

Mr. Francis  
European Literature

### Searching for a Reason

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#### A Modern Perspective on Homer's Odyssey

One text will be assigned reading for every Stuyvesant sophomore this school year: Homer's Odyssey. But the question of why we read it, although not always asked, has several responses.

It is one of the earliest examples of European literature... It provides a sprawling depiction of the earliest eras of the culture that is widely considered to be the beginning of the Western tradition... It uses storytelling techniques that later writers have often imitated, and it includes moments that have been referenced countless times in many forms of expression...

Your challenge: Choose an idea that is addressed across the narrative arc of Homer's Odyssey. In an essay, establish and defend a strong thesis that considers a modern assessment of how Homer addresses your chosen idea.

The topic is deliberately broad, to allow for a wide range of responses; your thesis and analysis should be fairly specific. In addition to writing mechanics, the assignment will be assessed based on strength of argumentation, appropriate use of textual support, correct use of MLA style, and completeness and convincingness of synthesis between arguments and evidence.

\* \* \* You will be expected to use the vocabulary we have developed during class (assume the instructor is familiar with terms). \* \* \*

To support your discussion, you must use concrete details and at least one piece of quoted text from each of the following sections:

Books 1-4: the story of Telemakhos

Books 5-8: Odysseus travels from the cave of Kalypso to the court of Alkinoos

Books 9-12: Odysseus narrates the story of his wanderings

Books 13-16: Odysseus returns to Ithaka

Books 17-20: Odysseus returns to his hall

Books 21-24: Odysseus confronts the suitors and the aftermath

**Length guidelines:** 3-4 pages (do not exceed 5 pages).

**Format guidelines:** All submissions must be double-spaced with a Times New Roman font and one-inch margins all around.

**Assessment:** Your response will be assessed using the Stuyvesant English Department Rubric.

**Submission guidelines:** You must upload to turnitin.com by 7:59 a.m. on the assigned due date.

Rely on your own insights: there is no need to consult outside sources. Ask me first to approve any additional sources. Any assistance in completing this assignment must be noted in your declaration. I will not tolerate academic dishonesty.