

**AS and A LEVEL**  
*Set Text Guide*

# CLASSICAL GREEK

H044, H444

For first teaching in 2016

**Set Text Guide**

*Odyssey 10*

Version 1



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# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

## Homer

Homer is one of the most famous and influential authors in the western tradition, but also one of the most problematic. The earliest biographies of Homer were written in the sixth century BC, when he was already famous, but even these do not contain any reliable information about his life. Few facts about the author are undisputed; whilst both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are published under his name, there is serious disagreement over whether he was the author of both epics, and even whether each epic individually is the work of a single hand.



Homer

There is a general agreement that the *Odyssey* was composed somewhat later than the *Iliad* in eighth or seventh century BC, and that the poet was Ionian. It was composed in an era of orally recited poetry, in a society where the travelling bard was a well-known character. The bard's tales were drawn from a stock of common themes and characters, based in a mythical past, and possibly preserving some historical echoes of the bronze age of four to five hundred years earlier. Out of this tradition, possibly centuries later, the two poems of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* became fixed written texts and the foundation of the Greek literary tradition and educational system. Homer's was only poetry thought worthy by Alexander the Great to be taken on campaign, and by the Hellenistic period there were even temples dedicated to Homer – for example, by the Egyptian Hellenistic king Ptolemy Philopator.

## Epic

The most obvious defining feature of epic as an ancient genre is its poetic form: all ancient Greek and Roman epic is written in dactylic hexameter, and is notable for its length. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* consist of twenty-four books each, and, unlike other long works of antiquity (notably historical writing) keep a clear focus on a connected chain of events throughout the whole work – in the case of the *Iliad*, the wrath of Achilles, and in the *Odyssey*, Odysseus' desire to return home. In theme, epic poetry deals with great heroic deeds, taken from larger narratives of Greek heroic mythology.

Both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* assume a familiarity with the characters and plot-lines.

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are the only early epics we have; all other epics we possess from the ancient world are to a large degree written in imitation of these Homeric originals. We do know from Aristotle, however, that the two works were seen as remarkable because of the variety of ways with which they presented the stories – including the four books in the *Odyssey* which are a tale-within-a-tale, told by Odysseus himself, from which our set text is drawn.

## The Odyssey

The *Odyssey* is in some sense a sequel to the *Iliad*. The earlier work tells of the dissension and strife amongst the Greeks in the tenth year of the Trojan War, as well as their battles with the Trojans, although it does not actually describe Troy's final defeat. The *Iliad* sets the stage for the *Odyssey*, not only because its events form the back-story, but the themes and settings of the *Odyssey* form a contrast and counterpoint to those of the *Iliad*. Whereas the *Iliad* is set in a society at war, the *Odyssey* deals with peace-time; the *Iliad* is all heroic saga, whereas the *Odyssey* has a great deal which comes from sailors' fables and folk-tale elements.

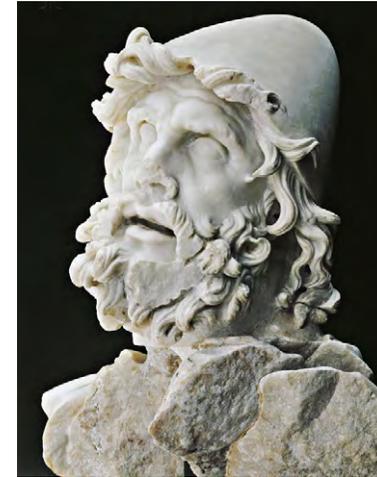


Trojan War

The *Odyssey* begins ten years after the fall of Troy and focuses on Odysseus, one of the Greek heroes from the Trojan War, famed for his cunning even more than his prowess in battle, and his journey homewards to Ithaca after the Trojan War. The prologue tells us that although Odysseus longs for home, he has suffered numerous disasters, lost all his companions, and is languishing on the island Ogygia with the nymph Calypso. The first four books are mostly about Odysseus' son, Telemachus, who was born just as Odysseus was setting off. Now about twenty, he goes off to find news of his father. The situation on Ithaca is unhappy: Penelope, Odysseus' faithful wife, is surrounded by arrogant suitors who want her to forsake Odysseus and marry one of them – meanwhile they have taken over Odysseus' house and are living off his wealth.

At the same time, Athena, Odysseus' divine champion, successfully persuades Zeus to allow Odysseus' return. He is released by Calypso, but Poseidon shipwrecks Odysseus on the island of Scheria, where he is entertained at King Alcinous' court. While there, he recounts the story of his journey from Troy to Ogygia, which makes up the bulk of the fantastic, weird and wonderful tales of the *Odyssey*. This section of *Odyssey* 10, is where Circe's story fits amongst stories of giants, Cyclopes, Sirens and a descent to the underworld.

The last part of the epic sees the hero's return home. Initially disguising himself as a beggar on his arrival in Ithaca, he discovers the situation of the arrogant suitors and the plight of the faithful Penelope. Telemachus has returned from his travels, and in league with him, Odysseus reveals himself, kills the suitors and is reunited with his wife – at last.



Head of Odysseus



Odysseus and Calypso

## Talking Points

Talking Point	Explanation and Teacher Notes
<p><b><i>If the <i>Odyssey</i> were being composed as a film in the modern world, to what genre would it belong?</i></b></p>	<p>This is a good open-ended question for class discussion, with any variety of answers possible. The primary function of this discussion is to get students to think seriously about what kind of hero Odysseus is, and how the expectations of epic map onto and differ from modern action films, spy films, adventure films, comic-book worlds or whatever other genres students try to connect to the <i>Odyssey</i>.</p> <p>The importance of the discussion also lies in understanding generic expectations – that as soon as you place a work in a recognisable genre, the audience has a set of expectations which can be fulfilled or subverted.</p> <p>Students might be tempted to talk about the genre of ‘epic’ films (either set in the Classical world, especially in the era of the sword-and-sandal epics, in both Italian and English – e.g. <i>Ben Hur</i> – or other ‘epics’: e.g. <i>Braveheart</i> etc.). What makes them ‘epic’, and what makes them successful? Both Wolfgang Petersen’s <i>Troy</i> and Martin Stone’s <i>Alexander</i> were notorious critical flops; but <i>Ben Hur</i>, <i>Gladiator</i>, and <i>Lawrence of Arabia</i> seem to stand the test of time. Why are there no critically successful modern film adaptations of any of the major epics of the ancient world? For further reading, see the Winkler referred to later in this guide.</p>
<p><b><i>Sometimes the Homeric epics are referred to as ‘the Bible of the Greeks’. What do you think this might mean? How might they be similar or different to the way the bible is viewed in modern western culture?</i></b></p>	<p>This should be able to provoke some interesting discussion about authoritative texts and how we view them. The comparison has been discussed by a number of authors; the common elements discussed are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a fundamental part of education and literate culture (though this is changing for the Bible in western culture).</li> <li>• They can be understood as divine revelations – but this is disputed and problematic (both the bible and Homer have their public detractors).</li> <li>• Source of many recognised proverbs and sayings.</li> </ul> <p>Differences include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The idea that Homer was a guide to living or morals was more problematic (though in some interpretations it was viewed as such).</li> <li>• The use of the text for religious worship doesn’t seem to have been part of the history of Homer.</li> </ul> <p>Particularly bright students might be interested in the later philosophical, neo-Platonic, and Christian reception of the Homeric epics; a suggested book (Lamberton, <i>Homer the Theologian</i>) for further reading is in the back of this guide.</p>

# CONTEXT

## The Homeric Question

It was in the Hellenistic period that the first recorded debates about authorship of the Homeric poems occurred – the ‘separatists’, Xeno and Hellanicus, claimed that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were by different poets. Certainly there are differences in both style and content between the two poems, but the question is still undecided. In the nineteenth century, even the notion that the each poem on its own was the work of a single author was disputed due to internal inconsistencies. The so-called ‘analysts’ argued that the poems were the product of stitching together various earlier sources (written and/or oral) by a more or less talented redactor or editor.

In the early twentieth century, the studies of the American scholar Milman Parry into living traditions of oral poetry gave another possible way of explaining the inconsistencies and discrepancies: as results of the process of oral composition. Parry compared the epics to the performances of poetry he had witnessed from illiterate Serbo-Croatian singers; they did not have a whole performance memorised, but rather had to hand a store of stories and scenarios around which they could frame their compositions. They also had a treasury of stock phrases and elements which formed lines or half-lines and could be fitted together as circumstance demanded. In Homer, repeated half-lines, epithets, and stock descriptions of dawns, arrivals, departures, and introductions to speeches all show these characteristics.

## Folklore and Fairytale

Much of the *Odyssey* is in a markedly different world to that of the *Iliad*: instead of fierce battles and brave warriors, we are in the realm of giants, witches, magic and sorcery. These stories seem to have different cultural sources than other epic: the ancient traditions of fairytale, fantastical tales of sailors, and even possibly the rituals of northern shamanistic magic.

The character of Circe has two archetypes as forerunners: the wicked witch, who transforms humans into beasts, and is overcome by the folklore hero; but also the beautiful temptress who seduces men, and then undoes them with magic.

The magical and folklore elements, however, are often underplayed: when the sailors go to Circe’s house for the first time, they are met by tame bears and lions; these are possibly from a branch of the story where they are metamorphosed humans,

but the *Odyssey* refrains from labelling them as such. Real magic is only present in the sparse lines in which Circe turns the men into pigs, and then back again. The action is instead transferred from the realm of magic to the heroic register of epic: Odysseus is not the fairytale hero who beats the sorceress with stronger magic, but the resourceful epic hero, and the climax of their conflict is a very heroic leap with a drawn sword.

## The Circe Narrative

The story of Circe and Odysseus was clearly part of the epic tradition before the composition of the *Odyssey*; in Hesiod’s *Theogony* (1011-1014) also written in the 8th-7th century BC, several children are listed as the offspring of Circe and Odysseus. She is the daughter of Helios and the Oceanid Perse, and the sister of Aietes, the father of Medea (see *Odyssey* 10:135-9, Hesiod *Theogony* 956-7). Outside of the *Odyssey*, another story-cycle, the Telegony, recounts the adventures of Telegonus, one of the children of Odysseus and Circe: in this version, Telegonus unknowingly kills his father and marries Penelope, and Circe ends up marrying Telemachus.

Her role within the *Odyssey* extends beyond her appearance in Book 4; she gives Odysseus advice on how to consult Tiresias in the land of the dead, and on the hero’s return, directs him how to avoid further dangers. Like Tiresias, she functions as a seer (to whom Odysseus compares her at 12.267-8), and as a literary device, her advice foreshadows for the audience the events to come. She also forms a pair with Calypso; both are from outside the human world; both represent a threat or a delay to his nostos; both are exceedingly beautiful and take him as their lover, wishing him to be their husband; and both eventually assist him on his homeward journey. It is only Circe, however, of all the characters in the *Odyssey*, who is described as possessing Odysseus’ own distinctive trait of πολυμηχανία (resourcefulness), suggesting she is his match.

## Talking Points

Talking Point	Explanation and Teacher Notes
<p><b><i>How does an evolving understanding of the sources of the <i>Odyssey</i> and its method of composition change our understanding of it?</i></b></p>	<p>Much of the nineteenth century (and indeed Alexandrian) scholarship was focused on the discrepancies in the Homeric text – repetitions in awkward places; slight inconsistencies in the narrative (such as the role of the wand and drugs in the Circe episode), or unseemly narrative loose ends. Much work on both side of the analyst/unitarian divide was concerned with preserving Homer as a great poet or the epics as great literature. (It might amuse students to know the nineteenth century <i>bon mot</i> that analysts believed the <i>Odyssey</i> was not by Homer, but another poet of the same name.)</p> <p>Do these things matter? If we could pare down the text to an ‘original’ copy as written down in the first manuscript copy (whether that be eighth-century Ionia or sixth century Athens), would that necessarily be ‘better’ than the text as it stands, and on what grounds? There are, of course, no hard and fast answers to these questions, but getting students to recognise their own (often unexpressed) views and prejudices about authenticity, originality and authorship is valuable.</p> <p>For an extra academic challenge, students can be set Roland Barthes’ ‘The Death of the Author’ (see resources list). Although not related to Classics per se, literary theory has been increasingly influential in Classics at tertiary level, and introducing students to it in the sixth form is good advanced preparation for university.</p>
<p><b><i>Penelope has been lauded as one of the great heroines of ancient literature because she successfully fends off troublesome suitors; Odysseus spends one year with Circe and seven years living with Calypso; how much of a hero is he?</i></b></p>	<p>Classicists often bridle at what they see as anachronistic attempts to foist contemporary conceptions of sexuality and gender (or ‘political correctness’) onto ancient texts. The ethical questionability of the sexual mores of the Homeric epics has a long history, however: most famously, Plato in the Republic bans the poets because of the louche behaviour depicted and tacitly condoned. Initial responses might start with simplistic claims that it’s ‘just a story’, but it’s worth probing further – it’s a story in which we are meant to sympathise and even identify with the protagonist.</p> <p>Odysseus could be compared to famous anti-heroes, where the audience is encouraged to empathise with clear villains (such as some of the classics Ealing comedies – <i>The Lavender Hill Mob</i>, or <i>Kind Hearts</i> and <i>Coronets</i>, or more famous examples like <i>The Italian Job</i> or <i>Ocean’s Eleven</i>).</p>

# THE TEXT

## Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey*

The prescribed section from *Odyssey* 10 is part of a cohesive narrative that stretches through books 9-12 of the epic: all form a first-person narration by Odysseus himself of his several years of wandering after the fall of Troy. The epic itself in fact only covers forty days, but the device of Odysseus' own epic-within-an-epic allows for the events of several years to intervene in this relatively restricted timeframe.

The framing for the travel narrative is the court of Alcinous, leader of godlike Phaeacians, who, at the conclusion of his tale, agree to send him back at last to Ithaca. The land of the Phaeacians, Scheria, lies half-way between the discernibly real, human world of Ithaca (the beginning and second half of the *Odyssey*), and the realm of his travels. His adventures take place in a mythical geography, peopled by fabulous monsters, where the values of Greek civilisation do not exist. The technique of framing these adventures in a first-person narrative, told on neutral territory, allows for these two quite different worlds to form a unity in the overall structure of the *Odyssey*.

In Book 10 itself, the sailors encounter Aeolus, keeper of the winds; he gives to Odysseus a bag containing the wind necessary for their return home. Odysseus' men, however, thinking it contains gold, tear it open, causing an overwhelming storm to be unleashed, which blows them back to Aeolus, who refuses to help them further. Disheartened, they manage to row to Laestrygonia, land of giants, who kill and eat yet more of Odysseus' men. The remainder find their way to Circe's island, Aea, and at this point the set text begins.

## *Odyssey* 10, lines 144–399

The text opens with Odysseus at dawn scaling the heights of a hill, and seeing smoke rising from the midst of dense woods; this will prove to be the dwelling of Circe (as the first-person narrator, Odysseus himself, tells us). However, before exploring further, Odysseus kills a deer on his way back to his companions, and they feast and discuss their plan; the scene is filled with tears and foreboding, as the crew fear the same hostile reception they received at the hands of the Laestrygonians and earlier, the Cyclopes.

Odysseus splits the crew into two parties, and by lot, the other, led by Eurylochus, goes in search of the source of the smoke. They find Circe's house in a clearing, surrounded by tame lions and wolves. Circe herself is singing and weaving, and invites the men in for refreshment – all except Eurylochus, who senses a trap. Drinking the wine she offers them, the men are drugged, and tapped by her wand, are turned into pigs and herded into Circe's pigsty. Eurylochus escapes with the news to Odysseus, and advises flight, but Odysseus returns to the scene on his own.

On his way, he is met by Hermes, who gives him advice on how to deal with Circe and arms him with her drugs' antidote, the plant *moly*. Odysseus thus to her surprise is not affected by her drugs and instead threatens her with his sword, and resists her seduction; at least until she swears she will not harm him. After mounting her bed, Odysseus manages to obtain the release of his men, and Circe returns them to human form.

## Themes and Motifs

### Iliadic Parallels

Our section sees some interesting intertextual allusions to the *Iliad*; some might simply betray the common stock of metrical building-blocks handed down in oral tradition, but others are cleverly worked to give an extra dimension to their context. For instance, at 162-5, Odysseus' killing of the stag is described in terms used in the *Iliad* for the death of heroes in battle: 162 = Il. 16.346; 163 = Il. 16.469, 164 ≈ Il. 6.65. A little later, the decision of how to split the party in two (203-9) is given in terms of decisions on a much grander scale are taken by lot: e.g. 205 ≈ Il. 3.316; 207a ≈ Il. 7.182a. Odysseus preparing himself to go to Circe's house at 261-2 is given in the style of *Iliadic* arming scenes.

On a larger scale, Odysseus venturing to the Circe's house is both in structure and in many details based around Priam's journey to Achilles in *Iliad* 24. Both are met by Hermes in the form of a young man (266-9); at 373 onwards, we are reminded of Priam's refusal to sit down, concerned with the fate of his son's body (Il. 24.552-3); and Odysseus' request for his men to be released is given with the same term (λύω), properly used of the release of corpse, as that used by Priam (Il. 24.553-8).

## Odysseus and his men

We see in this episode part of a continuing decline in the relationship between Odysseus and his men; already Odysseus has been reduced from leading a fleet to a single ship, and here we see Eurylochus beginning to develop as a character of resistance to Odysseus leadership (see 264 and following, and, after our selection, 428-30). Eventually, of course, Odysseus returns home alone.

Much of the decisive action is undertaken by Odysseus leaving the group and acting on his own, such as the hunting of the deer, and the decisive scene with Circe. The distance between Odysseus and his men is clear here: we see 230 (Circe inviting the men in) repeated at 312 where Odysseus goes in, to highlight the following differences in approach and outcome between Odysseus and his men: remember it is Odysseus speaking and deliberately repeating the same line.

## Stylistic Features

### Dactylic Hexameter:

Integral to all ancient epic is its poetic form: the dactylic hexameter. The aural effect of the *Odyssey* is entirely dependent on this metrical form, with its combination of regularity and scope for a great deal of variation. Familiarity with how the hexameter works is not only valuable to get a sense of how the poetry sounded to its ancient audience, but also to pick up on choices and variations made by the poet. For instance, the commentator Stanford picks up on the odd rhythm of 224, with the six feet alternating dactyls and spondees.

### Narrative perspective:

The composition of the whole of Book 10, as a story-within-a-story, is a pervasive feature, and the framing of the narrative is subtly introduced at various points; for instance, lines 210-243 are clearly informed by what Odysseus only later learns, and it is filled in here to foreshadow the forthcoming narrative. Interestingly (and showing the complexity of how the different levels of narration function) in line 250, we are presented with Eurylochus' version of events, in which he assumes his comrades have been killed (ἀίστῶθησαν), or at least have vanished forever – although we as an audience already know that his interpretation is incorrect.

### Poetic features:

Of course, the most consistently notable features of the text are the commonly recurring devices regularly seen in ancient poetry which make individual lines memorable and striking; A few sparse examples: we see deliberate play with the sound of the line at 221 and following, with both assonance and a general euphony, echoing the beauty of Circe and her song; in line 251-2, the obvious asyndeton gives character to the speech, suggesting Eurylochus' agitation; and the anaphora in scene where Circe's attendants prepare for the meal (at 352, 354, 356, 358), gives a leisurely, drawn-out pace to proceedings which builds tension before the climactic moment of the release of Odysseus' men.

## Glossary of Key Terms

**alliteration:** repetition of consonants.

**allusion:** reference in one work of literature to another work, by paraphrase, echoing of theme or style, or other indirect means.

**analysts:** scholars who interpret the Homeric text as the accumulation of successive strata of text, joined together by a redactor, but not ultimately the work of 'an' author.

**anaphora:** repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses.

**asyndeton:** connection of two co-ordinate clauses without a connective particle (and or but or similar).

**dactylic hexameter:** the poetic metre of epic poetry.

**epithet:** a descriptive word attached as a defining formula to a noun.

**euphony:** any combination of sounds having a pleasing aural effect.

**intertextuality:** A broader term than allusion; the shaping of a text's meaning by its engagement with another text.

**oralists:** Scholars who interpret the Homeric text as the accretion of an oral tradition of poetry.

## Talking Points

Talking Point	Explanation and Teacher Notes
<p><b><i>How important is it to read the <i>Odyssey</i> in the original language, rather than in translation?</i></b></p>	<p>Translation of poetry is a notoriously difficult task; students might be introduced to some of Chapman's famous translation (and Keat's even more famous poem, 'On first looking into Chapman's Homer') and asked whether they think it's a good translation or not. Whilst a prose translation might be able to convey the plot of the <i>Odyssey</i>, it will of course fail to grasp any of the stylistic features of the text. It might be worth discussing which of the features mentioned in the key terms survive translation and which don't: what happens to intertextuality, or the formal conventions of epic (like stock epithets), when one is writing to a vastly different audience unused to such traditions?</p> <p>This discussion serves as good grounding to make sure the students know the kind of feature they are looking for when writing commentary questions. It also links well to the Poetry Translation exercise featured later in this guide.</p>
<p><b><i>What difference does the knowledge that all of Book 10 is a tale told by Odysseus make to our understanding of the text?</i></b></p>	<p>In addition to the several elements mentioned already, students might find indications of Odysseus' character in, for example, the hunt scene near the beginning of our text, where Odysseus dwells on his prowess as a hunter and the size of his kill. Later, the description of his relations with Circe is modest (348-59); earlier at 7:255-60, he glossed over his sexual relationship to Calypso entirely; possibly he is keeping in mind his Phaeacian audience which included women (Arete); possibly he is also trying to downplay his infidelity to the Phaeacians who he hopes will pity him enough to send him home. Irene De Jong's narratological commentary is a particularly useful resource for those wishing to press these questions further (see further reading).</p>

# ACTIVITIES AND STUDENT TASKS

## Activities

### Vocabulary List for Odyssey 6

The Perseus Project

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0135:-book=10>

Click on 'vocab tool' in the right-hand column for a vocabulary list which gives the most frequent words used in Od. 6.

The Perseus text can be used on its own by students – especially helpful is the morphological analysis of individual words.

Particularly useful, however, is its option for creating a specific vocab list for Od. 10. Taking the top 50% of words used in the book will give a learnable list of words, many of which (especially at the top) won't need to be learnt. This is great as a tool, if learnt off by heart, to get students familiar with the vocabulary of the text so that they can prepare it themselves, and see the process of reading the text as reading – not just as memorising a translation by rote.

### In Our Time: The Odyssey

BBC

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p004y297>

Discussion of the Odyssey as a whole: Melvyn Bragg with Edith Hall, Oliver Taplin and Simon Goldhill.

### Ancient Images of Circe

Theoi.com

<http://www.theoi.com/Titan/Kirke.html>

Background on, literary references to, and (most interestingly) ancient vase images of Circe: what do ancient visual representations of Circe add to our understanding of the Odyssey?

### Odyssey 10 reconfigured

Rewrite the set text in a new format.

### Poetry in Translation

Stephen Spender Trust

[http://www.stephen-spender.org/spender\\_prize.html](http://www.stephen-spender.org/spender_prize.html)

Choose a short section of the set text to translate into English as English poetry.

The challenge is not merely to translate the Greek words or sentences, but to try to convey the tone, style, feel, and form of Greek poetry as English poetry.

### Research task

Research another part of the *Odyssey* with links to the set text.



## Student task sheets

Title of activity: <i>Odyssey</i> 10 reconfigured.	
<b>Introduction to the task</b>	<p>Much of the class-time for A Level Classical Greek will be spent on close textual analysis – either for language work, or on close reading of your set text. It is easy to lose sight of the big picture: the way the narrative fits together as a whole, with carefully structural unity and overarching design in each individual book of the <i>Odyssey</i>, as well as in the work as a whole. Retelling the story in a different medium helps set the individual episodes in their context and is a good revision technique to help prepare for essay questions which ask searching questions about the whole text.</p>
<b>The activity</b>	<p>Re-tell <i>Odyssey</i> 10 (either the whole book, or the set portion of it) in a different medium. This task can either be set as group-work or an individual assignment. Any format or medium is possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A film.</li> <li>• A comic strip (there are some good sites which can help here: e.g. <a href="https://www.bitstrips.com/create/comic/">https://www.bitstrips.com/create/comic/</a>).</li> <li>• A twitter conversation (#stopcryingEurylochus); some sites will allow you to generate it in a form that imitates twitter itself - e.g. <a href="http://simitator.com/generator/twitter/tweet">http://simitator.com/generator/twitter/tweet</a>, or <a href="http://www.lemmetweetthatforyou.com/">http://www.lemmetweetthatforyou.com/</a>.</li> </ul> <p>It may be useful to start the activity by coming up as a class with a timeline of key events in the text which must be included in the retelling.</p> <p>Its worthwhile stressing that the value of this exercise doesn't lie in the quality of the retelling produced: stick figure drawings will be no less useful than carefully produced and edited film versions. What is important is reading over the story, picking out the key components, and using the exercise as a creative tool to really get to know the text intimately.</p>

Title of activity: Dido's court case	
<b>Introduction to the task</b>	Often we view translation as a task of combining the right definitions with the right syntax and grammar to produce 'correct' translations of individual sentences. However, literature (especially poetry) is far more complex in the way it creates meaning: it plays with the audience's expectations of genre, of the combination of form and content; it uses all the effects of sound – rhythm, metre, alliteration, and rhyme, to produce particular effects. Successful translation of poetry requires thought about all of these aspects.
<b>The activity</b>	<p>Your task is to select a passage from the set text and create a poetic translation of it, with an explanation of the choices you have made in your translation. The translation may not be at all close to the original Greek – but as long as you have good reasons for your changes, it may well make it a better poetic translation. A good discussion of the principles underlying literary translation can be found on the website of the Stephen Spender prize (<a href="http://www.stephen-spender.org/poetry_translation_notes.html">http://www.stephen-spender.org/poetry_translation_notes.html</a>), along with some excellent examples of classical poems (including many from tragedy) turned into English poetry. In order to translate, you will need to consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form: how does one effectively translate hexameter into English? Using an English verse form (Blank verse? Free verse? Or spoken-word style?)</li> <li>• What balance can you strike between poetic form and dramatic realism?</li> <li>• Poetic effects: alliteration, assonance, and other aural effects – how are they rendered? Do you try to keep them, avoid them, or replace them with English equivalents, like rhyme or word-play?</li> <li>• Context: How do you cope with the political and social context of the drama, as well as the knowledge of the plot familiar to a Greek audience but not to a modern one? Do you replace them with modern referents, keep them as mysterious references, or gloss them with an explanation?</li> </ul>
<b>Extension activities/questions:</b>	The students can enter their poems into the Stephen Spender prize competition: <a href="http://www.stephen-spender.org/spender_prize.html">http://www.stephen-spender.org/spender_prize.html</a> . There are excellent opportunities for cross-curricular work with English or Modern Foreign Languages here – students can compare foreign translations of the <i>Antigone</i> , as well as English ones.

Title of activity: Exploring Virgil's techniques	
<b>Introduction to the task</b>	<p>The episode of Odysseus and Circe fits into the complex narrative of both Odysseus' tale-within-a-tale, and the <i>Odyssey</i> as a whole; the episode is illuminated by, and helps to illuminate, other parts of the work, and a fuller contextual understanding not only helps give a greater depth to the more searching essay-style answers required for the examination, but also provides some good research skills in preparation for tertiary education.</p> <p>The task is to research one of the characters below, and explain how he or she intersects with the content or themes of the set portion of <i>Odyssey</i> 10.</p>
<b>The activity</b>	<p>Select one of the options below, and either individually or in groups, research the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does it fit into the <i>Odyssey</i> as a whole?</li> <li>• How does it relate to the set text? This might be because of a repeated character, shared motifs, or because of thematic similarities (or contrasts).</li> <li>• How does it change, enrich, or challenge our interpretation of the set text?</li> </ul> <p>The research might be given as a presentation, in the form of a written essay, or in a poster format.</p> <p>OPTION 1: Calypso          OPTION 2: Penelope          OPTION 3: Eurylochus          OPTION 4: Nausicaa</p>
<b>Extension activities/questions:</b>	<p>For those students studying Latin as well, students might be given as extension work (especially for those looking to study Classics at tertiary level) the task of researching Circe in later Classical literature, and the idea of intertextuality might be introduced; a good background article for this task is suggested in the further reading section of this guide.</p>

# FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

## For teachers

Barthes, Roland (1967) 'The Death of the Author', Aspen 5-6.

A seminal work on literary theory and interpretation; a good starting point for these issues for the more advanced students; easily available in PDF form online.

De Jong, Irene (2001). *A Narratological Commentary on the Odyssey*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heubeck, Alfred, Hoekstra, Arie (1995). *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey: Books IX-XVI*. Oxford: Clarendon. ISBN-10: 0198721447; ISBN-13: 978-0198721444.

A very useful commentary, to be used in conjunction with Stanford (see student resources).

Lamberton, Robert (1989), *Homer the Theologian: Neoplatonist Allegorical Reading and the Growth of the Epic Tradition*. Berkeley: University of California Press. ISBN: 9780520066076.

For advanced students interesting in later reception of Homer's work in antiquity.

Saïd, Suzanne (2011), *Homer and the Odyssey*. Oxford: OUP. ISBN: 9780199542857

An excellent overview and introduction to all the major themes of the *Odyssey* and current trends in scholarship. Particularly useful are chapters 6 (on Odysseus' narrative of his travels to the Phaeacians) and 9 (women in the *Odyssey*, with an excellent section on Calypso and Circe).

Segal, Charles (1968). 'Circean Temptations: Homer, Virgil, Ovid'. TAPA 99: 419-442.

A great introduction to the characterisation of Circe, both in Homer and in later literature, especially Latin. A good piece of extension reading for those studying both Latin and Greek.

Winkler, Martin M. (2015), *Return to Troy: New Essays on the Hollywood Epic*. Leiden: Brill. ISBN: 9789004292765.

A collection of essays on the appearance of epic in modern film.

## For students

Camps, W. A. (1980). *An Introduction to Homer*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

A good, easily readable overview.

Graves, Robert, *Homer's Daughter* [originally published 1955] (Penguin Modern Classics, 2012)

A fictional reconstruction – very speculative! – about the origins of the *Odyssey*.

<http://www.aoidoi.org/articles/meter/intro.pdf>

An introduction to Greek metre, including dactylic hexameter.

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0135%3Abook%3D10%3Acard%3D1>

*Odyssey* 10 on Perseus, including hyperlinks for morphology and definitions, an English translation, and the 1886 notes of W. Walter Merry, James Riddell, and D. B. Monro.

Stanford, W.B. (2013), *The Odyssey of Homer*. Vol. 1: Book 1-12. London: Bloomsbury. ISBN: 9781853995026

The most useful commentary on the Greek text, giving both linguistic and interpretational help, as well an excellent introductory overview to both Homeric dialect and dactylic hexameter.



## Publisher information

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9781474266024 containing:

Thucydides, *Histories*, Book IV: 11–14, 21–23, 26–28

Thucydides, *Histories*, Book IV: 29–40

with Introduction, Notes and Commentary by John Taylor and Malcolm Campbell

Plato, *Apology*, 18a7 to 24b2

Plato, *Apology*, 35e–end

with Introduction by Steven Kennedy

and Notes and Commentary by Ben Gravell

Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, Book 1.II.12 to 1.II.38

with Introduction, Notes and Commentary by Charlie Paterson

Homer, *Odyssey X*: 144–399

Homer, *Odyssey IX*: 231–460

with Introduction by Frederica Daniele

and Notes and Commentary by Rob Colborn and Claire Webster

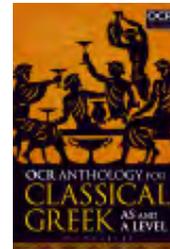
Sophocles, *Antigone*, lines 1–99, 497–525, 531–581, 891–928

Sophocles, *Antigone*, lines 162–222, 248–331, 441–496, 998–1032

with Introduction, Notes and Commentary by Matthew McCullagh

Aristophanes, *Acharnians*, 1–203, 366–392

with Introduction, Notes and Commentary by Sarah Harden





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