

7 Knowledge Map: The Odyssey (Book 22)

This component is called the 'Literature Study' and will form 50% of the Homeric World paper. It is focused entirely on Homer's epic poem, *The Odyssey*. This topic focuses on the plot of the Odyssey, with a particular focus on Books 9, 10, 19, 21, and 22. It also analyses the literary techniques employed by its author, Homer. Certain characters need to be analysed, particularly Odysseus, the main protagonist. The key themes that are threaded through the book, such as the concept of *xenia* (guest friendship and hospitality), must be examined.

Summary of Book 22

1	Book 22	Odysseus begins to shoot the suitors. Telemachus goes to the storeroom to fetch more weapons. He realises that he has left the door open and catches Melanthius taking weapons. Athena, disguised as Mentor, helps Odysseus, and eventually all the suitors are killed. The house is cleansed and the treacherous servants killed.
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Breakdown of Book 22 (Line-by-Line)

2	Lines 1-67	The Death of Antinous Incredibly, the book opens with Odysseus firing an arrow through the throat of the main suitor, Antinous. Uproar follows as the Suitors react in fear of the Stranger. Once Odysseus reveals who he is, Eurymachus tries to blame everything on the now dead Antinous.
3	Lines 68-115	The Battle Begins The battle begins with Odysseus declaring no one will be spared. Eurymachus attacks Odysseus, but he is also killed. Telemachus runs to the storeroom to get armour and weapons for him, Odysseus, Eumaeus, and Philoetius.
4	Lines 116-159	Melanthius Raids the Storeroom As Odysseus fires arrows to keep the Suitors at bay, Melanthius, Odysseus' disloyal goatherd, ran to the storeroom before Telemachus and claimed armour and weapons for the Suitors. Odysseus commands Telemachus to find out who betrayed them: Melanthius on his own, or one of his other servants.
5	Lines 160-199	Melanthius is Captured As Melanthius returns to the storeroom, Eumaeus spots him and with the help of Philoetius, they capture him and bind his legs and arms, before hoisting up to the ceiling.
6	Lines 200-240	Athene Intervenes Eumaeus and Philoetius put on armour and return to Odysseus. Athene now intervenes and appears before Odysseus as Mentor, whom Odysseus left in charge before going to the Trojan War. He knows it s Athene though, and she speaks angrily to Odysseus not to lose courage now.
7	Lines 241-309	The Fighting Continues Sensing Odysseus' wavering, the Suitors attack in a more coordinated way, but Athene protects Odysseus as much as she can. Odysseus and his men attack the Suitors, killing lots. As the Suitors try to flee, Odysseus and his men massacre them.
8	Lines 310-377	Leoides and Phemius One of the Suitors, Leoides, a priest, begs Odysseus for forgiveness, but Odysseus does not give it, killing him. Phemius, the minstrel who was forced to play for the Suitors, is spared by Odysseus after Telemachus speaks on his behalf.
9	Lines 378-432	Eurycleia Denounces the Disloyal Women After the bloodshed, Odysseus asks Eurycleia which servants were loyal to him in his absence. She declares that of the fifty serving women in the palace, twelve were disloyal to Odysseus. Odysseus asks they be brought to him.
10	Lines 433-501	Telemachus Executes the Serving Women Odysseus commands Telemachus to execute the disloyal servants to Odysseus, including the disloyal goatherd, Melanthius, who dies a brutal and painful death. Odysseus cleanses the main hall before he weeps at the joy of being finally home.

Key Characters in Book 22 (Mortals and Gods)

14	Odysseus	The main protagonist of the story. He is King of Ithaca, a Greek island, and he wants to return home after having been away for ten-years fighting in the Trojan War. He employs guile as well as courage to return to Ithaca, defeat the suitors, and resume his proper place as king.
15	Penelope	Wife of Odysseus. Whilst Odysseus was away, she had to fight off over a hundred suitors who wanted to marry her thinking that Odysseus was dead. She is depicted as shrewd, resourceful, and faithful.
16	Telemachus	The son of Odysseus. He would spend the first part of the story trying to find his father. Telemachus was born just when Odysseus left for the Trojan War, so is about twenty-years old at the point of his return.
17	Eurycleia	A maid in Odysseus' palace, she is loyal to Odysseus and Penelope and helps in Odysseus' pursuit of the suitors. She would recognise him when he is disguised.
18	Eumaeus	Odysseus' loyal swineherd, who grew up on Ithaca with Odysseus. He would be a loyal friend to both Odysseus and Telemachus and help them return to the palace to rid it of the suitors.
19	Philoetius	Odysseus' loyal cowherd. He would be a loyal friend to both Odysseus and Telemachus and help them return to the palace to rid it of the suitors.
20	Antinous	One of the main suitors in the story. A violent and over-confident character who strives hard to take Odysseus' throne.
21	Eurymachus	Another of the suitors. He is sly and manipulative, at one point fooling Penelope that he has no ill-intent. He arranges for the death of Telemachus, only to be outwitted by him.
22	Athene	Athene plays a vital role in the book as Odysseus' protector. It is she who secures the release of Odysseus from Calypso, and supports Odysseus in his plans to defeat the suitors.
23	Melanthius	Odysseus' disloyal goatherd who sided with the suitors in Odysseus' absence. He faces a brutal death at the hands of Telemachus.
24	Melantho	One of Odysseus' disloyal maids, who, after siding with the Suitors, dies a brutal and painful death.

Key Literary Techniques and Examples:

11	Epithet	Lines 1-4 Lines 22-26	"Throwing off his rags, resourceful Odysseus sprang to the wide threshold with the bow and the full quiver..." "Resourceful Odysseus, glowered at them, and answered: 'You dogs! You thought I'd never return from the land of Troy...'"
12	Epithet	Lines 77-79	"But at that very moment noble Odysseus let fly an arrow that struck him in the chest..." "Amphinomus, now, rushed at glorious Odysseus , attacking him with drawn sword..."
13	Simile	Lines 304-306	"Odysseus and the others, set upon them, like vultures from the mountains , with crooked talons and curving beaks, swooping on smaller birds that skim the plain beneath the clouds."

Themes in Book 22

25	Revenge	This is the predominant theme of Book 22, where Odysseus and Telemachus, aided by Eumaeus and Philoetius, exact revenge on the Suitors for their disrespect of Odysseus, his wife Penelope, and for the hosts' <i>Xenia</i> . The revenge on the Suitors is bloody and brutal. Perhaps though, the biggest example of revenge is when Telemachus executes the disloyal servants and goatherd in the most brutal fashion.
26	Justice	However, whilst revenge is definitely taken by Odysseus, both he, Telemachus, and the gods, in particular Athene, view this also as justice. It is not always about cold-blooded revenge as both Odysseus and Telemachus show mercy at times. Perhaps the best example of 'justice' is when both Leodes and Phemius beg for their lives. Odysseus' executes Leodes for his disloyalty, but spares Phemius who was forced to betray him.