

Synopsis: *The Odyssey*

Setting	Ithaca and other Greek lands; the Aegean and Mediterranean seas; c. 1180 B.C.
Characters	Odysseus—a hero of the Trojan War Penelope—wife of Odysseus Telemachus—son of Odysseus and Penelope Nestor—king of Pylos, who fought by Odysseus' side at Troy Menelaus—king of Argos, who came partway home from Troy with Odysseus Calypso—witch-goddess who captured Odysseus Antinous and Eurymachus—two chief suitors Alcinous—king of Phaeacia; married to Arete
Situation	Odysseus has been held by Calypso since he set sail after the Trojan War. At home, suitors hoping to marry Penelope are imposing on Odysseus' family. While Odysseus' godly enemy, Poseidon, is away, the goddess Athena persuades the other gods to intervene on behalf of Odysseus and his family.
Main Events	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Athena has Telemachus dismiss the suitors, and she tells him that Odysseus is alive. Telemachus complains about the suitors publicly and leaves to find out what happened to his father. Telemachus first arrives at Pylos, where Nestor retells the war at Troy and how each hero died. He praises Odysseus for his abilities but doesn't know what happened to him. 2. Telemachus and Nestor's son visit Menelaus and Helen to learn more about Odysseus. In Ithaca, the suitors plot to kill Telemachus. 3. The gods tell Calypso to send Odysseus on his way. He sails for 17 days. Then a storm sent by Poseidon wrecks his boat. Odysseus swims for three days. He finally lands on Phaeacia, where King Alcinous' daughter, Nausicaa, rescues him. 4. Odysseus tells Arete and Alcinous about his adventures since leaving Troy. He speaks of the Lotus-eaters, Cyclops, Circe, Teiresias, Scylla and Charibdis, and Helios. 5. Odysseus goes home on a Phaeacian ship. Athena meets him, disguises him, and sends him to the swineherd while she fetches Telemachus. 6. Telemachus returns home, and Odysseus reveals himself to his son. They plot their revenge on Penelope's suitors. 7. In a disguise, Odysseus goes to beg at his own home. Saying he knew Odysseus at Troy, he visits Penelope. Eurycleia, Odysseus' childhood nurse, recognizes him. 8. Penelope holds a shooting contest to see who will win her hand in marriage. After the suitors fail, Odysseus easily shoots the target Penelope set. He then begins shooting the suitors.
Resolution	Odysseus and Telemachus kill the suitors and unfaithful servants in battle. Odysseus and Penelope are reunited, as are Odysseus and his father, Laertes. The gods prevent a blood-feud following the death of the suitors.

ALTERNATIVE