 482): noun; a large number, a crowd