

Odyssey

Author
Homer

Year Published
725-675 BCE

Original Language
Greek

OVERVIEW

The Long Journey Home

Odyssey is one of the oldest adventure tales, enthralling readers with the clever hero Odysseus's 10-year journey home after a long war in Troy.



Underworld

Visits dead war heroes and learns how to return to Ithaca



Aeaea

His crew turned to pigs by the witch-goddess Circe, he lives in luxury with her for a year



Island of the Cyclops

Displays his cunning and blinds one of Poseidon's sons, Polyphemus



Scylla and Charybdis

Navigating between the two monsters, he manages to escape destruction



Ogygia

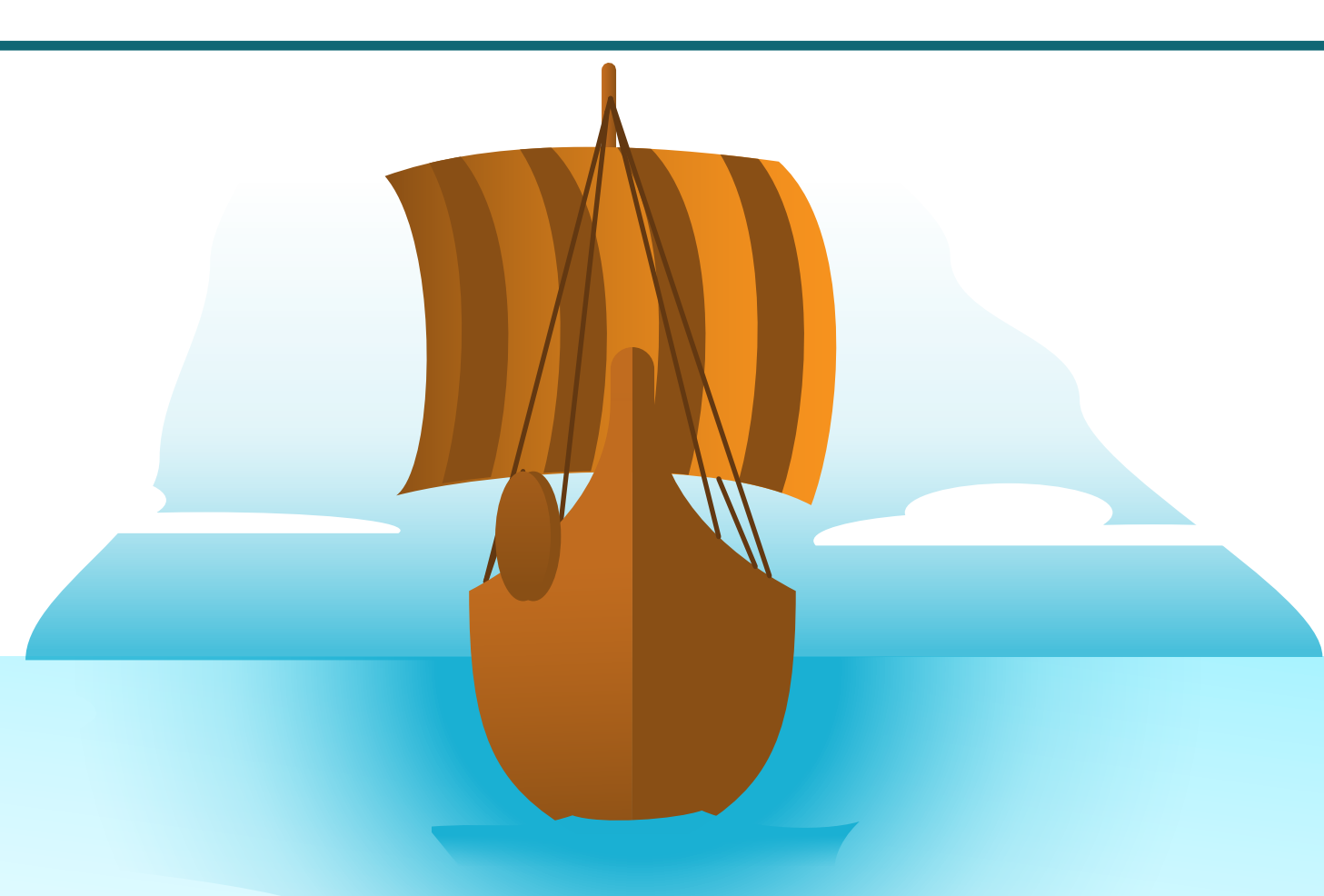
Held captive by the alluring nymph Calypso in a 7-year love affair



Ithaca

Disguised as a beggar, he kills Penelope's suitors and is reunited with his wife and son

Themes



Hubris

The hero's tragic flaw; excessive pride leads him to taunt the gods, who send obstacles to prolong his journey.



Temptation

Odysseus and Penelope both face temptation as they try to remain loyal; Odysseus is lured by sirens and goddesses, but Penelope stays true.

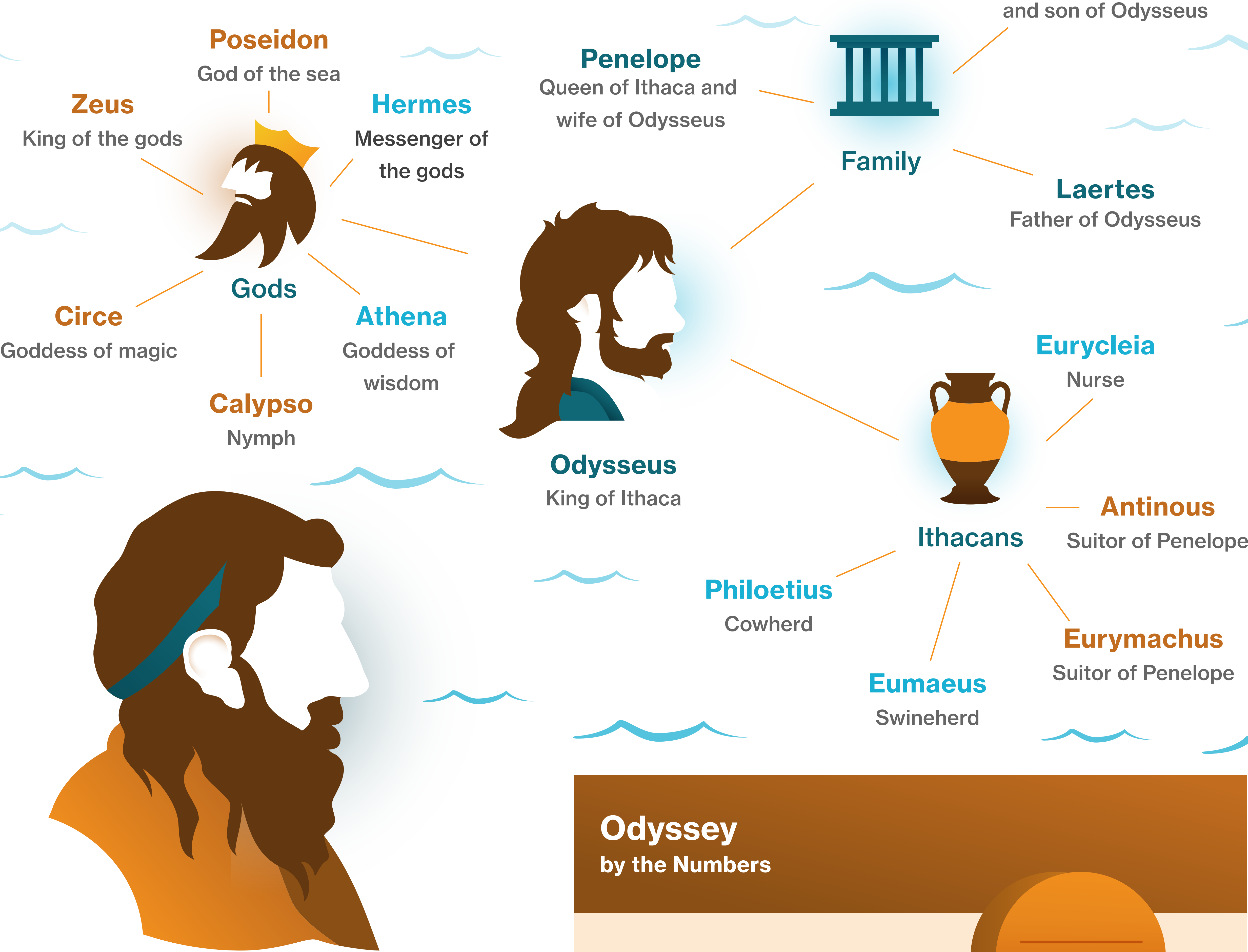


Homecoming

Stories of homecoming throughout the tale are capped by Odysseus's eventual heroic return to reclaim his kingdom, home, and family.

Main Characters

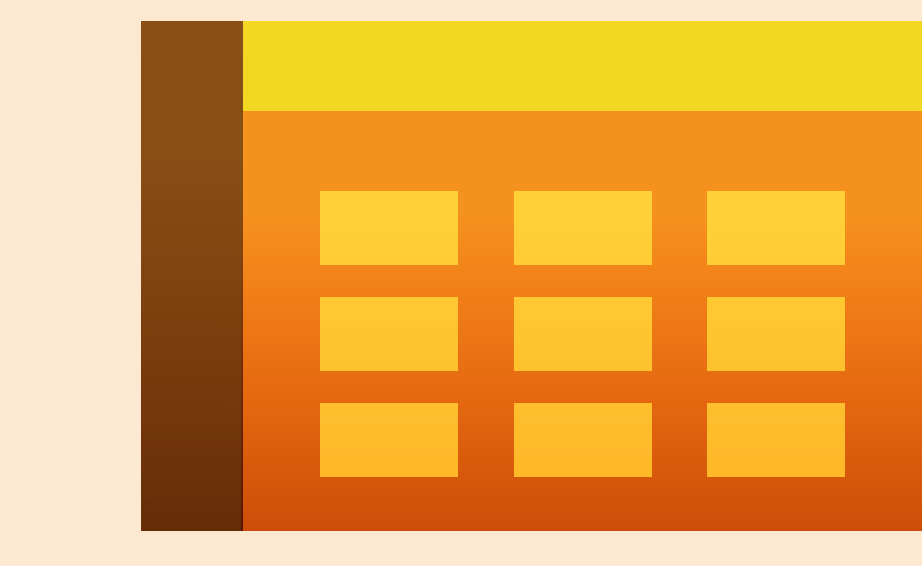
● Helps Odysseus
● Hinders Odysseus



HOMER
C. 9TH-8TH CENTURY BCE

Little is known about the life of the blind poet Homer, to whom we attribute *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. This is partially because poems were passed down orally in Homer's day and adapted to their telling. Nevertheless, Homer and his work had a great influence on ancient Greek society and continue to fascinate modern readers.

Odyssey by the Numbers



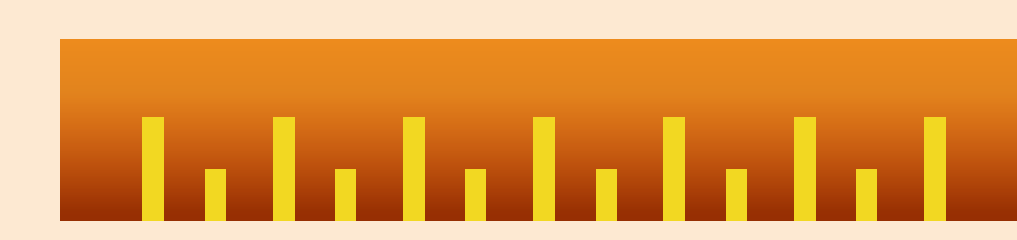
20

Years Odysseus is away from Ithaca, 10 in Troy and 10 journeying home



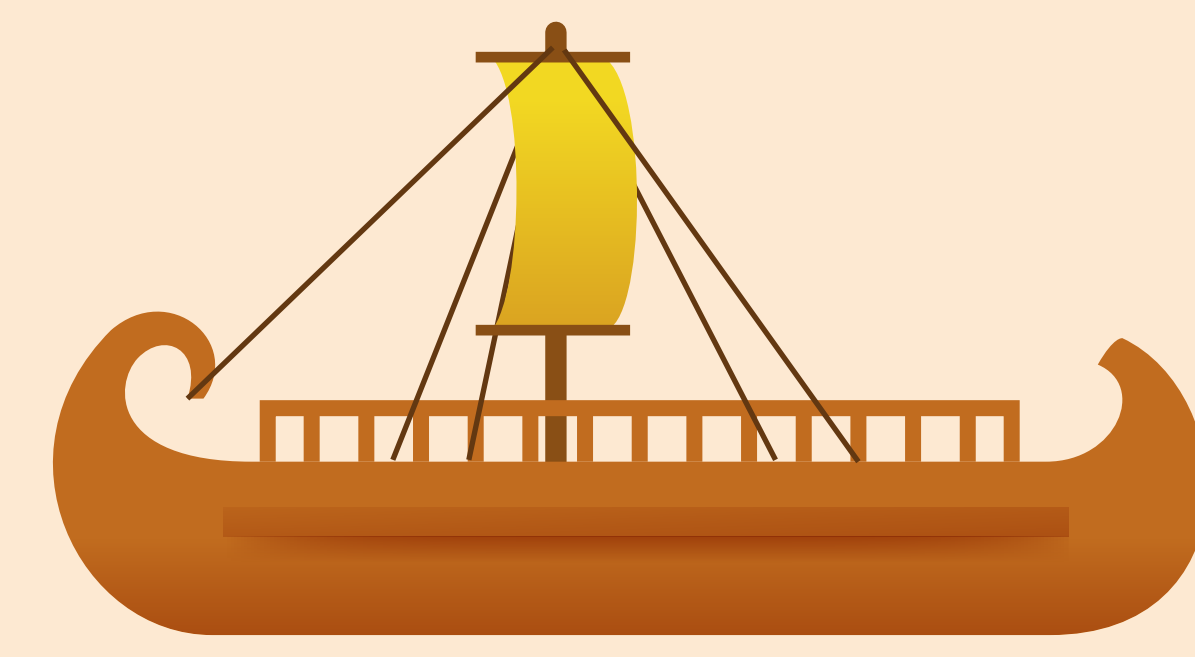
600

Men who set sail for Ithaca—all perished except Odysseus



6 "feet"

Metrical units each line has in dactylic hexameter, the meter used in the poem



55 feet

Estimated length of the Ithacan ships, which were light and canoe-like

*S*ing to me of the man,
Muse, the man of twists
and turns / driven time
and again off course...

Book 1, Lines 1-3