

Enrichment Works

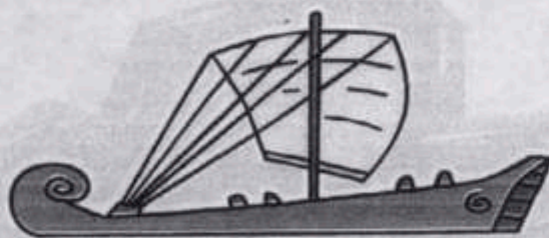
TEACHERS' STUDY GUIDE

by Marjorie Mellon, B.S., M.Ed.

for the play

The Voyage of Odysseus

Written and performed by Joshua Feinman



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Background - Standards and Learning

Enrichment Works is a theater company that provides performances designed to inspire children to learn by creating an emotional connection to the topic. The performance uses the Theatre Content Standards of California to provide a positive theatrical experience while also providing an increased interest in further pursuing core curriculum material. The Voyage of Odysseus helps children understand something about the ancient civilization of the Greeks, the thinking of the people of that society, and the types of lives the people led. It allows students to compare the ancient customs with their own and to recognize that themes in literature often reoccur.

Program

Greek King Odysseus (Joshua Feinman) bids farewell to his wife Penelope and his son Telemachus and invites students in the audience to take an interactive journey with him into the world of myth. The first stop is Troy, where, after a long siege, the Greek soldiers hide inside a statue of a giant horse as a ruse to enter the city of Troy and win the Trojan War. On the return voyage, Odysseus stops on an island where he is captured by the cave-dwelling monster Polyphemos. He blinds the giant Cyclops in order to escape and resumes his voyage home. Next, our hero encounters a beautiful woman named Circe, who turns Odysseus' sailors into pigs and then, after she falls in love with Odysseus, turns them back into men. Odysseus sails past the sirens and resists their dangerous song, and then he battles the whirlpool created by Poseidon, God of the Sea. Finally, after 20 years at sea he returns to his family. Penelope is surrounded by suitors who want to marry her, but she remains faithful to her husband despite his long absence. Odysseus, disguised as a stranger, scares the suitors away, reveals himself and reclaims his family.

Study Guide for the play *The Voyage of Odysseus* by Joshua Feinman

Study Guide by Marjorie Mellon

Pre-Performance Activities

1. Map of Ancient Greece – (see map worksheet)

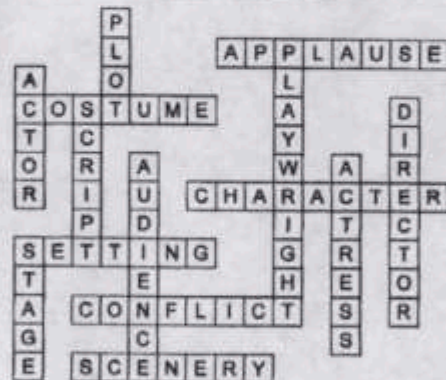
CA. Theatre Content Standards: 5.0, Connect what is learned in the theater to history and geography
 CA. History/S.S. Content Standards: Use maps to understand geography

- Have students locate Greece on a globe.
- Distribute copies of the map.
- Have students locate Ithaca and Troy.
- Discuss means of traveling from Ithaca and Troy 3,000 years ago and compare with today's possibilities.
- Make students aware of all the islands that are part of Greece.
- Have students draw a dotted line, showing the route from Ithaca to Troy.

2. Theater Vocabulary – (see crossword puzzle worksheet)

CA. Theatre Content Standards: Grade 4, 1.1, Use the vocabulary of theatre
 CA. Language Arts Content Standards: Vocabulary and concept development

- Read through the word bank and discuss words as necessary.
- Have students complete the crossword puzzle.



3. Understanding the Skill of an Actor/Actress

CA. Theatre Content Standards: 1.0, Artistic Perception
 2.0, Creative Expression
 4.0, Aesthetic Valuing
 CA. Language Arts Content Standards: Grade 3, Listening and Speaking: present dramatic interpretations

- Discuss the difference between acting in a movie, a T.V. show, and a play.
 (A play: performer must have lines memorized for whole play, a mistake cannot be corrected, noises in the audience can be distracting, they do the same thing over with each performance, scenery and props may have to be changed during the performance, etc.)
- An actor's job is to make the playwright's story come to life by saying and moving in a certain way. Have students demonstrate how an actor's movements or gestures can portray some of the following: frightened, full of pride, joyful, bully, upset, confused, surprised, thinking, having an idea, curiosity, love.
- Encourage students to watch for the actor's use of movements and gestures in *The Voyage of Odysseus*.

Pre-Performance Activities (continued)

4. Oral Tradition

CA. Theatre Content Standards: Historical and Cultural Context; tradition of storytelling

- a. Explain that in ancient times, stories were passed on from person to person through the spoken word. Stories were not often written down and even if they were, very few people could read. *The Voyage of Odysseus* has changed many times over the years.
- b. Play the "telephone game" to illustrate how stories change. Use a phrase such as: "Beautiful Helen, Queen of Sparta, has been kidnapped" or "Are you ready to get off the ship and explore these caves, my brave crew?"

5. Preview of *The Voyage of Odysseus*

CA. Theatre Content Standards: Historical and Cultural Context

CA. Language Arts Content Standards: Grade 4, 2.3, Make predictions about text

3.1, Explore myths as an imaginative form of literature

- a. Discuss "Greek Myth". A myth is a story based on events that may or may not have been true. They were often about superhuman beings, gods, goddesses and heroes. Myths were often made up to explain things that could not be easily explained any other way.
- b. Read: (see list of related literature)
Ancient Greek Myths and Legends by Philip Ardagh, pgs. 34 – 35.
Greek Myths by Geraldine McCaughrean, pgs. 78 – 83.

or ...

- c. Read the following synopsis: (have students fill in the blanks with ideas and predictions)

3000 years ago, Helen was the Queen of Sparta in Greece. She was the most beautiful woman in the kingdom. King Priam of Troy kidnapped her and took her to his kingdom, which was a city with a giant stone wall surrounding it. Helen's husband was very (mad, angry). He gathered thousands of his warriors. He told them they would have to travel across the sea in their ships and get (Helen) back. Odysseus was chosen to be the leader of the Greek army. The brave sailors and warriors began their journey.

What do you think happened? (have a few students make predictions)

Well, this is what happened: The Greeks sailed to Troy. They could not get inside the giant stone wall to fight the soldiers of Troy, called Trojans and the Trojans couldn't defeat the Greeks. The war went on that way for 9 years. Then Odysseus had a very clever idea.

Ask students what they think the clever idea could be. Do not accept or refute their suggestions. They will find out from the play!

MAP OF GREECE

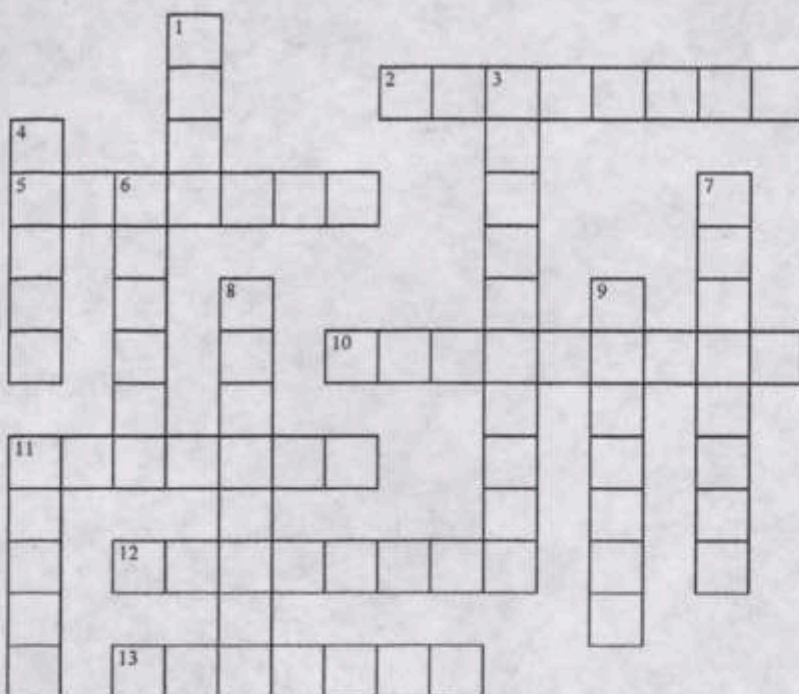
Find Ithaca, the home of Odysseus. Find Sparta, the home of Helen.
Find Troy, the place Helen was taken after she was kidnapped.
Draw a dotted line along a sea route from Ithaca to Troy. Make sure
you go around all the land and islands and stay on the sea.



THEATER VOCABULARY

Word Bank:

ACTOR
 ACTRESS
 APPLAUSE
 AUDIENCE
 CHARACTER
 CONFLICT
 COSTUME
 DIRECTOR
 PLAYWRIGHT
 PLOT
 SCENERY
 SCRIPT
 SETTING
 STAGE



ACROSS

- 2 A way to show you are enjoying the play
- 5 Clothes worn by the performer
- 10 A person who is in the story
- 11 Place where the story is happening
- 12 A problem in the play
- 13 Backdrop on the stage that shows the view

DOWN

- 1 Main idea of a play
- 3 Person who writes a play
- 4 A male performer
- 6 Words written for the performer
- 7 Person who tells the performer how to act
- 8 People who watch a play
- 9 A female performer
- 11 Place where actors and actresses stand to perform

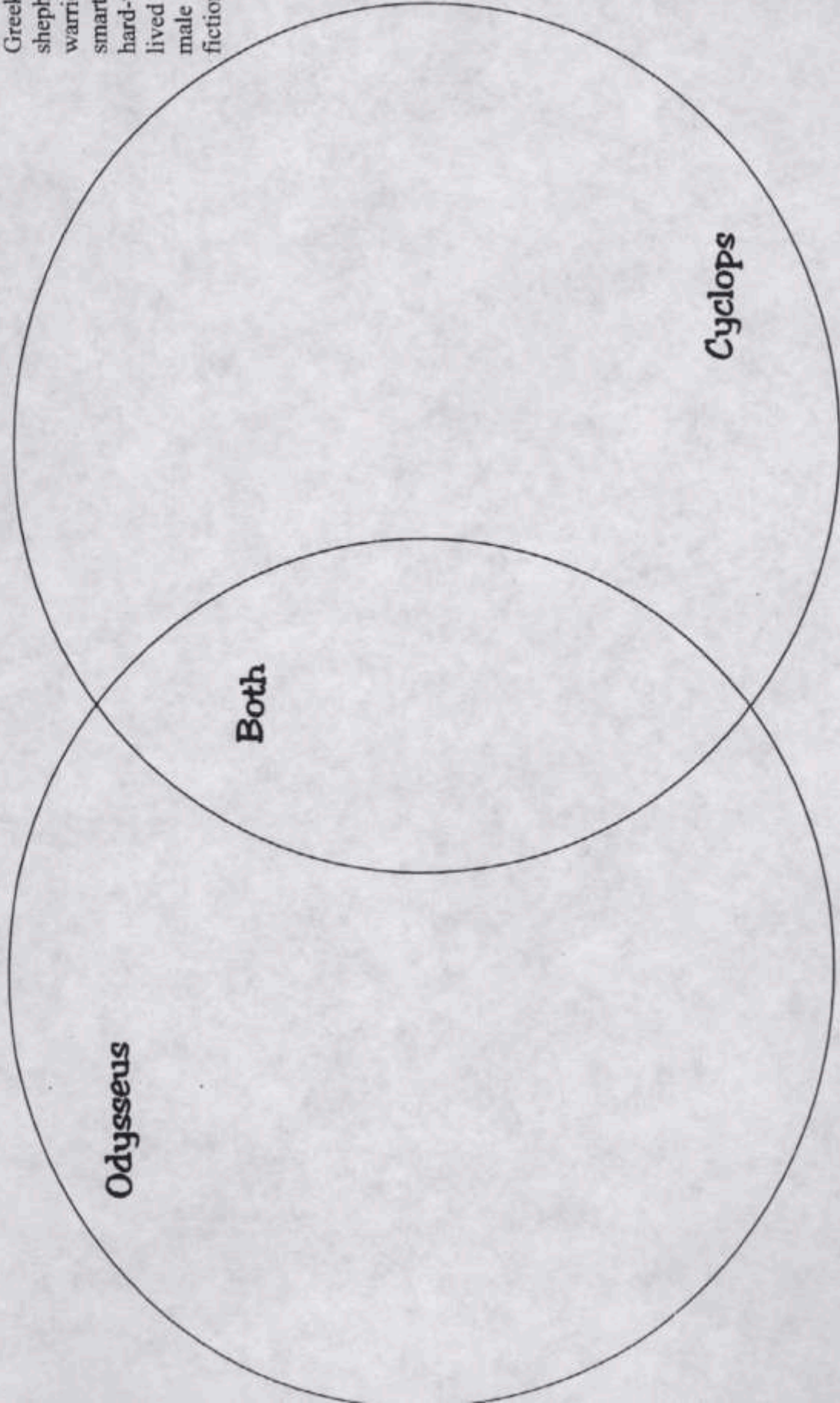


VENN DIAGRAM

Directions: Write the descriptive words about Odysseus in his circle. Write the words about Cyclops in his circle. Write the words that are about both characters in the overlapping circle. You can use the word bank and you can add any other descriptions that you can think of.

Word Bank

- clever
- mean
- leader
- one-eyed
- Greek
- shepherd
- warrior
- smart
- hard-worker
- lived on an island
- male
- fictional character



POSTCARD:

ΠΟΣΤΧΑΡΔ

Pretend you are Odysseus.

Write a postcard to your wife and son.

On the other side of this paper, draw a picture that shows what you have written about.



ΠΟΣΤΧΑΡΔ

Lady Penelope

Telemachus

Ithaca, Greece