

# Scheme of Learning: The Homeric World: Literary Study

## Topic Sequence:

1

## The Odyssey (Books 9, 10, 19, 21, and 22)

## Topic Overview:

This topic is the Literature Study that makes up half of the second exam paper. Pupils have to study five books [chapters] from the twenty-four that make up The Odyssey, and they are books 9, 10, 19, 21, 22. It is only from the content and themes of these books that pupils can be asked exam questions on. However, to have a fuller understanding of these books, pupils must study the entire book, even if not all books [chapters] are read in detail. The flow of the topic is very similar to that of any study of literature: a study of the plot, the key characters and their development, the main themes of the book, and then the linguistic tools that the author has employed in his writing. The flow of the lessons mirror this, and each book is analysed for plot, characters, linguistic devices, and themes.

## Lesson Sequence:

The lessons have been sequenced with the aim that pupils will have a thorough understanding of the plot The Odyssey, but there will also be a forensic analysis of the five books highlighted as part of the specification. The reading of The Odyssey should be a bit more familiar with pupils by this point of the course as they have looked at extracts from it, and also longer extracts from other ancient texts such as The Aeneid.

The first few lessons provide that overview. The lessons look at the overarching storyline to The Odyssey, the main characters, but most importantly, how the book is structured. The Odyssey is not structured in a conventional way, and uses the linguistic device of flashbacks to tell the story. It is only in the second half of the book when Odysseus is in Ithaca that the story reverts to a narrative where the climax to the story slowly builds. Pupils in the first few lessons will look at this structure and develop an understanding not only of how it is structured but why Homer has chosen to do it this way – what impact it has on the reader.

The next series of lessons focus on the key character of Telemachus, Odysseus' son. As he is the focus of the first four chapters of The Odyssey it is an excellent opportunity to practice the reading of The Odyssey, understand the context of it, and analyse the character of Telemachus and the structure of the books. Pupils won't be examined on this but it provides necessary content for a greater understanding of Books 9 and 10.

This will further be developed in the next series of lessons that look at Books 5 to 8 and it is our first introduction to Odysseus. In order to understand Book 9, which is an account by Odysseus of his adventures with Polyphemus the Cyclops, we have to understand who Odysseus is recounting this story to, and why. To not place this in context will lead pupils to misunderstanding the concept that Polyphemus is an adventure that happened in the past, not the present.

The next series of lessons tackle the two books from the specification, Books 9 and 10, that are essentially one-off stories of Odysseus' travels. We look at the plot of each story, the linguistic devices used by the author and their effect, the character development of Polyphemus, Circe and Odysseus.

The final stages look at Books 13 to 24, with particular focus on Books 19, 21, and 22. These 13 books tell the story of Odysseus' arrival in Ithaca and his fight to win back his throne, his wife, and his uniting of his family. These are not only important books as they complete the story arch but also serve as a means to analyse further key characters: Telemachus, and Odysseus' wife, Penelope, as well as the Suitors themselves. Throughout the study of these books, an analysis of plot, characters and themes are looked at.

The last few lessons look at The Odyssey again from an overview point of view. This is mainly done through the development of themes throughout the books: themes such as xenia, justice, and revenge.

## Sequence of Lessons:

1	Odyssey Lesson 1 - Overview
2	Odyssey Lesson 2 – Structure
3	Odyssey Lesson 3 – Literary Techniques
4	Odyssey Lesson 4 – Themes
5	Odyssey Lesson 5 – Telemachus' Journey
6	Odyssey Lesson 6 – Odysseus in Pheacia
7	Odyssey Lesson 7 – Book 9 (Plot)
8	Odyssey Lesson 8 – Book 9 (Literary Devices)
9	Odyssey Lesson 9 – Book 9 (Character - Odysseus)
10	Odyssey Lesson 10 – Book 9 (Character - Polyphemus)
11	Odyssey Lesson 11 – Book 10 (Plot)
12	Odyssey Lesson 12 – Book 10 (Literary Devices)
13	Odyssey Lesson 13 – Book 10 (Character - Odysseus)
14	Odyssey Lesson 14 – Book 10 (Character – Circe)
15	Odyssey Lesson 15 – Calypso to Ithaca
16	Odyssey Lesson 16 – Book 19 (Plot)
17	Odyssey Lesson 17 – Book 21 (Plot)
18	Odyssey Lesson 18 – Book 22 (Plot)
19	Odyssey Lesson 19 – Character (Penelope)
20	Odyssey Lesson 20 – Character (Other Characters)

## Topic Resources:

<b>Knowledge Map:</b>	Knowledge Maps 1 to 10: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Overview</li><li>2. Plot</li><li>3. Book 9</li><li>4. Book 10</li><li>5. Book 19</li><li>6. Book 21</li><li>7. Book 22</li><li>8. Odysseus</li><li>9. Other Main Characters</li><li>10. Themes</li></ol>	<b>Prescribed Sources:</b>	<b>Prescribes Sources:</b> Books 9, 10, 19, 21, and 22 of The Odyssey

## Supportive Reading:

<b>Homer</b>	The Odyssey
<b>Spark Notes</b>	The Odyssey: A Study Guide