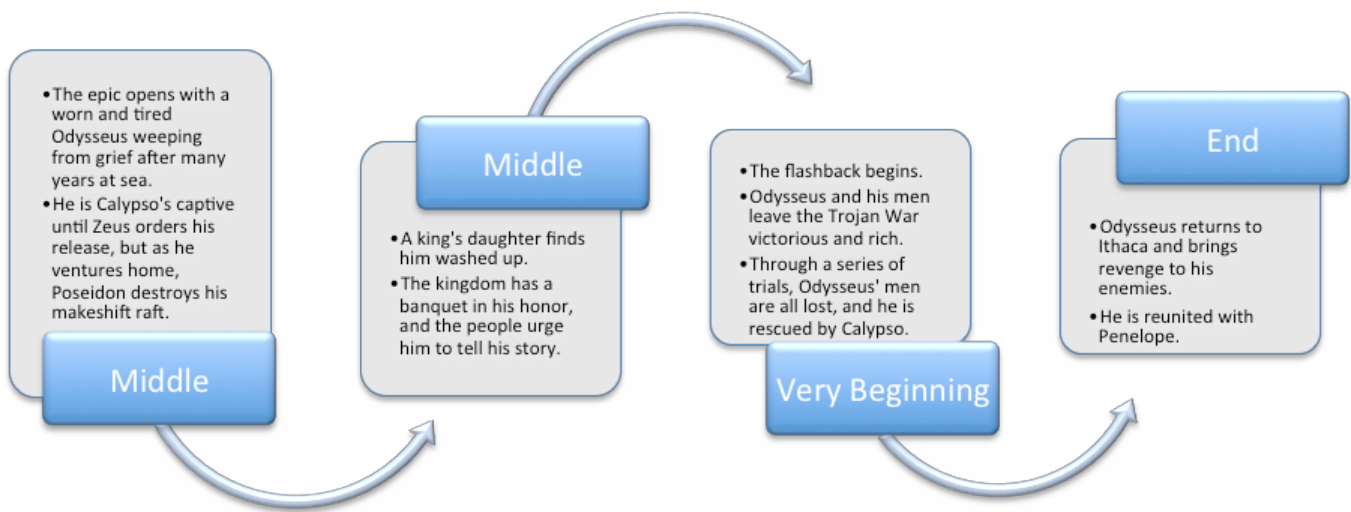


Book Nine Handout

The events in Books Nine through Twelve are flashbacks being told to the Phaeacians by Odysseus himself. The events of these books reveal how the trials Odysseus faces develop his character from the end of the Trojan War through his time with the Phaeacians.

Activity 1: Text Structure

One feature of the epic is beginning in the middle of the story (*in medias res*). Study the graphic below so that you will understand the text structure.



What is the effect of Homer's choice concerning how to structure a text and the events within it?

Activity 2: Close Reading of Book Nine, "In the One-Eyed Giant's Cave," pp. 211-214

Read the opening passage of Book Nine, which is reprinted for you below. Some lines have been removed, but the line numbers follow the original text. Follow the instructions below as you annotate:

1. For your first reading, define the terms that have been bolded for you. Write a synonym or definition directly above the bolded word.
2. For your second reading, use a handbook of mythological terms, the glossary of terms in the back of your text, or the Internet to look up background information for the shaded terms. Write the explanation directly above the term.

3. Finally, use the questions on the right side of the text to guide you as you record your insights and impressions about the text.

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| <p>1 Odysseus, the great teller of tales, launched out on his story:</p> <p>"Alcinous, majesty, <u>shining among your island people,</u></p> <p>what a fine thing it is to listen to such a bard</p> <p>... as we have here--the man sings like a god....</p> <p>12 But now you're set on probing the bitter pains I've borne</p> <p>so I'm to weep and grieve, it seems still more.</p> <p>Well then, what shall I go through first,</p> <p>15 what shall I save for last?</p> <p>What pains--the gods have given me my share.</p> <p>Now let me begin by telling you my name...</p> <p>so you may know it well and I in times to come,</p> <p>if I can escape that fatal day, will be your host,</p> <p>20 your sworn friend, though my home is far from here.</p> <p>I am Odysseus, <u>son of Laertes</u>, known to the world</p> <p>for every kind of craft--my fame has reached the skies.</p> <p>Sunny Ithaca is my home....</p> <p>30 Mine is a rugged land but good for raising sons—</p> <p>and I myself, I know no sight on earth</p> <p>than a man's own native country.</p> <p>True enough, <u>Calypso the lustrous goddess</u> tried to hold me back,</p> | <p>What does the underlined portion tell you about Alcinous?</p> <p>What kind of connotation does the word probing have? Why does Odysseus tell his tale?</p> <p>What is the tone (the speaker's attitude toward the subject)? (Hint--count how many lines Odysseus uses to introduce himself):</p> <p>Explain the underlined epithet. Who is it describing, and what does it suggest about him?</p> <p>What are some of the conflicts that Odysseus has faced?</p> |
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| <p>55 called for help from their neighbors living inland:</p> <p> <u>a larger force</u>, and stronger soldiers too,</p> <p> <u>skilled hands at fighting men from chariots</u>,</p> <p> skilled, when a crisis broke, to fight on foot.</p> <p> Out of the morning mist they came against us—</p> <p>60 <u>packed as the leaves and spears that flower forth in spring—</u></p> <p> and Zeus presented us with disaster, me and my comrades</p> <p> doomed to suffer blow on mortal blow.</p> <p> Lining up, both armies battled it out against our swift ships,</p> <p> both raked each other with hurtling bronze lances.</p> <p> Long as morning rose and the blessed day grew stronger</p> <p>65 we stood and fought them off, massed as they were, but then,</p> <p> when the sun wheeled past the hour for unyoking oxen,</p> <p> the Cicones broke our lines and beat us down at last.</p> <p> Out of each ship, six men-at-arms were killed;</p> <p> the rest of us rowed away from certain doom.</p> <p>70 From there we sailed on, glad to escape our death</p> <p> yet sick at heart for the dear companions we had lost.</p> <p> But I would not let our rolling ships set sail until the crews</p> <p> had raised the triple cry, saluting each poor comrade</p> <p> cut down by the fierce Cicones on that plain.</p> <p>75 Now Zeus who masses the stormclouds hit the fleet</p> | <p>Highlight patterns of violent diction. What was the consequence of the men's choices?</p> <p>Describe the battle between Odysseus's men and the Cicones.</p> <p>For lines 66-end, highlight the patterns of negative diction. Write notes about mood in the margin.</p> |
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with the North Wind—a howling, demonic gale, **shrouding** over

in thunderheads the earth and sea at once—

and night swept down from the sky and the ships went plunging...,

our sails slashed to rags by the hurricane's blast!

80 We struck them—cringing at death we rowed our ships

to the nearest shoreline, pulled with all our power.

There, for two nights, two days, we lay by, no letup,

eating our hearts out, bent with pain and bone-tired.

Activity 3: Style and Language of Book Nine

Part of what makes *The Odyssey* so compelling is the syntax or sentence structure of the epic. In the Robert Fagles' edition, the various phrases used add variety and interest to the story. Review the different kinds of phrases below. Then, go back through the passage and analyze the underlined phrases. For each phrase, label what kind it is, and write the effect of the phrase in the right margin.

| Phrase Type | Definition | Examples |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| participle | a verb form with an “ed” or “ing” added to it that functions like an adjective | Crying , Penelope weaved the shroud. Penelope surveyed the forgotten banquet hall. The suitors, insulted , stormed from the assembly place. |
| participial phrase | a participle plus other modifiers | Cursing his luck , Odysseus tried to command his men. Defeated by the enemy , the troops took to their oars. |
| appositive | a word that renames a noun or pronoun | Odysseus’s son Telemachus had grown up without a father. |
| appositive phrase | words that rename a noun or pronoun | Odysseus, the master tactician , schemed a plan. |

