

The Homeric World Study Guide

Developing Skills for GCSE OCR Classical Civilisation

L Harrow

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Key characters to know for Books 19–22

Athena	Athena is the goddess who supports Odysseus and his family. She helps directly by disguising Odysseus and offers help to his son.
Eumaeus	He looks after Odysseus's pigs and is called a <i>swineherd</i> . He welcomes Odysseus and is loyal. Eumaeus does not know who Odysseus really is.
Suitors	Odysseus has been away a long time – at least 20 years – and other nobles feel they have a right to marry his wife and take control of Ithaca. There are over 100 of them in the palace, all wanting to marry Penelope.
Telemachus	Telemachus is Odysseus's only son. He is about 20. He has been struggling to keep the palace running and Athena has been to help him by suggesting he visits some of Odysseus's old war friends like Menelaus and Nestor to find out what has happened to Odysseus. While Telemachus is away the suitors plot to kill him.
Penelope	She is Odysseus's wife. She has never doubted that Odysseus is still alive and has been putting off marrying any of the suitors.
Antinous	He is the leader of the suitors.
Eurycleia	She is a loyal female servant.
Melanthius and Melanthe	He is a disloyal servant. He kicks Odysseus. His sister Melanthe is a disloyal female servant. She is rude to Odysseus.

Book 19: Odysseus is recognised

OCR Booklet Book 19: 1–52 Odysseus and Telemachus hide the weapons

Understand the plot

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. What excuse are Odysseus and Telemachus going to give for removing the weapons?
2. Where must the women stay?
3. What strange phenomenon does Telemachus notice?

Context

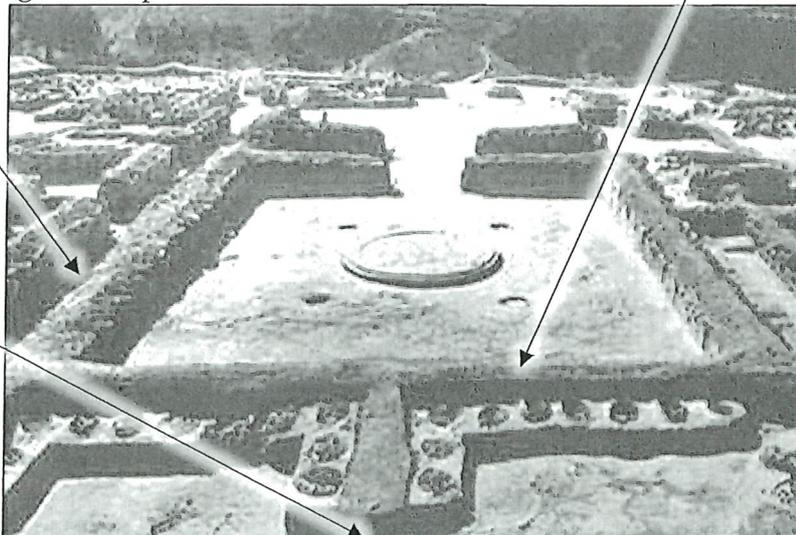
Activity 79

Revise the layout of Mycenaean palaces from Section A.

The corridor enabling the weapons to be removed

Suitors in the main hall

Women upstairs in their quarters



Themes**The gods**

Athena helps by lighting the way for Odysseus and Telemachus to remove the weapons. Telemachus cannot see her, but knows a god is present by the increase in light: *One of the gods who rules the wide sky must surely be here.*

The character of Odysseus

Odysseus's plan begins. Being outnumbered, this must be a case of 'brain over brawn'. Remember Odysseus's epithet *of the many stratagems*. The plan includes:

1. Women are shut in quarters
2. Weapons are removed

The reason they will give the suitors for the removal of the weapons is that:

They no longer look as they did when Odysseus left them behind and sailed for Troy. But all grimy where the draught from the hearth has reached them.

and

You might start a quarrel amongst yourselves, and wound each other, and so bring shame on the feast and your cause.

Odysseus sends Telemachus to bed so that he and Penelope can talk. He wants to test Penelope's loyalty: *Go and sleep and leave me here to rouse the curiosity of your mother and her maids.*

OCR Booklet Book 19: 53–99 Penelope prepares to question the stranger**Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. Where does Penelope sit?
2. What warning does Odysseus give to Melanthis?
3. What does Penelope say to support Odysseus's words?

Themes**Loyalty of slaves**

Melanthis abuses Odysseus. He has been testing the loyalty of the slaves and Melanthis has not passed: *plague us all night long... Get out, you wretch, and be glad of what supper you had.* Odysseus issues her with a warning: *So beware, woman.* Penelope backs this up with: *Bold, and shameless creature.*

The character of Odysseus**Activity 80**

Look at Odysseus's speech to Melanthis. To what extent is he telling the truth this time?

**Literary techniques and composition****Activity 81**

How does Homer show the riches of the palace?



OCR Booklet Book 19: 100–163 Penelope and Odysseus converse**Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. What does Penelope tell Odysseus is her problem?
2. What did Penelope tell the suitors?
3. Who told the suitors about Penelope's trick?

Context**Activity 82**

Describe Penelope's trick on the suitors.

Dulichium Same and Zacynthus: these are islands off the west coast of Greece and near to Ithaca. They would all have had princes, who are all Greeks and are often called *Achaeans* in Homer.

Themes**Kleos**

An interesting addition to the theme of kleos is the kleos of Penelope: *Your fame rises to high heaven*. Kleos is one of the ultimate values for which Odysseus strives in all that he does. Homer compares her kleos to that of a king. He does not praise her for the expected virtues of a woman but for her ability to uphold justice.

Guided Activity 22

Can you see any similarity between Penelope and Odysseus? Give details about:

- Their tricks
- Their desire for gifts
- Their reputations

OCR Booklet Book 19: 164–219 Odysseus tells a false tale**Understand the plot**

Read the whole section.

Activity 83

Make bullet-point notes of Odysseus's tale.

Context

Crete: An important island and centre of the Minoan culture which overlapped with the Mycenaeans. The great palace on the island was *Cnossos*, which was excavated by the British archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans. In mythology, Crete was ruled by a King *Minos*. This is why Evans named the people Minoans though they did not call themselves this. *Idomeneus*: a hero of the *Iliad*. He was king of Crete and often used by Odysseus in his tales. One true part of the story, from Odysseus's point of view, is that Odysseus did indeed sail with *the sons of Atreus*. These are Menelaus and Agamemnon, the Greek leaders of the Trojan War. *Amnisus* was a Bronze Age settlement on Crete and *Eileithyia* was a goddess associated with the settlement. Despite this being a false tale, as told by Odysseus, it is in fact quite accurate from an archaeological point of view and may represent an old memory of Mycenaean times passed down by word of mouth.

The character of Odysseus**Activity 84**

Is Odysseus cruel to Penelope by telling her a lying tale?
What is her reaction?

OCR Booklet Book 19: 220–307 Odysseus prophesies his own return**Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. Describe what Odysseus saw 'Odysseus' wearing.
2. Describe Odysseus's squire, Eurybates.
3. Give a brief summary of Odysseus's adventures.

Context**Independent Learning 8**

Read Book 12 Lines 260 to the end. It tells the story of the sun god's cattle.

www.ocrclassical.com/11261-Book-12

Lines 260–453

**Themes**

There are two encounters between Odysseus and Penelope. Finally alone with Penelope, Odysseus offers evidence, according to some scholars, that she knew her husband. Penelope seems suspicious about his identity. He calls her *My lady*. This is ambiguous because in Greek there is no word for 'wife'. The word is the same for woman and wife. Some suggest that Odysseus may be addressing Penelope as 'wife' but she will understand it as 'lady'.

Literary techniques and composition**Independent Learning 9**

Look at the above section again from Book 12 to see how the bard has taken the chance to go over phrases.

**OCR Booklet Book 19: 308–360 Penelope offers hospitality****Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. What orders does Penelope give to her maids?
2. Who does Odysseus suggest wash his feet?
3. Who does Penelope suggest?

The portrayal of key characters

Eurycleia: a loyal servant. Laertes, the previous king of Ithaca, had bought her for 20 oxen. This was a large price. Despite being bought as a slave she gets much respect. She was Odysseus's wet nurse, and had a role in his naming ceremony. She then went on to be Telemachus's nurse and loved him.

She shows her loyalty:

1. She fears the suitors
2. She guards Odysseus's storerooms
3. She is an informant on the disloyal slaves

Penelope: she remains sceptical about his tale: *How I wish your words might prove true!* Penelope is definitely suspicious about the beggar's true identity and realises that he is no ordinary beggar:

Dear Friend, of all the strangers from afar, never has my house welcomed a more discerning guest. She also hints: No doubt Odysseus's hands and feet look like his now since men age quickly when times are hard.

OCR Booklet Book 19: 361–475 Eurycleia recognises Odysseus

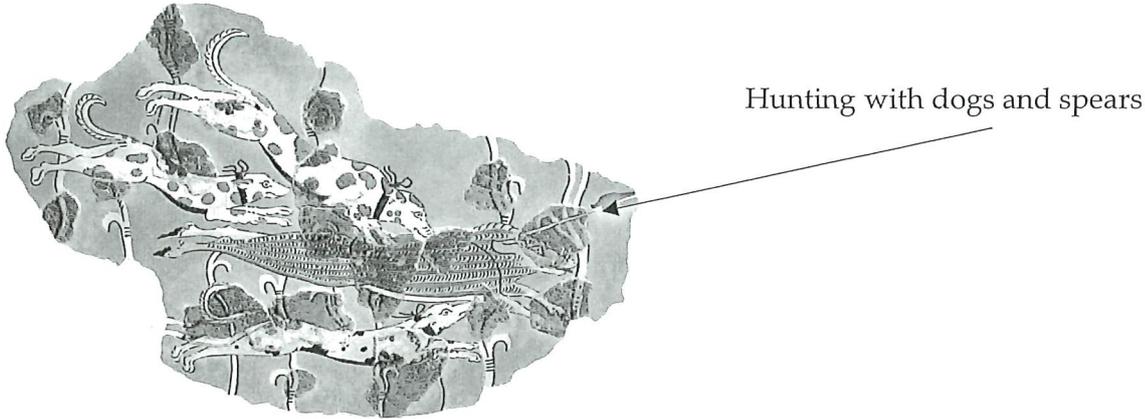
Understand the plot

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. How does Eurycleia recognise Odysseus?
2. What animal had given Odysseus the scar?
3. What accident happened to the washing bowl? Why?

Context

The hunting accident:



Role of women

Homeric slave women usually wash and bathe men. This happened also on Circe's island. Eurycleia recognises the scar. She has proved to be loyal but Eurycleia must keep the secret.

Literary techniques and composition

The recognition is made more suspenseful by the use of the *digression* which explains how Odysseus got his scar. Digressions also give the idea of time passing and make the last books, which are in real time, more intense.

Activity 85

How does Homer make the hunt an exciting and dangerous sport?



OCR Booklet Book 19: 476–507 Odysseus tells Eurycleia to conceal his identity

Understand the plot

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. Why can Eurycleia not tell Penelope his identity?
2. What does Odysseus do to Eurycleia?
3. What threats does he make if she is not quiet?

The character of Odysseus

Odysseus has this final test: *Be quiet and keep it from all the rest of the house.*

Odysseus is now preparing to assert himself in his own home:

1. He is prepared to be ruthless.
2. He will find out for himself those who have or have not been loyal.

OCR Booklet Book 19: 508–553 Penelope's dream

Understand the plot

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. How does Penelope spend her day?
2. What two alternative options does Penelope have?
3. Which one does her son Telemachus favour?

Context

Penelope makes reference to the *nightingale*. *Itylus's* mother was Aedon. Envious of Niobe, the wife of her husband's brother (her brother-in-law), who had six sons and six daughters, Aedon formed a plan to kill the eldest of Niobe's sons, but by mistake killed her own son Itylus. Zeus relieved her grief by changing her into a nightingale.

Themes

Signs and omens

The ancient Greeks believed that dreams were a way of telling the future.

Activity 86

How would you interpret the following?

Great eagle	
Twenty geese	
I keep warm	
There they lay dead, piled in the yard	

Justice and revenge

This is also an indication of *justice that is to come*. When Penelope wakes up she sees: *Geese feeding on grain, by the trough in the yard, as ever*. She wakes up to find the suitors still eating her out of house and home.

OCR Booklet Book 19: 554–604 Penelope proposes a challenge for the suitors

Understand the plot

Read the whole section.

Activity 87

Describe the contest Penelope has devised.

Context

Dreams: The gates of horn and ivory were used by the Greeks to separate true dreams from false ones. In Greek, the word for 'horn' is similar to the word for 'fulfil' and the word for 'ivory' is similar to 'deceive'. So, true dreams were believed to come through the gates of horn, and false dreams came through ivory. The earliest idea of this is here in *Odyssey* 19.

The portrayal of key characters

Penelope: is a good match for Odysseus. She also proposes the contest of the bow. She reveals that she will hold a contest the next day to find a husband. The suitors will approve of this. The challenge is one that she knows only Odysseus has performed before: stringing his own bow and shooting an arrow through a straight row of 12 axes. So, again, does she know who Odysseus really is and is she testing him?

Literary techniques and composition

Book 19 has three features of oral poetry which allow the bard some rest:

1. False tales
2. Digressions: pre-prepared stories which can be slotted in by the bard or his apprentice
3. The repeat of previous sections. Odysseus recounts familiar phrases from the island of the sun god and the Phaeacians.

Guided Activity 23

What do you think makes a false tale successful? You might consider:

Do places and people have to be real?

Do some details need to be true for the narrator?

Book 20 Summary (not prescribed book) linking Books 19 and 21

Book	Event	Useful for Theme
20: Prelude to the crisis	<p>Odysseus's anger grows. Athena appears in order to reassure Odysseus.</p> <p>Penelope prays to Artemis.</p> <p>Odysseus hears her weeping and prays to Zeus. Zeus sends a reply – thunder.</p> <p>The women get up and Eurycleia oversees the women's work.</p> <p>Eumaeus arrives. Melanthius arrives and insults Odysseus.</p> <p>Philoetius the cowherd arrives. He is still loyal.</p> <p>Ctesippus throws a cow's hoof at Odysseus.</p> <p>Telemachus speaks out against the suitors. Agelaus is very condescending.</p> <p>The prophet Theoclymenus gives a prophecy of doom, which is greeted by laughter.</p>	<p>Divine intervention</p> <p>Role of women</p> <p>Loyal and disloyal servants</p> <p>Bad behaviour of the suitors</p> <p>(<i>Hubris</i>)</p>

Independent Learning 10

For an overview of Books 19–20 see: zzed.co.uk/11261-Books-19-20

To hear Book 20 as an audio book see: zzed.co.uk/11261-Book-20

Book 21: The Great Bow

OCR Booklet Book 21: 1–79 Penelope declares the contest

Understand the plot

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. Who gave Odysseus the bow?
2. How had they both come to meet at Messene?
3. What gift had Odysseus given in return?

Context

The bow: Penelope goes to the storeroom using a *key* made of bronze and ivory. This would be expected in the Bronze Age. However, the axes themselves are of *grey iron*, which is definitely not Bronze Age. In the storeroom too is: *gold and bronze and hammered iron*. There then follows a digression giving the audience the story of the bow. *Iphitus* gave Odysseus the bow. They met at the house of *Ortilochus*, who lived in Messene on the mainland of Greece in the Peloponnese. *Grease the bow:* this is still required in modern archery.

Themes

Justice

Justice had to be seen to be done. With no police force at the time it was up to individual families to get justice and revenge.

Activity 88

Using this passage, explain how justice and revenge worked in the world of Odysseus.



The portrayal of key characters

Penelope:

Activity 89

How does she challenge and tell off the suitors at the same time?



Literary techniques and composition

Activity 90

Make a list of words and phrases associated with different metals.

What impression is given of the objects in the palace?



OCR Booklet Book 21: 80–135 Telemachus sets up the axes

Understand the plot

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. Who lay out the bow and axes?
2. Which suitor is rude?
3. Who sets up the shooting competition?

Context

The cowherd: is Philoetius, who is also loyal to Odysseus.

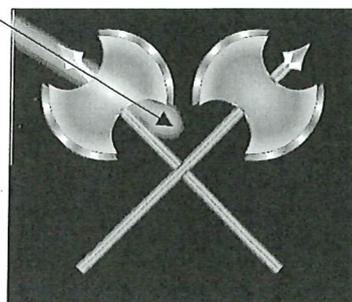
Setting up of the axes: Exactly how are the axes set up? This has been the subject of hot debate. Telemachus sets them up: *Then he set all the axes in a long trench, in a straight line, stamping the earth in around them.*

The version in this picture seems unlikely. It would be difficult to bend over and shoot



The axes are double-headed axes. Axes like these existed before the Bronze Age and gold ceremonial ones have been found. Homer says the axes are iron and might have looked like the ones below right. Did the suitors have to shoot through here perhaps?

However, some scholars focus on the handle which, archaeological evidence suggests, may have had a metal ring on the end. It was possibly a practical way to hang the axe: from a peg on the wall. Some say it is the metal ring that Odysseus shoots through, though this is far more difficult to line up. There are 12 in the row of axes, but because he is sitting on a stool, Odysseus is lower down and may be at the right level to attempt the shot.



The portrayal of key characters

Telemachus: Penelope suspects that the beggar is her husband (and can, therefore, achieve the task set), but Telemachus knows. With this knowledge, his confidence is given a boost and he puts himself forward to take a shot. He is able to set up the axes as Penelope dictates but cannot even string the bow despite trying three times. Odysseus indicates that he should stop: *had he not shaken his head.* His attempt at stringing the bow symbolically illustrates that, although he is not quite yet ready to take over leadership from Odysseus, he is proving worthy to be his successor eventually.

Activity 91

What do we learn about the character of Telemachus from this passage?



OCR Booklet Book 21: 136–185 The suitors try the bow**Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. Who is Leodes?
2. Why does he fail?
3. Why does Antinous want a fire lit?

Context

The order of those attempting to shoot: Telemachus, Leodes: son of Oenops, Eurymachus, Odysseus.

Tallow: is a wax or grease made from animal fat.

The portrayal of key characters

Leodes has a go first and fails. As a religious man he is not interested in being a hero. *kleos* does not concern him.

Activity 92

In what ways is Leodes different from a hero like Odysseus?

**OCR Booklet Book 21: 186–244 Odysseus reveals himself to Eumaeus****Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. Who does Odysseus test when outside in the courtyard?
2. How does Odysseus prove to them that he is Odysseus?
3. What special orders does Odysseus give to Eumaeus and Philoetius?

Themes**Disguise and recognition**

While the contest is going on, Odysseus goes outside to meet with Eumaeus, the swineherd, and Philoetius, the cowman. Odysseus asks them: *If Odysseus suddenly returned, brought by some god, would you be the men to fight for him? Would you be for the suitors or Odysseus?* On learning that they are loyal, Odysseus reveals his true self: *Well I am home.* He goes on to provide further proof by revealing his scar underneath his disguise. To be fair the two men look carefully at the evidence. Eumaeus and Philoetius hug and kiss him in a formal way in displays of loyalty.

Justice and revenge

Odysseus now has two extra men to help with his plans. Loyalty is always rewarded and the men are promised:

1. A wife
2. Goods
3. That they can build a house

The character of Odysseus**Activity 93**

Odysseus continues to show skill in strategy. What plans are made in this passage?



OCR Booklet Book 21: 245–310 Odysseus seeks to try the bow

Understand the plot

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. Why is Eurymachus annoyed that he cannot string the bow?
2. What does Antinous suggest the suitors do next?
3. When Odysseus asks to string the bow, what does Antinous assume?

Context

Centaurs and Lapiths

The Lapiths were a people who lived in Thessaly, a wooded part of Greece. Pirithous, King of the Lapiths, invited his neighbours, the centaurs, to his wedding feast. Centaurs were half horse and half human. Undiluted wine was served, which made the centaurs rowdy and aggressive. They grabbed the Lapith women, in particular the centaur Eurytion grabbed Pirithous's new wife, Hippodamia, and a battle, Centauromachy, ensued. Battles with centaurs are frequently depicted in Classical architecture, as centaurs represent uncivilised behaviour.

West pediment
Temple Zeus, Olympia



The portrayal of key characters

Penelope: has devised a contest that only Odysseus can possibly win. This continues the idea from Book 19 that she is aware of Odysseus's real identity. When Odysseus asks for a chance at the bow Antinous objects: *Isn't it enough for you we allow you to dine in peace in our noble company letting you share in what's on the table?*

Eurymachus: However hard he tries he fails to string the bow. This upsets him. He also reveals he is not that bothered about marrying Penelope as other women are available. What upsets him is the fact that he looks like a *weakling* compared with Odysseus. This is a blow to his reputation, *kleos*.

Antinous avoids being embarrassed by not being able to string the bow and suggests they stop the contest until the next day. That way, he says, there will be time to *Lay thigh pieces on Apollo's altar, the famous Archer, then try the bow and decide the contest*. He tries to lecture Odysseus on the 'evils of drink' with the story of centaurs and Lapiths, but he has not been behaving morally himself.

OCR Booklet Book 21: 311–358 Telemachus asserts his authority**Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. Who settles the quarrel between Antinous and Odysseus?
2. Why does Eurymachus object to Odysseus having a go?
3. What does Telemachus tell Penelope to do?

The portrayal of key characters

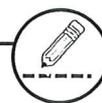
Penelope: Do you really think that if the stranger, trusting in the strength of his hands, strings Odysseus' bow, he will take me home as his wife? She permits the stranger a shot. Perhaps she knows who Odysseus is.

Odysseus would not claim her for his bride as Odysseus would not have to.

Her attitude towards Telemachus is mixed; she was taken aback when he said *I hold the authority in this house* but secretly approves and considers her son's suggestion *wise*.

Activity 94

How does Telemachus show his authority in this passage?

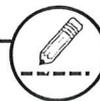
**OCR Booklet Book 21: 359–403 Odysseus receives the bow****Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

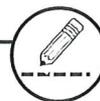
1. Who gives Odysseus the bow?
2. What order did Eumaeus pass on to Eurycleia?
3. What sign does Zeus send?

The portrayal of key characters**Activity 95**

How do the suitors behave in Book 21 which will ensure Odysseus takes revenge?

**Literary techniques and composition****Activity 96**

Explain how Homer makes the closing lines of Book 21 dramatic.



Book 22: The Battle in the Hall

OCR Booklet Book 22: 1–67 The death of Antinous

Understand the plot

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. When Antinous is killed, what do the suitors assume?
2. According to Odysseus, what wrongs have the suitors done?
3. What do the suitors offer to pay as compensation?

Context

Currency

The Mycenaeans did not use money. We have a reminder of a time when oxen were currency. Twenty oxen will buy:

100	male prisoners / suits of bronze armour
12	large tripods
9	suits of golden armour
4	skilled female slaves

The portrayal of key characters

Eurymachus:

Activity 97

How does Eurymachus try to bargain with Odysseus? What does this tell us about his character?



Literary techniques and composition

Antinous: as ringleader of the suitors, Odysseus singles him out first as his next *target*; no axes here, this one is human. Characters hate each other but Homer can stand back and be more objective. There is a touch of tenderness for the villain and pity and rhetorical question add pathos.

Activity 98

How does Homer make Antinous's death a graphic piece of narrative?
In what ways does Homer make us feel sad for Antinous?



OCR Booklet Book 22: 68–115 The battle begins

Understand the plot

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. What does Eurymachus do, and what is the result?
2. What happens to Amphinomus?
3. What does Telemachus offer to do?

The portrayal of key characters

Eurymachus: He is now calmer and puts the blame on Antinous. In his anxiety, his speech is somewhat disjointed. In his speech, the phrases are short and staccato.

Telemachus: He is getting like his father. He has a plan.

Literary techniques and composition

Activity 99

The ancient Greeks enjoyed vivid and sensational descriptions of violent death. How far is the relating of Eurymachus's death a vivid description?



OCR Booklet Book 22: 116–159 Melanthius raids the storeroom**Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. How does Melanthius help the suitors?
2. What mistake has Telemachus made?
3. What does Telemachus order Eumaeus to do?

Context**Activity 100**

Describe the armour.

**OCR Booklet Book 22: 160–199 Melanthius is captured****Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. What does Melanthius do?
2. Who sees him?
3. What does Odysseus order Eumaeus and Philoetius to do?

Theme**Loyalty of slaves**

Eumaeus: There is no one as harsh to an unfaithful servant as a faithful servant. Eumaeus uses mockery: *Now you can keep watch all night, lying on soft bed you deserve.*

Melanthius the goatherd, and son of loyal Dolius, has attacked Odysseus in Book 17.212–369 and abused Odysseus in Book 20.173. He is subjected to graphic torture by the loyal slaves. Why does Odysseus not take part in Melanthius's torture? Because punishment should be delivered by those of the same social order and not superiors.

OCR Booklet Book 22: 200–240 Athena intervenes**Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. In what form does Athena appear?
2. What does Agelaus say to Athena?
3. How does Athena respond to Agelaus's speech?

The portrayal of key characters

Athena: Although she is known as the goddess of wisdom, she is associated with **practical** wisdom. Athena helps Odysseus against the suitors. She goads Odysseus: he has realised that his mentor is probably Athena. Athena calls him *dear friend*. She tests Odysseus but also pushes him to achieve: *Where is that brave spirit?*

OCR Booklet Book 22: 241–309 The fighting continues

Understand the plot

Read the whole section.

Activity 101

As you read about the battle, make a note of the fate of the suitors.

Suitor	Killed by
Demoptolemus	
Peisander	
Euryades	
Elatus	

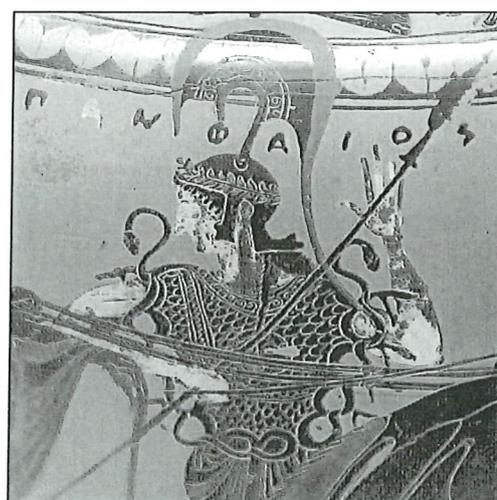
Other suitors mentioned are: Agelaus, son of Damastor; Euronymus, Polybus, Eurydamus Polytherses; father of Ctesippus, Leocritus. Ctesippus in Book 20 hurled an ox hoof at Odysseus. He is killed by Philoetius, the loyal cowherd, an ordinary man who gets his revenge for the abuse of his cow.

Context

Athena: She shakes her *aegis*. Scholars debate what this is. Why is it deadly? Notice the effect on the suitors. How does she use it if she is a swallow?



Aegis here depicted as a breastplate



and here as a type of shawl with snakes

Literary techniques and composition*Similes:***Activity 102**

What do the following represent?

Herd of cattle	
Darting gadflies	
Vultures	
Crooked talons and curving beaks	
The birds have no defence or means of escape	

OCR Booklet Book 22: 310–377 Leodes and Phemius**Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. Who is Leodes?
2. Who is Phemius?
3. Who is Medon?

Context

Phemius: He also clasps Odysseus by the knees in supplication. Phemius says *I am self-taught*, which would mean watching and learning from another, which was the norm. He respects his instrument – he lays it down with care. Bards were given great respect as it was believed the gods have a role in inspiring the bard. Odysseus has to spare him. (See a fresco possibly of a bard on p. 36 Section A.)

The character of Odysseus

Odysseus has been insulted by Antinous, Ctesippus, Eurymachus, Irus, Melanthius, and Melanthe. His emotions run high. He hates Antinous, who is picked off first. Odysseus is also *shrewd* as he can see through Leodes' plea. Yet at the end of the battle his speech is not the usual triumphant speech of the Homeric hero.

Activity 103

What is the tone of Odysseus's speeches in this passage?

**The portrayal of key characters**

Telemachus: He intervenes to give his support to Phemius. He is starting to become kingly and to notice his epithet here: *royal*. He is ensuring justice is done.

OCR Booklet Book 22: 378–432 Eurycleia denounces the disloyal women**Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

1. Who fetches Eurycleia?
2. What is her reaction on entering the hall?
3. What information does she give about the women?

The character of Odysseus**Activity 104**

What is the tone of Odysseus's speeches now?

**Literary techniques and composition****Activity 105**

How does Homer create a vivid picture of Odysseus in the passage?



OCR Booklet Book 222:433–501 Telemachus executes the serving women**Understand the plot**

Read the whole section. Answer these comprehension questions:

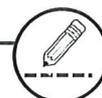
1. What jobs must the disloyal women do?
2. What happens to Melanthius?
3. How did the loyal women behave towards Odysseus?

Theme**Role of women**

In Odysseus's household there were 50 women: 12 have behaved shamelessly. They are punished where they worked. *round-house*: Its function is not certain – possibly for grain or as a furnace for baking bread. The violation of his women (i.e. Odysseus's goods) is an important consideration, which is why Odysseus becomes so angry over the maids.

Activity 106

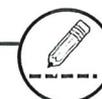
How does Odysseus want the women killed? How does Telemachus?

**Literary techniques and composition**

Melanthius's death is even more horrific.

Activity 107

How appropriate is the simile, lines 468–472, to the death of the women.

**Book 23 Summary: Odysseus and Penelope**

Eurycleia goes off to tell Penelope. Penelope thinks that Eurycleia is making a cruel joke. Eurycleia reports on the death of the suitors. Eurycleia says that the beggar is Odysseus because she has seen his scar. Penelope is reserved in her reception of Odysseus and is rebuked by Telemachus. Penelope says that there are signs that will prove Odysseus's identity. Odysseus suggests they wash and play music to stop the news of the suitors' deaths being known. The music begins. Passers-by are fooled. Odysseus is washed. He asks for a separate bed to be made up. Penelope says that Eurycleia can move out the bed from their bedroom and Odysseus is furious, as he knows that the bed cannot be moved. Penelope acknowledges that Odysseus is her husband. Penelope wants to hear what Odysseus has been doing. He starts to tell his tales. At dawn Odysseus gets up, leaves Penelope in charge of the house and goes off to the farm where his father lives with Telemachus, Eumaeus and Philoetius.

**Independent Learning 11**

Book 23 Summary and discussions can be found here: zzed.co.uk/11261-Book-23

Book 24 Summary and discussions can be found here: zzed.co.uk/11261-Book-24

Book 24 Summary: The Feud is Ended**Concludes the Odyssey**

Tying up the loose ends: *suitors*: go to the Underworld escorted by Hermes. The funeral of Achilles is described by Agamemnon, who also praises Penelope. *Laertes*: is visited by Odysseus, who tells him a false tale but then reveals his true identity. *Relatives*: discover the death of the suitors. Peace is made on the orders of Zeus.

Themes, Characters, Key Characters

Themes

Theme	Book(s) which has/have a note	Add specific lines here
Xenia (guest-friendship)	Book 9 Book 10 Books 19, 21	
Civilisation and barbarism	Book 9 Book 10	
Revenge and justice	Book 19	
<i>Nostos</i> (desire to return home)	Book 9 Book 10	
Deceit and trickery Not telling the truth, disguise False tales	Books 9, 19, 21	

Character of Odysseus

Character	Book(s) which has/have a note	Add specific lines here
Leader, husband, father	Books 9, 10, 19, 21, 22	
Warrior and hero <i>kleos</i>	Books 9, 10, 19, 21, 22	
Intelligence and oratorical skills	Books 9, 22	
Relationship with Athena	Books 9, 22	

Key Characters

Character	Book(s) which has/have a note	Add specific lines here
Gods	Book 9, 10, 22	
Portrayal of the suitors	Books 19, 21, 22	
Crew	Books 9, 10	
Polyphemus	Book 9	
Circe	Book 10	
Penelope	Books 19, 21, 22	
Telemachus Son, and leader in the making	Books 19, 21, 22	
Slaves: loyal and disloyal	Books 19, 21, 22	

Evidence from Different Sites

Visual/material prescribed sources

Mycenae	Tiryns
Palace	Palace
Sally port	Main entrance
Passage and cistern	Cyclopean ramp
Cyclopean walls	The galleries
Lion Gate	Defences
Grave Circle A	Tholos tomb
Grave Circle B	
Tomb of Clytemnestra	
Tomb of Aegisthus	Pylos
Treasury of Atreus	Linear B tripod tablet
Dagger blade showing hunting scene	
Fresco of lady with the necklace	
Death mask of Agamemnon	
Gold pyxis	
Gold rhyton lion's head	
Warrior vase	

Some additional non-prescribed sources discussed in this guide to include in answers

Mycenae	Tiryns	Pylos	Midea: Dendra	Asine
Lady with wheat	Bath	Megaron	Walls	Walls
Nestor's cup	Floor panel	Hearth	Tholos	Pottery cup
Signet ring	Fresco	Stag fresco	Dendra armour	
Warrior Vase House	Throne	Fighting barbarians	Glass beads	
Head of Odysseus	Blue fresco	Two charioteers		
Battle in the Glen	Two women in a chariot fresco	Man with lyre fresco		
Chariot stele	Man in tunic fresco	Linear B tablet – broken		
Ivory women	Gold signet ring			
Painted women Painted head				
Jewellery				
Pottery: cups and figures				

Examination Guidance

Short tariff questions (1–6 marks)

This type of question will be short and *mainly factual*. There might be an image to identify. For example, an image of a Linear B tablet might ask what it was made of. The answer is clay. The mark scheme calls these types of questions AO1.

Questions which follow may ask for *opinion or personal interpretation* such as: *why?* Although 1 mark may be assigned to the question there can be several answers: clay was easy to work with; clay is soft for making masks; clay can be found around the site of Mycenae; clay could be made into notebook shapes. Answers which explain or give reasons are called AO2.

Activity 108

Here is some information about pottery/clay objects. Sort the information into AO1 and AO2.

Cups were made of clay; some cups have an octopus on them; the human figures are not very realistic; some animal figures have been found at Mycenae. Koine pottery was very boring. Pottery could be useful and decorative. Stirrup jars were made of clay. Mass production meant cups were easily accessible.

AO1	AO2

8-mark question

It should not be assumed that eight points = 8 marks. An answer packed with eight facts (AO1) will not get a top level. Neither will a well-argued answer (AO2) with no detailed examples.

Requirements of different levels

Level 4: 7–8	Answers have detailed knowledge, a personal response (to <i>Do you think...?</i>), critical analysis and evaluation. The question is answered throughout.
Level 3: 5–6	Can use sources on the question paper very well; other sources may be named but not discussed. Some obvious conclusions and maybe there is some irrelevant material.
Level 2: 3–4	There will be factual errors. The response includes a few details, but has a limited understanding, not appreciating the Mycenaean or Homeric context. Vaguely remembers some additional material, though it is insecure.
Level 1: 1–2	Little of value related to the question.

15-mark questions

As above, it should not be assumed that 15 points = 15 marks. Do not make 15 bullet points as continuous prose is required.

Requirements of different levels

Level 5	Shows excellent and wide knowledge and does not have to be perfect. Coherent arguments (follow on as opposed to lists) with sources with evaluation. Should have a balance if question is <i>How far</i> though 50%/50% not required.
Level 4	A good range but may not go into wholly relevant depth. Some details may not be that relevant. The evaluation is there but may be more list-like and random, or thin.
Level 3	There is some decent factual knowledge, but the facts are not expanded. Though the range may be good it may be just a list or just names. Some AO2 may just be unjustified statements. An understanding but not in depth.

What is detail? See how detail can be added.

Sample Question

What is this object (1) and what does it tell us about metalworking in Mycenae (3)?

SAMPLE ANSWERS: These answers get increasingly more detailed until the question is answered fully.

This is a box with gold on it. The Mycenaeans had gold. (1)
This is a pyxis, a beauty box. It is hexagonal in shape and has gold panels stuck on it by a craftsman. (1+1)
This is a pyxis, a beauty box. It is a hexagonal wooden box with 12 gold panels. Each panel is beaten from behind (repoussé). On the panels are various hunting scenes with deer and lions. (Needs to be linked to question.) (1+2)
This is a pyxis, a beauty box. It is a hexagonal wooden box with 12 gold panels, beaten from behind (repoussé) and each panel has a filigree edging (twisted gold). To make this required a great deal of skill to get such detail beaten into each panel, such as the deer and the lions' manes. Mycenaean metalwork was not just for weapons but for luxury items too. (1+3)

Relevant to the question

Activity 109

Not all these sentences are relevant to an answer about the leadership of Odysseus. Which of the following would not be relevant? (This could form a discussion.)

Odysseus is son of Laertes
Odysseus sometimes calls his men fools
Odysseus feeds his men a stag
Odysseus tells the Cyclops what his real name is
Odysseus wants to kill Eurylochus
Odysseus is disguised as a beggar
Odysseus comes up with the idea to blind the Cyclops

Choosing your questions

At the end of each section there is a choice of questions. For someone who has revised thoroughly, these should all be accessible. However, under examination conditions and with only 15–20 minutes to answer, sometimes a quick decision is not necessarily the best. Two of the most common traps in essays are:

1. The question has not been read properly
2. A candidate writes all they know about a topic but does not answer the question

Sample Question

'The gods are essential to the success of the *Odyssey*.' How far do you agree with this view?

COMMENTARY:

Essays on the gods are always popular. Most people can say something about the gods. From the prescribed material there are just a few gods who can be discussed: Poseidon, Zeus, Aeolus, Hermes and Athena. However, there is not much that they actually do. Poseidon hears the Cyclops' curse and Zeus sends some thunder. Aeolus, Hermes and Athena play a more active role. There is much in the prescribed books which does not involve the gods. This is where the phrase *How far do you agree...* is important. After considering the different sides of evidence, conclusions can be drawn.

For the highest levels, *essential to the success* must be addressed. Here evaluation is important, but also personal response. Success should be defined; there is no fixed correct answer, and it could be related to:

1. The excitement of the story
2. Odysseus getting what he wants, i.e. getting home
3. The behaviour and interaction of different human characters are sufficient
4. The composition of oral epic poetry

