

"the odyssey" by homer essay

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



The Odyssey is the story of an old man (Odysseus) returning home and a young man (Telemachus) venturing out in search of himself. Telemachus, throughout the story, considered the heroic Odysseus as his model.

Throughout the story, there is a constant struggle of the growing Telemachus to imitate the actions of his father and then eventually become like him that he comes to an end of his journey. In the beginning of the poem, Homer does not give any indication to the readers that Telemachus will eventually go on a journey like his father.

Telemachus's headway towards this goal actually shows how difficult were the goals and ventures of Odysseus. The text of The Odyssey presents a single framed narration of the hero, Odysseus, and the journey of a child, Telemachus, into manhood. This essay will demonstrate the comparisons and contrasts the tale draws between the two central characters of father and son.

There are distinct similarities between the character of Odysseus and Telemachus. The resemblance are so close that in one account Penelope had to reverse the procedure in identifying the true identity of her visitor as Odysseus.

In Odyssey 4, Helen's description of Telemachus actually shows the close physical resemblance between the two characters. However, as a character in the book, Telemachus is often found to move under the shadow of his father's heroic feats.

Odysseus is hailed a hero for his heroic adventures and conquests in the battle of Troy. Telemachus too tries to emulate his father, and like him, goes out on a voyage, but fails to attain full respect like his father. Therefore, a continuous struggle is observed in the text wherein there is continuous comparison between the two characters.

The writer, the readers, does it and even by Telemachus himself who felt that, he could never match up to his father's valor. In Odyssey 2, the episode in which Telemachus leaves a sword in unlocked room that helped the suitors to possess arms to combat the former.

Odysseus, though had made mistakes, could not be expected of making such a careless mistake. Eurymachus states that Telemachus could never muster the courage and conviction to face the threats of the suitors. In another instance, Leocritus points out that Telemachus may not venture out in a journey even after continues encouragement from his elders.

Homer's epic poem portrays the character of Telemachus as a son who takes change of situation due to an absent father. Only till the father returns to take back the reigns. Therefore, to a great extent the character of Telemachus and his adventures has been belittled in the text. However, Telemachus does show a sense of pride in his family and blood when he says that he will not shame his family.

Odysseus is critical of Telemachus when they reunite after the former's return to Ithaca. Telemachus expresses his doubt on their reunion if the man who had transgressed from a beggar to the state of a hero could really be his

father, to which Odysseus answers with impatience that had he not been the real father he would not have returned to Ithaca after twenty years of toiling.

In general, the characters of Telemachus and Odysseus reflect on that of an obedient son tied by his duties and a gentle father happy to reunite with his family.

The poem stresses on equality and a cordial relation between Telemachus and Odysseus. However, it cannot be overlooked that the poem is more about Odysseus, who fought at Troy, and his grand heroic adventures and that of a mediocre son who lived a mundane life in the island of Ithaca encompassed by his family duties.