

The Odyssey, Reading Comprehension Questions

Directions: On a separate piece of paper, write the answers to the following questions. Each answer must be written in a complete sentence!

This assignment will be collected during the first week of school.

Book I:

1. Where is Odysseus?
2. What or whom is Athena disguised as?
3. Why do Telemachos and his mother need Odysseus?
4. Why does Odysseus's wife have suitors?
5. What does Athena advise Telemachos to do?

Book II:

6. Describe the trick that Penelopeia plays on her suitors.
7. What specifically does Athena do to help Telemachos in this book?

Book III:

8. What is Nestor's opinion of Odysseus?
9. Describe Nestor's reaction when he realizes that Telemachos's companion is Athena.

Book IV:

10. What clues cue Menelaos and Helen that Telemachos is Odysseus's son?
11. What is Menelaos' opinion of Odysseus?
12. Describe Antinoos' plan to destroy Telemachos.

Book V:

13. Who is Hermes, and what is his mission?
14. What can Hermes do with his wand?
15. Who is holding Odysseus captive?
16. What is Calypso's reaction to having to let Odysseus go?
17. What is the main problem Odysseus faces while traveling by sea?
18. What happens to Odysseus at the end of Book 5?

Book VI:

19. What "subliminal" message does Athena give to Nausicaa while she lies sleeping?
20. Who is the only person who doesn't run away from the terrifying Odysseus? Why doesn't she run away?
21. Is it pure luck that Nausicaa helps Odysseus? Explain.
22. What does the fact that Odysseus won't bathe in front of the girls tell us about the kind of person he is?
23. Does Nausicaa believe her parents will help Odysseus?
24. Why won't Nausicaa let Odysseus ride in her cart?
25. What instructions does she give Odysseus?

Book VII:

26. What craft are the Phaiacians best known for?
27. How is Odysseus treated as a guest?

Book VIII:

28. Describe the activities that King Alcinoos arranges to entertain Odysseus.
29. Who is Demodocos?
30. How is King Alcinoos helping Odysseus to get home?
31. What is Odysseus's reaction whenever Demodocos sings about the Trojan War?

Book IX:

32. What was the effect of the Lotus plant?
33. How heavy is the door of the Cyclops' cave?
34. What is the first villainous thing the Cyclops does?
35. Why doesn't Odysseus kill the Cyclops when he has the chance?
36. What does Odysseus give the Cyclops as a gift?
37. What gift does the Cyclops give in return?
38. What does Odysseus tell the Cyclops that his name is?
39. How do Odysseus and his men sneak out of the Cyclops' cave?
40. What foolish thing does Odysseus do?
41. What did a soothsayer once predict would happen to the Cyclops?
42. What does the Cyclops ask his father Poseidon to do for him?

Book X:

43. Who is the god of wind?
44. What favor does he do for Odysseus and his men?
45. What stupid mistake do some of the men make on the ship?
46. How do even more men die after the bag accident?
47. What does Circe do to some of Odysseus's men?
48. How does Odysseus get her to release his men?
49. What instructions does Circe give Odysseus?

Book XI:

50. What does Odysseus do to call the souls of the dead to him?
51. Who is Teiresias and what does Odysseus want from him?
52. What does Teiresias predict for Odysseus?
53. What should Odysseus do to the suitors at his house?
54. What does Teiresias say Odysseus should do after dealing with the suitors?
55. What is the name of Odysseus's mother and how did she die?
56. Why can't Odysseus hug his dead mother?

Book XII:

57. Why should Odysseus be wary of the Sirens?
58. What should he and his men do to keep safe from the Sirens?
59. Describe Scylla.
60. What will Charybdis do if Odysseus's ship gets too close?
61. What does Odysseus keep secret from his men?
62. Describe the circumstances of Odysseus's shipmates' deaths. Is it Odysseus's fault?

Book XIII:

63. Describe Odysseus's journey home from Scheria.
64. What does Poseidon initially want to do to the Phaeacian ship?
65. What decision does Alcinovs make because of the wrath of Poseidon?
66. Why and for how long does Athena want Odysseus to be in disguise?
67. What does Athena instruct Odysseus to do now that he has returned to Ithaca?
68. Whom does Athena instruct Odysseus to visit first?

Book XIV:

69. What is the name of the swineherd?
70. What does Odysseus tell the swineherd about himself?
71. Describe Odysseus's disguise.

Book XV:

72. How has Eumaios proven his faithfulness in this and previous books?
73. Who do you think will be the first person to know Odysseus for who he really is?

Book XVI:

74. What does Telemachos call Eumaios? Why?
75. Describe Athena's changes to Odysseus's appearance.
76. Who does Telemachos think Odysseus is when Athena removes his disguise?
77. What do Odysseus and Telemachos plan to do?
78. Describe Penelopeia's confrontation with Antinoos.

Book XVII:

79. What does Theoclymenos prophesy to Penelopeia?
80. How does Odysseus test the suitors?
81. Who recognizes Odysseus right away? How does he recognize him?
82. Describe Melanthios.
83. Who makes Odysseus extremely angry?
84. Why does Odysseus want to test his servants and his wife before revealing his identity?

Book XVIII:

85. Why does Odysseus get in a fight with Iros? Who wins?
86. What trick does Penelopeia play on the suitors in this book?
87. Which three characters anger Odysseus in this book?

Book XIX:

88. What does Odysseus the beggar tell Penelopeia about Odysseus?
89. How does Eurycleia recognize Odysseus?
90. How did Odysseus get the scar on his leg?
91. Describe Penelopeia's challenge for the suitors.

Book XX:

92. Name two people who are cruel to Odysseus the beggar.
93. Who proves himself to be a kind and faithful servant?
94. What do you think Odysseus is going to do to the suitors?

Book XXI:

95. Whom does Odysseus trust to help him defeat the suitors?
96. Why don't the men want Odysseus to try to string the bow?
97. How does Odysseus prove his true identity?

Book XXII:

98. What did Odysseus prove about his abilities when he shot the arrow through the twelve axes?
99. Whom does Odysseus kill first and why?
100. How does Eurymachos plead his case with Odysseus?
101. Whom does Telemachos catch raiding the storeroom of weapons and what do they do with him?
102. Which two servants were spared?
103. How does Odysseus identify the unfaithful maids?
104. What does Odysseus do to the unfaithful maids?
105. What is done to Melanthios?

Book XXIII:

106. How does Penelopeia test Odysseus?
107. Why does she test him?
108. Describe the one last task that Tiresias told Odysseus to complete. What will be his reward for this task?
109. After Odysseus tells Penelopeia about all his adventures, he sets off again. What does he go to do? What does he tell Penelopeia to do?

Book XXIV:

110. How does Odysseus prove that he is really Laertes' son?
111. What is Laertes afraid of?

112. Who comes to battle Odysseus? Whom are they led by?

113. Whom does Odysseus kill?

114. Who stops the battle?