

**:: STRUCTURE ::****12.0 Objectives****12.1 Introduction****12.2 Greeks Gods & Goddesses (with their Roman Counterparts)****12.3 Plot of The Illiad****12.4 The Illiad Trivia****12.5 Thematic Concerns in The Illiad**

- **Check Your Progress (The Illiad)**

**12.6 Plot of The Odyssey****12.7 Thematic Concerns in The Odyssey**

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**12.0 OBJECTIVES**

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In this Unit, we shall

- study two great epic poems of Ancient Greece;
- examine the oral & bard tradition of poetry in their context;
- learn about Greeks, their Gods and Goddesses, and Graceo-Roman culture;
- get an idea of Greek myths and legends;
- identify war tactics of the ancient times;
- understand the administration of regions and monarchy;
- know about Greek places and geography; and
- discover the significance of universal values such as responsibilities and duties towards nation, righteousness and patriotism.

On completion of the unit, you should be able to

- develop insight into epic and oral traditions of poetry;
- become proficient in Greek culture;
- identify different perceptions of beauty, heroism and hero worship;
- shape thoughts about statesmanship and administration;
- learn the value of suffering; and
- build a better character and personality by the ingraining of universal values depicted in the poems.

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## 12.1 INTRODUCTION

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The incredible stories of epic poems like *The Illiad*, *The Odyssey* and *The Aeneid* address universal issues like friendship, suffering and betrayal. In spite of being written centuries ago, their relevance in time and place is unquestionable. They are still as fresh and intelligible today as they were when they were composed. All these three classics are interlinked to one another. However, *The Illiad* and *The Odyssey* are very different from *The Aeneid* historically as well as culturally. And hence, the first two have been chosen here for your perusal and study. *The Illiad* delineates the war between the Greeks and the Trojans that took place over the disappearance of the Spartan queen Helen by the Trojan Prince Paris. It is a prequel to *The Odyssey* as well as to *The Aeneid*. *The Odyssey* is the story of the Greek warrior Odysseus's adventurous expedition to his home after the Trojan War.

*The Illiad* and *The Odyssey* were oral traditions. However, when they were penned down, it was in the early form of Greek language. They have been translated into so many languages all over the world for the study and analysis of scholars everywhere. The names of many places as well as characters are now available in their accepted Latin forms. This evolution of names has been a result of the centuries of handing down of these epic poems from one generation to another and their wide acceptance in and similarity with Latin culture.

The blind Greek poet Homer is said to have composed these poems orally in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Not much information is available about Homer except that he was blind and perhaps from the island of Chios. Singing poems with stories narrating heroic feats may have been Homer's profession. He used traditional backdrop and events to compose his poems. He may not have committed to his memory such long poems and hence, there may be a different version of them every time he himself sang them. Scholars reproduced these poems in 600 BCE at the Great

Library of Alexandria. And again, as a result of multiple retelling, these tales must have changed a bit from Homer’s original creation.

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## **12.2 GREEK GODS & GODDESSES (WITH THEIR ROMAN COUNTERPARTS)**

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Literature, art and philosophy blossomed beautifully in the Golden Era of Ancient Greece (500 – 300 BCE). Romans, especially emperors like Augustus, were highly inspired by Greek culture & history and hence established inseparable connections with them. One of the most remarkable influences on Romans was that of Greek religious beliefs. Romans worshipped the same Gods and Goddesses as the Greeks though they sometimes changed their and dispositions. In order to understand Homer’s works completely, it is essential to be familiar with the following Gods & Goddesses and their roles.

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Greek God / Goddess</b>	<b>Roman God / Goddess</b>	<b>Role</b>
1	Apollo	Apollo	God of the sun, music, and poetry
2	Aphrodite	Venus	Goddess of love and beauty
3	Ares	Mars	God of war
4	Artemis	Diana	Goddess of the moon and the hunt
5	Athena	Minerva	Goddess of wisdom and strategy in war
6	Demeter	Ceres	Goddess of the harvest
7	Dionysus	Bacchus	God of wine
8	Eros	Cupid	God of love
9	Hades	Pluto	King of the Underworld
10	Hebe	Juventas	Goddess of Youth
11	Hephaestus	Vulcan	God of Fire and Metal
12	Hera	Juno	Queen of the Gods
13	Heracles	Hercules	God of Strength
14	Hermes	Mercury	Messenger of Gods
15	Hestia	Vesta	Goddess of the Hearth & Home
16	Kronos	Saturn	God of Time
17	Persephone	Proserpina	Queen of the Underworld
18	Poseidon	Neptune	King of the Sea
19	Zeus	Jupiter	King of the Gods

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### 12.3 PLOT OF *THE ILLIAD*

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*The Illiad* tells the tale of the city of Illium, commonly referred to as Troy. It recounts the last six weeks of the war that took place between the Greeks and the Trojans. The war went on for ten long years. It has been historically proven that Troy actually existed and a war, such as that depicted by Homer, did take place there. The subject matter of Homer's epic are the Trojan War, the delineation of the moving scenes of the bloody battle, the wrath of Achilles and the arbitration of the Gods to aid the cause of justice. *The Illiad* is the legend that eulogizes glory, wrath, homecoming and fate. It has provided a backdrop for various other Greek, Roman and Renaissance works.

The epic is laid out in the context of the Trojan war that was sparked owing to the capture of Helen, considered to be the most beautiful woman in the world. She is the wife of Menelaus, the King of Sparta. A young man named Paris steals Helen with the help of Goddess Aphrodite (the goddess of love) and loots the palace treasure while Menelaus was away on a trip. On discovering the events that took place, Menelaus, with his brother Agamemnon, launches an attack on Troy where Paris had taken her. The epic commences in the timeline of around ten years into the siege of Troy by the Greek armed forces, steered by Agamemnon, the Emperor of Mycenae. The Greeks are in a dilemma regarding the returning of Chryseis, a Trojan captive of Agamemnon, to her father Chryses. Chryses being a priest of Apollo, the powerful God plagues Agamemnon's camp with an epidemic when he is reluctant to return the priest's daughter to him.

The Greeks, prompted by the warrior-hero Achilles, persuade Agamemnon to return Chryseis to her father so that Apollo may be pacified and the epidemic may end. The king unwillingly does so but he takes away Briseis, Achilles's own war prize concubine, to compensate for his loss. This arouses the wrath of Achilles who drops out from the war himself as well as retreats his Myrmidon warriors. This weakens Agamemnon's army significantly. Achilles also requests his mother, Thetis (the sea goddess), to plead with Zeus to assist him in vindicating the wrong. Zeus consents to help Trojans against the Greeks, thus opening the eyes of Agamemnon concerning the inevitability of Achilles in the war.

In the meantime, during a brief accord between the hostility and war, a duel between Paris (Trojan Prince who had started the war by stealing Menelaus's wife Helen) and Menelaus is agreed upon for the

determination of war and deciding the fate of Helen. In spite of the intervention of the Goddess Aphrodite, Paris loses the duel to Menelaus. This should have ended the war but Goddess Athena (who is on the side of the Greeks) prompts the breaking of the truce leading to the renewal of the battle.

In the absence of Achilles and his warriors, the Trojans seem to be getting the advantage. Agamemnon, Odysseus, Ajax, Phoenix and Nestor all seek his help but their pleas are not heeded by the offended Achilles. No temptation is able to lure him back. Agamemnon is injured in the course of the battle. Hector breaks into the fortified Greek camp and wounds Odysseus and Diomedes too. He intimidates the Greeks by warning that he would burn down their ships.

Motivated by his loyalty, but still angry at Agamemnon's conduct, Achilles ultimately sends his friend and lover, Patroclus, to fight in the war, disguised as Achilles himself by giving him his own armour. Hector from the enemy camp seeks out Patroclus and battles him thinking him to be Achilles. With the help from Apollo, Hector is able to kill him. The Greeks, with a lot of effort, ultimately succeed in recovering the corpse of Patroclus. Achilles's indignation gets diverted towards Hector and he reconciles with Agamemnon to rain his fury on the Trojans. His mother brings him a magnificent suit of armour, created by smith-god Hephaestus. He wreaks havoc by slaying lots of Trojans. He spots Hector and kills him ruthlessly. He then ties Hector's corpse to his chariot, dragging it around with the intention of throwing it to the dogs and birds of prey. On the other hand, a splendid funeral is planned and executed for Patroclus.

Ultimately, King Priam, Hector's father, redeems Hector's corpse and holds a funeral in the duration of a twelve-day truce allowed by Achilles. King Priam and his daughter Polyxena receives Hector's body for a ransom of gold. Achilles is also touched to know about the pain of Polyxena, Hector's sister. The King offers to get her married to Achilles who agrees, and the engagement takes place. However, Achilles decides to keep it a secret till he talks about it to Agamemnon.

Achilles starts liking Polyxena and meets her at the Apollo temple to talk and share his life. All of a sudden, Paris appears there and shoots an arrow at Achilles' heel, the only spot in his body that can kill him. This leads to the death of the glorious Greek warrior. A poll is planned by Athena to decide who should get Achilles' armour. Odysseus and Ajax, being the best Greek soldiers, are announced as the candidates. The goddess who favours Odysseus ensures that he secures the most votes.

Ajax is shocked and hence to stop him from reacting, Athena confers temporary insanity over him under the influence of which, Ajax kills pigs in a pen. When his senses are restored, he is so remorseful that he kills himself by falling on his sword. The Greeks are dismayed over losing two of their best warriors. However, Odysseus thinks of a brilliant plan. He commands for an enormous wooden horse to be built to which wheels are attached. He hides in it with a group of soldiers and the rest of the Greek army sails off in the ships to a nearby island.

The Trojans are happy to see that the Greeks have left and they think of the wooden horse as a gift. King Priam orders the horse to be brought into the kingdom through the gates of the city. Thinking that the war is over, there are celebrations in the city after which the tired citizens go to a peaceful, deep sleep. When everything is calm, Odysseus leads his men out of the horse, slains the citizens and destroys the city. The Greeks are victorious and Menelaus receives his wife, Helen who is reunited with him. This marks the end of the epic poem *The Illiad*.

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#### 12.4 THE ILLIAD TRIVIA

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Some facts about *The Illiad* would help to understand it better. It is not just one entire poem, but a collection of ancient poems, called the **Epic Cycle**. Many of these poems are not available to us now. These lost fragments are assumed to have dealt with the history of the Trojan War. It is also uncertain whether these fragments were ever written down. The poems of the **Epic Cycle** were sung and recited at celebrations and ceremonies by singers who were termed 'rhapsodes'. The events revolving around the kidnapping of Helen by Paris - the Trojan Prince, the death of Achilles and the fall of Troy have been omitted and they form segments of other poems of the **Epic Cycle** that were not composed by Homer.

*The Illiad* comprises of twenty four scrolls and 15693 lines. The meter used is dactylic hexameter. In accordance with the oral tradition of the times, it was written in a rhythmic manner to make it sound interesting and also to make it easier to memorize. The repetition of the phrases, lines and passages through the epic also conforms to the established oral tradition. Connecting the language of *The Illiad* to the present times, there are many phrases that have found their way into the modern language, such as 'Achilles' Heel', meaning 'a person's weakness that an enemy may attack', 'Helen of Troy' meaning 'a very beautiful woman', 'beware of Greeks bearing gifts' meaning 'a deadly gift', 'odyssey' meaning 'a

long and difficult journey’ and ‘spartan’ meaning ‘exact yet uncomfortable’.

The mention of gods and goddesses require familiarity with Greek culture and religious beliefs. They also are many times used in an allegorical way to represent certain ideas. Their relationship to the human characters is complex and call for a psychological study and insight. They sometimes provide comic relief amongst the bloody descriptions of the war. Their favouring certain characters and parodying the humans seems funny.

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## 12.5 THEMATIC CONCERNS IN *THE ILLIAD*

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War and peace stand out as the main theme of the epic poem. The entire portrayal of the war and fights is remarkable and lays out before the mind’s eye. Though it builds an atmosphere of violence and awe, the heroic feats of the brave warriors and glory associated with war are also remarkably recounted. The concept of beauty pictures throughout the work with the physical beauty represented by Helen and internal beauty symbolized in heroism and ethical values. Fidelity of the heroes and warriors are time and again brought to question. Friendship that leads to peace and friendship that gives rise to fights and battles indicates how this human value was the core of relationships and events. The opening word of the epic, ‘menin’ or ‘menis’ means ‘anger’ or ‘rage’, and a leit motif in the poem is the anger of Achilles and his letting go of this anger gradually and behaving in a way that is advantageous to his country. All these themes are worth exploring keeping the chief events and characters of The Illiad in mind.

### • Check Your Progress (*The Illiad*)

**Q1 Match the following:**

Sr. No.	Column A	Sr. No.	Column B
1	Zeus / Jupiter	a	Queen of the Gods
2	Hermes / Mercury	b	Goddess of Love & Beauty
3	Hera / Juno	c	King of the Sea
4	Athena / Minerva	d	God of War
5	Ares / Mars	e	God of Love
6	Apollo / Apollo	f	God of Speed / Messenger of Gods
7	Aphrodite / Venus	g	God of Strength
8	Eros / Cupid	h	King of the Gods
9	Herakles / Hercules	i	Goddess of War & Wisdom
10	Poseidon / Neptune	j	God of the Sun, Music & Poetry

**Q2 Fill in the blanks:**

- 1 Troy is also known as \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ is the ancient Greek story teller who narrated the story of the Trojan War.
- 3 *The Illiad* tells the story of \_\_\_\_\_, considered to be the most beautiful woman in the world.
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_ steals Helen with the help of Goddess \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_, who was on his way back from a trip, discovers that Paris had stolen his wife.
- 6 Menelaus asks his brother \_\_\_\_\_, to launch an attack on Troy where Paris had taken Helen.
- 7 Achilles' best friend \_\_\_\_\_, borrows his armour and goes to war in his stead.
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_ is Achilles' mother and the sea goddess.
- 9 Thetis orders \_\_\_\_\_, god of fire and metal, to create a special suit of armour for her son Achilles.
- 10 Achilles agrees to get married to Hector's sister, \_\_\_\_\_.

**Q3 Choose the correct option:**

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_ is the leader of the Greek forces.  
A Priam  
B Agamemnon  
C Menelaus  
D Achilles
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ is the King of Troy.  
A Agamemnon  
B Menelaus  
C Achilles  
D Priam
- 3 The proud soldier who dies on his sword is \_\_\_\_\_.  
A Ajax  
B Odysseus  
C Achilles  
D Paris
- 4 Odysseus' plan is to build a \_\_\_\_\_.  
A ship  
B fort  
C gigantic wooden horse  
D temple



5 Achilles is killed by \_\_\_\_\_.

- A Agamemnon
- B Menelaus
- C Paris
- D Ajax

6 A poll is planned by \_\_\_\_\_ to decide who should get Achilles' armour.

- A Athena
- B Aphrodite
- C Thetis
- D Polyxena

7 \_\_\_\_\_ wins maximum votes and gets Achilles' armour.

- A Ajax
- B Paris
- C Agamemnon
- D Odysseus

8 Athena confers temporary insanity over \_\_\_\_\_.

- A Ajax
- B Odysseus
- C Priam
- D Achilles

9 The \_\_\_\_\_ are happy to see that the Greeks have left and they think of the wooden horse as a gift.

- A Italians
- B Trojans
- C Ethiopians
- D warriors

10 \_\_\_\_\_ is reunited with Helen.

- A Paris
- B Menelaus
- C Agamemnon
- D Achilles

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## 12.6 PLOT OF *THE ODYSSEY*

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Homer's epic poem, *The Odyssey*, chronicles the story of Odysseus (also known as Ulysses)'s expedition to Ithaka, his home and island kingdom. The time frame is the last six months of his ten-year long journey. He commences this journey after the end of the Trojan War. He was the ingenious Greek warrior whose plan to trick the Trojans by building a gigantic wooden horse with soldiers hidden in it brought victory to the Greek forces against the Trojans. The brave warrior confronts lots of challenges on his way to home. Penelope, his wife, calmly awaits his homecoming. She is as brilliant as her husband which is seen in the way in which she outwits the suitors (as many as 108) who woo her everyday and want to get married to her.

Poseidon, the god of the sea, had been displeased by Odysseus in the past. He therefore, stacks up many obstacles in Odysseus's path to prevent him from going home. Obtaining aid from Goddess Athena, Odysseus sets off for home with his crew in three ships. The ships are laden with jewelry, precious metals, silks and fur secured from Troy after its fall. The weight of the ship poses the problem of their starting to sink in the sea. The gemstones are discarded in water to lighten the ships. The glitter of the ornaments attracts the Naiads, the gorgeous sea nymphs, who gather around the ship, and sing and laugh with delight. This again instigates Poseidon who assumes that Odysseus and his men are trying to steal his nymphs. He asks his son, Aeolus, to send in a powerful storm to punish the Greeks since the Aeolus is the keeper of the winds.

Tired, tossed and starved, the Greeks anchor off the island of Sicily. This island is home to the one-eyed giants called Cyclopes. The most savage of them is Polyphemus, who beguiles Odysseus and his men with the aroma of the roasting lamb. The dexterous Odysseus blinds the monster with a fiery poker and gets away with his men by ambushing under the sheep bellies. The courageous men with their determination go ahead and reach an island palace, where they are bathed and refreshed with oils by invisible hands. They then meet King Aeolus and his wife at a grandiose banquet.

The King tells Odysseus to disclose his story. He is full of admiration on listening to the amazing adventures of the warrior and rewards him with a sack of wind, at the same time warning him that the sack must not be opened unless in an emergency. Odysseus guards the sack but the greedy sailors open it while he was sleeping. The wind is unleashed and steers the ships far away from home. Odysseus and his men keep sailing north

and ultimately anchor themselves on an island in search of food and water. The island is inhabited by a sorceress, Circe, who feeds the men and is very hospitable. But after the dinner, she uses her magic to transform them into pigs. Odysseus seeks the help of Hermes, the messenger god. He is given a magical flower that changes the pigs back to men but in return, he has to love the sorceress till he lives there. The men stay there for quite a time until they become nostalgic and are reminded of their homes. They resume their excursion after receiving guidance and gifts from Circe.

The gifts confer momentum and protection to the Greeks, but not for long. Alluring sirens cross their path to charm them and draw them away from their ships and to their deaths. However, the men insert the soft wax given by Circe to ignore the bewitching songs of the sirens. Having successfully overcome this deadly trap, they go ahead, but again to encounter a deadlier obstacle.

They pass through the Straits of Messina, located between Sicily and Italy. This place is occupied by the monsters, Scylla and Charybdis. Scylla has six heads with razor-like teeth. Charybdis swallows the sea three times a day, only to spit it up all again, causing the ships to wreck and sailors to drown. Odysseus, recalling Circe's advice, pushes his crew to steer the ship straight between these two creatures. This bears no fruit and Scylla captures six crew members with its six heads. The rest of the crew members are seized in the whirlpool created by the second monster. Odysseus emerges as the sole survivor of Ithaca's warriors that fought in the Trojan War.

Odysseus then stays with the nymph Calypso who enchants him with her singing. She wishes to make him her immortal husband and keeps him at the island of Ogygia for seven years. Her healing presence and place makes Odysseus happy but finally, he realizes that he should return to his home, his wife and sets out again.

He proceeds homeward in the sea for nine nights and days. It is then that a violent storm lashes the raft and wrecks it completely. Completely immersed in water, Odysseus is almost drowned but ultimately thrown ashore on an island. He lies collapsed on the island of Scheria where he is discovered by Princess Nausicaa and her servants. She rejuvenates him by providing food and care. She then sends him to King Alkinoos and Queen Arete, her parents. Odysseus presents his life story to them and they are fascinated as well as compassionate to hear it. They are more than willing to facilitate him with whatever he needs for his return. The King

furnishes him with a ship and a crew. Odysseus resumes his prolonged, arduous journey towards home.

After putting in ten years in war and then another ten years in expedition, the warrior at the end arrives at his beloved homeland, Ithaka. On Athena's advice, he disguises himself as a beggar after learning about his wife's suitors that she had been stalling for some time, awaiting his return. On reaching the palace guided by his old hunting dog, Argus, Odysseus is mocked at by the suitors. Penelope commands them to treat the guest respectfully. Meanwhile, Telemachus, the son of Odysseus and Penelope, has returned after a massive and far-reaching quest to find his father. He is asked by the suitors to persuade his mother for a second marriage.

Tired of being pursued, Penelope announces a competition wherein the suitors have to string Odysseus's bow and shoot an arrow through twelve axe handles. The winner would get married to her. Odysseus, still a guest, is identified by his old nurse, Eurykleia, on seeing a scar on his knee. She extends her full support to him whenever and wherever needed. The next morning, the suitors turn up at the grand hall where the contest is planned and all elaborate arrangements are made. Women are asked to step out of the hall. All the suitors try their luck but miserably fail. At last, Telemachus asks the beggar to try his hand at it. Odysseus effortlessly does the task. Athena reveals the true identity of the beggar and transforms him into the brave Odysseus. Odysseus and Telemachus wipe out all the suitors after which Odysseus commands the cleaning of the palace and the bringing of Penelope to him. Penelope has doubts about the identity of Odysseus and lays a trap by expressing that Eurykleia would prepare Odysseus's bed outside her chamber. At that moment, the astonished Odysseus exclaims that he had carved his bed from an ancient olive tree whose roots still exist in the earth. It was not possible to shift such a bed. This is the moment of truth wherein Penelope realizes that the man in front of her is the real Odysseus as only he would be aware of such a thing. She rushes to his arms and welcomes him home.

### **12.6.1 Thematic Concerns in *The Odyssey***

Unwavering determination and dedication is the principal theme of *The Odyssey*. Odysseus's long journey home tells volumes about his strong will to return to Ithaka. The indignation of the gods, the constant impediments, even the temptations fail to change his unfaltering resolution to go on with the seemingly unending and extremely painful expedition. The epic poem is a tale of the perseverance of his wife, Penelope, too. She never lets her hope fade away that her husband will

surely return to her, though 108 suitors are ardent to please her and get married to her. Her unflinching fidelity makes her a perfect example of a devoted wife. The devotion of a son towards his parents is also glorified in the character of Telemachus.

War is one the themes and the backdrop of *The Illiad*; but *The Odyssey* is set amidst a sequence of social and domestic situations. So, the domestic and matrimonial life is also a theme of the epic poem. Narratives by Odysseus and other characters brings forth the charm of story-telling. Fantasy lands and strange, imaginary and sometimes horrifying creatures are intended to present an atmosphere of mystery and awe. Journey and difficulties or obstacles surrounding it are also a leit motif in the work.

- **Check Your Progress (The Odyssey)**

**Q1 Match the Following:**

Sr. No.	A	Sr. No.	B
1	Poseidon	A	secured a Greek victory with the Trojan horse
2	Nausicaa	B	the clever wife of Odysseus
3	Odysseus	C	the god of the sea
4	Ithaka	D	lured sailors to their deaths
5	Scylla	E	one-eyed giants
6	Penelope	F	the Cyclops who was blinded by Odysseus
7	sirens	G	kingdom of Helen and Menelaus
8	Polyphemus	H	island home of Odysseus and his family
9	Sparta	I	the princess who found Odysseus washed ashore
10	the Cyclops	J	sea monster with six heads

**Q 2 Sequencing**

Arrange the following statements into the correct sequence in which they happen in the story:

- 1 Odysseus is found by servants and gracious Princess Nausicaa, who feeds him and directs him to her father’s palace.
- 2 The crew live an enchanted life on Circe’s island for a long time.
- 3 Poseidon, the god of the sea, determined to keep Odysseus from his homeland, places many obstacles in his path.

4 Penelope, shining among women, rushes to Odysseus' arms and welcomes him home.

5 Beautiful sirens appear to tempt them from their ships and to their deaths.

6 Odysseus, still disguised as a beggar, is recognized by his old nurse, Eurykleia, when she sees a scar on his knee while pouring hot water for his bath.

7 King Alkinoos gives him a ship and a crew.

### Q 3 Fill in the blanks

1 \_\_\_\_\_, also known as Ulysses, is the cleverest of the Greek warriors.

1 Odysseus faces many obstacles on his way home to \_\_\_\_\_.

2 \_\_\_\_\_ outwits the suitors (as many as 108) who woo her everyday and want to get married to her.

3 Odysseus receives help from the goddess \_\_\_\_\_ on his way to Ithaka.

4 The glitter of the gemstones attracts the \_\_\_\_\_, the gorgeous sea nymphs.

5 \_\_\_\_\_, the keeper of the winds, sends in a powerful storm to punish the Greeks.

6 \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to make Odysseus her immortal husband and keeps him at the island of Ogygia for seven years.

7 \_\_\_\_\_, the son of Odysseus and Penelope, goes for a massive and far-reaching quest to find his father.

8 Odysseus had carved his bed from an ancient \_\_\_\_\_ tree whose roots still exist in the earth.

9 Odysseus, still a guest, is identified by his old nurse, \_\_\_\_\_, on seeing a scar on his knee.

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## 12.7 SUMMING UP

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Homer's epic poems *The Illiad* and *The Odyssey* present a world that may seem alien to our eyes but the themes and emotions are as alive and relevant as they were then. The fight for territory, power and love are an intrinsic part of the human nature. And in that way, war makes sense to those who wage it. But the destruction and barbarism that it brings about in cities and civilizations just to satisfy one or a group of individuals renders it unintelligible. Attachment to home is another idea that Homer dwells on. Any success, wealth or power cannot compensate the contentment and happiness that one attains from the company of the loved ones. The epic poems take us on a roller coaster to an altogether

new world and scenario in pursuit of such themes portrayed through the eyes of the mighty warriors and heroes.

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## **12.8 BOOKS SUGGESTED**

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- Lattimore, Richmond. *The Illiad of Homer*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951.
- Lattimore, Richmond. *The Odyssey of Homer*. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.
- Fagles, Robert. *The Illiad*. New York: Penguin, 1990.
- Grimal, Pierre. *The Dictionary of Classical Mythology*. New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988.
- Oliphant, Margaret. *The Atlas of the Ancient World*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992.

❖ Answer

**Check Your Progress (*The Illiad*)**

**Q1 Match the Following:**

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
h	f	a	i	d	j	b	e	g	c

**Q2 Fill in the blanks:**

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Ilium	Homer	Helen	Paris, Aphrodite	Menelaus
6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Agamemnon	Patroclus	Thetis	Hephaestus	Polyxena

**Q3 Choose the correct option:**

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
B	D	A	C	C	A	D	A	B	B

• **Check Your Progress (The Odyssey)**

**Answer Key (*The Odyssey*)**

**Q1 Match the Following:**

1 - C	2 - I
3 - A	4 - H
5 - J	6 - B
7 - D	8 - F
9 - G	10 - E

**Q 2 Sequencing**

3, 2, 5, 1, 7, 6, 4

**Q 3 Fill in the blanks**

1 Odysseus                      2 Ithaka                      3 Penelope                      4 Athena  
 5 naiads                      6 Aeolus                      7 Calypso                      8 Telemachus  
 9 olive                      10 Eurykleia