LIVING LIMBRATURIE SERIES

NESVEEDEN/HEE

A PERMA-BOUND PRODUCTION

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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SYNOPSIS

Ulysses's adventures result from forces beyond his control: at the wedding of Peleus to Thetis, Eris, the Lady of Discord, tosses on the banquet table a golden apple marked "To the Fairest." The squabble that arises among Hera, Athene, and Aphrodite leads to a formal beauty contest judged by Paris. All three offer Paris bribes, he chooses Aphrodite for her offer of Helen, the beautiful wife of Menelaus and queen of Sparta. On a diplomatic voyage to Sparta, Paris kidnaps Helen and carries her back to Troy. Greek leaders who had courted Helen fulfill their vow to rescue her. The war lasts ten years; Ulysses ends it by building the Trojan Horse. The Greeks sail for home, but Ulysses is fated to wander ten years.

Laden with treasure and the few supplies that his fleet can hold, he sets out and on the second day arrives among the Ciconians, who attack the 150 crewmen. Leaving eighteen corpses on the beach, Ulysses departs and, jettisoning his treasure, encounters a stiff breeze that takes him to North Africa. In Libya, the crew encounters a sleepy people who live in dreams spawned by fragrant lotus. Ulysses forces them back to the sea, where he faces his own terrifying visions and knows that they will come true.

Hungry and threatening mutiny, the crew insists on making a landfall. Ulysses faces Polyphemus, a one-eyed giant, one of a colony of Cyclopes. The giant eats two sailors and threatens the other eleven. Posing as "Nobody," Ulysses offers Polyphemus wine, a new experience for the giant. After the huge body reposes in sleep, Ulysses pokes out his eye with a heated sword blade. He and his men hide beneath the giant's sheep and goats and escape the giant's cave. On the way out of the harbor, Ulysses makes a fateful error: he boasts and tells Polyphemus his real name. The giant, son of Poseidon, god of the sea, calls down a curse that will keep Ulysses at sea for many years and bring him home to a hostile environment.

The Greek fleet turns north, enters Aeolus's fortified lair, and receives hospitality. After revealing his connection with the Trojan War, Ulysses accepts a precious gift — the winds tied in a leather bag. With a gentle west wind left free to blow the ships to Ithaca, Ulysses comes within sight of home. While he rests, his men, drawn to the mysterious bag that Aeolus gave Ulysses, unleash the other winds, which blow the ships back to Aeolus's island home. Ulysses, grieved at their folly, concludes that the gods toy with him.

Because Aeolus refuses to help a man who bears ill luck, Ulysses sails for six days, arriving at the Island of the Racing Sun. As day and night swiftly change places, the sailors repair the boats. A mob of giants attack and destroy

two ships and their crews. Only Ulysses's ship escapes. With a crew of 45, he sails north for three days; cautiously, he lands again and surveys a small castle from which come strange howling sounds. After a filling meal of stag, Ulysses keeps guard and dispatches Eurylochus with a group to survey the castle, where Circe, a beautiful seer, weaves and sings. She feeds the men a potent meal and turns them into swine.

Ulysses, concerned at the men's lengthy absence, attempts to better his record of losing crewmen by vowing to rescue the advance party. Hermes, messenger of the gods, clarifies for Ulysses his suspicion that Poseidon, the earth shaker, dislikes him. With a moly or charm from Hermes, Ulysses enters Circe's home, and averts her power to convert men into beasts. He agrees to stay with the amorous Circe in exchange for his men's freedom.

Before Ulysses again sets sail, the seer warns that he must enter the underworld, which lies far to the west. When he arrives among the dead, he offers a blood libation to enable the dead to speak. Among them is Elpenor, his crewman, who fell into the sea on the voyage. Teiresias, the noted prophet, warns that Ulysses has many more trials to overcome: the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, the island of Hyperion, and the battle with suitors, who court Penelope and scheme to steal Ulysses's place in Ithaca. Forewarned, Ulysses eludes the Sirens, who lure him toward the rocks, and enters a strait terrorized by Scylla and Charybdis. Passage costs him six sailors, whom Scylla eats alive. He lands his ship on Thrinacia. At departure time, the ship is becalmed. His rebellious men disobey and eat the sun god's cattle to save themselves from starving. A killer storm destroys his boat, leaving him only a raft, on which he floats nine days to Calypso's isle. The ageless Titan reveals visions of old battles but not his future. He dispatches a crow to spy on Ithaca; the report confirms that Penelope stalls her suitors by pulling out her weaving. which she intends to complete before choosing a husband.

Calypso agrees to help Ulysses return home. She prophesies that he will be driven from home and die far from the sea at the behest of Poseidon, who forgives no one. With the aid of friendly gods, Ulysses departs on a new vessel, again battles Poseidon's fury, and arrives near Phaeacia, where Ino's veil keeps him afloat. The royal princess, Nausicaa, brings him to the palace and entertains him with a song accompanied by the lyre. Moved by her charm, he reveals his true identity. The king and queen outfit him with a ship; he sails away, leaving Nausicaa pining for his love.

Back in Ithaca, Ulysses assumes the guise of a beggar and joins forces with Eumaeus, his faithful swineherd, and Telemachus, the son he left twenty years before. Ulysses endures insults and abuse before setting his bow on a tar-

get and winning the contest for Penelope. With deadly aim, he, his son, Eumaeus, and the goatherd kill the usurping suitors. Happy once more to be with his son and wife, Ulysses promises that Telemachus will someday bend the bow of his renowned father.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Bernard Evslin (April 9, 1922-June 4, 1993), a native of Atlantic City, New Jersey, was the son of inventor Dr. Leo Evslin and Tillie Stalberg Evslin. A student at Rutgers University for two years, he left college in the early 1940s to act in the Toy Theater and produce original one-act plays. As a corporal, he served with the U.S. Army in World War II from 1942-1945. Before leaving home, on April 18, 1942, he married Dorothy Shapiro Evslin (1923-), a college professor and feminist writer and collaborator on The Greek Gods (1966), which the couple published with the assistance of editor and producer Ned Hoopes. The Evslins, who had four children, sons Thomas and Dr. William Lee Evslin and daughters Pamela Zino and Janet Clinton, lived at 158 Sutton Manor, New Rochelle, New York, until Bernard's death from cardiac arrest while swimming off Kauai, Hawaii, near William's home.

Evslin settled in New York in 1950, after beginning a job as scriptwriter for "Mighty Mouse," "Heckle and Jeckle," and "Tom Terrific," products of Terrytoons. He saw his stage play versions of Mark Twain's The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg and Henry James's The Bostonians produced in Pennsylvania's Hedgerow Theater, the oldest repertory company in the nation, and Massachusetts playhouses. On October 17, 1962, Evslin's one Broadway play and survivor of prefatory runs in Toronto, Cleveland, and Detroit, Step on a Crack, starring Rita Hayworth and Gary Merrill, opened at the Ethyl Barrymore Theater and closed in one night. It was followed by The Geranium Hat, a comedy which played New York's Orpheum Theater, and the autobiographical The Merchants of Venus, a diatribe on Hollywood's crass star system. Perhaps Evslin's most enduring work is his 24-volume Monsters of Mythology, concentrating on Greek lore with a smattering of biblical, Norse, and Celtic lore, which he produced at the request of his wife, who taught mythology at Westchester Community College.

CRITIC'S CORNER

An admirer of Tennessee Williams and a noted young adult mythographer, playwright, director, and producer of documentary film, Bernard Evslin wrote the type of prose that clarifies as it excites readers with a love and appreciation of ancient literature. Despite his failure as a Broadway playwright, he received critical acclaim from *Variety* for "The Face of the Land," the best television film of 1959, as well as from the National Education Association (1961), a nomination for a National Book Award (1975), *Horn Book* honor list (1975), and the Washington Irving Children's Book Choice Award (1986).

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- To explain the importance of heroes and heroines as cultural role models.
- To comment on gods, demigods, and monsters as characters

- 3. To contrast behaviors and coping skills on land and sea
- To discuss the effects of homesickness and restlessness
- 5. To account for boasting as a human weakness
- 6. To summarize the physical hardships inherent in sailing
- 7. To note the value of trusted underlings, whether in a crew or house staff
- 8. To locate terminology common to sailors, travelers, and geographers
- To contrast atmospheres in the underworld, Circe's grotto, Nausicaa's banquet, and other memorable sites
- To express the longing and fears of long-separated family members

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To explain how Argo, Eumaeus, and Eurycleia greet their master
- To contrast Penelope, Nausicaa, and Calypso as female attractions for Ulysses's love
- 3. To detail the rise and fall of Ulysses's fortunes
- 4. To contrast Eurylochus, Telemachus, and Eumaeus in terms of obedience
- 5. To explain the causes and outcomes of the Trojan War
- 6. To credit Ulysses for duty and responsibility to his crew and his throne
- 7. To note Circe's attentions to the tattered wanderer and his crew
- 8. To recount the insults Ulysses suffers while he is dressed as a beggar
- 9. To express examples of pride and self-glorification
- 10. To explain why Ulysses's myth is still pertinent

MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the book. Explain the meaning of each. Chapter title and page number are given so that you can note the context from which the item is taken.

1. He was the master strategist of the Greek forces in their war against Troy, the war that started with an apple, ended with a horse, and was fought by a thousand kings for the love of a single woman. (Prologue, p. viii) (This sentence summarizes in few words the greatness of Ulysses, whom the Greeks called Odysseus. A thinker, he was the favorite of Athene, who helped him assume disguises and warned him of difficulties. Known for his ability to lie, Ulysses is also credited with other unworthy traits, such as an attack on his friend Diomedes during a two-man night-time mission outside the gates of Troy. Unlike Agamemnon, the Greek commander-in-chief, Ulysses possessed less titular power, but more insight into situations and the ability to employ divergent thinking, as displayed by the Trojan Horse, a far-fetched but creative conclusion to a messy ten-year

conflict. Ironically, it was Helen, the object of the mission, who threatened the ploy by circling the horse and calling to the men in an approximation of their wives' voices. Ulysses kept quiet and held his seat, but wept for his beloved Penelope.)

- 2. The sail was raised only for a fair wind, or could be tilted slightly for a quarter-wind, but was useless against headwinds. (Ships and Men, p. 2) (Bernard Evslin's description of the type of ship that comprised his fleet explains Ulysses's logistics and the conditions under which he attempted to battle the implacable Poseidon. With limited maneuverablity, the ships, far less adaptable than the sailing ships of the 18th and 19th centuries, "were almost always at the mercy of the weather and were often blown off course." Because they were brass-beaked warships rather than passenger vessels, they "[lacked] the cargo space" for lengthy voyages and were forced to stop for food and water at whatever harborage they neared, despite dangers from land and sea.)
- 3. Who was Morpheus? (The Lotus-Eaters, p. 10)
 (By explaining the origin of Morpheus and his lore,
 Evslin establishes an example of myth and its purpose.
 By connecting kinship lines to Hades, ruler of the dead,
 and Hypnos, Evslin prepares the way for Morpheus's
 actions in laying "a little death" on dreamers "to prepare
 [them] for the kingdom of death." Persephone, goddess
 of the underworld, remarks that his secret pocket of
 "bright things" allows him to offer repose and colorful
 pictures on "the walls of sleep... so that man may not
 know death before he dies." Evslin develops the image
 with commentary about the creation of dream pictures,
 which puzzle and delight the dreamer.)
- 4. Ulysses kept the helm, grim and unsmiling. For he knew that what he had seen painted on the walls of his sleep was meant to come true and that he was sailing straight into a nightmare. (The Lotus-Eaters, p. 15) (After interacting with crewmen, who are harmlessly, rapturously wrapped in the drowsy pleasures of escape, Ulysses, his dreams akin to knives of steel, foresees the decade of grimness and near-death experiences that lie ahead. He knows that only one man will survive and that the others, for all their hopes, will die far from home, only one buried according to Greek traditions. Symbolically, he grasps the helm, taking the blame for duty and leadership, for the choices he makes, and for being the first to face them.)
- 5. Invisible hands held torches for them, guided them to the baths, anointed them with oil, and gave them fresh clothing. Then the floating torches led them to the dining hall, where they were greeted by Aeolus and his twelve handsome children. (Keeper of the Winds, p. 30) (Significant to ancient lore is the taboo associated with inhospitable treatment of strangers. Many stories particularly the theft of Helen and the rifling of her hus-

band's property by Paris, a diplomat and trusted house

- guest recount the broken alliance between guest and host. In each instance, the sin results in terrible recompense. Thus, both parties guest and host living in a dangerous world fraught with sudden eruptions of violence, were expected to maintain the code and to live amicably and civilly, whether entertaining or being entertained.)
- 6. Then Ulysses told of the Trojan War; of the abduction of Helen, and the chase, and the great battles; the attacks, the retreats, the separate duels. He spoke of Achilles fighting Hector and killing him with a spear thrust, of Paris ambushing Achilles; and, finally, how he himself had made a great hollow wooden horse and had the Greek armies pretend to leave, only to sneak back and hide in the belly of the horse. (Keeper of the Winds, p. 31)
 - (A full recounting of the entire story requires a study of Homer's Iliad and Odyssey and of Virgil's Aeneid. Additional information about Menelaus, Agamemnon, Ajax, Helen, and the Trojan Women requires a knowledge of Sophocles and Euripides's tragedies and Ovid's Metamorphoses and Heroides, which fill in major episodes. No reader can encompass the whole Trojan War cycle without a thorough grounding in classical civilization by Greek and Roman authors.)
- 7. Would you rather stay here with your men and guard the ship while I visit the castle or would you rather I keep the beach? Choose. (Circe, p. 51)

 (A compelling aspect of Ulysses's leadership is his fairness and consideration for others, even underlings on his staff. Eurylochus, who faces the dangerous reconnoitering of Circe's isle, prefers a land assignment to more sea duty and "a floor that does not pitch and toss and roll." Ulysses allows him his choice.
- 8. Steamy shapes separated, heads and shoulders of mist leaning over the trench to drink, growing more solid as they drank. (The Land of the Dead, p. 75) (A tradition in much of world literature is the perilous encounter with the land beyond life, the territory of the dead. As in Black Elk Speaks, "Gilgamesh," Dante's Inferno, and Longfellow's Song of Hiawatha, Homer attempts the impossible a descriptive picture of the soul in the afterlife. It is significant that Ulysses first meets his mother, Anticleia, who died after he left for Troy and whom he now meets on unequal footing, live son and dead mother. The eerie situation fails to daunt his mission: a word with Teiresias, world-renowned adviser to kings who can give "good counsel to get home.")
- "I am one of the Titan brood," said Calypso. (Calypso, p. 109)
 (The cast of heavenly powers shifts over the years of Greek literature. From earliest times, people worshipped the Titans, the mighty, atavistic earth gods whom humans associated with the sea and earth, lightning and sun. From Saturn, the father of the Titans, came more civilized, more human, less vindictive

deities called Olympians, ruled by Zeus and his brothers, Poseidon and Hades. An understanding of the difference between the Titans from the previous bloodthirsty era and their supplanters, the Olympians, who sprang from them explains why Athene, Hermes, and Zeus intercede for Ulysses against Calypso to aid the hero in his voyage home to Ithaca.)

10. Your husband and I were talking one time around the watch-fire on a night between battles, and he spoke, as soldiers speak, of home. (The Return, p. 163) (In a soldier's voice, Ulysses, pretending to be an acquaintance of himself, recreates a night-time conversation around a sentry's fire. Like homesick people in any war, the battle-weary Ulysses fears that Penelope will be widowed. With the guile of a skilled liar, the pretender tells Penelope how to cope with the suitors by having them bend the master's bow. Thus, while posing as a friend, he passes along a needed message to end the contretemps in Ithaca of who rules in Ulysses's stead. Note that the watch fire was also used as a signal fire to pass messages from Troy overland to Greek sentries at home. It was this primitive communication system that prepared Clytemnestra for the return of her husband Agamemnon, whom she murdered on his first day home from Troy.)

COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

Questions 1 - 4 Literal Level

1. What causes the Trojan War?

(The Trojan War is a human offshoot of a squabble among deities, who often involve themselves in people's lives and fortunes. At the marriage of Pelis and Thetis, the Lady of Discord, Eris, feels slighted because she does not receive an invitation. To spark a fight among the most powerful goddesses, she tosses a golden apple on the table. The bauble is labeled "to the Fairest" but does not indicate who deserves the title. After Hera, goddess of marriage and queen of heaven, disputes the claims of Aphrodite, goddess of love, and Athene, goddess of wisdom, the gods pass the burden of judging the beauty contest to Paris, a prince of Troy who had been living incognito and keeping sheep.

At the judging, each of the three goddesses offers a bribe. Hera has power to give and can make Paris a mighty king. Athene has wisdom, and offers Paris the secrets of life and death. The third, Aphrodite, offers a gift that does not belong to her — the loveliest of earthly women, Helen, wife of Menelaus. The thought of possessing a woman of heavenly beauty, a daughter of Leda and Zeus, convinces Paris to award the apple to Aphrodite. Asserting himself for the first time, Paris leaves his shepherd's job and returns to the palace of Priam. From there, he journeys to Sparta, ostensibly on a diplomatic mission, and, during an overnight stay, steals Helen and returns to Troy.)

2. How does Polyphemus influence the length of Ulysses's voyage?

(After Ulysses's departure from Troy, he beaches his fleet on a small island in the Aegean Sea and reconnolters the landfall. Before he can elude capture, he discovers that the inhabitants are "Cyclopes, huge savage creatures, tall as trees, each with one eye in the middle of his forehead." Exiled to the island for a fault against the gods, these crude, amoral giants practice the shepherd's trade, subsisting on meat, ox blood, and buttermilk. After Polyphemus immures Ulysses and his thirteen men in a cave, Ulysses tempts him to taste wine, which lulls Polyphemus to sleep. Ulysses blinds the giant, then escapes.

The skill and speed that return Ulysses to his skiff bring out his cockiness. Having introduced himself to Polyphemus as "Nobody," Ulysses dares to correct the misconception and to boast and belittle the pained giant: "Poor fool! Poor blinded, drunken, gluttonous fool — if anyone else asks you, it is not Nobody, but Ulysses who has done this to you." These words violate the great injunction against pride. Polyphemus explodes in anger, hurls a boulder that kills most of Ulysses's crew, and prays to his father, Poseidon: "God of the Sea, I beg you, punish Ulysses for this. Visit him with storm and shipwreck and sorceries. Let him wander many years before he reaches home, and when he gets there let him find himself forgotten, unwanted, a stranger.")

3. How does Ulysses capture Nausicaa's heart?

(After navigating the worst of Mediterranean monsters and eluding two bold and alluring sorceresses, Ulysses, rescued by Ino's buoyant scarf, washes up on Phaeacia, a rocky islet that tears his flesh and hurls him groaning against a rock. Before the backwash carries him beyond the reef and back to sea, Ulysses climbs into the coastal undergrowth and lies near the mouth of a river among the reeds. At the command of Athene, who appears in a dream, Nausicaa, royal daughter of Alcinous and Arete, goes to the river to wash clothes. Nausicaa and her handmaids encounter the naked, salt-encrusted stranger. The princess alone dares to speak to him and invite him to the palace.

Nausicaa and Ulysses share a common bond: he longs for his wife; the princess has need of a likely mate, but cannot find a man to marry. He teases her with light banter and idle talk of her beauty; she responds good-naturedly. Arete disapproves the welcome of a stranger who conceals his name, but Nausicaa obeys her intuition and the look in Ulysses's eyes that proves he has known torment and proved himself equal to the punishment of angry gods. Before the evening's court entertainment, the bold princess locks the bard in the stable, strums his lyre, and sings for the banquet. As the lyrics laud the deeds of Achilles, Ajax, Menelaus, and Diomedes, Ulysses responds to her clever choice of songs. At the sound of his own deeds, he weeps.

The family, honored to have so noble a hero at their court, gives Ulysses a ship. He admits to King Alcinous

that he is drawn to the lovely, witty, courteous, and kind girl, but that he is too old to court her. Alcinous acknowledges that Nausicaa is stricken with love and promises to watch her to keep her from stowing away in Ulysses's vessel. After Ulysses sails to Ithaca, Nausicaa remains single and becomes the first female bard, traveling about the Mediterranean to sing of Greek heroes and deeds of war. The tale concludes that she either came to dwell in Ulysses's court or that she married a blind poet, who turned her songs into "one huge tapestry of song.")

4. How does Ulysses reunite with Penelope?
(With the help of Telemachus, Ulysses, disguised as an aged beggar, visits the Queen's chambers, even though Eurymachus, the leader of the suitors, threatens the prince with a knife. Sitting with his face averted, he trembles with longing for his lovely wife. Penelope offers him guest privileges and asks about the beggar's knowledge of Ulysses. The beggar divulges a meeting with Ulysses, whom he claims was a fellow soldier at Troy. The story of the beggar's "free-booting band" includes retellings of Ulysses's exploits.

In a private tale, untold in the bards' stories, the beggar describes the night that the Trojan Horse was taken into Troy, when Helen, a taunting mischief-maker, taps on the horse's abdomen and imitates the voices of the Greek warriors' wives. The last voice she mimics is Penelope's. Ulysses groans and trembles, but manages to "mask his distress and use all his force and authority to keep the others quiet." The beggar concludes, "A tiny incident, madame, but it showed me how much he loved you.")

Questions 5 - 8 Interpretive Level

5. How do separate incidents reveal individual qualities in Ulysses?

(Ulysses, like all humankind, learns from his adventures the universal truths. From his boast to Polyphemus, Ulysses learns that god will not be mocked and that proud humans must suffer for their callousness and impiety. From the journey to the underworld, Ulysses learns that the price of courage and boldness often carries unforeseen penalties, particularly the death of Anticleia, the hero's mother, who confronts him among the bloodless spirits. The grievous reunion with Ulysses's old comrades wrenches his heart from recounting war stories.

Other details suggest that the price of leadership is also high. Ulysses, who frequently mans the helm and confronts the fearsome monsters that he has seen and heard in prophecy, takes seriously his duty to his crew. He attempts to protect them from harm, yet cannot come between them and their natural follies and appetites. When they hunger for forbidden food, Ulysses knows that they will die for violating the cattle of Hyperion. When their curiosity and greed cause them to open the bag of winds, he suffers even more from having seen the white pillars of home and from being blown once more back to Aeolus's kingdom of the winds.)

6. What humbling experiences precede Ulysses's restoration to his throne?

(Ulysses returns to Ithaca as a humble beggar and accepts the hospitality of a lowly herdsman, Eumaeus, one of the truly faithful employees in ancient lore. In addition to receiving food and shelter at his own pig pens, Ulysses receives a reminder that many wanderers tell the same tale, but, as Eumaeus summarizes, "Even liars have to eat. Ulysses never turned a beggar away, and neither will I." Against Eumaeus's advice to avoid the boastful, luxurious suitors at the castle, Ulysses insists on approaching the door to beg.

That same night, Telemachus, a quarry of the vengeful suitors, slips into Eumaeus's hut, "all aglitter, fledged by firelight, a golden lad." The son who was an infant when Ulysses departed for Troy asks that the beggar sleep in the pig byre. The urge to embrace Telemachus thrusts Ulysses into his real body and vigor. The two reunite, but Ulysses must continue scouting the dangerous edge of the Ithacan court until the time is right to reveal his royal lineage and claim to the throne.)

7. How does Ulysses let his victims display their own destructive urges?

(Without divulging his name and purpose, Ulysses creeps about the castle at dusk the next day and is welcomed by Argo, his golden-brown hunting dog, who collapses with joy at reunion with his master. Antinous, an arrogant jokester, offers churlish hospitality, and "a few scraps to spare, even for a scurvy old wretch like you." He bashes Ulysses with a footstool. Eurymachus, leader of the suitors, scowls, but says nothing. Iros, the usual beggar at court, rebels at an outsider taking handouts meant for him and bawls, "Get out of here, you miserable cur."

The crowning achievement, the test of strength, puts them all in their places as one by one, they fail to string the king's bow. Antinous and Eurymachus squabble over Ulysses's request for a turn at the contest. The strong arm and true aim of the returned king needs no more proof than a single shot through twelve axe-rings lined up as targets. Startled with their abrupt coming-to-knowledge about the beggar's identity, both Antinous and Eurymachus hear Ulysses's prayer to Apollo, god of archers: "dear lord of the silver bow, archer-god, help me now to hit a mark no man has hit before." With that invocation, Ulysses initiates a round of carnage that cleanses the palace of would-be kings.)

8. To which gods does Ulysses owe the most credit? (Ulysses, a clever and strong warrior, remains the favorite of Athene, goddess of wisdom and war. It is her craftiness that gets him safely ashore at Ithaca and back on his throne. Before the voyage ends however, Ulysses must rely on Hermes, the gods' messenger, who provides him with a moly to overcome Circe's magic, and on Zeus, who allows Athene to talk him into defying Poseidon and helping Ulysses escape a storm. Other deities, for example, the sea nymph Ino and Morpheus, god of sleep, do their part to bolster

Ulysses's flagging spirits and lack of sorcery. Ino's scarf keeps him afloat after Poseidon smashes the ships and threatens him with drowning. Morpheus, bringer of dreams, knows that the future Ulysses faces is no mortal dream but a nightmare suited to a man of vision and courage. Humbled by the excellence and courage of a mortal, Morpheus pays Ulysses homage. The most ominous of prophecies is Calypso's murky foretelling that Ulysses will "come to a place where no man salts his meat, and where they think the oar is a winnowing-fan." Even her powers, stirred from a magic log, cannot withhold Ulysses from the inevitable death far from the sound of the sea that has been a part of every major episode in his life. So distraught is he with his languishing on her isle that he calls on the gods to return him home or send him to Tartarus to reside with the wispy shades. Calypso, adhering to Hermes's message to help Ulysses prepare a raft, agrees that he "can't fight Zeus" and surpasses the divine orders by helping him stock a small vessel with supplies for the trip from Ogygia to Ithaca.)

Questions 9 and 10 Critical Level

9. What realistic torments daunt Ulysses?

(Beyond the fantastic elements — an island where night and day pass with unseen rapidity, a man turned into a crow that spies on Ithaca, and sea monsters who lure ships — are the realities of simple boat captains attempting to sail without complicated navigational tools, without sails that can withstand heavy weather or violent headwinds. After departing from what is now the Asian coast of Turkey, Ulysses, who is blown as far south as Libya, must endure foreign peoples, uncivil treatment, and unknown languages and customs as he makes his way over uncharted waters that seem to wash up on hell itself. Fearful for his wife and son, he believes his memories and dreams, for they are all he has of home. His treasure is jettisoned and his crew rapidly depleted by storm, attack, and mishap at sea.

On return to safety and normalcy, Ulysses, like warriors from other times and places, relives the trauma of the Trojan War and exerts his vigor to reclaim a grown son and wife. But he cannot reclaim time, which has cost him his mother Anticleia, wearied his dog Argo to the grave, and hurried his father to the raw edge of death. With what is left of his own time, Ulysses can comfort himself with the remains of family and court life— a simple herdsman who willingly faced a pack of dilettante suitors, a son who risked all to locate him and a wife who defied a pack of fortune-hunters long enough to keep herself pure for her husband.)

10. Why does the author imply that Nausicaa may have played a role in creating the Greek epic of Ulysses? (Scholars have long debated the differences between the Iliad and the Odyssey. The traditional author of both, Homer, a blind poet living centuries after the Trojan War, composed a textured verse incorporating the tales and folk myth that surrounded the real multinational war, a conflict unearthed and studied by German archeologist Heinrich Schliemann. Since there is a marked difference between the two texts in their attitudes toward longing and their approaches to malefemale relations, some translators and critics surmise that the Odyssey poet was female. In this telling, Nausicaa, the songstress who becomes the first traveling bard, does the unthinkable — she abandons her birthright as princess of Phaeacia, rejects all suitors, and becomes a wanderer, a dangerous lifestyle for a single woman at any social level.

The second suggestion intrigues scholars with its simplicity. If Nausicaa was present when Ulysses arrived on Phaeacia and did confront him with his exploits, it is possible that her gift for poesy and compassion caused her to choose a male poet as mate and to share the story that had, by Homer's time, spread around the Mediterranean rim. The time difference between Ulysses's wanderings and Homer's writing would rule out Homer as her mate, but the writer deflects such questions with a simplified disclaimer: "But it all happened too long ago to know the truth of it." Note that the idea of a blind poet is traditional. As a natural outgrowth of myth, which strikes a balance between fancy and reality, the poet, who was honored as a seer or visionary, might be expected to give up outward vision for inward sight. The same myth applies to Homer, although no proof exists that he was blind or even existed at all.)

Questions 11 and 12 Creative Level

- 11. Write a journal entry from the point of view of Elpenor, Eurylochus, Telemachus, Eurycleia, Eurymachus, Iros, Antinous, or Penelope. What joys or fears color your memories of Ulysses? What reason do you have to anticipate his return to the throne of Ithaca?
- 12. Compose an essay, verse, or song lyrics on your emotions and thoughts upon returning home after a lengthy absence. How will you cope with change, loss of old friends and family, and anger at those who have been untrue to you? What pleasures will you first enjoy? What foods? What entertainment? What visits?

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Business and Economics

- Make a list of items necessary for a tour of the Mediterranean Sea by small ship or raft. Compute the cost of basic tools, food, water, weapons, fishing supplies, and sailing gear. Include such miscellaneous items as extra sails, caulk, and flares for emergencies.
- Discuss why obstructions such as monsters along ancient trade routes would raise the price of imported goods and would inhibit the export business and travel for pleasure.
- 3. What problems of overland trade routes would rival those of the merchant sailor, as with robbers, lack of communication with home, and local taxes?

Geography '

- 1. Explain why the map of Ulysses's voyages blends fact and fiction. Name and locate places that really exist, particularly Troy, the Aegean Sea, Crete, Samos, and Ithaca. Which sites are most doubtful, for example, Tartarus and the fortified island of Aeolus, king of the winds?
- List and explain geographical and nautical details, especially strait, landfall, back-tow, reef, whitecap, whirlpool, outcropping, grove, headland, moor, spume, and current.

Social Studies and Religion

- Describe the social situation on Phaeacia when Ulysses arrives. Why do Nausicaa's parents question her meeting with an unidentified stranger? Why does she choose to become a wandering minstrel?
- 2. Discuss the author's belief that Poseidon never forgives. Why do Hermes, Athene, and Zeus pity Ulysses? Why does Poseidon continue to threaten Ulysses long after the hero has suffered cruelly? Why does Ulysses survive ten years of wandering?
- 3. Why is Penelope unable to fend for herself in her own home by ejecting the suitors? What does the untenable situation with the quarreling suitors suggest about the power of women, even queens, or about sons whose fathers cannot protect them? Debate how an heir to Ithaca's throne would compromise plans of the suitors.

Psychology

- What qualities set Ulysses apart from ordinary people, for instance, duty, responsibility, leadership, endurance, pride? How does Ulysses's pride endanger the entire fleet?
- What effect does the storyteller achieve by these events:
 - taking Ulysses in sight of the white columns of home before returning him to Aeolus's island
 - b. implying that Nausicaa loves Ulysses and spends her life singing songs of his heroics
 - c. reuniting Ulysses and his mother in Tartarus
 - d. establishing an enmity between a sailor and the sea.

Mathematics

Discuss the use of numbers to indicate loss of crewmen and the whittling down of a fleet of three ships and 150 crewmen to one survivor on a raft. At that rate, what are the odds that Ulysses will remain alive and in command of a vessel at the end of a ten-year voyage?

Science and Health

1. What natural phenomena account for winds, whirlpools, dangerous rocks, sirens, and narcotic plants? Why might the poet have begun with simple fact and expanded it to epic proportions, as with the one-eyed giants and the cannibalistic monsters in the sea crag?

- 2. What are the dangers to a marooned sailor on a raft at sea? Why is Ulysses encrusted with salt? How can currents endanger a survivor on the final swim to land? How would exposure and dehydration deplete Ulysses's body?
- 3. What is the purpose of a bow so stiff that no ordinary man can flex it? How does the bow excel other weapons? Why is Telemachus eager to become as strong an archer as his father?

Language and Literature

- Read Alfred Tennyson's poem "Ulysses" and determine a list of characteristics that the hero still exhibits in old age. In what ways is Telemachus different from his father? How do the two men accommodate each other's traits?
- Discuss the sense impressions that enable the reader to experience the buffeting of wind and water and to endure hunger, uncertainty, fear, pain, and the other challenges that Ulysses conquers. Explain why such passages satisfy adventure readers.
- 3. Compose an extended definition of epic. What qualities of the great Greek warrior appear in current television and movie heroes? How would Poseidon, Hermes, Zeus, or Athene be cast in a modern story?

Art

- 1. Sketch a sailing vessel that moves by oars and sails. Include the black hull, which is caulked with pitch to keep out water. Why did ancient mariners draw a large eye on the front of their vessels?
- Select a natural scene that you think a professional artist would like to draw or photograph, perhaps a field of grazing cattle or sheep; a gathering of osprey, herons, and gulls; or a sunrise over rocky Ithaca. List details that would situate the view along the Mediterranean Sea, as with local costume, houses, and coastal meals of seafood, figs, olives, wine, cheese, goat milk, and bread.
- 3. Make suggestions for a movie logo to accompany a film version of this story. What aspects of the supernatural should receive priority? What ordinary details would you need to research, for example, a sailor's attire, style of worship, or seating for a banquet?

Music

Select music to accompany these scenes: arrival in Phaeacia, a woman singing and weaving, men turning into pigs, a man building a boat, and souls pressing around a ditch filled with blood.

Journalism

Compose a newspaper article describing archeological discovery of an artifact proving the existence of

Ulysses. Consider a statue, piece of a sunken ship, treasure from Troy, Circe's palace, a huge cave filled with the bones of goats and cannibalized men, or an Iron Age mosaic depicting Nausicaa's family and lore.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

- Compose a scene in which Ulysses teaches Telemachus to launch and sail a small craft. Chart a restful vacation for father and son, for example, to Crete, Samos, or Delos.
- 2. Read Tim Severin's "The Quest for Ulysses," National Geographic, August 1986, 196-225. Summarize methods by which specialists reconstruct Ulysses's voyage. Select a detail that seems logical, for example the study of sea currents to determine drift and direction or the shape of Iron Age boats and their maneuverability with oar, tiller, and sail. Consider also biological evidence, such as plants, sea creatures, and other animals indigenous to certain islands and harbors.
- Consult a summary of the Trojan War, then sketch a
 map naming the best known cities, bodies of water, and
 islands of the ancient world. Include Athens, Sparta,
 Ithaca, Aulis, Alexandria, and Troy as well as Lesbos,
 Crete, Samos, and the Aegean and Mediterranean
 seas.
- 4. Lead a discussion about Ulysses's decision to kill Penelope's suitors. Why is the carnage necessary? Why do the men consider it their right and privilege to court the most eligible queen in all Greece? How does Telemachus react to the threat to his mother, his patrimony, his life, and his father's good name? Debate whether Telemachus would make a worthy replacement for his father if Ulysses never returns home.
- 5. Read aloud Ulysses's sodden arrival on Phaeacia. Discuss why Nausicaa is able to keep her wits in the face of a naked and disoriented stranger. What qualities suggest that she would make a good queen? What behaviors and events prove that she is skillful and knowledgeable? Why has she been suggested as the possible author of Ulysses's myth?
- 6. Contrast the women human and divine in Ulysses's life: Nausicaa, Helen, Penelope, Athene, Circe, Calypso, the Sirens, Scylla, Charybdis, Arete, Eurycleia, and Anticleia. Why is Ulysses proud to display emotion without shame? What characteristics of himself does he relate to Penelope before he reveals that he is the real Ulysses?
- 7. Contrast stories of the mythic adventurers Jason, Ulysses, Aeneas, Hercules, Dionysus, Belleraphon, Perseus with events in the life of Pecos Bill, Hiawatha, Johnny Appleseed, Calamity Jane, Joe Magarac, Bigfoot, High John the Conqueror, and Paul Bunyan. What elements of American myth differ from the Greek epic of Ulysses, for example the intervention

- of the gods through storms and earthquakes or dreams and visions?
- Create a glossary of terms necessary to an understanding of the story, e. g. strait, vortex, naiad, prow, booty, and imperiled.
- 9. Write a theme in which you anticipate Ulysses's return to the throne. How will subjects, servants, Penelope, Laius, and Telemachus participate in the ceremonies and joyous celebration? How will governance change with the suitors removed from the palace and with the greatest hero from Greece home at last? How will Telemachus's life be eased by his father's return?
- 10. Make an oral report on minimal supplies needed for Ulysses's fleet. Name, for example, wax, canvas, pitch, pegs, nails, hammer, saw, and other tools for the pilot and captain as well as water, food, first aid supplies, and extra clothing for the crew. Suggest some ways to keep maps and charts waterproof and food free of insects and mice.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

- List in chronological order and describe significant events in Ulysses's career. Include the courtship of Helen, building the Trojan Horse, talking with Teiresias, killing Eurymachus, identifying himself to Telemachus, greeting and thanking Eumaeus, shooting through the axe-heads, throwing away treasure, receiving hospitality from the king of winds, swimming to Phaeacia, shooting charioteers' horses, concealing his identity from Penelope, greeting Argos and Eurycleia, stringing the rhinoceros-horn bow, and serving as chief strategist of the Greek forces.
- Make a list of scenes that express deep emotion. Name and describe Ulysses's yearning for news of Ithaca, the crew's hunger, the promise to bury Elpenor, seeing Achilles and Ajax again, losing crewmen to Scylla, fleeing toward the Sirens, bobbing to the surface of Charybdis, bidding farewell to Arete and Alcinous's daughter, and reuniting with Penelope.
- Compose a list of twenty questions to complete an interview about the Trojan War from the point of view of the victor. Balance the idea of treasure with the fact of long years from home and family and unforeseen hardships on the journey home.
- 4. Using Ulysses as a model, compose an extended definition of leader. Contrast the leader in both winning and losing modes and justify heroic or admirable actions in each extreme. Also, comment on Ulysses's skill at lying, deceiving, and charming women.

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Heroes and Monsters of Greek Myth (1967) Heroes, Gods and Monsters of the Greek Myths (1967)

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Signs and Wonders: Tales from the Old Testament (1984)

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RELATED READING

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Magic

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Greek Myths

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Donna Rosenberg's World Mythology

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VOCABULARY TEST

Underline a word in parentheses to complete each of the following sentences.

- 1. His bed had been made in front of a (reef, headland, grotto, addenda, lyre), he saw.
- 2. So he marched on toward the castle, through the pack of lions and wolves, who leaped about him, (inept, fawning, foretelling, ordaining, beseeching).
- 3. She became the first woman (spar, demigod, siren, ogre, bard) and traveled all the courts of the world singing her song of the heroes who fought at Troy, but especially of Ulysses and of his adventures among the terrible islands of the Middle Sea.
- 4. The bright (flax, naiad, spume, helm, prow) leaped through her fingers as if it were dancing to the music in her voice.
- 5. For as Circe passed among them now she touched each one on the shoulder with a wand, saying: "(Glut, Pelt, Gibber, Grope, Grapple) and swink, eat and drink, gobble food and guzzle wine."
- 6. In the path of light stood a row of battle-axes driven into the earth, their rings (aligned, aghast, agile, gluttonous, enchanted).
- 7. On this day he could not believe his luck when he saw a boat actually landing on the beach and thirteen meaty-looking sailors (baling, spurned, disembark, growling, shrouded) and begin to march toward his cave.
- 8. But was a gallon enough for that great (foliage, embrasure, underchief, gullet, cudgel)?
- 9. Visit him with storm and shipwreck and (limpets, osprey, polyps, titans, sorceries).
- 10. The winds were (relented, routed, deigned, lisping, pent) in their mountain.
- 11. But according to his (unfurled, tumultuous, prudent, cherished, exploited) custom, Ulysses beached only two ships, keeping one moored in the harbor in the event of attack.
- 12. And he realized then that the three sailors he had sent (clamoring, vetoing, aloft, spitted, abase) had climbed to a mumbling death.
- 13. He beached his (ogre, libation, carcass, skiff, keel) and struck inland.
- 14. If there was one, there must be more; and with game like that the ship could be (enticed, provisioned, ponderous, bowered, starboard) in a few days.
- 15. You may already be (ordained, buoyant, offshore, tainted, anointed) with death, you and your men, making your fates too heavy for any ship to hold.

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Name the locations described below.					
	1. a kingdom whose ambassador steals a Spartan queen				
	_ 2. the prison of the winds				
	3. a great meadow grazed by black goats				
	4. a palace with white columns				
	5. a small residence where a singing woman weaves flax6. the home of a giant herdsman				
	7. a whirlpool where Ulysses's raft bobs to the surface				
***************************************	8. a pleasant waterway where girls wash clothes and play ball				
	9. a place where a magic log shows the future				
	10. the African land where Morpheus plays				
Port II: True/Ealee (20 points)					
Part II: True/False (30 points) Mark the following statements either T for true	e or F if any part is false				
1. Thetis begins the squabble by throw	• •				
2. The Cyclopes believe that no outsic					
3. Scylla grabs six crewmen before UI					
4. Calypso refuses to provide Ulysses	•				
5. With the aid of Ino's veil, Ulysses s					
	llysses hides food in the leather bag at the top of the mast.				
	rsation with Teiresias, Elpenor falls from the mast and drowns.				
8. Athene enlists Zeus's aid against P					
	ysses shoots a stag and drags it to the shore for the crew to eat.				
	ead, pays Ulysses's way to a visit with Trojan War heroes in the				
11. The Ciconians attack with brass-bla	ded chariot wheels and the enticing fragrance of lotus.				
12. Ulysses carries the corpse of Argos	, who collapses with joy after encountering his master.				
13. The crow agrees to spy after Ulysse					
14. Telemachus is eager to bend his fat	ther's bow.				
15. Because his men disobey him, Ulys	ses tosses overboard the loot from the Trojan War.				

THE ADVENTURES OF ULYSSES Part III: Fill-in (30 points) Complete each of the following lines with a term. that Hermes hands Ulysses protects him from Circe's magic wand. 2. Penelope intends to weave a ______ for her father-in-law before taking a new husband. 3. To Polyphemus, Ulysses falsely introduces himself as 4. On Thrinacia, Ulysses warns his men to leave unharmed the sun god's ___ 5. After tricking the bard, _____ sings to notes of the lyre. 6. A dream tells Nausicaa to wash clothes before her 7. _____ fears Ulysses as a bringer of bad fortune. 8. Aphrodite, Athene, and ______ vie for the title of "Fairest." 9. ____ challenges the second and newest beggar at Ulysses's table. 10. _____ comes to Calypso to insist that Ulysses leave Ogygia. Part IV: Essay (30 points) Discuss the significance of two of the following passages. 1. Ulvsses said: "O King, if I were the age I was twenty years ago when the ships were launched at Aulis, then the favor I would ask is your daughter's hand. For surely I have traveled the whole world over without seeing her like. I knew Helen, whose beauty kindled men to that terrible war. I knew the beauties of the Trojan court whom we took captive and shared among us. And, during my wanderings I have had close acquaintance with certain enchantresses whose charms are more than human, namely Circe and Calypso. Yet never have I seen a girl so lovely, so witty, so courteous and kind as your young daughter. Alas, it cannot be. I am too old. 2. Ulysses' problem was made worse by victory. 3. He studied his face — the wide, grooved brow, the sunken eyes, the red hair, the jutting chin. And he said to himself: "This man is a hero. Terrible are his needs, sudden his deeds, and his dreams must be his own. I cannot help him." 4. He saw his crew flung about the deck like dolls, and the tattered sails and the broken spars, and he did not know

whether he was awake or asleep — whether this was some nightmare of loss, or whether he was awake now and had slept before, dreaming a fair dream of home. Whichever it was, he began to understand that he was being

made the plaything of great powers.

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COMPREHENSION TEST B

bard	hawser	lotus	reef	strait		
oooty caulk	Gorgon	lyre	satyr	tack		
entaur	headland helm	moly	shroud siren	Titan		
cudgel	keel	osprey port	spume	whitecap winnowing fan		
aun	libation	prow	starboard	yaw		
		_ 1. the place wher	e the navigator stands			
		_ 2. an alluring wor	man			
		4. a sudden unexpected lurch 5. the beam to which the anchor is fastened 6. a gift of wine to the gods 7. an immortal deity				
·····						
	8. a singer and entertainer 9. a decoration on Athene's shield					
		10. a circular move	ment of water			
: Short Answ a word or phr	er (30 points)			sponse in the blank are		
	er (30 points) ase in answer to each		estions. Place your res	sponse in the blank pro		
	er (30 points) rase in answer to each	n of the following que	estions. Place your res an War last?	sponse in the blank pro		
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THE ADVENTURES OF ULYSSES	
Part III: Selecting Details (20 points) Place an X beside any statement that is true of Ulysses:	
1. advises that Helen's suitors swear an oath.	
2. sees pictures of the underworld in the magic log.	
3. reveals his identity to Telemachus after the archery contest.	
4. pretends to have sat by a watch-fire with the great Ulysses.	
5. angers Poseidon by boasting of wounding his son.	
6. sees his mother after her death.	
7. leaves Troy before the end of the war.	
8. brings all three ships safely to Phaeacia.	
9. shoots the horses of the attacking charioteers.	
10. waves a wand that turns the pigs into men.	
Part IV: Essay (30 points) Choose two and answer in complete sentences.	
1. Explain the role of prophecy in Ulysses's story.	
2. Discuss Ulysses's knowledge of the sea.	
3. Discuss the sequence of events that lead to the Trojan War.	
4. Justify the men's decision to defy Ulysses and kill Hyperion's cattle.	
± .	

ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY TEST

1. grotto 6. aligned 11. prudent 2. fawning 7. disembark 12. aloft

3. bard 8. gullet 13. skiff 4. flax 9. sorceries 14. provisioned

5. Glut 10. pent 15. tainted

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Location Identification (20 points)

6. Polyphemus's cave 1. Troy

2. Aeolus's kingdom 7. Charybdis

3. land of the dead 8. Phaeacia

4. Ithaca 9. Calypso's grotto

5. Circe's castle 10. Libya

Part II: True/False (30 points)

1. F 6. F 11. F 2. T 7. F 12. T 3. T 8. T 13. T 4. F 9. F 14. T 5. T 10. F 15. F

Part III: Fill-in (20 points)

1. moly 6. marriage 2. shroud 7. Aeolus 3. Nobody 8. Hera 4. cattle 9. Iros 5. Nausicaa 10. Hermes

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Identifying Terms (20 points)

1. helm 6. libation 2. siren 7. titan 3. moly 8. bard 4. yaw 9. Gorgon 5. hawser 10. eddy

Part II: Short Answer (20 points)

1. 10 11. Calypso 6. Ithaca 2. 20 7. Hyperion 12. Ulysses 3. Helen 8. Telemachus 13. Circe 4. rhinoceros 9. Scylla 14. Penelope 5. Polyphemus 10. wine 15. 150

Part III: Selecting Details (20 points)

1. X 6. X 2. 7. 3. 8. 4. X 9. X 5. X 10.

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.



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