






This component is called the 'Literature Study' and will form 50% of the Homer 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.

Telemachus 		Penelope 		The Suitors 		Polyphemus 		Circe 						
1	Books	Telemachus can be found in Books 19, 20, and 21. He can also be found in early books, most notably Books 1 to 4.	8	Books	Penelope can be found in Books 19, 20, and 21.	15	Books	The Suitors can be found in Books 19, 20, and 21.	22	Books	Polyphemus can be found in Book 9.	29	Books	Circe can be found in Book 10.
Summary of Telemachus' Character		Summary of Penelope's Character		Summary of The Suitors' Characters		Summary of Polyphemus' Character		Summary of Circe's Character						
2	Coming of Age	The Odyssey's secondary plot is the coming of age of Telemachus. Throughout the book, Telemachus grows to become a strong, determined and courageous man. This is best symbolised by his	9	Devoted	Penelope is a devoted wife and mother. Despite not knowing if Odysseus is dead or alive, and despite having 100 suitors wanting to marry her, she maintains faithful to her husband.	16	Represented by Antinous and Eurymachus	The Suitors are a group of 100 men from all of Ithaca who wish to marry Penelope following Odysseus' failure to return from Ithaca. They are best represented by two key Suitors: Antinous and Eurymachus.	23	Representation of Uncivilised	Polyphemus represents the concept of the uncivilised in The Odyssey. The Cyclops has no laws, no councils (democracy) or hospitality. They are the contrast to the humans who have all these things.	30	Magical	Circe is clearly magical and has magical powers, best demonstrated in her ability to turn humans into animals which she does when she turns Odysseus' crew into pigs.
3	Faithful	Telemachus is faithful to both his family (mother and father) and to the Gods. His faith in the Gods and destiny is undoubted, especially in Athena's. Throughout the whole story, Telemachus seems to be motivated by a faith.	10	Devious	Like her husband, Penelope is cunning and devious when she has to be. This is best symbolised with the story of the loom. She promised the suitors that once she completed her shroud for the eventual death of her father-in-law, she would choose a husband. Little did they know that each night she undid all her work.	17	Aggressive	Antinous and Eurymachus are incredibly aggressive towards most key characters. Their treatment of Odysseus when he presents as the 'Stranger', even throwing objects at him. They are also incredibly aggressive towards the other Suitors, even threatening them.	24	Barbaric	Polyphemus is barbaric. He nonchalantly and casually eats two of Odysseus' crew when they are trapped in his cave. He tears them apart easily and thinks nothing of it.	31	Merciless	The way Circe simply turns Odysseus' crew into pigs without a second thought demonstrates her mercilessness. She doesn't even think twice about it nor does she even try to understand who they are and why they are there.
4	Assertive	During the first books, Telemachus tries to assert his authority on the Suitors, but it does not quite work as the Suitors just disrespect him. Yet by Books 19, 21 and 22 he establishes an authority amongst the Suitors, best displayed with his handling of the Suitors treatment of the 'Stranger' (Odysseus).	11	Acceptance of Destiny	Penelope seems quite accepting of her destiny. This is best symbolised with the contest. She tells the Stranger, that she will hold a contest amongst the suitors that <i>only</i> Odysseus could ever win. This is no coincidence. It seems Penelope trusts in fate that the Stranger may be Odysseus, hence her choice of contest.	18	Murderous	Both Antinous and Eurymachus lead the plot to murder Telemachus upon his return from his travels to Pylos and Sparta. They fail due to the intervention of the Gods, but their intention was to kill him off.	25	Strong	Polyphemus is incredibly strong and shows this in Book 9 when he easily moves a boulder that acts as a door to his cave. It would have taken 22 carts to have pulled the rock into place had humans had to do it.	32	Vulnerable	When Odysseus confronts Circe, her reaction is pure fear. She clings to his knees and begs for mercy showing that her goddess-like appearance hides a more vulnerable character.
5	Loyal	Telemachus is taught the importance of loyalty by Nestor and Menelaus and demonstrates this with his loyalty to the father he hardly knows. After only just meeting his father, he plans the killing of Suitors, and then never wavers in his actions.	12	Hospitable	Penelope is the most gracious host despite the suitors abusing her hospitality. By offering xenia to the Suitors for over four years, she is the embodiment of virtuousness.	19	Disrespectful	The Suitors behaviour to their host, Penelope, is incredibly disrespectful. They abuse her hospitality, living off Odysseus' wealth and food for many years as they try to force Penelope to choose a husband.	26	Lacks Intelligence	Polyphemus demonstrates a lack of intelligence as Odysseus is easily able to fool him when he tells him his name is 'Nobody'. Polyphemus completely believes him without question.	33	Faithful	Circe, despite being an enchantress and goddess herself, listens and obeys the 'greater' gods. This is best exemplified when she realises Hermes' messages have all come true when she meets Odysseus.
6	Vengeful	Telemachus displays his vengeance when the Suitors are all dead when punishing the disloyal maids and servants in Odysseus' house. He executes a number of them in a brutal fashion.	13	Stoic	Penelope remains stoic throughout the ten years her husband has been missing. Stoic means to be endure hardship without showing signs of it. Throughout The Odyssey, she presents an image in public of someone in control, but in private, she grieves for her husband.	20	Deceitful	The best example of their deceitfulness is Eurymachus. Upon Odysseus revealing his identity to the Suitors and killing Antinous, Eurymachus attempts to convince Odysseus that it was all the now-dead Antinous' fault and he was the source of the abuse of his home.	27	Godless	Despite being the son of Poseidon, Polyphemus, along with all the other Cyclops, are godless and have no faith in the Greek Gods. In Book 9, Polyphemus is completely dismissive of Zeus when talking to Odysseus claiming he cares nothing for him and claims he is greater than he.	34	Hospitable	Circe exemplifies what it means to be a hospitable host. Granted it is after she has turned his crew to pigs, but she shows impeccable hospitality to Odysseus and his crew. So good in fact, that Odysseus has to be reminded by his crew to continue his journey back to Ithaca after a whole year.
7	Merciful	In Book 22, when handing out punishments to the disloyal servants, he spares the life of Phemius, the minstrel. He was forced to sing for the Suitors each night against his will, and Telemachus tells his father to spare his life.	14	Indecisive	Throughout The Odyssey, Penelope is a quandary about what to do: remain loyal to her husband or marry another. She never quite decides and leads the Suitors on, much to their anger, but this may be the reason. She may just be buying time for either her husband to return or for her son to grow and take control.	21	Ambitious	All the Suitors are ambitious, but Antinous and Eurymachus, more than anyone. They both display little feelings towards Penelope and are more interested in what marrying her brings: to become King of Ithaca.	28	Gentle, Caring, and Civilised	Despite his brutality and godlessness, Polyphemus displays a caring and delicate nature in the way he looks after his flock of sheep. He carefully and sensitively nurtures and cares for them showing a side that Odysseus did not want to really reveal.	35	Loving	Circe is in love with Odysseus and yet does not deny him his return home. When he approaches her to leave, she encourages it and helps him prepare to visit the Land of the Dead, despite it breaking her heart.