**EPIC HERO**

The larger-than-life central figure of an epic story is known as the **epic hero**. Usually a man, he stands for the ideals of a culture. He performs deeds of great valor that require superhuman courage. Sometimes he is assisted by supernatural forces. However, most epic heroes also have character flaws or weaknesses. They might be overly confident or curious. They might ignore warnings or advice.

**Directions:** Use this chart to identify Odysseus’ strengths and weaknesses. The first one is done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shows loyalty in his desire to return home</td>
<td>pride</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...
**Reading Strategy**

**READING AN EPIC POEM**
To read an epic poem, slow your reading rate to help you follow the narrative. Read difficult passages more than once. Try reading the poem aloud slowly and clearly.

**Directions:** Use this chart to record major events in the epic. Write a brief description of a key event. Then describe the **imagery** and **figurative language** that helps you visualize what is happening during an event. Be sure to note **epic similes**, poetic comparisons that are extended for several lines. The first one is done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Event</th>
<th>Imagery</th>
<th>Figurative Language/Epic Similes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hermes flies to Calypso’s island to bring Zeus’s message that Calypso must release Odysseus. (Book 5)</td>
<td>Hermes uses his beautiful golden sandals to fly effortlessly over land and water.</td>
<td>Hermes is compared to a gull skimming just above the water as it hunts for fish (lines 9–12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

... (continued table with blank spaces for further entries)
from the ODYSSEY: PART 1

Vocabulary Study

WORDS IN CONTEXT

A. Directions: As your teacher reads the passage, listen for each boldfaced word and clues to its meaning. Then discuss possible meanings of the word.

Daniel had always lived a life of travail. Fortunately, he didn’t mind hard labor. But now he was faced with a terrible nightmare. A gruesome monster had become Daniel’s sworn enemy, or so it seemed. Every waking moment of his life was filled with foreboding about what would happen next. Daniel didn’t know how he had attracted such a powerful adversary. The monster followed him everywhere. He had never felt so harried in all his days. His so-called friends treated him abominably, shutting their doors in Daniel’s face. Daniel was appalled by the situation. What could he do to assuage the monster? He could think of nothing to calm the creature. The monster pursued Daniel with ardor. “Why does the monster follow me with such passion?” he wondered. “What can I do?”

He stopped to think long and deep. Daniel’s meditation paid off: He remembered some magical lilies that grew nearby at this time of year. His mother had once showed him where to find them.

Daniel followed the old path to a meadow where he saw a profusion of the fabulous flowers. He filled an enormous vase to overflowing from the meadow’s abundant supply. Then he carried the ponderous load up a hill to the monster’s den. He left the heavy urn by the entrance, hid behind an old oak tree, and called to the monster. When the monster saw the lilies, she laughed and jumped with joy. Within moments, the monster had turned into a beguiling princess. “I knew you would help me,” the charming damsel proclaimed.

B. Directions: Write each boldfaced word from Part A beside its definition.

1. an enemy __________________________
2. shocked, horrified ____________________
3. large amount ________________________
4. terribly, awfully _____________________
5. heavy, awkward ______________________
6. hard work ___________________________
7. calm, ease ___________________________
8. passion, eagerness ____________________
9. dread for the future ___________________
10. hassled, bothered ____________________
11. charming, enchanting ________________
12. deep thought ________________________
Vocabulary Practice

A. Directions: Choose a word from the box to complete each sentence.

1. Most heroes go through plenty of hardship and ________ before achieving their goal.
2. An epic hero might act because he feels an intense ________
3. Many epic heroes have to face a violent ________ who represents evil.
4. Heroes must often ignore temptations that are ________ but dangerous.
5. A feeling of ________ suggests that trouble is ahead.
6. A hero’s journey includes a vast ________ of challenges and tests.
7. Facing so many difficulties would leave most people feeling ________ and exhausted.
8. Friends can help to ________ a hero’s fears or doubts.
9. A hero’s tasks can be a heavy and ________ weight that he must bear.
10. A monster might behave so ________ that readers feel it deserves to die.
11. Readers can be both amazed and ________ by a monster’s violence.
12. A hero might use thoughtful ________ to find the best way to overcome such a monster.

B. Directions: Write a paragraph for a travel section that describes the vacation a person might have if he or she visited the islands that Odysseus and his crew traveled to. Use at least four words from the box.
Vocabulary Strategy

WORDS WITH THE PREFIX be-
The prefix be-, which means “thoroughly” or “excessively,” is used to form a number of English words. In beguiling, it is combined with the noun guile, which means a “cunning or deceitful behavior.” Thus, something that is beguiling is thoroughly capable of misleading or deceiving. Recognizing this prefix when it appears in words can help you determine their meanings.

A. Directions: Choose a word from the box to complete each sentence. Refer to a dictionary if you need help.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bedazzled</th>
<th>belaboring</th>
<th>bemoaning</th>
<th>besmirch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>begrudge</td>
<td>belittle</td>
<td>bemused</td>
<td>bewail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. He will ________________ his honest reputation if he gets caught telling a lie.
2. The coward is always complaining and ________________ his fate.
3. A hero does not ________________ the difficulties that he must overcome.
4. A faithful follower cannot be ________________ by a flashy temptation.

B. Directions: Write sentences using the four words from the box that were not used in Exercise A.
Reading Check

Directions: Recall the events in Homer’s epic poem. Then answer the questions in phrases or sentences.

1. What does Calypso do to help Odysseus?

2. Where does Odysseus want to go?

3. What does Odysseus do to the Cyclops?

4. What dangers are posed by the Sirens, Scylla, and Charybdis?

5. What happens when Odysseus reaches the island of the sun god, Helios?
LITERARY ANALYSIS
For questions 1–5, see page 1138 of the Pupil Edition.

Directions: Answer each question.

6. Analyze Epic Hero Complete each sentence.

Three of Odysseus’ strengths are ________________________________

Two of Odysseus’ weaknesses are ________________________________

Odysseus is an epic hero because ________________________________

7. Analyze Epithets Epithets are brief descriptive phrases used to describe a character or thing. Explain what each of the following epithets says about Odysseus’ character:

“the great Odysseus” ________________________________

“Odysseus, master mariner and soldier” ________________________________

“man of woe” ________________________________

8. Understand Character Motivation Odysseus makes sure that Polyphemus knows his name because ________________________________

9. Interpret Epic Simile Reread the epic simile on page 1136, lines 193–199. The lines describe the men caught by the monster Scylla. This simile compares the men with _________

10. Interpret Allusions In the opening of Book 1, the poet calls upon Muse the daughter of Zeus. He calls upon Muse because ________________________________

11. Examine Theme Which of these themes will you find in Part I of the Odyssey?

a. A hero must know when to back down from a challenge.

b. A hero must use clever deceit to survive.

c. A hero must never tell the truth to strangers.

The event that conveys this theme is ________________________________